Change is the only constant
Top execs of Project:Worldwide and GPJ discuss the future of Experiential Marketing p. 34

SHOWTIME
sets new standards
with its debut IP

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Friday, April 26, 2013
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If you asked me even one year ago whether ticketing as a model would be successful in the Indian LIVE entertainment space, i’d have had to lean more towards a negative response rather than a positive. After attending the Sunburn Arena featuring DJ Tiesto last week in Noida (that’s not Delhi), there’s only one singular realization... This industry never fails to surprise! Being the chronicler for this industry, there were endless opinions including our own belief based on very real examples, that LIVE entertainment was and will for a long time be sponsor dependent. The only news now is that if you’re an owner of a property that cannot sustain without sponsor funds, you’re simply not giving your TG what they really want.

Audiences will pay for what they want to consume in a LIVE environment. Not challenging whether the model is absolutely successful commercially or not, but the revenue from ticketing is surely an avenue that can determine the success, sustenance and scale of an IP. It also makes an organizer work that much harder to actually cater to an audience rather than a sponsor. And the irony is that, the sponsors come more readily when the property’s got the right audience hooked!

It’s easier said than done. But its equally important to continuously strive for greatness. Our own flagship IP is testimony to this. The WOW Awards 2013 grew steadily in its fifth edition to include 260 participants. Newer companies are now part of our ever-growing network thanks to this property. As the jury works tirelessly in determining the ‘Best of the Best’, we look forward in including each one of these organizations, that have partaken in the growth and sustenance of the WOW Awards to join us in celebrating the truly deserving, on April 26, 2013 at the Grand Hyatt, Mumbai.

Karishma Hundalani Nagdev
karishma@eventfaqs.com
Showtime sets new standards with its debut IP Jodhpur One World Retreat

OML’s debut festival in Mumbai features Norah Jones

Percept Live and Submerge bring the World’s No.1 DJ Armin van Buuren to India

Submerge partners Future Music Festival Asia for the second time

A tryst with 92.7 BIG FM and what the brand stands for

“Since our core TG is the youth, we at 9XM have done many on-ground activations across colleges and youth hangouts”
- Amar Tidke | 9X Media Group

“Malaysia’s unique selling points make the country an ideal business events destination”
- Manoharan Periasamy | Tourism Malaysia

Change is the only constant
Top execs of Project:Worldwide and GPJ discuss the future of Experiential Marketing

Robert G. Vallee
Project: Worldwide

Mike Amour
Project: Worldwide

George P. Johnson
India

Rasheed Sait
George P. Johnson
India

Glimpses 53-57
when you need to create that

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Vibgyor launches multi-brand sampling platform - Go Try

Go Try is said to be India's first and only multi-brand sampling platform present at high footfall environments and is in expansion mode. The brainchild of experiential marketing and brand activation agency Vibgyor Brand Services uses technology at its core to make the sampling process more intelligent and effective.

Dhruv Kalra, Director, Go Try Marketing said: "Go Try started out with a pilot kiosk at Pacific Mall, Delhi NCR and then expanded to Mumbai at Oberoi Mall. It will be present at Bangalore and Hyderabad in two months. The target for the end of the year is to be operational at leading malls across the top 10 cities in India, giving a pan India reach to its clients."

Raymond launches deodorants with fragrance diffusing arches

Raymond recently launched its new range of premium deodorants. Hansa Events & Activation was appointed to create unique 'fragrance diffusing arches' across malls. The activity started in February and will end by April. It is being held in two or three malls in each city - Mumbai, Delhi and Kolkata.

The objective is to generate trials and induce consumers to buy the new deodorants. Sujit Kote, GM (West, South & East), Hansa Events & Activation said: "Promoters encourage people to pass under the arches and sample the deodorant. The remote-controlled diffusers are then activated and a spray of deodorant is dispensed. The placement of the arches near the entrance of shopping malls enables everyone entering the mall to get a whiff of the fragrance as soon as they pass under it."

ITC engages students at college fests for Fiama di Wills and Vivel

It was the season of college festivals in February and ITC made sure it engaged students to 'look fresh, smart and confident.' The activations were held at college fests in Mumbai and Bangalore like Crossroads at SRCC, Mecca at Hindu, Quintessence at Lady Irwin, Lashkaara at Khalsa, etc. The activations ended on March 15 and were executed by Vibgyor.

Ankur Kalra, Founder & CEO, Vibgyor Brand Services Pvt. Ltd. said: "The two main activities were a talent contest for girls and a motion sensing game for boys. About 500 students were engaged in each college. These products have already been launched in the market, so the objective was to increase awareness about the product and generate maximum trials. It was an atmosphere of fun, excitement and entertainment."

Mahindra promotes Quanto through road shows

Mahindra organized a multiple city road show in order to promote Quanto as a weekend car. Positioned as a holiday car following the theme of 'Live the Weekend Life', Quanto is being promoted in Maharashtra, Gujarat and Andhra Pradesh. It is being managed by Craftworld Events, which manages events for Mahindra on a regular basis. The agency had to create a theme-based concept which would connect well with the audience.

Manoj Mahla, MD, Craftworld Events said: “Quanto being a weekend car, we suggested a beach holiday look on the canter so that people can personally experience a weekend feel. The toughest part was communicating the same to the prospects which we ultimately managed quite successfully.”

Bajaj Commercial Vehicles conducts multi-city campaign

The Bajaj Health + Mileage Campaign started in March and is covering four cities - Kochi, Kollam, Pathanamthitta and Kottarakara. Tamarind Event Management Solutions is executing the BTL activity, promoting the RE-445 as a high mileage commercial auto with numerous health benefits.

Vipin Das, MarCom Head, Tamarind Event Management Solutions said: "The campaign focuses on the vehicle's high mileage capacity and design to give relief to the major health ailments autos caused to the autodrivers. The campaign intended to create a deep connection with the autodrivers in the state, while communicating brand values. There are also test-drives and mileage competitions organized in each city with around 80-120 test drives taking place each day. Post-combing activities which consist of taking feedback of the vehicle and the campaign are also taking place."

Oral-B conducts mall activation for Smile India Movement 3

The two-day mall activation for Oral-B Smile India Movement (SIM) 3 took place at Oberoi Mall in Mumbai and was executed by Encompass. SIM was launched in 2010 with a mission to educate consumers about the importance of proper health care regime. Continuing this mission, Oral-B came up with a two day mall activation which focused on departing the right health education and engaging consumers through interesting activities.

Anirudh Bhagtani, Sr. Manager - Client Servicing, Encompass said: "Visitors at the mall were asked to submit their stories via physical forms, online submissions or through video recordings. Five lucky consumers were handed gift hampers."
Suzuki Motors India celebrates with Annual Dealers Meet 2013

Suzuki India Annual Dealers Meet 2013, an event held to commemorate the success of Suzuki Swish and Suzuki Access, took place on March 1 at Hotel Claridges in Delhi. The on-ground activities of the meet were conceptualised and executed by Percept Activ. Marketing presentations shared at the event reflected the overwhelming response in the sales figures for both two-wheeler models of Suzuki.

Sanjay Shukla, CEO, Percept Activ said “We’re honored to have played a catalyzing role in this partnership. Percept would be working towards strengthening this relationship with Suzuki in the future too. The activities were undertaken with tremendous detailing, considerately handled and perfectly executed by the team, making it an event to remember.”

Gulf Oil Annual CEO Meet 2013 sees global guests visit India

The Gulf Oil Annual CEO Meet 2013 took place from Feb. 26 to March 2 at the Jaypee Palace Hotel & Convention Centre in Agra. Fountainhead Corporate Journeys was appointed to execute the meet which saw about 60 attendees, including global CEOs. The event comprised a gala night and a two-day conference.

Ankita Dhupia, Project Head, Fountainhead Corporate Journeys said: “We received the mandate for conceptualizing, planning and executing the meet in Agra. We were mandated to create experiences at the event in such a way that it would bring out the true colors of India. Since last year’s event took place in a destination as exotic as Argentina, a benchmark was set for us to create an experience that surpassed the client’s expectations.”

Encompass executes Asian Paints dealer incentive program - Royale Brand Ambassador

Asian Paints started the initiative in order to accelerate sales. Encompass, which has a long standing relationship with Asian Paints, was engaged for the activity. A gala night event took place on March 4 at ITC Maratha, Mumbai.

Deepti Bhatia, Account Director, Client Servicing, Encompass said: “The guests were ushered in with a red carpet welcome where the host for the evening conducted live interviews. The event progressed with dance performances followed by speeches. Actress Sona Ali Khan also joined in the celebrations. She made a unique entry through a flash mob performance.”

Rotary International District 3140 organizes DisCon 2013

Rotary District 3140, which spends more than 50 crores towards community service, organized the DisCon 2013. Swastika Entertainment Pvt. Ltd. was appointed to execute the two-day conclave at Aamby Valley’s golf course. This two-day event was attended by more than 1200 Rotarians consisting of doctors, engineers, company executives, entrepreneurs, etc.

Amit Verma, Director, Swastika Entertainment said: “The tag line of the event was ‘Conclave of Excellence.’ The detailing and arrangements were done keeping in mind the excellence theme. Other than Rotarians from different walks of life, this conference was also attended by eminent personalities of the society who were felicitated for their excellent work in their respective fields.”

Bestseller India organizes Annual Sales Meet 2013

Bestseller India recently organized the Annual Sales Meet 2013 at Zuri White Sands Resort in Goa. The five-day event was conceptualized and executed by Cream Events, because of its long term association with Bestseller. It took place from Feb. 28 to March 3 and was attended by 80 people.

Trishala Jailwala, Executive - Client Service, Cream Events said: “The event involved the pan-India higher management team. The conference was organized to herald the achievements of 2012 and discuss the way forward till 2015. The conference was spread over four days comprising engagement activities, celebrations and future plans. On the whole, the event was executed with absolute perfection, with no glitches or problems.”

Percept executes 5th India Live 2013 Medical Conference

Percept Sports & Entertainment (PS&E) conceptualised, planned and executed the 5th India Live 2013 Medical Conference at ITC Grand Chola, Chennai. The four day conference ended in March. PS&E assisted the client right from choosing the venue for the event to getting sponsors, raising funds, ticketing, travel and stay logistics for 1500 doctors from across the world.

Savio Sequeira, CEO - Percept Sports & Entertainment said: “This was a multi-agency pitch and Percept won the mandate to manage the event based on the concept, creatives and ability to execute large format events. PS&E had to provide a 360-degree solution and be a one-stop shop for all requirements. The highlight of the event was the ‘Meet The Expert’ session wherein attendees could interact with personalities of the cardiology field.”
Tata Sky launches its DIY service with Prachi Desai

Tata Sky launched its new feature DIY (Do-it-Yourself) on March 12. It was launched by Prachi Desai, who mastered the art of balloon sculpting at the launch. InchbyInch Productions was roped in to manage the launch after winning a multi-agency pitch. It had the task of creating a first-hand experience of the services for the media/press personnel. It had to create the concept to make people curious about the new services.

Vikram Mehra, Chief Marketing Officer, Tata Sky said: “The event began with the registration process which was followed by product presentations. Desai interacted with the audience and tried her hand at one of the available features. Live demonstrations also took place for further clarity. The setup had a simple stage and side screens. Branding elements showcasing the different product features were put up.”

3rd Rock Entertainment launches Holi Reloaded music festival

Holi Reloaded is a unique music festival presented by +91 which is a 3rd Rock Entertainment property. The inaugural edition, which was headlined by Juno Reactor, took place on March 27 at Chitrakoot Grounds in Mumbai. Performances by one of India’s best electronica DJs Ankytrixx were followed by other DJs like Anish Sood, Teenu Arora, Helium Project and Phoenyx.

Aarnav Shirsat, CMD, 3rd Rock Entertainment said: “The objective was to create the ultimate electronic music experience while celebrating Holi. The fest saw a wide variety of cocktails and a spread of Holi delights. Apart from LEDs and visuals, there was a rain dance area, foam arena, water sprinklers, games, food counters and thandai stalls, with unlimited eco friendly colours.”

Pegasus Events lights up Gateway of India

The Gateway of India was lit up in green as part of Tourism Ireland’s Global Greening project. The activity took place on St. Patrick’s Day which falls on March 17. Pegasus Events was involved in all aspects of the event, right from procuring the licenses and permissions to managing the press event which took place at Chambers Terrace, Taj Mahal Palace in Mumbai.

