

OUTDOOR ASIA

December 2021

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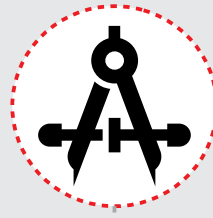
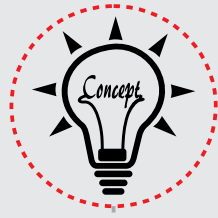


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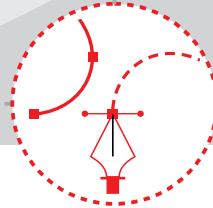
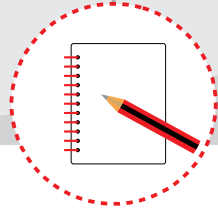
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RAJIV RAGHUNATH
Managing Editor

The Metaverse is just around the corner for OOH

Even as OOH businesses around the world grapple with applications of newer technologies for audience data capture and analytics, programmatic DOOH transactions, campaign reporting, among others, DOOH majors like Ocean Outdoor have already moved into the futuristic metaverse creating a new frontier of advertising. The UK-based DOOH operator recently tied up with in-play company Admix to connect the dots between advertising in both the physical world and the virtual world – where an ever growing band of gamers spend quality time.

Technology is the harbinger of change. Today, as Indian OOH attempts to reignite the growth engine, application of new technologies in business will ensure the speed of change increases geometrically. It needs to be said there is no silver bullet that can bring about total transformation of the OOH industry. Instead, it will call for greater interactions between the media operators and the technology providers that contribute to the development of an OOH/DOOH ad-tech ecosystem in the country. The upcoming OOH Expo, to be held in Mumbai on March 14-15, 2022, is a strident step being taken in this direction. In this edition, we have highlighted the business areas that will be in focus at the Expo.

Spectacular DOOH displays are headline grabbers, and continue to keep brand advertisers interested in this medium. 3D displays on Piccadilly Lights, building projections on Burj Khalifa, and Times Square advertising are cases in point. Newer ad-tech applications are constantly keeping these media assets ahead of the curve. Tiger Party, the company that manages the synchronised New Year Eve countdown on Times Square digital screens, provides an insider view of what it takes to manage and deliver such a spectacular DOOH event.

In this edition, we have also featured insightful content on mall advertising, keeping in view the growth opportunities in this space.

Happy reading!

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Editor & Publisher: Vasant Jante
Managing Editor: Rajiv Raghunath
Sr. Associate Editor: N. Jayalakshmi
Designer: Vinod Kumar V

Business Head

Akash Jante - 97427 73627
akash@vjmediaworks.com

Sales West

Rahul Shinde - 9823529429
rahuls@vjmediaworks.com

Sales North

Himanshu Agarwal - 8423000287
himanshu@vjmediaworks.com

Head Office:

#1019/2, 1st Cross, Geetanjali Layout,
New Thippasandra, Bangalore-560 075.
Tel : 91-80-40522777, Fax: 40522727
Email: subscribe@vjmediaworks.com
Website: www.vjmediaworks.com

Mumbai Office:

201, 2nd Floor, Krishna Commercial Centre,
6 Udyog Nagar, Nr. Kamat Club S.V.Road,
Goregaon (W), Mumbai-400 062.
Tel: 91-022-40234446

Delhi Office:

M5 3rd Floor Adani Samsara
Sector 60, Gurugram, Haryana 122102
India

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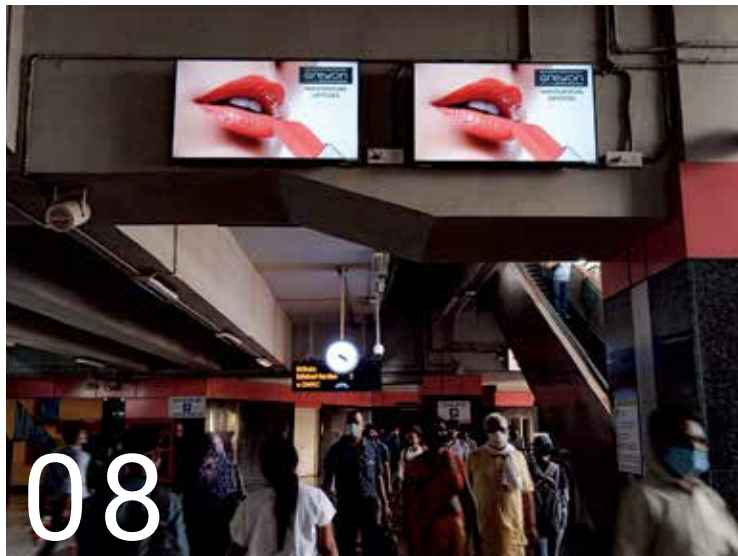
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'India Talks OOH' to steer meaningful discussions around OOH

The one day conference 'India Talks OOH' organized by VJ Media Works, to be held on January 18 at Hotel Sahara Star in Mumbai, will have focused discussions and presentations on subjects that are intertwined with the core needs of the Indian OOH industry. Srishti Communications has taken up Presenting Sponsorship for the event, which comes in the wake of the Indian OOH industry shifting gears to gather greater growth momentum post the festive season this year.

