

A Dream is Born: Ambika Sharma launches Pulp Strategy

August 12, 11

Shree Lahiri



Embarking on the road to entrepreneurship, Ambika Sharma has started her own full service experiential marketing and communications agency – Pulp Strategy Communications. The agency will specialise in the B2C experiential marketing space, providing customised and measurable solutions to address specific brand marketing objectives via consumer connect modules.

Catching up with Ambika Sharma, who was on the road travelling, she told us about her new venture – ‘Pulp Strategy’. This immediately triggers off your memory... you remember ‘Pulp Fiction’, an American crime film directed by Quentin Tarantino.

Yes this could be equally significant, as she seems to convey, as it is a turning point in her life. This one-month old outfit is a month old, as the proud owner Ambika Sharma says. She worked at Jagran Solutions (A Unit of JPL) as Chief Operating Officer. When Pulp Strategy was born, their facebook page had its status as: A dream is born reality is on its way. Top of Form April 9 at 9:48pm Bottom of Form

What is Pulp Strategy? Ambika describes it as, “ Pulp Strategy Communications is a full service experiential marketing and communications agency. We specialize in the Business to consumer experiential marketing space, providing customized and measurable solutions to address specific brand marketing objectives via consumer connect modules. When we speak of engagement and interaction with consumers, the line between social media and ground activation is blurred, in-fact there is progressive opportunity for seamless integration.”

In the market scenario, this is a unique slot, which she agrees to. Regarding the market scene here, she expands, “ The market is scattered, typically Ground Activation & Social media are two different worlds of agencies, rarely does one spill over into the other and integration is client led or sporadic as an offering. Why we are unique is because we are in the consumer engagement space holistically, Social and on ground the two mediums compliment each other and when used in an integrated manner double the value for a client.”

Which other players in this space? She observes, “ Both medias are amongst the fastest growing, individually they have many players and a few do support both medium solutions as well.”

This outfit is engaged in a number of activities, in this space. Ambika holds forth, “Pulp Strategy specializes in the experiential marketing space, led by a strong and highly experienced management team, supported by a group of experienced professionals who include planners, business managers, creative directors, Marketing consultants, Brand activation specialists, logistics managers channel supervisors, Web Designers, Social Media developers, auditors, visualizers, writers, technical production

& audio visual experts.”

She adds, “With 76+ years of cumulative industry experience in delivering award-winning campaigns for global consumer super brands & leading brands in India, Our strategists have demonstrated expertise across industries including that of Media and Entertainment, Online, FMCG, Telecom, White Goods, Personal Care, Finance, IT, Retail, Liquor & Beverages, Automobiles, Pharmaceuticals, Travel and lifestyle amongst others.”

They are one-month old, but what is the impact you are hoping to achieve in the combined medium (social + On-ground)? She is quick to reply, “I have always believed that a well-delivered experience recruits you a consumer, he may not convert immediately but when the time to buy comes he will consider the best experience at the top of his list. Once the experience is delivered you can’t just let him go without keeping in touch! Integrating social media platforms with a ground activation gives the added advantage of being able to retain, converse regularly, re-engage frequently, help build positive WOM.”

Not holding my curiosity back about the name, I asked, “Why 'Pulp Strategy'?” pat came her reply, “The background? ‘Pulp’ denotes a mixed shapeless mass of rich bodied material (most widely used) which is then processed to form ‘paper’. Paper the single most important revolution in communication. Pulp moulds itself to a multitude of forms, post processing as suited to a need, Pulp Strategy for our clients shapes itself into a multitude of solutions each to suit a different and unique need. A ‘strategist’ always focuses on reality while exploring possibilities.”

She elaborates, “We ‘strategists’ are a quirky and dedicated lot. You can expect our solutions to be delightfully innovative yet hardworking, at times shocking but always clutter breaking. ‘Pulp Strategy’ is founded on the belief that customized, strategic brand activation solutions integrate, creativity, consumer insight, technology and practical creativity to deliver measurable results for your brands.” And the team adds to the philosophy and vision as she says, “Led by a strong and highly experienced management team that has developed some of the most powerful and applauded activations in the recent past Each Strategist is an experienced professional committed to developing and implementing Brand Activation modules via Consumer Connect Strategies working closely with our clients as partners in meeting marketing objectives.”

Regarding the consumers, they reach out to, she says, “We reach the consumers of the brands we work with. It’s a wide spectrum and we are equipped with geo reach and MIS, to connect with consumers of diverse attitudes, aptitudes, and profiles.” Headquartered in Delhi, the company’s business network extends to Mumbai, Bangalore, Hyderabad, Kolkata and Chennai in India, with international associate offices in the UK, Australia, USA, Thailand, Singapore and The UAE. She points out, “Our India execution network extends to over 2300 towns and cities across all the Indian States. The network is also powered with our MIS and consumer insight of the ‘Golden Heartland’ cities. Mapping the top 100 cities with information of pop strata distribution, residential areas, commercial complexes schools, influencers, shopping districts, web and traditional media consumption well up to the preferred local mithai and chaat joints. This unique insight enables us to minimize spill over.”

On the consumer segment, she expands. “We also have a unique proprietary channel of 3000 Internet cafes which cater to the youth audience (15-35 years), consumerism in India is powered by the youth, 35% of India’s population is between the ages of 15-35 years - largest buyers of everything from mobiles to Cars, Apparel to LCD’s, brimming with impulse purchase and e commerce the segment fast going global. With the fastest growth in online users 55% of the Internet users access the net from I cafes.

With an average time spent of 45 mins per consumer our set of 3000+ youth I cafes cater to a captive audience of 1.9 Lac Global Indians every day across 50+ cities. Contests, experience, online interaction, ground engagement, consumer acquisition, Product sampling, or just pure branding. The space lends itself to a host of possibilities with a high return on investment.”

How much of the media market pie do they hope to achieve in terms of market share? She smiles, “We are a young brand, an emerging challenger in the business. It’s too early voice claims of future numbers, we like to let the numbers do the talking for us!”

What is this market worth, in term of Rs? She explains, “Brand activation figures are pegged at 2500 crores some claim more, the, Digital is the fastest growing media, with 85% of the online indians on social media the marketers are already there or getting onboard. Advertising spend on social media sites were on a rise through the year 2010.internationally US alone accounted for \$1.7 billion of which Facebook accounted for 53% of the total spend and the global social media marketing spend was at \$3.4 billion.”

Still a new scenario, how is the scene in India, vis-a-vis other countries? India is nascent, one just has to search twitter to know that businesses are not there in the numbers that could be. But one can’t forget that India is the 2nd largest internet destination of the world already. Internationally ground engagement has many restrictions, and experiential marketing is restricted by strict laws, and India is more liberal and thus cost to deliver a consumer experience is not prohibitive.”

Ambika concludes, “The power to integrate with digital has a strong future.” And certainly, she and Pulp Strategy will gain from it.