Prashant Chari, Manager - Client Servicing, Pegasus Events said: “Ireland Tourism was keen on bringing the Global Greening project to India this year and contacted us to find out whether it could be done here and what structures we could illuminate.”

Product of the Year Awards marks its 25th year globally

The Product of the Year India Awards 2013, which is running its fifth title in India and is 25 years old globally, took place on March 9 at The Regal Room, Trident in Mumbai. The event saw a joint execution take place where Pegasus Events designed the stage and Fountainhead executed the rest of the event.

Charulata Ravikumar, CEO, Product of the Year, said: “It started with a panel discussion which featured a number of eminent panelists, followed by a short break. The awards function then started with emcee Cyrus Broacha, who did a small Gangnam Style performance to pep up the audience. The actual awards ceremony saw a mix of giving away awards, a presentation by the Director of Nielsen and a performance by Usha Uthup.”

Gillette celebrates Women’s Day and organizes campaign

As part of Gillette’s Soldier for Women campaign, Encompass executed an event to celebrate International Women’s day alongside celebrities like Chitrangada Singh and Malaika Arora Khan, who came together to celebrate real life soldiers who stand up for women. Arbaaz Khan and Vidyut Jamwal also joined the ladies by leading a group of men to pledge their support.

Shyam Gursahani, Manager - Client Servicing, Encompass said: “They narrated real life stories in which men have and can stand up for women and respect them. Chitrangada and Malaika too shared their experiences where men have stood up for them in times of need.”

Beam Inc. holds 12th edition of Teacher’s Achievement Awards

The 12th edition of the Teacher’s Achievement Awards (TAA), which recognise and celebrate the true sense of individual excellence in diverse fields, took place at Taj Land’s End in Mumbai on March 9. The event was organized by Beam Inc. and was managed by Wizcraft International, which has been associated with the event since 2003.

The event was attended by around 250 guests, which included past winners, jury members and key stakeholders of the Teacher’s Achievement Awards. Some of those present included Akshay Kumar, Sussanne Roshan, Jacqueline Fernandez, Irrfan Khan, Nargis Fakhri, Ramesh Sippy, Amrita Puri, Yukta Mookhey, Aditya Hitkari, Divya Palat and Vidyad Malvade among others. The black and gold theme colours were incorporated at the venue.”
Vespa organizes golf tournament to exercise brand building

Vespa recently organized a golf tournament at Poona Golf Course on March 9 and saw participation from leading businessmen and industrialists. Vespa Golf Classic was executed by OgilvyAction due to its previous long standing relationship with the brand.

Pradyumn Tandon, Management Supervisor, OgilvyAction said: “Vespa’s faith in OA for understanding the brand, creativity and flawless execution made us the only agency involved for the project. Around 100 registered participants including Siegrid Nitzchke of Volkswagen, Gunjal Milind of Tata Motors and Col. Ashok Singh, Army Chief, Southern Command attended the event. The venue setup observed the bold and vibrant colours associated with Vespa in all its elements.”

Inaugural edition of Chennai Pink Run ends

Toss Sportz Eventz, in association with Anna University Sports Board conducted the Chennai Pink Run 2013 on March 10 at the Anna University Campus. The aim of this running event was to raise awareness about women empowerment and safety. A total of around 350 women from all age categories participated, right from 6 to 75 years, and also from all categories of life, such as school girls, college women, executives, home makers, etc.

M. Rajalingam, Founder-Director, Toss Sportz Eventz said: “The idea was not just about creating awareness about women empowerment. There was also the fitness element. It’s about promoting the idea of women focusing on their health, whether that’s through running or walking.”

Oak’s Management Consultancy launches ‘The Colour Run’

Oak’s Management Consultancy Pvt. Ltd. (OMPCPL) launched its second IPR this year called ‘The Colour Run’, which is taking place in 15 cities, starting off from Mumbai at the RWITC (Race Course) on March 27. The initiative was launched by the agency as part of its celebration for being in the industry for 20 years. The purpose of the initiative is to raise funds which will be donated to help the lives of the underprivileged.

Rahul Gomes, Director, OMPCPL said: “The Colour Run started in the morning with participants checking in and collecting their colours. There were three back to back performances on the main stage which continued throughout the entire event.”

Stuff India holds Gamethon for sport aficionados

The first edition of Gamethon, a monthly tournament targeted towards all sport aficionados, took place on March 13 and 14 at Smaaash in Mumbai. The tournament, which saw a bowling competition this time, was carried out by Stuff India in association with Smaaash. The tournament will comprise individual games every month like basketball and cricket. It will comprise a knockout stage and finals out of which a fixed number of winners will be chosen based on the best scores.

Nydia Dias, Group Head of Marketing, Haymarket Media India Pvt. Ltd. said: “Stuff India magazine basically saw this as a brand extension, so we decided to do on-ground activations for our readers. The premise was to launch this particular activation initiative for Stuff India readers while the objective was basically for branding and visibility while garnering subscriptions.”

Godrej Properties Inter-Club Golf Challenge takes place pan India

The Godrej Properties Inter-Club Golf Challenge, an annual property to promote golfing as a sport in India, was held in four cities from March 2 to 30 and will see the finals take place from April 19 to 31 in Bangalore. Professional Management Group (PMG) managed the entire tournament. The mandate given to PMG was to create a property with golf, which would be a pan India event and would give Godrej an opportunity to talk to HNIs.

Melroy D’Souza, COO, PMG said: “Godrej gave us a brief where they wanted to merge lifestyle real estate with sports. We thought one of the ways to do it would be to look at golf, because golf is a premium sport played by people who are high net worth customers. We will make it an annual property.”

Maximus takes Pinkathon to Bangalore

The second of the planned 10 city series across India, named ‘Pinkathon - Run to Lead’, took place in Bangalore on April 7 starting from Sree Kanteerava Stadium. The 10km run is an initiative of Maximus MICE and Media Solutions Pvt. Ltd. to spread awareness on breast cancer and educate people about the causes and prevention of this hugely under-publicized ailment.

Reema Sanghavi, MD, Maximus MICE and Media Solutions Pvt. Ltd. said: “There was a setup at the run which included stall space for sponsors, counters for baggage, a changing room and medical centre, an exhibit for breast cancer awareness, and branding for partners on banners, backdrop, stage, standees, etc.”

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93.5 Red FM organizes unique ‘on-air’ event - Bauaa Hawa Mein

93.5 Red FM recently organized a series of live radio shows from studios fabricated on billboards. This unique ‘on-air’ event - Bauaa Hawa Mein - was executed by DDB MudraMax. The objective was to popularize Red FM Delhi’s evening show host RJ Raunac’s character Bauaa through an OOH medium that allowed for live performance and interaction with the audience and fans.

Mandeep Malhotra, President, DDB MudraMax said: “The execution was literally from up in the air. There were several challenges, of which fabrication was just one. Hoisting a 100 sqft. live-broadcasting, fully equipped studio in mid-air, was not easy.”

The Good Housekeeping Show returns for eight edition

Vivel Cell Renew presented the eighth edition of the Good Housekeeping Show at World Trade Centre in Mumbai on Feb. 28 and March 1. The property of the India Today Group was inaugurated by VJ, actor and cover girl Maria Goretti. More than 2500 working and non-working women along with their families attended the show across the two days. The expo was set up with octonorm stalls and workshops.

Manjira Dutta, Editor, The Good Housekeeping said: “The unique event brought alive the content of the magazine on-ground and synergised with the Vivel philosophy of getting to the root of things to promote it and engage the visitor in a holistic manner. There were experts with whom people got a chance to interact, ask questions, get helpful tips and good advice.”

ZEE launches refreshed version of ‘Zee Khana Khazana’

Zee Entertainment Enterprises (ZEE) Ltd. has announced a refreshed version of 24-hour food channel - Zee Khana Khazana. Swastika Entertainment Pvt. Ltd. recently managed the press launch for the same at Mayfair Banquets in Mumbai. Around 50 press representatives for print and TV news media were present.

Amit Verma, Director, Swastika Entertainment said: “The event started with the emcee inviting Punit Goenka (MD - Zee Entertainment Enterprise Ltd.) on stage for his opening speech where he explained the ideology of the channel. The host of the new shows were also invited to talk about their shows.”

Vh1 ties up with parties through Fab Holi Parties

This year, Vh1 has tied up with Holi festival parties across the country and has launched an initiative called Vh1 Fab Holi Parties. It is an initiative by Vh1 to promote a new-school way of partying during traditional festivals like Diwali, Holi, etc. Vh1 has tied up with six funky Holi parties. These parties, which started on March 27, include Holi Reloaded, Holiguns, Holi Cow, Rangholi, Shiva Squad Holi and Rang.

Ferzad Palia, SVP and GM, English Entertainment, Viacom 18, said: “It is for the first time that an Indian television channel is going a step further and associating with Indian festivals that are celebrated in the most unique way. The channel establishes its leadership for on-ground activities in the English music space.”

ICW conducts first look launch event for Bombay Talkies

Bombay Talkies, a movie made to celebrate 100 years of the Bollywood industry, allowed people to have their first look at it recently. In Collaboration With (ICW) conducted the event in PVR Cinemas in Mumbai on March 25. It was attended by directors like Anurag Kashyap, Karan Johar, Zoya Akhtar and Dibakar Banerjee.

The lobby area had a red carpet entry with fancy branding of the movie. The audi had a stage and backdrop with ambience light. The emcee started the event by inviting the four directors on stage along with the producers of the movie. The directors and producers exchanged their views about cinema in India and their experience of making short movies. The movie trailer was played once everyone shared their experience of coming together for the film. Post the trailer, a Q&A session with the media began. The event culminated with F&B.

93.5 Red FM supports wrestling through Vote for Langot

Vote for Langot, a unique initiative by 93.5 Red FM to promote and give prominence to the sport of wrestling, which will cease to be a part of the Olympics from 2020, went on for a week at Ambience Mall in Gurgaon. The initial stages were managed in-house with regards to the concept and planning, while the execution was done by an external agency.

Rajat Uppal, GM and Marketing Head, 93.5 Red FM said: “Vote for Langot, which had extensive branding for Red FM across activation venues, saw actress Poonam Pandey and Olympian wrestler Rajiv Tomar come to support the campaign.”
**Thailand’s MICE on the rise**

Thailand’s MICE industry enjoyed a buoyant year in 2012 since MICE visitor numbers to Thailand reached 895,224, exceeding the annual target set by the Thailand Convention & Exhibition Bureau. TCEB is confident of continuing growth in 2013, driven by a major rebranding and strategic repositioning of the organization, while continuing strong public and private sector investment in MICE venues and related developments. In 2012, Thailand hosted a total of 7,382 MICE events.

Parichat Svetasreni, Marketing Communications Director, TCEB said: “Together with the boost to the MICE industry given by the recent surge in investment in new convention venues, hotels, cultural attractions, and mass transit systems, we believe that this repositioning will help drive growth, create new economic value and increase revenues. However, Thailand remains the top MICE destination not only because of its world class facilities, services and infrastructure, but also because of the uniqueness of its cultural heritage, leisure activities, cuisine and the friendliness of Thai people.”

**Colombia coming up as MICE destination**

Colombian cities have a varied range of high-quality conventions centers and hotel infrastructures that include prestigious national and international chains for holding company events. Bogotá, the capital of Colombia, boasts several high-capacity convention centers, an important fairground and an ample range of meetings salons.

Colombia offers five destinations for congresses and conventions that are different from each other in geography, climate, cuisine, and architecture. Medellín is Colombia’s second most important city. It has novel stages for all kinds of congresses, seminars, events, etc. and a great public utilities infrastructure.

**Oman chosen among best to host congress**

The Sultanate of Oman has been selected as one of the finalists to host 1,500 delegates at one of its first large-scale international congresses in 2017 to be held at the new Oman Convention & Exhibition Centre in Muscat. Oman is competing against some of the world’s best convention destinations of Turkey, Singapore, India, Malaysia and South America to host the 37th annual congress of the International Association of Hydro-Environment Engineering and Research (IAHR).

AEG Ogden manages venues throughout the Asia-Pacific region. Its Group Manager of Convention Sales Development, Rochelle Uechtritz said: “We have had enormous confidence in Oman as a convention destination, but we cannot bid for these events alone. They must be supported by the Omani member, association or society.”

**Abu Dhabi promotes MICE in destination**

Tourism & Culture Authority of Abu Dhabi feels India proves to be the Emirate’s second largest overseas source market for hotel guests - just behind the UK. The landmark Jumeirah at Etihad Towers has India’s outbound MICE segment in its sights. Jumeirah is focusing on business and MICE travel as well as leisure segments in India.