Taking cognizance of the emerging business environment, and the particular needs of all OOH business stakeholders – brand advertisers, media owners, specialist agencies, tech solution providers, and other OOH solutions providers, and indeed the government bodies and regulators – the pan-India OOH conference will have focused discussions and presentations on subjects such as, 'How marketing can make the difference for media owning business', 'Where OOH fits in the scheme of omnichannel marketing', 'The programmatic OOH jamboree – sounds to pick in all that noise', etc. The sessions will be addressed by top brand marketers, media planners and buyers, technology and marketing experts, among others.



Venue: Hotel Sahara Star, Mumbai
on 18th January 2022

Garima Publicity plans attractive media at Siwan & Azamgarh rly stations

Patna-based OOH company Sri Garima Publicity has won sole ad rights at two railway stations, Siwan in Bihar and Azamgarh in UP. The company won two tenders at Siwan, one for outdoor ad space and the other for ad space inside the station, while in Azamgarh the company won a combined tender for both outdoor and indoor ad spaces. The rights are for about 150 media at the Siwan railway station and about 120 at the Azamgarh railway station. These include unipoles, gantries, lollypops, kiosks, signage, hoardings and billboards. The tender duration is five years.

While the company is still developing the media in these stations, a few brands in the insurance, banking and innerwear segments have already begun to show interest in the branding space. Also, the company is moving away from conventional fabrication and is looking at new and innovative concepts for the billboards, something similar to airport media.





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All White bags ad rights on Chandigarh's promising Smart Bike dock stations



All White - a joint venture between leading marketing agencies, Crayons Advertising and CASHurDRIVE Marketing -- has secured the advertising rights on the parking docks of the recently launched pan-city bicycle sharing project, Smart Bike, from the Chandigarh Administration. Speaking on the occasion, Kunal Lalani, Partner, All White, said, "We are so glad to be part of this project which not only promotes a healthy lifestyle among the residents but also contributes significantly in reducing air pollution. This project has a huge potential of becoming the main solution for public mobility in future. We would definitely play our part and make this environmentally friendly initiative a huge success."

The Smart Bike plan would be developed in four phases and will be completed over the course of one year. The first phase is completed and is already open to the residents and visitors of the city to take a quick ride from the 155 dock station and park the bicycle back to the nearest dock station post their ride. Another set of 175 cycle docks would be added by January 2022 making its coverage more extensive and robust.

Sapphire Media installs 310 screens at Delhi Metro Pink Line stations

Sapphire Media Services has installed 310 screens at key locations inside 31 stations of Delhi Metro Pink Line -7. Each Metro station has 10 LED Screens.

The Pink Line (Line 7) of Delhi Metro connects Majlis Park and Shiv Vihar, covering a length of 58.43 kilometers and is the longest individual line of Delhi Metro, breaking the record set by the operational Blue Line.

The Pink Line, which became operational from March 14, 2018, is mostly elevated and known as the Ring Road Line, as it passes alongside the busy Ring Road in Delhi that witnesses massive traffic jams every day. The Pink Line has interchanges with most of the operational lines of the network.



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A playbook that collates learnings from creative, innovative OOH

The Outernet Marketing Innovation Group (OMIG), an industry initiative by global ad-tech company Moving Walls, and The Association of Advertising and Marketing Singapore (AAMS), have launched a playbook to share their learnings from running creative and innovative OOH campaigns in 2021.

The OMIG group, which brought together more than 25 marketing leaders from brands across Asia, was designed to chart the future of Outernet marketing by running pilots using planning, buying, and measurement technology provided by Moving Walls.

The playbook offers a perspective on the strategies used by the marketing innovators in planning and executing their campaigns to drive efficient outcomes. The Outernet media landscape has shown that a majority of growth is being driven by digital brands, who now form the bulk of the top 10 highest DOOH spenders.



WOO onboards new members from 7 countries

The World Out of Home Organization (WOO) has added new members in Argentina, Mexico, China, Japan, Saudi Arabia, the US and the UK.