Mubarak Al Nuaimi, International Promotions Manager, TCA Abu Dhabi said: “We have achieved growth through testing the waters in India via road shows and trade fairs and now with full-time, on-the-ground representation, we foresee a substantial increase in Indian visitation given the destination has the luxury, family and events offering which industry professionals to seek cerebral stimulation and intellectual growth, through exchange of ideas and information.

**Knowledge Capital recently concludes ‘Winning Leadership Strategies’**

It was a thought provoking event held at The Lalit in Mumbai and Hilton Nehru Palace in Delhi. Alphabetz Network Pvt. Ltd. was appointed to conduct the back-to-back events on Feb. 27 and 28.

**Eighth edition of Goafest concludes**

Goafest is a property that calls all the creative heads in South Asia together to meet and network. This year the theme was ‘Just what you unexpected.’ The festival saw conclaves, seminars, Abby Awards and much more.

**Road shows and networking to help promote E3 Expo 2013**

The trade fair on event management, event services and event venues will take place from April 19 to 21 at Bombay Convention & Exhibition Centre in Mumbai. The Expo, being organized by ExhiCon Group, is created as a platform to network with event services buyers.
V Resorts to open 10 more resorts in India

V Resorts, said to be India’s first limited service chain of resorts, recently announced its plans of opening 10 new resorts by December 2013 in various parts of Northern India. The group currently operates five resorts in Uttarakhand located at Corbett, Ramgarh, Sattal, Pauri and Almora.

Vaihav Dayal, MD, V Resorts said: “V Resorts is poised for big growth and this investment will be used for adding more resorts to our fast expanding bouquet of resorts. V Resorts will focus on properties located primarily in hilly terrains and forested areas with special emphasis on driving distances from major cities in North India.”

Ginger Hotels strengthens presence in Bangalore with second hotel

Ginger Hotels, from Roots Corporation - a subsidiary of The Indian Hotels Company Limited (IHCL), recently announced the launch of its second hotel in Bangalore. Located in the heart of the city at Bangalore Inner Ring Road, the 65-room hotel exemplifies smart, stylish and chic services, all at affordable rates. Ginger Hotel Bangalore aims to focus on Corporates and SMEs.

The new hotel is located across from Embassy Golf Links that houses some of the best known corporations in the world. The central location of the hotel would enable it to cater to the growing demands of corporate firms and small and medium enterprises.

The Taj Group launches its 100th hotel in India

The Taj Group recently announced the launch of its 100th hotel in India with Vivanta by Taj, in the Millennium City of Gurgaon. Located 30 kms south of New Delhi, the stylish and contemporary Vivanta by Taj - Gurgaon, offers a great escape for the new age ‘work hard-play hard’ traveller who seeks distinguishing design and edgy spaces. It is situated close to the business district and recreational hotspots including Kingdom of Dreams and the DLF Golf Course along with Gurgaon’s ubiquitous malls.

Raymond N Bickson, MD and CEO, Indian Hotels Company Limited said: “The state-of-the-art conferencing facilities and fully furnished banquet halls add another dimension to convenience for the business traveller. Every room comes fully equipped with video conferencing facilities, continuous and undisturbed internet access and comfortable seating of over 10,000 sqft of meeting spaces.”

Mohali to get regions largest convention and exhibition centre

The Punjab government has planned to set up the region’s largest integrated exhibition and convention centre in Mohali in the public-private partnership mode and has also identified 50 acres of land for the same in Sector 66.

Anurag Aggarwal, MD, Punjab Infrastructure Development Board said: “In order to make it economically viable for the private partner, the project, which includes the setting up of a 4,000-capacity convention centre with exhibition halls, will also have 5-star and 3-star hotels, service apartments, retail, food courts and commercial-cum-office complexes. The Rs.550 crore project will include an open plaza and musical fountains along with a theme park. The exhibition ground will be spread over nearly 10,000 square feet.”

Freeport exhibition and conference centre opens in Lisbon

A new conference and exhibition centre in the Portuguese capital of Lisbon, Freeport Congress Centre (FCC), has opened with an inauguration event attended by stakeholders and guests. The FCC is the largest congress centre in Portugal and is located in Alcochete.

The site of the congress centre was originally a cinema complex and with an investment of €300,000 it has been transformed into a conference centre with 20 auditoriums, a 2,100sqm multipurpose hall and exhibition centre.

Rasheed Sait wins at Marketing Excellence Awards 2013

The VP and MD of George P. Johnson Experience Marketing India, was awarded for his outstanding contribution to the Event Management industry at the twelfth edition of the awards which took place on March 2 in Pune.

Mandar Thakur and Vijay Nair to participate in MUSEXPO 2013

The ninth annual independently organized global music industry event will see speakers like Mandar Thakur - COO, Times Music India and Vijay Nair - Co-Founder and CEO, Only Much Louder.

Executive Events opens offices in UK, USA and Middle East

Because of the potential these markets offer, Executive Events decided to expand its outreach and penetrate these areas by opening new offices. The international operations commenced from March 28 and will overlook all the production, marketing and execution responsibilities.

Procam International bags ‘Best Sports Event Management Company’ at FICCI

Said to be India’s leading sports and leisure management company, Procam swept away the award for the ‘Best Sports Event Management Company’ for the year 2012 at the prestigious ‘Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry’ (FICCI) Sports Awards in New Delhi.

Sunburn crosses borders and waters

Percept’s annual music festival which takes place in Goa went to Dubai for the first time. After expanding to Mumbai, Delhi and Colombo last year, Sunburn went to Dubai to host Tiesto’s concert on March 28 at Dubai World Trade Centre Arena. Sunburn then hosted Tiesto’s multicity India Tour from March 29 to 31.
“Since our core TG is the youth, we at 9XM have done many on-ground activations across colleges and youth hangouts”  - Amar Tidke

9XM is an Indian Hindi music television channel owned by 9X Media Pvt. Ltd. It was launched in October, 2007, and airs the latest Bollywood songs interspersed with jokes and anecdotes by its animated characters such as Bade and Chote, Bheegi Billi, Badshah Bhai, and The Betel Nuts. 9XM has also introduced a live streaming service called 9XM Live on its website. The channel even launched its services in the UK in 2012 as 9XM UK.

Amar Tidke, Sr. Vice President and Content Head, 9X Media Group, gives ExM a little insight on what makes the channel tick, its take on BTL marketing, and how it has replaced real VJs with animated characters as part of its programming.

What made 9XM as a channel choose to have no real VJs in between the music programming? How did the channel think this would help improve the connect with the channel’s audience?
At a time when music channels were moving away from music, we saw an opportunity of offering viewers a channel that is really well packaged with back to back hits. While the other channels were bombarding viewers with VJs and format based shows, 9XM decided to present the latest Bollywood hits in its purest form. The channel’s programming strategy of airing the best and latest Bollywood hits combined with animation and humour, has struck a chord with the viewers and that resulted in the incredible success of the channel.

We launched 9XM in 2007 and the channel was an instant hit amongst viewers. 9XM was appreciated by all age groups for its simple yet very effective programming strategy, redefining the Hindi music genre in India. The leadership status of 9XM has been consistent for over five years.

How does 9XM distinguish itself from other Bollywood music channels? How has it managed to maintain a unique brand image and hold on to its audience viewership?
Our programming strategy coupled with our unique on-air presentation has helped us to be at the top of the Hindi music genre. We have always introduced our viewers to many innovations in music. A number of our shows such as 9XM Music Players, 9XM Best of, 9XM Top 9 (the Bollywood countdown show based on viewers’ choice), and Khans Pe Dance (showcasing the hit songs of all the Khans) have received fabulous response from viewers.

There was also a unique property that we launched called Buzzworthy which first saw Sonu Nigam followed by Yo Yo Honey Singh’s new track, breaking exclusively on our channel. This differentiates content which we are putting out. Our initiatives centered on marketing, digital, and client innovations, makes 9XM a complete package.

**How much has 9XM used BTL / on-ground activities to help reach out to its target audience? What BTL / on-ground activities has it organized or associated with for the same?**

Since our core TG is the youth, we at 9XM have done many on-ground activations across colleges and youth hangouts, apart from other public places. We regularly connect with our core TG through college fests, music events, etc. The branding also extends to restaurants and cinema halls with Cinemax.

We also did a very unique initiative for World Music Day by installing the biggest wall of music in Mumbai for people to download songs for free. This 9XM Wall of Music was the first activity in India which used augmented reality (AR) technology to reach out to its audience by giving them free access to the latest Bollywood music. The activity has been featured in the Limca Book of Records 2013 for being the largest wall installed that allowed users to download music using AR technology.

We have regularly organized ‘meet and greet’ events at various malls across metros with our popular animated characters - Bade, Chote and Bheegi Billi. We have also partnered with Essel World and branded some popular rides at the amusement park. So there's a constant effort to connect with our viewers at all levels.

**What is your take on the idea that any BTL activities that 9XM organizes will lack an audience connection aspect due to a lack of VJ figures from the channel?**

Our animated characters are the channel heroes and we integrate them in all our on-ground events and activations. We have always received a fabolous response from the audience thanks to the presence of these character mascots who are extremely popular across all age groups.

**Please tell us about the launch of 9XM in the UK? What was the idea behind the same, and what challenges were faced in establishing the channel there?**

We all know that Bollywood has fans across the globe. We launched 9XM in the UK to tap into Bollywood music lovers in that market. Challenges are similar to those that come from being a niche player in any market.

**From its launch in 2007, please tell us how 9XM’s marketing strategies have changed and evolved to keep up with the dynamic market and competition? What kind of role has BTL / on-ground activities played in the same?**

Owing to the popularity of the channel’s animated characters namely Bade, Chote and Bheegi Billi, our constant endeavor is to take these dudes beyond television screens. Hence BTL / on-ground activations play an important role in connecting with our audiences. In addition to undertaking engaging marketing initiatives across multiple touch points such as colleges, malls, multiplexes, restaurants, and cafes, we have launched a series of mobile games and apps featuring our animated characters.
Tourism Malaysia or Malaysia Tourism Promotion Board (MTPB) is an agency under the Ministry of Tourism, Malaysia. Some of its functions include stimulating and promoting tourism to and within Malaysia, and invigorating, developing and marketing Malaysia internationally and domestically as a tourist focal point, which would include promoting it as a MICE destination as well.

Manoharan Periasamy, Director, Tourism Malaysia, talks to ExM about Malaysia as a MICE tourist destination for India, its marketing plan to promote the same, and its unique selling points that make the country an ideal business events destination.

What is Tourism Malaysia’s general marketing plan in India to help boost MICE tourism to the country? What is the present amount of MICE tourism from India and what kind of growth does Malaysia expect or aim to reach?

The MICE movement from India to Malaysia grew by leaps and bounds. This was largely due to the efforts of the Malaysia Convention and Exhibition Bureau (MyCEB) and a group of dedicated MICE travel agents. One has to keep in mind that the clients for MICE are seasoned tourists and they are very demanding. Hence Malaysia offers specialized, customized tours which are different as an experience and tailors them for a limited number of days. MyCEB also organises a variety of experiences including fine dining, cultural shows, soft adventure, sightseeing, shopping and fun.

In 2012, MyCEB kicked off a series of specific sales and marketing activities to attract business events from India. MyCEB organized a sales road show to India in March 2012 supported by Tourism Malaysia to promote Malaysia’s products and services, where we launched the Malaysia Twin Deal Programme for India. As a result Malaysia has observed a growth rate of 26-30 percent in the incentive category in 2012, and we see a 10-20 percent increase in Indian footfalls via MICE.
How has Tourism Malaysia's marketing strategy changed in the last five years and what changes were made that has caused Indian MICE tourism in Malaysia to slowly increase over the years? Malaysia is strongly perceived to be a real value for money destination in India and we will continue to be a favourite with the Indian traveler. We would of course be working towards opening up new destinations and experiences for the Indian MICE travelers so as to ensure repeat visits. Malaysia is also an ideal destination for offsite team-building. Easy accessibility, a range of products and value-additions in terms of extras that Malaysian hotels and event managers offer, is what has attracted most companies. Since corporates prefer MICE cum leisure, choices for holidays and places to hold functions or events are plentiful in Malaysia with a choice of environment - whether in the city centre, up on a highland resort, beautiful scenic islands, beach resorts or even the quiet tranquility of a forest resort.