Taggify in Argentina is a DOOH programmatic platform; Mexico-based GPO Vallas is a major media owner in Latin America; Digital Signage Consortium in Japan is a trade body with over 140 members while Override Media is a Saudi Arabian digital transport specialist.

Dongfang Chuxiao Media Group is a fast-growing DOOH owner in China, Los Angeles-based Kevani is a sales organization that promotes national and local brands through innovative outdoor advertising destinations. OOH Capital is a London-based international consultancy and advisory company to owners and investors in OOH, cities and municipalities.



18th January 2022

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“OOH has a higher sticky factor compared to other mediums”

Somany Ceramics is a brand that has leveraged the out-of-home (OOH) medium in many ways - from hoardings and branded buses that also served as mobile stores; to in-stadium and airport branding. In an interaction with Outdoor Asia, **Minal Somany, Brand Custodian, Somany Ceramics**, shares the brand's experience in the OOH space, the possibilities with it in future and the challenges therein. Read on...



Minal Somany, Brand Custodian, Somany Ceramics

By N. Jayalakshmi

Brand Somany Ceramics very recently began its marketing campaign by collaborating for on-ground advertising for the T20 and Test Series between India and New Zealand that started on 17th November. As part of the association, brand Somany was displayed at perimeter Boards, sight screens and upper tier during the airing of three T20 matches and two test matches.

The brand is pretty upbeat about continuing its association with cricket and has already signed up for the India South Africa series in January. Says Minal Somany, Brand Custodian, Somany Ceramics, speaking about the collaboration, “As we all know cricket has a very large viewership and following in our country; it's literally like a religion and cuts across all demographics of people, and ours is a product that needs a very high top of the mind recall so we will continue to focus on it.”

Speaking further about the on-ground campaign and how it works particularly in the context of cricket, she says, “I feel on-ground is a more definite way of getting noticed. We get real feedback and data and we know that it was viewed so many times during a particular match. So in that sense, it offers a more tangible and measurable way of recording visibility than say, a hoarding or any other medium. Plus when it's associated with an event like cricket, it gives us mileage on all fronts, - TV, OTT, etc, besides the on-ground visibility.”

Sharing the brand's experience with other OOH avenues like airports, Minal explains, “We are very aggressive





at the airports and we will continue to be so. We have already got the four major airports in India and we are focusing on getting some more strategic ones like for example Goa during the coming holiday season or in other holiday destinations. But right now we are very focused on the major airports like Mumbai, Delhi, Bangalore, Kolkata and Hyderabad. In airports, we are open to all kinds of mediums, whether digital or static. Airports have given us a lot of eye balls and we are very happy with that medium."

Further speaking about traditional formats like hoardings, she says, "Outdoor formats like hoardings work very well when we work in conjunction with showroom opening. So we need to have a 360 degree approach."

The brand has also leveraged bus branding by having its own branded buses travelling across the country along a charted route. Says Minal

talking about it, "We are looking at relaunching it as it worked really well. It went into interior parts of the country where hoardings and airports don't play a role. Also, it wasn't just a bus; it was also interactive in that you could go in and select sanitary wares and tiles. So it also functioned like a mobile store which was well branded. We are thinking of relaunching it now because we are actively looking at tier 3-4 cities where the major shift is happening."

So are there any specific challenges that the brand faces in the OOH space? Minal replies, "I think the major challenges are pricing, measurability and maintenance of properties. There is no regular upkeep and review of the creatives, and in terms of the pricing, there is so much of fluctuation. We would obviously want to confine to our budget because ATL is not the only spend we have in marketing. We have a lot of BTL and digital spends too."

But despite these challenges, Minal feels OOH is not a medium one can ignore. "A larger-than-life presence always makes a brand look grander and bigger. Also, I feel that there is a higher sticky factor in outdoor when it comes to a product ad, than say any other medium like radio, print or TV." Minal also agrees that OOH has a greater ability to drive trust in a brand, conveying a sense of being in the big league.

As for innovation in the OOH space, Minal feels the main innovation needed would be in terms of measuring the responses and better maintenance in terms of the quality of printing and OOH for longer lasting presence.

So in effect, when it comes to spends, Minal is pretty sure that as long as the advertising budgets go up, OOH will surely get a big chunk of it.



“OOH is the best way to connect with the local audience”

Leading next-gen ITeS firm Plaxonic recently rolled out an Out-of-Home (OOH) campaign in Delhi NCR to promote the logo of their upcoming hyperlocal marketplace app Evobee. The company, a first time user of OOH, placed a total of 65 advertisements in the form of hoardings and physical ads in elevators of major residential societies and the campaign aimed at grabbing consumer attention, augmenting region-wide presence and building brand recall among its target demographics.

Plaxonic adopted an above-the-line (ATL) marketing approach in its intuitive OOH campaign. **Shaan Rizvi, CEO & Founder, Plaxonic**, shares with Outdoor Asia, the brand’s approach to OOH and how it leveraged the medium.



Shaan Rizvi, CEO & Founder, Plaxonic

What were key factors you looked at when you chose the OOH medium to promote the logo of your hyperlocal marketplace app Evobee?

Our product is a hyperlocal application and our goal is to reach out to the local audience. Our understanding is that OOH is the best way to connect with the local audience. We are starting with a small area, and we thought OOH would be the most effective way to impact this area. We are in fact trying all the mediums initially, and not just OOH, to have some data to compare and analyse later on and decide what would work best for us. And yes, this is the first time we are using the OOH medium.

Our product is helping both local businesses and consumers. Having visibility among the businesses and consumers would make us a part of the community and would help us build trust. It would make everyone feel like it is a part of their society, which is what our goal is and that’s where OOH comes in.





Who did you partner with for the OOH campaign?

We partnered with the Ghaziabad and Noida development authorities for the space. Our in-house teams designed the banners.

Are you planning similar campaigns again in the near future? Any specific formats or locations you would be targeting?

Yes, we will be planning similar campaigns in the future. We would expand the campaign to new areas. Our next locations are going to be Delhi & Gurugram.

Roughly what percentage of your marketing budgets did you allot for OOH?

Pre-Launch: 50%

Post-Launch: 30%

Sustenance mode: 20%

What factors do you think can make the OOH medium deliver more for advertisers like you? What are your expectations from the medium?

Marketing is all about visibility, and OOH campaigns leave a strong mark on viewers' minds. If they look at the same banner/ billboard over 7-8 times, it remains in their brain for life. It also makes your presence stronger since not all target viewers are online. It improves the chances of interactions and would catch everyone's gaze at least once.

How has been the response to the OOH campaign? Any tangible results you'd like to share?

The response has been excellent. People are talking about it. We have heard words about the intriguing campaign in our network, and we believe it is making some impact. We do not have any tangible results to share since we are in the pre-launch phase. We will have some data once the app is launched.



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The future is here

The OOH Expo, to be organised at the Nehru Centre in Mumbai on March 14-15, 2022, will showcase advanced technology and creative solutions for OOH business in India, and serve as a convergence platform for buyers and sellers in this space.



By M4G Bureau

The much-awaited OOH Expo (www.oohexpo.com), to be organised at the Nehru Centre in Mumbai on March 14-15, 2022, is billed to be the largest exposition of technology and creative solutions for OOH business in India, and the most definitive convergence platform for buyers and sellers in this space – media owning firms, media buying agencies, brand marketers, government bodies that create, manage and regulate OOH advertising, and indeed OOH technology and creative solution providers.

The OOH Expo will be a showcase of diverse technology solutions and systems, that include those for:

- High definition & interactive ad displays**
- Programmatic DOOH**
- New & innovative formats**
- Audience data capture & analytics**
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The global OOH landscape is witness to the launch of highly innovative OOH advertising display solutions and systems that would be game-changers for this business. India is at the threshold of ushering in the latest display technologies in the OOH/DOOH space. A recent media report citing that the Noida city will likely have a DOOH display avenues on the lines of New York's Times Square is illustrative of this.

DOOH advertising is rapidly evolving. Take the case of the world's first AR-enabled DOOH advertising network launched in by UK-based 3rockAR. The company's 'Magic Mirror' DOOH screen has the ability to showcase AR experiences along with standard DOOH. "When people see themselves on the screen, they stop, engage, spend quality time with brands, and leave with a smile on their face. They'll also tell their friends and share their experience on social media," the company stated in a recent media release.

3D displays on DOOH screens is coming into its own, creating a truly wow effect on audiences. Earlier this year, UK's major DOOH media operator Ocean Outdoor rolled out its DeepScreen™ – using a technique called 'anamorphosis' or 'forced perspective' which mathematically warps imagery so that when viewed from a specific vantage point, the illusion of 3D depth is created on flat surfaces. The 3D technique using large format full motion portfolio are being used by brand advertisers to deliver spectacular audience experiences.

The DeepScreen 3D templates can be used to create breath-taking windows into other worlds, extend existing architecture, or make impossible objects appear to float in the air, coming out of the screen and towards the viewer. Activations using DeepScreen have been carried on the iconic Piccadilly Lights in London. Bold illusions by Vodafone, IWC Schaffhausen, Netflix, Deliveroo and PokerStars have been used as centrepieces for integrated campaigns.