F1 observed that a lot of corporate companies hold a strong view that MICE motivates their employees in a major way and also enhances the awareness about their own companies in the masses. With various options available, from the corporate suites which group in a fully airconditioned suite, to the corporate platforms which combine the best of 5-star hospitality in an airconditioned marquee and seating in the open-air grandstand, discerning fans can opt for pit action views or live head-to-head battles on the south track.

What kind of role does BTL marketing play in the general Indian tourism marketing strategy of Tourism Malaysia? What BTL initiatives / on-ground activities has Tourism Malaysia initiated / associated with or plans to initiate / associate with to further promote this cause?

Tourism Malaysia and Sepang International Circuit in association with Malaysia Airlines and Starwood Hotels and Resorts, organised a Formula One evening for the corporate sector in Bangalore and Mumbai with the main objective of creating awareness and excitement about F1 among corporates. The objective was to promote incentive programs in a F1 track as it is different in a lot of ways from the regular tours, and ensures that the incentive tour is exciting and interesting. An incentive programme that includes watching the pulsating action on a F1 race track as a part of its itinerary is sure to create enthusiasm amongst employees and boost their morale.

Other activities include leveraging Tourism Malaysia’s presence in India as an extended sales team to promote Malaysia for business events and for lead generation; working closely with local destination management companies (DMCs) and incentive agents to secure conference and incentive business for Malaysia; a new event support programme whereby event support is more flexible and tailored to the specific needs of incentive operators; trade advertising; and facilitating familiarisation visits from India.

How important is India as a MICE tourism market for Malaysia? Approximately how much of Malaysia’s global MICE tourism marketing budget is dedicated to promoting Malaysia as a MICE tourism destination in India?

The MICE market in India is niche and growing. With the booming economy and the rising tide of investments, enormous business opportunities have been unleashed in India in sectors such as IT, medicine, telecommunications, banking, insurance, oil and petroleum, health care, pharmaceuticals, agro products, food and water management etc.

The country has growing potential as a global economic hub. It’s still a pristine and a largely untapped market making it a very potent choice for investors, developers and operators alike looking to explore, establish and expand their business and brands in the country. This has given a boost to business travel which has resulted in tours linked to meetings, incentives, conventions and exhibitions (MICE) taking off big time in India.

What are the special aspects of Malaysia that seem to be effective in promoting Malaysia as a MICE tourism destination in India?

Malaysia’s unique selling points make the country an ideal business events destination. In terms of location, Malaysia is strategically located between two giant economies (China and India), and right in the middle of Asia where over 55 percent of the world’s population reside. There is direct access to/from over 100 destinations worldwide with 50 airlines including low cost carriers, providing direct access. It is also easily accessible from any part of India with increased direct flights offered by both the mainstream airlines and low cost carriers. Malaysia is also considered a medium haul destination in terms of flying time, as most flights between Malaysia and India are between four to seven hours away, making it a preferred destination for business events in the region.

Malaysia offers excellent value for money and it has received recognition for the same including ‘3rd Most Price Competitive Country in the World for Travel 2011’ according to Travel & Tourism Competitive Index 2011, World Economic Forum, while the Lonely Planet Guide named it ‘One of the Best Value Destinations for 2010’. Delegates can also truly experience Asia through Malaysia’s blend of the vibrant cultures of Asia’s three major races: Malay, Chinese and Indians, plus 47 ethnic groups. This diversity is reflected in its cuisines, art and heritage, traditions, lifestyle and year-round festivals.

Malaysia has an impeccable track record for hosting some of the world’s largest, most prestigious international conventions with record attendances. Some of them include the 25th World Gas Conference 2012 which saw 5,299 delegates, the 70th Institute of Internal Auditors International Conference 2011 which saw 2,200 delegates, the 18th World Congress of Accountants 2010 that had 6,050 delegates, and Amway India Leadership 2009 (Incentive) that saw 3,000 delegates. The government recognises the importance of business events (MICE) and has set-up MyCET to provide a range of services to support convention and incentive organisers e.g. bid support, site inspections, product and service selection, planning advice, event promotion, itinerary development, government liaison and on-site support.
Showtime sets new standards with it’s debut IP Jodhpur One World Retreat

Indian Head Injury Foundation headed by Maharaja Gaj Singh II and Showtime Group jointly transformed the city into a hub where eminent personalities came together to support the cause of ‘Head Injury in India’.

By Parita Modi

After nine months of perseverance, Showtime Group made its official debut in the world of IPs with its big ticket event Jodhpur One World Retreat. The second weekend of March saw one of the biggest congregations in Jodhpur, where 250 luminaries from across the globe gathered together to unanimously raise resource and awareness for one single cause. Making this possible and a dream come true for many were Indian Head Injury Foundation (IHIF) headed by Maharaja Gaj Singh II of Jodhpur and Showtime Events.

A Royal Ensemble
The retreat saw a plethora of events spanning over a period of three days from March 8 to 10 with the aim of raising awareness about unattended head injuries at its epicentre. The attendees, assembled together for the Retreat with the sole intent of contributing generously towards the cause in their own way. Together with the Maharaja of Jodhpur and his family and team, Showtime lifted the show through a diverse spread of events, while raising resources for a critical cause—head injury and brain trauma.

The main objective of the Retreat was to garner support for the alarming rise of head injuries in the country. Enriching us with his perspective, HH Gaj Singh II said: “The Jodhpur One World Retreat 2013 with its underlying theme ‘A Beautiful Mind’ is the propitious coming together of several interests of mine. Above all it aims to give a new, critical impetus to the work of the Indian Head Injury Foundation, a mission, very close...
to my heart. Whilst doing this, it will show-case Jodhpur and its heritage and culture in all its glory like never before, bringing it abreast with international developments in hospitality, entertainment and technology.”

Nita Ambani and the Reliance Foundation, Bloomberg Philanthropies, the Aga Khan Foundation, CNN IBN, BMW and celebrities like Sachin Tendulkar and Dia Mirza also came forward to extend their support making it special for the organizers.

Leading us towards the journey of how JOWR came to be, Michael Menezes, MD, Showtime Events (India) Pvt. Ltd. said: “JOWR flowed out of Showtime’s association with the World Economic Forum each year in Davos. And it had a great social objective to it. The basic thought - if the world’s greatest thought leaders could brave the inhospitable environs of a chilly, one-horse town called Davos to ostensibly conference and network, could we not get them to a gorgeous princely destination like Jodhpur to do much of the same while they lent their support to one of the most deserving causes across the planet.”

This thought of Menezes’ assumed reality in the form of Jodhpur One World Retreat. IHIF and Showtime Group jointly transformed the city into a hub where eminent entrepreneurs, philanthropists, spiritual leaders and legendary artistes descended on one common platform to support the cause and revel in the grandeur that Jodhpur is.

Celebrating human mind and spirit

All the sessions that were planned during the course of the three days were carefully crafted around the theme of the event. Adding splendour to the Retreat was the opening act orchestrated by one of India’s top theatre directors, Bansi Kaul, who with his tale entitled ‘The Power of Shakti’ paid an ode to the woman of India. The performance, which coincided with International Women’s Day, brought alive the diverse facets of the Indian woman though its story. Narrating this rendition were over 150 artists, who gathered from all across the country at the Mehrangarh Fort to make it as culturally diverse in both performances and representations. This was followed by a sumptuous ‘Spirit of India Banquet’ and lastly a Bollywood themed extravaganza.

Setting the tone for the next day was a serious thought session on ‘A Beautiful Mind’ helmed by distinguished speakers from across the world, who came forward and displayed a warmth support, engulfing all with their cohesive thoughts. Dr. Raj Narayan from North Shore LIJ, New York spoke on ‘Improving Outcomes from Head Injury’ while British composer, Nigel Osbourne held forth on ‘Music and the Healing of the Mind’. Baroness Susan Greenfield caught the attention of the audience with her session on ‘The Future of the Brain’.

BMW and celebrities like Sachin Tendulkar and Dia Mirza also came forward to extend their support making it special for the organizers.

Thought Session at Bal Samand Lake Palace

Maharaja Gaj Singh II
Jodhpur

“The Jodhpur One World Retreat 2013 with its under-lying theme ‘A Beautiful Mind’ is the propitious coming together of several interests of mine.”

Sachin Tendulkar with wife Anjali
An auction also took place on the same day where royal artifacts, heirlooms, antiques and precious handicrafts were put on offer in a bid to raise funds for the cause. Another attraction of this regal affair was the ‘Jodhpur One World Bazaar’ that took the guests back to the golden era. Here one could seek some of the most talented designers and purveyors of luxury showcasing their finest products and art in a very aesthetic fashion.

Sting your way through the night!
What kept the guests waiting with bated breath was multiple Grammy Award winner, Sting’s performance against the mystical backdrop of Umaid Bhavan. The musician performed some of his biggest hits including Roxanne, When We Dance, Fragile and Every Breath You Take for the One World of Music- private concert.

To match the entertainment standards set for the three day retreat, nothing short of a performance by legendary musician Sting would have sufficed. Known for his philanthropic work, the musician performed for an hour as a special contribution to the humanitarian cause. Accompanying him were his band-mates and guitarist of 23 years, Dominic Miller. As soon as Sting took to the stage, most guests left their seats and joined the dance floor. A few lucky guests even got invited to the stage to perform with the rockstar.

Without diverting from the cause of head injuries, Maharaja Gaj Singh II gave a heartfelt speech before the performance began. Nita Ambani too thanked everyone and extended full support towards the endeavour. Prince Andrew, the Duke of York, also drew attention to the necessity of helmets as a safety measure. The musical evening was part of an exclusive sit-down dinner wherein celebrities flew down from across the world just to be part of this occasion.

The three day series of experiences culminated with what was a truly fitting finale, a Thanksgiving brunch hosted by the Maharaja and Maharani at their residence.

Stop! Men at Work
Putting together an event of this scale involves the blood, sweat and toil of many. Showtime led the way through with a core team of marketing and operations professionals. After all, it is the people who eventually transform a cause into effect!

“Showtime has over the years consistently set the standards for the entertainment and experiential marketing industry. I am delighted that the Jodhpur One World Retreat is yet another example of this.”

Michael Menezes
Managing Director, Showtime Events (India) Pvt. Ltd.
The agency followed a strict and detailed plan of action starting with defining the key result areas. The cause which had to be marketed both internationally as well as nationally needed the help and support of many. Sponsors were roped in which also opened a whole new avenue of sponsor marketing for Showtime.

The Taj Group of Hotels was the first to join the bandwagon as Hospitality Partner. Global automobile major, BMW too pledged its unconditional support and came in as Luxury Mobility Partner whereas advertising agency Law & Kenneth came aboard as Design Partner.

BMW sponsored the Retreat and also provided 20 BMW cars as a part of their role as Luxury Mobility Partner. The company organized an exclusive preview of the new BMW 7 Series at the event. The closed room event was attended by His Highness Maharaja Gaj Singh II along with other prominent personalities from different walks of life. Commenting on associating with the platform, Philipp von Sahr, President, BMW Group India said: “The Jodhpur One World Retreat made for an ideal occasion for His Highness Maharaja Gaj Singh II to unveil the new BMW 7 Series as part of an exclusive preview.”

Deepa Harris, Sr. V. P. – Sales & Marketing, Taj Group of Hotels also commented: “It was an amazing weekend and so well organized. From seamless arrivals to Mehrangarh, lovely sessions at Bal Samand and the best of all Sting!”

Over 150 Indian artists perform to celebrate the Indian Woman

Retreat reflects tradition and exclusivity and made for an ideal occasion for His Highness Maharaja Gaj Singh II to unveil the new BMW 7 Series as part of an exclusive preview. It gave us a spectacular setting for displaying our product range, the perfect, captive audience for an exclusive preview of our new 7-series and it was also a great opportunity for us to support a truly worthy cause.”

Another challenge that came along the way was to identify suitable vendor partners, who would be able to provide traction to the sheer scale of the event. The core team, beginning February 2012 till the run-up to the Retreat, conducted weekly reviews at Delhi headquarters and also monthly reviews at the IHIF headquarters in Jodhpur.

It was equally important for the agency to maintain consistency not only in the overall experience but also in the content used across multiple locations. Accurate coordination played the key role here. Looking at the vastness of the Umaid Bhawan and Mehrangarh fort, it wasn’t a shocker when the agency faced the huge task of cabling these palatial
monuments. At the fort, Genset units were put at the base while the cables were physically laid right on top, which was a good thousand feet up.