The age of full motion DOOH screens is very nearly here. And, research reports point to the high impact delivered on audiences through full motion video branding on high-definition large format DOOH screens.

Leading Australian DOOH company QMS in its neuroscience study conducted a few months ago in partnership with Neuro-Insight, brought to the fore the finding that long term memory encoding, critical for campaign effectiveness, continues to grow in respondents that are exposed to evolving creative. The findings suggest that a creative that evolves was shown to deliver a 38% higher impact than that of static creative by day 5.

The study captured real-life, continuous digital and static OOH panels over consecutive days, to accurately measure how the human brain responds to a piece of creative advertising each day.

Spanning 30 creatives across 15 categories, one of the strongest performing campaigns in the study harnessed the capabilities of DOOH with a simple creative change that displayed the day of the week matched with the live temperature at the time, to deliver an 18% stronger result than the average DOOH campaign.

Likewise, Ocean Outdoor's Neuroscience research programme also analysed brain response to four different forms of interactive content which combined full motion with additional DOOH functionality including wi-fi, live streaming, augmented reality and social media interaction.

The findings reinforced the effectiveness of full motion DOOH advertising – something that will be of interest to the India markets, as city planners look up ways to beautify the urban landscapes, and declutter the OOH advertising space.

The OOH Expo will showcase a range of new age DOOH display solutions and systems that would be relevant to the Indian markets.

Programmatic DOOH

Programmatic OOH buying, or more specifically programmatic DOOH (pDOOH), is fast emerging as the most efficient platform for DOOH media buying, especially in key overseas markets. Nigel Clarkson, CRO of industry-leading pDOOH platform Hivestack writes in the Advertising Week, "During the pandemic period, OOH media owners

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have made moves to make their digital inventory available to OOH DSPs to be traded programmatically. The use of data and automation will streamline multiple manual processes requiring human effort and interaction. Historically, OOH was once exclusively negotiated by people and governed by the “insertion order”, requiring location scouting and communication via emails and phone calls, which then made it to ad ops for trafficking and charting. Programmatic has changed this process completely and consequently, brings valuable benefits for both brands and agencies, but also media owners alike.”

Nigel explains that pDOOH pricing models are flexible and give brands the power to increase or decrease ad spend, adjust campaign parameters, or even pause campaigns altogether in response to external changes, all in real-time. That is a study in contrast to the traditional OOH business methods whereby campaigns were bought weeks and often months in advance. “This increased ability to optimize and alter flighting and delivery in real-time has been widely embraced by the market and allows DOOH to be more reactive as a partner to other media channels,” he writes.

In a nutshell, the advantages of going the pDOOH way are:

Data-driven transactions

User data-driven triggers for purchase of a DOOH ad slot.

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Dynamic content, video content, interactive content –can be played on DOOH displays around the world.

Existing content can often be adapted easily to suit a DOOH display

The types of pDOOH deals are:

Open Real-Time Bidding

Private deal / Real-Time Bidding

DOOH media owners may offer special access to programmatic inventory to select buyers

Guaranteed buying

A media owner and a buyer will have an agreement: whenever the owner offers the buyer an ad slot that meets their criteria, the buyer will buy it.

The Indian OOH market is inching toward a pDOOH take off point, and is likely to gather the upward thrust in the coming months, as the industry lines up for bigger investments in DOOH, especially in networked DOOH screens.

The OOH Expo will have the participation of key ad-tech companies that are offering cutting-edge pDOOH solutions.

New & innovative formats

In an increasingly tech-driven OOH business arena, new and innovative ad formats are gaining advertising interest. Addressing

Programmatic Digital Out-of-Home (also known as “pDOOH”)



Source: BroadSign

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a recent conference, Laetitia Lim, CEO of Quividi stated that in-store environment is a dynamic place for brands, advertisers and retailers to engage shoppers at the moment of truth. Referring to a recent BCG report, Laetitia cited that retail media network is estimated to become a \$100 billion high-margin annual revenue stream. Although much of that media is currently online, offline retail media is likely to expand multi-fold in the near future.

Quividi is extending solutions to help the retailers to monetise this opportunity of branding and promotion on the digital OOH media networks. The solution is a combine of content intelligence and audience consumer insights into one “easy to use, integrated platform”. Quividi’s engagement with US-based Starlite Media is a case in point on this application.

In a different geography, COMMB (Canadian Out-of-Home Marketing and Measurement Bureau) is introducing a place-based audio out-of-home (AOOH) measurement methodology. Following approval by COMMB’s Research Committee and the Board of Directors, the measurement and reporting of digital audio ads will be implemented in retail stores throughout Canada.

Meanwhile, Montreal-based leading global music, media, and technology company Stingray has entered into an industry-first dynamic digital AOOH partnership with Hivestack. The integration

of Stingray’s proprietary streaming media player into Hivestack’s suite of supply side technology, including the Ad Server and Supply-side Platform (SSP) will allow for AOOH inventory to be available programmatically for the first time in Canada.

AOOH is an exciting emerging new channel that reaches audiences out of the home, complementing a diverse omnichannel marketing mix and is now supported by verified audience measurement through COMMB. The Expo provides an opportunity for innovative OOH/DOOH formats and solutions to be exhibited to media owners for investments, and to media planners and buyers for including such formats in their considering lists.

Audience data & analytics

Audience data capture and analytics are the key levers of OOH media planning. Various ad-tech companies have come up with proprietary tools and analytics to offer robust audience data capture and analytics. Location intelligence is another area that is seeing strident progress in terms of application in OOH/DOOH business.

For instance, Data Fusion Research Centre (DFRC), an independent R&D SME having offices in Korea Singapore and Switzerland, is extending its data technologies for application in OOH business. DFRC’s LBASense technology is employed to estimate footfall in a designated area, computing dwell time and mobility patterns based




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on the mobile phone probing signals. That is, LBASense sensors are installed in the “observation zones” to passively detect and analyse smart mobile signals, transmitted over Wi-Fi, not capturing any personal data, e.g mobile number. The big data collection over Wi-Fi capture only MAC address, the digital signature of the smart devices. This solution is PDPA compliance. LBASense technology is currently deployed in 59 cities around the world.

Campaign reporting & media monitoring

With sophisticated media campaign reporting and monitoring systems, OOH/DOOH will be able to gain a greater share of the OOH ad spend. There is significant credence in employing third party verification systems, such as, that offered by Australia-based Seedooh. Speaking to Media4Growth earlier this year, Joe Copley, Chief Revenue Officer, Seedooh has said the key factor contributing to a wider market acceptance of your 3rd party verification and reporting solutions is: “Recognition amongst sector participants that the future of OOH requires standards, standardisation and connectivity that have already been achieved by other digitised media sectors, as they have matured.”

Social listening is a powerful way to assess a campaign impact. US-based Outfront Media stated in a report that OOH secures 4X more social activations, per ad dollar spent, compared to all other media. “Our social media monitoring tool tracks social activations and conversations around specific campaigns, providing unparalleled, data-packed insights that paint a fuller picture of visibility and consumer response to your OOH advertising.

Using keywords, social profiles, hashtags, and phrases, Outfront can track mentions, sentiment, reach, and trends around your campaign and brand. We can monitor specific locations, or track campaigns nationally, to show the impact of your OOH advertising.”

Green media & material recycling

COP26 in Glasgow once again placed sustainability at the top of the global agenda for a cleaner, green planet. It is imperative that the OOH industry is guided by the climate mitigation goals, for which adoption of environment friendly practices and materials become crucially important. The Expo offers an avenue for the different participants in the green OOH space to exhibit their offerings. A variety of developments around the world testify the accent on green OOH. For instance, earlier this year, Kinetic announced a partnership with cleantech company Pluvo. The partnership will see hundreds of distinctive columns pop up in UK public spaces where pollution is high

such as busy roadside locations, and where viruses are more likely to be transmitted such as rail stations, airports and shopping malls.

Launching in 2021, the columns can scrub up to one cubic metre of air per second, the same as 2,000 human breaths. In a six-month trial in north London, the tech was proven to clean up to 99% of harmful particulate matter, noxious gases, and airborne viruses. Best of all, installation cost will be funded in a similar way to London’s “Santander Bikes” with brands sponsoring the units. For the advertiser, the benefits are obvious – a brand presence in key locations in busy urban areas plus the positive association of providing cleaner air. For the public and landlords, it means the Pluvo Columns deliver cleaner air at negligible cost – it really is win/win.

In the Indian markets, several textile manufacturing companies have come up with eco-friendly media for OOH that are being used in different cities. It is essential to evangelise green OOH media and to showcase the materials to the advertisers and buyers.

In regard to recycling, dentsu China has teamed up with UseDem to transform poster and billboard vinyl into trendy and desirable products. dentsu maintained that outdoor advertising is a highly visual and impactful way for advertisers to reach consumers and build brands. However, the material commonly used to make the posters and billboards often goes to waste, and countless tons of vinyl often ends up in landfills and oceans. “As a company, we believe it’s imperative to help create meaningful progress for the brands we work with and for society as a whole.”

This initiative involves collaborating with teams that collect vinyl (PVC) coated fabrics from outdoor advertisements that are then cleaned thoroughly before cutting and stitching them together into items that can be used every day.