Commenting on the other pressure points, Navin Sarin, Country Head – Operations, Showtime Events (India) Pvt. Ltd. said: “While trussing up the ramparts of the Mehrangarh Fort for lighting, we had to contend with extremely high wind pressures. Moreover, due to constant tourist traffic during the day, we had limited access to various areas of the Fort and the set-up was largely restricted to the nights. At Umaid Bhawan Palace, there were challenges of another kind. We had to transport 3,000 light fixtures to the rooftop without inconveniencing the guests staying at the Palace. Moreover, we had to lay the main cable and DMX cables across the rooftop of the Palace and had to contend with multiple rooftops with varying heights.”

Light designers were flown in especially from Australia and Rome to light up the culturally rich Mehrangarh Fort and Umaid Bhavan with 3,000 different kinds of lights and fixtures. Designer umbrellas, glittering chandeliers, antique furniture and ornate woodwork embellished the interiors of the venues.

Appreciating his team and the effort put in, Menezes said: “Showtime created magic for three days at Jodhpur. The success of Jodhpur One World Retreat is largely due to the spectacular teamwork of Showtimers led by Country Head – Operations, Navin Sarin; National Creative Director, Anjan Chatterjee; VP – South, Manish Kashyap and VP Western Region, Vikram Shankar. Also critical to the success of the first-ever Retreat were Showtime’s several vendor partners. This is just the first unique IP from Showtime. The entire experience was highly challenging and, indeed, very gratifying. You will see some really large IPs and some not so large ones from us in the near future.”

The vendor partners that dedicated their services to the event were Eneas Mackintosh, Lighting Consultant, Rome; Dhruva Jyoti Ghose, Lighting Designer, Australia; Sound.com; Ulhas Sahasrabuddhe, Lighting Hardware; Aduex Display & Lalit Arts Studio, Staging & Infrastructure; Adventure Unlimited for Logistics and Edelman India Pvt. Ltd. for Public Relations.

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Member, Advisory Board, IHIF also reached out to their network of friends who came forward whole-heartedly to support the cause.

Before the festivities began, Showtime organized a press meet at the IHIF Rehabilitation Centre, New Delhi, giving media personnel an opportunity to interact with The Duchess of York, Sarah Ferguson and The Maharaja of Jodhpur.

A five-minute pre-event promotional film was used largely at these cultivation events helping create awareness about the high incidence of head injuries in India and generate support for the Retreat.

**The Way Forward**

The Jodhpur One World Retreat hopes to be the harbinger of many more landmark efforts. It started off with the core purpose of supporting a noteworthy cause by having some of the most noted personalities initiate the process. IHIF and Showtime ensured all along the journey that the outcome eventually matched its objectives.

According to Showtime this would be the best tribute to the hard work and dedication that went into its creation. Menezes said: “JOWR is a truly pioneering effort in an extremely critical space - fund-raising and cause-related marketing - and is even more timely and relevant because of the new 2% CSR rule introduced recently. Corporate India is going to need our professional expertise in helping them make a meaningful contribution to transforming the lives of the underprivileged and deprived. The Jodhpur Retreat is an exciting example of how interactivity, networking and dialogue can integrate with leisure, culture and the arts makes this transformation possible. I think Showtime can be truly proud of what it has managed to create with the Jodhpur One World Retreat.”

Leaving us with a note on the overall experience of this grand celebration, Suhel Seth, Member, Advisory Board – IHIF said: “The magnificence of the setting was equally matched by the large-heartedness of the many for a cause that over the years each one of us will remember the JOWR for. For putting head injury in our minds and forcing us to change the status quo! It was not just a celebration of the beautiful mind. It was indeed balm for the soul.”

All in all, the Retreat witnessed some very colourful events which varied in nature and content; not forgetting its rich cultural background and the most important of all - raising awareness for a greater cause. The JOWR which will be a biennial event will in its wake deliver more creative, exemplary and inspiring events in the future.
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A window into the world of Experiential Marketing

Roshan Abbas is a slasher by profession, having had seven careers related to media. Abbas’ experience ranges from radio, theatre, television, event management, being an MC, a film director and a writer. He spends his time looking for gyaan, and shares some on experiential marketing in this column, each month, exclusively for ExM Magazine...

Roll out the red carpet

Award season is about to begin and over the last few months we have had creative and AV teams in most companies make entries look better, brighter. The organizers are set to roll out the red carpet! Before the awards begin, it’s time again to give our set of awards to the unirring efforts of the event fraternity. Inspired by Bollywood they are a combined list of the critic and popular categories; for like film awards we too have so many stars to honour!!

The Ek Tha Tiger Award: To the breed of original event managers. Those who are soon becoming an extinct species. The ones who saw the industry through the 80s and 90s. Still bearing their fangs in the face of new onslaughts from start ups and upstarts. Exploring new jungles or laying out the law of the land. Occasionally missing a tooth or two when it comes to the onslaught of digital.

The Rowdy Rathore Award: To the dealers and sales forces of sundry companies who display their true colours after a drink or a few. Who will take over the stage and the console, the mike and the light panel. Who with the magic elixir called alcohol conjure up the powers of event management in a few drinks flat. They can better DJ than the DJ, show Prabhudeva a step or two and as for their singing voices no Bappi or Bappa can match up to them.

The Cocktail Award: To those performers who keep rediscovering themselves and those who keep discovering them. An emcee with a laser, a singer with a tazer, and numerous east European acts tailor made to the groom or his uncles specifications. Cocktail waitresses who can’t spell cocktail, aerial artistes serving paan, circus acts dressed as auras, philharmonic playing the harmonica piece from Sholay!! The ubiquitous personal event is responsible for unleashing every Gujarati, Punjabi and Marwari fantasy with an occasional South Indian Nightmare thrown in.

The Oh My God Award: To those who pulled off the impossible. The CM holograms we have still to decipher what a real IP needs. In a nation with 8 film awards, 16 music awards, 32 business awards, fashion and sports awards, concerts, international DJ’s, comedians with PJ’s, cycling, martial arts, marathons, half marathons! Nothing is sacred, some are scarred and yet no one is scared. So its heritage walks in monuments, and ramp walks at fashion weeks where the fashion is truly weak!! But the search is on!!

The Bol Bacchan Award: The new age servicing slicko. A resume with a minimum of 5 job switches in 5 quarters. They talk and talk and do little else. Every company has them. But no one does anything about them. Employers become mute spectators; seniors become speechless as they wield a weird mix of fractured grammar, and punctured ideas. Never the winners of a long service award but always the party favorite with a tall tale or two.

The Talaash Award: Be it a magazine, a radio station, a TV channel, or an NGO, the search is on for an IP. Having scored international websites and seen every concert video on Youtube they have still to decipher what a real IP needs. In a nation with 8 film awards, 16 music awards, 32 business awards, fashion and sports awards, concerts, international DJ’s, comedians with PJ’s, cycling, martial arts, marathons, half marathons! Nothing is sacred, some are scarred and yet no one is scared. So its heritage walks in monuments, and ramp walks at fashion weeks where the fashion is truly weak!! But the search is on!!

The Cocktail Award: To those performers who keep rediscovering themselves and those who keep discovering them. An emcee with a laser, a singer with a tazer, and numerous east European acts tailor made to the groom or his uncles specifications. Cocktail waitresses who can’t spell cocktail, aerial artistes serving paan, circus acts dressed as auras, philharmonic playing the harmonica piece from Sholay!! The ubiquitous personal event is responsible for unleashing every Gujarati, Punjabi and Marwari fantasy with an occasional South Indian Nightmare thrown in.

The Agent Vinod Award: It goes to the MICE managers who travel more than the agent ever did. He was in Istanbul they were in Igatpuri, he went to Morocco they were in Macchu Picchu. You heard of Hampi, they knew Humping Creek!! MICE companies have become event managers, event companies are managing MICE. And so now, you don’t just arrange a visa but a visit to their headquarters too, its not just air tickets but air dropping logos in weird locations. The jury is out if it’s a successful marriage.

And finally The Kahaani Award: To those who still believe there is a story in all of us. A story of people who work tirelessly to create, recreate in the face of procurement, permissions, payment delays and people issues! To those who make every experience an engagement. To those who will continue to reap the rewards of converting ideas to action! Who will not just airbrush a pothole in a poster but will fill it on site. Who will boldly go where no wo/man has gone before. All in the hope of creating the magic of events!! Find a day in your own office and roll out the red carpet for them all...they are the stars of our industry!!
What forms of BTL work best when it comes to rural marketing? Please explain why.

BTL in a rural environment is mainly to do with sampling and selling it at the right price to the end consumer. Rural options in Indian markets are still very nascent in terms of distribution of various organisations. This is because our country is a huge one and it really costs a lot to cover it. Hence doing BTL in rural India has to be more focused in terms of markets and also at the right price.

The best option of doing BTL is by participating in melas and weekly haats since they’re the places where people congregate in a big way. It is also quite cost effective. Other options include getting into mobile van operations which will have both entertainment as well as sampling and selling to the end consumer. Further options include wall painting, rural state bus transport branding, retail shops, etc.

The pharmaceutical industry does not have many options as it is bound by the rules and regulations of the medical association. Direct communication is very important keeping in mind the low level of education and also the unavailability of proper infrastructure.

When we talk about BTL, rural and urban marketing are not too different from each other. It should be simple and direct for rural marketing though. It should be more towards experiencing the product and informing its benefits. The rural consumer has limited exposure towards the urban world, so a direct approach would be more result-oriented than just creating a buzz.

BTL marketing should be interactive where one can exchange information rather than creating visual impact.

A very important aspect when it comes to engaging with the deepest parts of rural is that it should be a joint venture of marketing and sales. This is because the availability of the product or service is very important before creating visibility. After creating visibility it is very important to repeatedly fulfill the demand till the market gets stalled.

Further to the above, one should always focus on an activity which is scalable and measurable so that the end result of such an activity can get a self-sustainable model.
What forms of BTL work best when it comes to rural marketing? Please explain why.

By Dharm Patel

Low literacy levels, low media penetration and socio-cultural differentiations across rural necessitates a differentiated approach to reach or engage rural communities. Hence, BTL is highly relevant when it comes to rural marketing.

There are no standard models that one can apply to reach or engage the rural crowd. Rural plans ideally stem from the client’s marketing objectives.

For example, if a brand has to build affinity with its target crowd, it can take CSR or a value engagement route. For product placement or seeding, customized trade activations like retail programmes could work well. To reinforce brand communication, engagement through BCT can be used.

Sanjay Kaul
CEO,
Impact Communications

BTL has many facets when used in rural. Personally I believe, field marketing enabling product feature demonstrations, creation of an experience zone to do product sampling and influencer marketing are the ones which work best when it comes to rural marketing.

Field marketing enabling product feature demonstrations helps in connecting most of the target audience directly as they get a fair understanding of the product. This form is successful because consumers get a better understanding of the product, which is limited in other mediums or forms.

Creation of an experience zone to do product sampling enhances the consumer’s exposure to the product and brings them closer to the brand.

For example, to penetrate deeper in rural India, JK Tyres built up a brand visibility and alternate sales points using the influencer channel of prosperous farmers, who became JK Tyres brand ambassadors. They appropriately represented JK Tyres as their success enabling factor.
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Change is the only constant

Top executives from Project:Worldwide, a growing global agency network with an engagement marketing focus, and George P Johnson, its flagship experiential agency, discuss what the marketing industry of the future will look like.

By Karan Sinroja

If there is one immutable truth in the world of brand marketing, it’s that nothing stays the same. In fact, the pace of change is only increasing. To succeed, brands have to be an active force for change and improvement in their customers’ lives, rather than simply react to the changes that land on their doorstep.

Robert G. Vallee Jr., Chairman and CEO of Project: Worldwide, Mike Amour, CEO of Asia Pacific for Project: Worldwide, and Rasheed Sait, Vice President and Managing Director of GPJ India, came together exclusively for ExM magazine, to discuss what it takes to build a brand today and what the marketing industry of the future will look like. And you guessed it: change is coming.

Evolution of GPJ; Formation of Project: Worldwide

Founded in 1914, GPJ today has 29 offices and more than 1,300 employees creating integrated event-based programs for top global brands. GPJ lends its history in events and engagement to the Project: Worldwide network, as the flagship experiential agency of the network. This 10-agency group recognizes the power of engagement marketing techniques, creating and deepening customer relationships through specialized services in advertising, digital, social media, experiential and other marketing channels.

A number of strategic moves along with the attainment of certain clients on board are what has led GPJ’s reputation and presence to what it is today. One of the key landmarks for the company was in 1997, when GPJ became IBM’s event marketing agency of record. This required the agency to gain an establishment in Europe and Asia within 2-3 years, and eventually increased its presence to 30 markets globally in order to service the IBM account.

Simultaneously, GPJ’s automotive and IT clients also increased and the company extended largely in formats of conferencing and exhibitions. The agency went ahead
and evolved in conference attendee solutions by integrating registration models and infusing digital technology in the process. This was to enable companies to benefit from this data assimilation and stay in touch with their customers over a period of time beyond the event itself. With an increase in automotive clients, the company crossed over to the luxury brands space with certain automotive brands, which lead to the advent of the agency in luxury experiential marketing.

In 2002, GPJ extended its reach to India and has worked with over 70 global and local clients and successfully delivered over 5,000 events, exhibits and experience marketing solutions since its establishment in India.

The last decade has also seen the global network of the agency focus on digital expansion with the acquisition of certain established agencies in relevant space, in order to complement GPJ’s existing business / services. Finally in 2010, the establishment of Project: Worldwide came about, as the umbrella company under which all the agencies would function.

Experiential marketing industry: Growth, strategic expansion, and markets with more potential

The experiential marketing industry has been one that has come up over the years in terms of importance and widespread use. However, the industry hasn’t reached its peak and still has a lot of ground to cover in terms of growth. Robert G. Vallee Jr., Chairman and CEO, Project: Worldwide and GPJ, tells us a little more about the growth potential of the experiential marketing Industry and the strategic expansion plans of Project: Worldwide:

“It’s quite apparent that the 30 seconds spot is getting more diluted as time goes by. This brings activities with engagement at their core forward, provided they’re outstanding ideas likely to deliver greater results. Also, at the time of the economic slowdown, it was seen that activities involving a higher level of strategy were required to combat the market scenario. That’s precisely what we developed as our expertise, since only through strategic expansion alone can one have a competitive edge.

I think in our world there are four things that make an agency successful. It’s the relationship that you have with the client, and whether or not they value the people that are gathered around the table. It’s the value of your ideas, your creativity, and innovation that you are bringing to the equation. The price point must be market competitive in order to have purchasing recommend it, even though marketing might desire to do business with that particular agency regardless. Unless the rate structure is market competitive, you won’t have approval from purchasing and that can make your life very difficult. And last but not least, and this is the strength of George P Johnson but isn’t necessarily the strength of other local agencies - We have the ability to deliver flawlessly on a very large scale across the major global markets, while at the same time providing a marketing consistency on behalf of large multinational brands. This would be a major point of differentiation between George P Johnson and other local agencies.

The internet has done many wonderful things for us, but one of the things that it hasn’t done particularly well is allow companies to price in an isolated environment. So price point for commodity is now very well understood in the market place and what you’re providing, a tangible deliverable offer, needs to be market place competitive. So my labour rates for delivery, the cost of floral, rental items and all of these things, they vary depending on the market. It would probably be less expensive in many parts of India than it would be in Boston or New York in the United States. But for those particular markets, the margin that you would be allowed would be in a very narrow range. So it’s not an area that we would look to overweight going forward.

Coming to the topic of markets with more potential, Asia remains an overweight for us in terms of our interests in capital investment. We continue to be extremely excited about where we would want to invest in, be it Malaysia, Vietnam, Greater China etc. And for us the investments will be two track – organic and acquisition. There will be organic investment in building new agency capabilities, either under new brand names or inside the pre-existing GPJ structure.

The challenge with acquisition in Asia pacific right now is that the kinds of things that we’re looking to add to the core of GPJ, and the number of available talent in independent agencies is relatively small. The multiple is high and the number of available agencies for acquisition is relatively low.

“Coming to the topic of markets with more potential, Asia remains an overweight for us in terms of our interests in capital investment. We continue to be extremely excited about where we would want to invest in.” - Robert G. Vallee Jr.

So the challenge there is that while Project: Worldwide would be valued at a particular multiple in a reasonable area, it’s not healthy for us to go out and acquire a company at a 12 times multiple. It’s very hard to pay or to get that paid back. And so I think that organic growth will probably be a bigger avenue for expansion for us as compared to acquisition, in the areas where we like to hold on to the core of GPJ. But we’re not discounting it. We’re actively looking to invest the money that we’ve made. In China for example, where the Government doesn’t make it easy to get your earnings out of the country, you’re really incented to reinvest there.

We’re sitting on a decent chunk of cash in China and we would like to invest it but...
“Advertising unfortunately is sitting in the wrong end of the business where margins over the past 3-4 recessions have been cut a lot. So when the recession comes out on the other side, it’s much harder for the advertising industry to make up ground.”
-Mike Amour

have yet to determine exactly what it is we will acquire.

Our plans for India again are two track. Definitely organic growth which we’ve seen dramatic evidence of in Bangalore and we hope that Mumbai and Delhi will follow on the city’s heels. We were just talking over the last couple of days about adding new capabilities organically, with individuals who perhaps are not currently too happy with some of the consolidation that’s taken place in the market as related to agencies. And we’d be interested in talking to key individuals who might want to start their own agency that will plug and play well with what GPJ does.

We certainly think that Public Relations is one area that is a critical component to engagement and I think that we would benefit from an improved capability in that regard. The entire digital equation is wide open and a rapidly changing part of the engagement environment and we’ll look to add digital capability. But again because the multiples are so high in the companies that are in and around that space, it is more likely in India to happen organically than it is through acquisition.

I was reading that the Indian government approved and then reversed the approval for Walmart to start big-box in India. That’s very interesting. I don’t know how that will evolve but my guess is that India will not be able to hold off big-box retailers forever, so at some point there will be a more competitive retail environment. That said, in the US we have recently hired a very talented gentleman from Saatchi & Saatchi X which is the shopper marketing arm of PublicisGroupe.

Charlie Anderson is helping us work through the intertwining of engagement with shopper marketing. While we’re very good today globally in the IT space and in the automotive space, we do think that consumer package goods is a very significant area that engagement marketing will be involved in, and that the experience at point of retail is a critical element for big brands in the CPG space.

Charlie has already got great traction for us in North America and we’re going to have him come out and do a tour in Asia. I think taking some of the key learnings that we will now avail ourselves of in North America, and bringing that to other markets that are very dynamic, will be of great value to us.”

Experiential marketing through differing financial scenarios

During the recession that happened a few years back, some industries were affected more than others. Companies interested in spending on marketing and advertising, started being extra careful when choosing and picking where they wanted to put their money. Mike Amour, CEO, Project: Worldwide Asia Pacific, talks to us about this topic and gives us his take on the same:

“Most of my background has been in advertising. I joined Project: Worldwide exactly at the time that it was set up. So I actually was still in the advertising industry at the time the crisis hit, and I can tell you with 100 percent certainty that it affected pretty much every market around the world. Advertising unfortunately is sitting in the wrong end of the business where margins over the past 3-4 recessions have been cut a lot. So when the recession comes out on the other side, it’s much harder for the advertising industry to make up ground. This is particularly because the models that they are operating on have been built around traditional media. I think it really depends on which geography you were standing in. Certain geographies suffered more than others. Australia neatly avoided the global recession because it’s fundamentally dependent on the mining industry, although they’re struggling a bit now.

I think the majority of the markets around the region were hit in varying degrees and that manifested itself more through some retrenchment across the industry, but more because people were just hunkering down and waiting for the storm to blow over. And what it did, like what has happened over previous recessions, is that clients had a recalibration of where they needed to spend their money. So to your questions of whether they are they spending less, they may not be spending less, they’re just spending it differently. The balance of where they’re spending the money is moving away more from traditional media, again depending on which geography you’re in for Asia Pacific, and moving more into the kind of areas that we’re in. So to some extent, it’s both the timing of the marketing services industry, as well as what happened post Lehman, that is playing in our favour.”

According to some, the recession didn’t affect India as much as it affected certain other parts of the world. RasheedSait, Vice President and Managing Director, GPJ India, tells us about his experience during the period and how the economic slowdown affected GPJ India as a company:

“India didn’t suffer from the recession that much. In fact during that period, in 2008, we actually had good growth and grew GPJ India by around 30-35 percent. Of course, because of the environment, what we also did was go a little slow on the hiring side, but business never stopped coming through the door from all our clients. And luckily we also had clients at that point in time that had a long term vision for the Indian market. They were not dictated by what would happen quarter on quarter.
They knew they had to be in this market and make a strong foothold over here. Because of that we benefitted and our profitability also went up during those couple of years, because hiring was low, but business was high. With brands like General Motors and Chevrolet for example, globally they were going through bankruptcy and things like that, but in India they were still doing extremely well. So I would say that India didn’t get affected that much from the situation during that period."

**Growth prospect: Shopper marketing in India**

Shopper marketing in India is a fairly new and untapped industry. Although more widely used worldwide, it is still yet to find a more stable place in the Indian market. Rasheed Sait explores this topic and its importance in India:

“There’s hardly any strategy involved for shopper marketing right now in India. It’s what we call activation with a lot of sampling etc. What I also hear is a lot of companies like the P&Gs and the Unilever’s have started outsourcing a lot of their shopper marketing which their sales guys used to do, to agencies. So for stocking up shelves, the sales guy would go and negotiate with the shop owner asking him to put his product in a specific place, and spend less time on actually doing the sale. So what they’ve done now is they’ve taken that equation out of the sales team and they are giving it to shopper marketing agencies. So shopper marketing agencies are becoming more important now.”

Robert Vallee takes the topic further and tells us a little more about the challenges and the future of the shopper marketing industry in India:

“You like to build that affinity with brands so that when you’re shopping, you’re communicating what specials may be on certain products. The challenge now is that an individual is not in many cases recognized when he/she step through the door of a retailer, but I think a lot of that will change once firms adopt Near Field Communication (NFC) capabilities. Once that happens, it should be pretty crazy with the digital environment in those few years that follow. For the first time, you’ll actually be able to recognize an individual that has an affinity for a brand even if they’re not physically in the store or their intention wasn’t to go to a store for a specific purchase.

When you walk through a shopping mall, you see brands like subway for example. When NFC becomes widely available on mobile devices, if I were a really big Subway fan, as I get anywhere near that Subway outlet it might tell me that they’re running a special on a particular sandwich on that day. So it’ll be interesting to see how the dialogue and the interplay between consumer and brands evolves once NFC becomes widely available.”

**Advantage Project Worldwide**

Similar to Project: Worldwide, there are a number of other organisations out there which provide engagement marketing services to their client. Mike Amour talks about what makes Project: Worldwide different from their competitors and keeps them one step ahead of the rest:

“I think one of the big differentiators between Project: Worldwide and some of our competitors is that the company has grown up and integrated and collaborated by default. So it comes as second nature and it’s easy for our kind of company to work with multiple different talents and different skills sets to bring truly holistic engagement marketing solutions to clients. On the other hand, it’s quite difficult for a lot of the bigger agencies who have grown up more on the advertising side and who are trying to integrate that by design rather than by default. I think that’s quite a competitive angle for us and is a potential advantage for us going forward.”

“India didn’t suffer from the recession that much. In fact during that period, in 2008, we actually had good growth and grew GPJ India by around 30-35 percent.” - Rasheed Sait

Robert Vallee adds his point of view by further talking about Project: Worldwide and its differentiating factors:

“One other point of differentiation between our company and others is we work extraordinarily hard in keeping all of our key management folks and all of the agencies deeply connected with one another. So you look at a WPP, Omnicom Groupe, PublicisGroupe etc., which have hundreds of agencies many of which have real significant overlap, but they just don’t seem to play real well with each other. They’re more concerned about their own profit and losses than they are about working to the benefit of the client.

Since we are an engagement company at our core, we use our own knowledge and expertise to create deep connections inside our own agencies to the benefit of our clients. So different from other holding companies, we put a team of individuals around the table in front of a client with different capabilities. I would expect that the sense the client would get from the gathered project agencies would be something quite different from the experience they might have with another holding company.

As long as I am around we will work to overweigh the complimentary and connected side of our own agencies to the benefit of our clients, and I think that is really key. This is the core of engagement. It is the power of meeting in person and being able to communicate and respond to a client’s questions, concerns, and the opportunities that their product and service may have in the market.”

*ExFM*
OML’s debut festival in Mumbai features Norah Jones

Norah Jones performed at A Summer’s Day - a new music festival produced by Only Much Louder in Mumbai as part of her three-city tour in India.