Besides the above mentioned, there is an array of areas that the OOH Expo will cover in terms of the latest solutions, products and technologies. Do keep watching this space as we present an overview of these solutions in our next editions.

Workshops

The OOH Expo will also feature workshops on tech application and applications of other new OOH solutions, conducted by subject experts. The stage is set for a large congregation of OOH business stakeholders to connect and build strong business partnerships.



To register as a delegate visit here:
<https://www.media4growth.com/events/india-talks-ooH-22>

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OOH Expo is invaluable in terms of what it can do for the industry: Noomi Mehta

Sharing his views on why the OOH industry in the country today needs a platform like the OOH Expo, to be held in Mumbai on March 14-15, 2022, Noomi Mehta, Chairman, Indian Outdoor Advertising Association (IOAA), says, "I think the OOH Expo is a great platform because the outdoor industry will get a chance to see all the different solutions available to them under one single roof - the entire gamut of what is happening in signage, materials, technology, etc. And I guess it works both ways, because the suppliers who display their wares will also get to meet so many potential buyers under one roof. I don't think any other opportunity like this exists in the country, so this is obviously much needed and much appreciated."

Talking further about how important it is to actually see a variety of solutions that exist in the market, he adds, "We do read or hear about all the new solutions and technologies that are available, but to actually see them live is another thing. It helps put things in perspective. So this sort of an expo is extremely important. It's in fact invaluable in terms of what it can do for the industry, because this is the point from which the industry can take off. It is a point from where ideas can emerge, germinate and find expression."

He adds, summing it up very lucidly, "Often it's not just the technology, but a combination of technologies that actually gives the cutting edge. So all these things go together to form the ultimate expression of what a client wants and what a media owner provides. For us to try and imagine using different technologies is just a theoretical exercise. It is only when we see them, that it automatically clicks and we realize what we can do with them."



Noomi Mehta, Chairman
Indian Outdoor Advertising Association (IOAA)

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Making the most of specialty communications

Haresh Nayak, Founder & CEO of Connect Network Inc., talks about his new venture and the emerging opportunity universe

By Rajiv Raghunath

"I see a lot of opportunities in the OOH space". Stating this, Haresh Nayak, who has launched his independent venture Connect Network Inc. after concluding his innings as COO, Dentsu International, Media Service Line & Group MD, Posterscope South Asia, made the observation that while the world is still not out of the woods, with the pandemic continuing to spread its tentacles, it is imperative to spot the "opportunities for the clients" and flag the challenges too.



**Haresh Nayak, Founder & CEO
Connect Network Inc.**

"As a consultant to the client that's our job and we have been doing that for years," he says, while highlighting the varied streams that Connect Network would be doing business in – Brand Advertising, Brand Experiences, Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), Shoppers Marketing, Out of Home,

Sports Marketing, Smart City Solutions "and numerous specialty communication services to drive bottom-line results for our clients".

In these times of agency business consolidation worldwide, what could be the defining role for an independent venture? Addressing this questions, Haresh, who is the CEO of the new venture, says that "for us the sweetspot is about optimising resources and learning from our collective experience". The company has also set the ambition of developing an Indian MNC that works in global markets.

"We are in discussion for business in three countries and we plan to roll out business in at least two countries in the first year of our business," says Haresh.

Haresh points out that clients are increasingly looking at result-oriented marketing. That also calls for learning from one media channel to be applied in another. "We may be called upon to build synergies between different channels, like digital which is evidence based, and OOH which has no metrics right now," he says.

Commenting on the scope of DOOH business in India, Haresh says that quality of infrastructure will determine the overall success and growth of the medium. Connect Network is building up its own digital tech capabilities and offerings. "We are creating a dashboard providing access to all our consultancy services".

"With tech playing such an important role we are attempting to connect AdTech with MarTech to make communication more action oriented and result driven. We will bring best talent, technology, commerce & experience as our core to service clients across all markets," states Haresh in the company's media release.

Headquartered in Mumbai, Connect Network Inc. will also have operations in Delhi, Bengaluru, Kolkata and Ahmedabad. "Connect Network Inc. strives to be leaders across all consumer connection points in our endeavour to bring human and business insights with convergence of technology to create rewarding experiences," states the company's release.

See detailed video interview on www.media4growth.com



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Why malls matter as advertising mediums

As brands increasingly look for newer and more innovative platforms to engage with their target audiences, shopping malls become increasingly relevant as an advertising medium, given the opportunity they offer to tap a captive audience through focused, interactive and experiential communications. Here's a look.