By Dharm Patel

Critically acclaimed artist Norah Jones toured India as part of a three-city gig on March 3 at Turf Club in Mumbai, March 5 and 6 at Siri Fort Auditorium in Delhi and March 8 at Nice Grounds in Bangalore. The multi Grammy Award winner kickstarted the tour with the headlining performance at A Summer’s Day, a new music festival produced by Only Much Louder in Mumbai.

Welcoming the first day of summer
Named after the charming poem ‘A Something In A Summer’s Day’ by Emily Dickinson, the festival was designed to be cheery and easy while marking the arrival of the summer months in the city. With the idea of curating a festival that women would love to go to, it was conceptualized by a strong team of women, who worked on everything ranging from the design to the food at the festival.

A Summer’s Day is OML’s first festival in Mumbai. The company has previously organized festivals like Bacardi NH7 Weekender, reviewed to be one of the best organized festivals in the country and Eristoff Invasion, which has brought high-energy, international acts like David Guetta and The Prodigy to India.

Speaking about the property, Vijay Nair, CEO, Only Much Louder said: “A Summer’s Day is a brand new property for us, and one that we’d wanted to start in Mumbai. Like with Bacardi NH7 Weekender, we do plan on taking it to other cities over time. With the festival, we wanted to target a newer demographic of the music listening/festival-going audience, and A Summer’s Day focused on a slightly different audience than our other properties - a slightly older crowd, with more women, and a more laid-back, easy experience. We also wanted to have the festival at a different time of the year, and A Summer’s Day will always bring in the summer.”

Cheerful music – on the grass, under the sun
Over 10,000 people attended her tour across the three cities. The festival featured two stages namely ‘The Main Stage’ and ‘Think Pink Stage’. The festival featured well known singer-songwriters and happy, easy-listening bands throughout the day exuding a cheerful and laidback vibe.
Norah Jones got onto stage to a cheering crowd at the first gig of her maiden three-city tour in India, and launched straight into ‘Happy Pills’ from her latest album Little Broken Hearts. The full-to-capacity crowd of 4000 people, included many hardcore Norah Jones fans who kept screaming requests at the Grammy-award winning artist through her set. Her over 90-minute set included everything from her biggest hits to songs from her newer albums as well as covers of other songs. She ended her set with ‘Sunrise’ but the audience cheered her back for an encore, which she happily obliged, singing ‘Stuck’, and finally ending with her biggest hit, and what her fans had been waiting to hear all night, ‘Come Away With Me’. Ward also played a set including tracks like ‘Chinese Translation’ and ‘Primitive Girl’. Creating awareness through pink
The Think Pink Stage was named so in order to raise awareness around breast cancer in India, in partnership with the Women’s Cancer Initiative - Tata Memorial Hospital. It featured some great sets by singer-songwriters Siddharth Basrur, Nischay Parekh and Jiver Singh, and Mumbai folk-rock act Spud In The Box. During the day, through volunteers and messaging, the initiative aimed to raise awareness with women at the festival. Additionally, part of the proceeds of A Summer’s Day will go towards the same, in the endeavour to create awareness and support the treatment of women with cancer.

Spreading the warmth
Bacardi, Dewar’s, Budweiser and Red Bull were the sponsors involved. VH1 was the media partner and Amity was the education partner. It was promoted on TV, radio, online and print. OML also advertised on buses and had an activation where it gave away flowers to women to promote the concert. Flowers were given away to women across events such as the Mahindra Blues Festival, at their offices and restaurants like Cafe Zoe and Bonobo. There were also discounts available at shops such as Dhoop with the Norah Jones India Tour ticket. 

“With the festival, we wanted to target a newer demographic of the music listening and festival-going audience. A Summer’s Day focused on a slightly different audience than our other properties - a slightly older crowd, with more women, and a more laid-back, easy experience.”

Vijay Nair
CEO,
Only Much Louder

Norah Jones performing with her band
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Percept Live and Submerge bring the World’s No.1 DJ Armin van Buuren to India

The artist celebrated the 600th episode of his radio show - A State Of Trance - with 12,000 people in Mumbai.

By Dharm Patel

Percept Live and Submerge brought the World’s Number 1 DJ Armin van Buuren to India this summer to celebrate the 600th episode of his iconic radio show - A State of Trance (ASOT). India was on the map for his Expedition World Tour which saw him perform at Turf Club in Mumbai on March 16.

It was presented by Smirnoff, powered by Jack & Jones and in association with Budweiser, VH1 and MTV. Clique Photography was present to capture the evening. Metigon PR hosted artist interviews and has managed some great concerts in the past few months.

In the past, Percept Live has seen artists like Swedish House Mafia, Dash Berlin and Avicii perform under its Sunburn Arena property. In the past, Submerge has also brought down Above & Beyond, Alesso, Deniz Koyu, Paul van Dyk, Albin Myers, Gareth Emery, Mark Knight, Laidback Luke and Richie Hawtin among others. Needless to say, the two agencies have worked together and contributed to see the best artists perform in India. Submerge consists of its three directors - Nikhil Chinapa, Hermit Sethi and Pearl.

Speaking about the artist performing in Mumbai, Nikhil Chinapa, Director, Submerge Entertainment, said: “Armin was keen to do India and as promoters, Submerge, had to choose the best market for Armin, as well as a city which also allowed him to connect his flights together smoothly. We got the sense that Mumbai’s trance community was a little bit upset that we decided to stage Trance Around the World 450 with Above & Beyond in Bangalore. There is a rabid dance music fan base in Mumbai and we felt it was only fitting to do the premier radio event in the dance music world here in Mumbai, India’s largest city. Mumbai is a great city; there are people from so many different communities, religions, and backgrounds living here side by side. People, being open to new experiences,
its fair amount of challenges and every challenge thrown at us seems like an impossible and herculean task; but everyone comes together, puts their best foot forward and works beyond their role of duty to make it happen. Moreover, it is of utmost importance for us to make sure it is safe and everyone leaves the event with great memories.”

Commenting on the attendance, Chinapa said: “We saw about 12,000 people at ASOT600 in Mumbai. It was a huge event many would like to attend, it was held on a weekend and since it was the only one in India, we expected such a massive turnout. Armin van Buuren is the world’s best DJ for a reason - he really knows how to lift people with his music. There are thousands of devoted Armin van Buuren fans in Mumbai who listen to his radio show, A State of Trance, every single week. Armin has been voted the best not once but five separate times.”

The promotions campaign saw digital promotions lead the charge, along with traditional media and contests. Submerge promoted the event heavily using social media, especially Twitter. Beyond social media, it also engaged with people across many platforms - billboards, radio spots, magazine advertising, viral marketing, etc. It did a three-city pre-party with Shogun and Arnej. There was a contest where the winner not only won a free ticket but also got to meet Buuren.

Speaking about brands and promotions, Chinapa said: “The scene will expand if everyone involved and interested in the scene joins hands. We are ready to welcome more promoters, investors, clubs, etc. into the circle and move things forward. We are glad to see that non-traditional brands like Adidas, Jack & Jones and Micromax are coming on-board as partners to promote many of our various shows. This helps them to cater to a greater and wider audience that is also relevant to the brand.”

Manuj Agarwal
CEO, Percept Live

“ASOT 600 was by far a unique event. Being a part of their global tour made it even more exclusive. We witnessed a packed and overflowing venue.”

are something we really want to take advantage of. Nothing brings people together like dance music.”

Lose yourself, in A State Of Trance
A State of Trance (ASOT) is one of the most popular dance music radio shows in the world airing currently. This radio show boasts of 25 million weekly listeners in 26 countries and is a weekly routine for devout dance music fans.

The show started with two Indian artists taking the stage - Sanjay Dutta and Vinayak A. Opening for Buuren were Canada’s Arnej, Dutch duo Rank 1, American DJ Shogun and Egyptian duo Aly & Fila, who performed before Buuren took over. Buuren’s two-hour long set made sure about 12,000 people lost themselves in ‘a state of trance’.

Speaking about the show, Manuj Agarwal, CEO, Percept Live said: “ASOT 600 was by far a unique event. Being a part of the global tour made it even more exclusive. Considering the college exams at this time of the year did allow us to assume that the number of people would have a cap, only until we witnessed a packed and overflowing house beyond a certain time of the day. Every project comes with

Armin van Buuren during his performance

Let’s do it Live!
Percept, now with its new arm, Percept Live, which is the intellectual property division, has been in the business of creating and managing properties since a few years after its inception. The company has robust plans of entering other genres in the music space while innovating and developing the current portfolio will always be a progressive stance.

Commenting on the same, Agarwal said: “Since the inception of Sunburn in 2007, Percept has been seeding the EDM scene and for most fans Sunburn is as good as a generic for EDM in India. Apart from bringing the top-end and globally popular talent, we are honing new talent by giving them a global platform and promoting them through our properties.”

Adding further, Agarwal said: “While we already have a great traction in India and are making efforts to lead the global festival torrent, as a business it is imperative to be ahead of the game. Every edition of the Sunburn festival and its Arena format witnesses innovation and detailing which comes from a consumer focused approach. Sunburn is by the fans, for the fans and from the fans; this is our mantra; it is all about the fans for us and we do everything to enhance their experience making sure that each one is unique.
IN FOCUS

from the other. We do have a few magic ingredients which are hard to define, but the ultimate factor comes from the positive energy that one senses at any Sunburn experience!

Speaking on the occasion, Armin van Buuren said: “Home to more than 18 million people and a real melting pot of cultures and lifestyles, it shares the same unifying character as my music. That’s exactly why Mumbai formed the perfect place for A State of Trance 600 - The Expedition. Once again it was great working with our long-time partners in India to bring ASOT 600 to Mumbai.”

Speaking about his experience, Arnej said: “I’ve previously played at Sunburn in Goa, Noida and Colombo, so I’ve done quite a few shows with Submerge and Sunburn in the past few months. Nikhil told me ASOT 600 was going to take place in Mumbai and asked me if I could play. Of course I said yes, since it’s an honour and privilege to play at ASOT!”

Jack & Jones has been associated with a lot of international music artists since it uses music as a medium to connect with its target audience. In the past, the brand has associated with a lot of international sensations like David Guetta, Bryan Adams, NH7, Above & Beyond, Edward Maya and the likes.

Commenting on the brand connect, Vineet Gautam, Country Head - Jack & Jones, Vero Moda and Only said: “Youth is the primary target audience of events like these and hence it is a great platform to connect and interact with them in such a fun and relaxed environment. The brand targets all men in the age group of 14 to 40. Most of them in this age group share a passion for music and hence it is an effective way to connect with our target audience. Being an international brand, Armin’s music completely syncs with the brands identity.”

Lights, smoke, LEDs, lasers, ASOT!

The brand was a part of the logo unit that was used across all online and on ground communication by ASOT. A stall at the venue was designed to facilitate interaction with the audience and create a ‘funzone’ where people could come and relax with their groups of friends during the concert.

The two main attractions at the stall were the branded foosball table and a special photobooth. Fun props like exaggerated sunglasses, wigs and various headgear were provided to add a quirky element to the pictures. Instant printouts of the photographs with a branded border were provided to translate the fun into lasting memories for the audience. There were also other stalls at the venue including Yogo and I-Bar.
Submerge partners Future Music Festival Asia for the second time

Future Entertainment Australia and Livescape Asia organized the festival which featured artists across various genres like Armin van Buuren, The Prodigy, PSY, Sidney Samson and W&W amongst others.

By Dharm Patel

The second edition of the Future Music Festival Asia (FMFA) took place on March 15 and 16 at the Sepang International Circuit (SIC) in Malaysia. Submerge partnered the event for the second year in a row. The festival this year had a mash of musical genres that would cater to all types of music fans. Dubbed as the largest music festival to ever grace Southeast Asian shores, the award-winning festival was claimed to be one of the most expensive music events to be held in the country, with a production cost of almost RM (Malaysian Ringgit) 10 million.

Submerge, the pioneers of dance music in India

Last year, FMFA contacted Submerge to feature Nikhil Chinapa and Pearl at the festival. Submerge also brought on board Jalebee Cartel to perform with them.

Speaking about Submerge’s association and role, Arnold Wilson, Manager - Marketing and Business Development, Submerge said: “We wanted to provide more than just artists. We did a lot of PR work and also got MTV and Rolling Stones involved. We took key media to Malaysia so we could cover it and will be doing the same this year. They appreciated the support so we were on board again for the second year. We are currently at a stage where we are already discussing future plans and events. Our role is to amplify the visibility for FMFA. We will be in charge of promotions and media like last year. This includes national media, online portals, magazines, papers, etc. Our connect lies in the fact that we’re both platforms which want to promote local talent. We both have the same vision of spreading EDM in our respective countries.”

FMFA 2013 was also the official opening event for the Malaysian F1 Grand Prix week. It saw more than 40 world-class dance music acts to deliver the complete musical experience across two days. With the organizers also keen to add an Asian element into the award-winning music festival, a host of regional and local acts were also handpicked to showcase their talents on the second day of the fest. It is supported by Malaysia Convention & Exhibition Bureau (MyCEB) as part of an initiative to kick start the promotional campaign of Visit Malaysia Year 2014. The festival is a huge tourism magnet drawing over
7,000 fans in 2012 from neighbouring countries such as Singapore, Indonesia, Thailand and countries from as far as Australia, India and even Europe. For this year, it drew an influx of more than 16,000 tourists, since those many tickets were sold before March itself.

Commenting on the same, Nikhil Chinapa, Founder, Submerge added: “Everything about the festival is wonderful — the people, the production, the atmosphere. Music connects people and it’s great to see the Malaysian government supporting an event that brings together fans and artists from Southeast Asia and the world together. It’s an event all Malaysians can be proud of.”

Let’s dance to the future!
Livescape is a creative and events agency that primarily targets and executes projects through its own developed platforms. These platforms include Livescape’s Escape: NYE, the ever pumping Wednesday night, NSPW and Rockaway Festival; which have generated a large amount of supporters throughout the years. On the creative side, Livescape conceptualizes and brings to life the brand’s essences and mission statements. Its aim to bring quality events and international level concerts in the country are evident in their past events/shows and partnership with Future Entertainment in FMFA.

Speaking about the fest, Adam Mathews, Director of Livescape Asia said: “All the sleepless nights and fingernail-chewing was worth it as we opened one of the biggest festival weekends Asia will see this year. The support from the fans, acts and media have been immense. We are thrilled to be able to welcome these partners on board in what we believe is a fantastic platform to market to the youth. Like Future Music Festival Asia, the brands involved share with us a common passion - the youth and music. We look forward to a long and fruitful partnership that I’m sure will benefit the brand as much as it will benefit the festival.”

The first day was dedicated solely to celebrate the 600th episode of Armin van Buuren’s legendary ‘A State of Trance’ show. This show also saw a host of acts handpicked by the World’s No. 1 DJ Buuren himself such as Aly & Fila, Ben Gold, Cosmic Gate, Super8 & Tab and W&W share the stage with him. Held for the first time in Malaysia and Asia, Armin Van Buuren’s ASOT 600 was only one of 12 events that have been announced to take place globally this year. Malaysia was its sole Southeast Asia destination.

“We are currently at a stage where we are already discussing future plans and events. Our role is to amplify the visibility for FMFA. We were in charge of promotions and media like last year.”

Arnold Wilson
Manager - Marketing and Business Development, Submerge Entertainment

A DJ duo playing for the crowd at FMFA

4 April 2013, EXPERIENTIAL MARKETING 46

“Everything about the festival is wonderful - the people, the production, the atmosphere. Music connects people and it’s great to see the Malaysian government supporting an event that brings together fans and artists from Southeast Asia and the world together.”

Nikhil Chinapa
Director, Submerge Entertainment
“We really wanted to ensure that the Asian element is brought into equation and for the regional and local talents to have the opportunity to showcase their music on an international platform. We have some extremely talented musicians here and we think that they really deserve to be heard and FMFA allowed them to do just that.”

Adam Mathews
Director,
Livescape Asia

The second day saw artists like PSY, The Prodigy, Feed Me, Kill The Noise, Zeds Dead, Rita Ora, Fun, Bloc Party, Temper Trap, Rudimental, DJ Fresh, Stafford Brothers, Timmy Trumpet and Tenzin.

“Adding further, Mathews said: “We really wanted to ensure that the Asian element is brought into equation and for the regional and local talents to have the opportunity to showcase their music on an international platform. We have some extremely talented musicians here and we think that they really deserve to be heard and FMFA allowed them to do just that.”

FMFA is sponsored by Xpax (Official Telecommunications Partner and Presenter of ASOT600), AirAsia (Official Airline and Co-Presenter of FMFA 2013), AirAsiaGo (Official Online Travel Partner), Sunway Resort Hotel & Spa (Official Hotel), MTV (Official Music Channel), E! Entertainment Television (Official Entertainment Channel) and is served by Asahi Super Dry.

“We’re very proud of our line-up for this year. We got a group of phenomenal acts in place and I don’t think Malaysia let alone Southeast Asia has ever witnessed a gathering of musical talents in a single event of this proportion and scale. After a sold-out show this was the party of the year in the region.”

Brett Robinson
Director,
Future Entertainment Australia

Commenting on the event, Brett Robinson, Director, Future Entertainment Australia said: “We’re very proud of our line-up for this year. We got a group of phenomenal acts in place and I don’t think Malaysia let alone Southeast Asia has ever witnessed a gathering of musical talents in a single event of this proportion and scale. After a sold-out show this was the party of the year in the region.”

Future Entertainment is a youth-focused entertainment company that was founded in 1993, with the objective of presenting annual major music festivals, events, national tours and showcasing world-class entertainment.
IN FOCUS

A tryst with 92.7 BIG FM and what the brand stands for

92.7 BIG FM talks to ExM about its general marketing strategy and how it has established itself as a brand over the years

By Karan Sinroja

92.7 BIG FM is a private FM radio station in India with a presence across 45 cities, 1200 plus towns and 50,000 plus villages, with a weekly reach of around 4.3 crore Indians across the country. After the launch of its first station in September 2006, it expanded at a phenomenal pace, launching a 45 station network in just 18 months. It is the only private FM radio station which is being broadcast from Srinagar and Jammu in Jammu and Kashmir state. From July, 2008, it also included Singapore, the first city outside India, in its broadcasting network.

92.7 BIG FM has won a number of awards in both the national and international category, with recognitions in the radio fraternity which include most awarded Indian radio station at the New York Festival for two years in a row, Radio Broadcaster of the Year at the Golden Mikes 2011 radio awards, and has won eight awards at the Indian Radio forum 2012 to name a few.

Commenting on BIG FM's journey since the beginning and how it has managed to establish itself as a radio station, Ashwin Padmanabhan, Business Head, 92.7 BIG FM said: “The brand has evolved since the start of its journey in 2006, a journey that has involved increasing and strengthening its connect with its audiences in each of the 45 stations where it is broadcasted. The change has meant transforming from a single identity across the country, to being 45 unique stations each with their distinct identity and relevance. It has meant understanding how each city has its characteristic beat, and has also meant identifying the passions of our target audience in every city, and presenting programming with all this in an appealing and meaningful package. The one thing however that has remained common, is the belief in our purpose - entertainment that enriches.”

As a FM station with a presence across 45 cities, marketing the BIG FM brand locally in accordance with each city's target group, while generally maintaining a stable brand image at the same time, will come as no easy task. Discussing the same and breaking down BIG FM’s marketing strategy, Padmanabhan said: “Our tagline ‘Suno Sunao, Life Banao’ is the guidepost of our marketing strategy. Every effort 92.7 BIG FM makes is designed to engage, entertain, and enrich the lives of our listeners. For 92.7 BIG FM, being locally relevant has been the basis of the brand right from the time it launched. We have a multitude of music formats carefully selected and tailored for our core TG in the cities.
That we are present in, and this music is layered with programming and content. 92.7 BIG FM speaks the language of the city, be it Kannada in Bangalore, Telugu in Hyderabad, or Bengali in Kolkata, bringing out the local flavours with the intrinsic city culture as the ingredient. Simply put, while the music and content vary with every station, the approach with which they are delivered is consistent with the brand 92.7 BIG FM.

Moving on to the topic of BTL activities as a part of the radio station’s marketing strategies, Padmanabhan feels that radio, being an audio only medium, makes it a passive consumption medium by nature. He feels that given this context, it is important for a radio brand to live and breathe in the mind-space of its listeners and advertisers. According to him, 92.7 BIG FM addresses this with constant presence at the street-level. Further commenting on the same, Padmanabhan said: “BTL is the largest building block of 92.7 BIG FM’s marketing strategy. Apart from the large integrated properties ranging from music and entertainment awards to recognizing talent in different fields, the brand 92.7 BIG FM thrives on engaging the consumers. Be it games and contests at popular hang-outs, malls, etc. or galvanizing consumers to rally for positive action on social issues such as warm clothes in the winter for the homeless (DariyaDilli), or supporting the cause of the girl child (Kudiyan Di Lohri), or even partnering with a Pinkathon for creating awareness about breast cancer; all of these help the brand 92.7 BIG FM to be seen, experienced and remembered. More significantly, they underline the larger purpose of the brand – ‘Life Banao.’”

The Indian radio industry has a plethora of stations available for listeners of every category. This makes it a medium where it is no walk in the park to stand out. Although reach and localized programming does help, radio stations needs to provide something more than that to keep listeners tuned in. Shedding some light on how 92.7 BIG FM differentiates itself from other radio stations, Padmanabhan said: “92.7 BIG FM is the largest network of FM radio stations and is a leader with a large number of these stations. While awards and accolades from the industry and peers have cemented this leadership, 92.7 BIG FM adds dimensions with its innovative programming. ‘Yaadon Ka Idiot Box’, with its story telling format interspersed with music, or a celeb jock (Karisma Kapoor) on board for ‘BIG on STYLE’, or ‘Inthi Nimma Priya’ (Kannada), the diary of a girl, have all been signature approaches.”

For a radio station network with an extensive presence across India, 92.7 BIG FM has managed to overcome the marketing difficulties associated with its vast presence with a well balanced mix of localized programming while remaining true to its basic and core brand image. This according to Padmanabhan, is what has helped it to reach Indians across the country and continue to positively impact their lives with the radio station’s clutter breaking, unmatched, and innovative programming.
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The event took place on March 15 at Enigma, J W Marriott, Mumbai. East India Comedy performed at the event with a headlining stand-up act by Sorabh Pant. This was followed by an upbeat performance by the band Something Relevant. The event was managed by INvision Entertainment.

9th All Starr Jam
The 9th edition of the All Starr Jamm took place on March 20 at Bombay Exhibition Centre, NSE Grounds in Mumbai. The event was executed by Cream Events and saw performances by Rabbi Shergill, Raghav Sachar, Shefali Alvares and Ankur Tewari.
Bestseller India presents Allure

Bestseller India dazzled the evening with a fashion show on March 20 at Bombay Exhibition Centre, NSE Grounds in Mumbai. The event was conceived and conceptualized by Cream Events. It was attended by Arjun Rampal, Kunal Kapoor, Diana Penty and Mandira Bedi among others.

An evening with Steven Spielberg

Reliance Entertainment organized a tete-a-tete between Steven Spielberg and Amitabh Bachchan on March 11 at Taj Land’s End in Mumbai. Fountainhead executed the event which was attended by about 100 people including film directors.
Elle Carnival for a cause

ELLE Carnival for a Cause, a platform where fashion joins hands for the cause of breast cancer, took place on March 2 at The Taj Mahal Hotel, New Delhi. Through this initiative, Elle augments work in the area of breast health under the auspices of the Ogaan Cancer Foundation.

Gant at CN Wadia Gold Cup Million Race

A host of celebs and socialites came together to watch the title of the CN Wadia Gold Cup Million Race at Mahalaxmi Race Course in Mumbai on March 10. GANT showcased its Spring-Summer ’13 collection which gave guests a glimpse of the upcoming trends of the season.
The ILPA Show 2013

The event was organized by the Indian Leather Products Associations (ILPA) and took place on March 16 at the Royal Calcutta Golf Club in Kolkata. It was carried out on occasion of the completion of 25 years by ILPA and was conceptualised, managed and executed by Edge Events & Promotions.

Kingfisher Premium Sunday Soul Sante

The 11th edition of the Kingfisher Premium Sunday Soul Sante took place on March 17 at the ITPL grounds in Whitefield, Bangalore. The flea market showcased the very best in art, craft and design on a common platform.
NDTV Good Times Lifestyle Awards

India’s lifestyle channel NDTV Good Times hosted the premier edition of the NDTV Good Times Lifestyle Awards on March 3 at the Jaypee Greens Golf & Spa Resort in Greater Noida. The channel recognised icons in the field of food, travel, technology, fashion and luxury at a gala awards ceremony.

Taste of Mumbai

Taste of Mumbai, a global food festival held in partnership with American Express, took place from March 22 to 24. The event was brought together by ASK and was managed by Leading Edge. The festival brought together the choicest of food, drink and world class restaurants for all food lovers.
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