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Shopping malls have been among the main highlights of the Indian retail space in the last 15-20 years, catering to a new segment of shoppers hungry for variety - both in terms of the number of products and the quality of their shopping experience with a corresponding capacity to spend more. According to Statista Research Department, there were 253 shopping malls in the eight major metropolitan areas of India in 2018 and this was a stable year-on-year increase from 188 malls in 2012. By 2022 it is expected that around one hundred malls are completed, according to its projection.

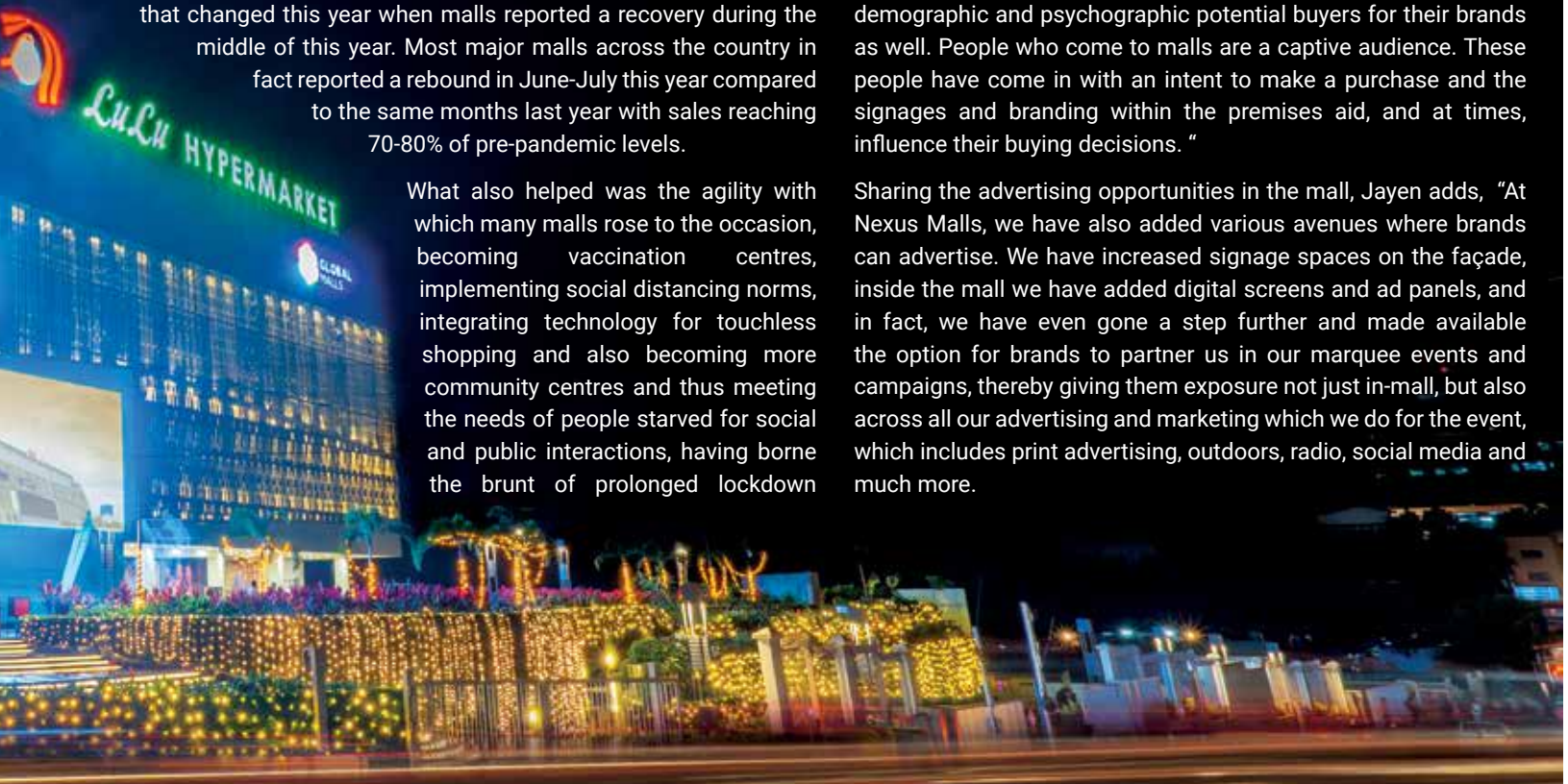
Of course, when the pandemic ravaged businesses last year, malls were among the worst hit given the lockdown restrictions and the general apprehensions among people to visit public places. But all that changed this year when malls reported a recovery during the middle of this year. Most major malls across the country in fact reported a rebound in June-July this year compared to the same months last year with sales reaching 70-80% of pre-pandemic levels.

What also helped was the agility with which many malls rose to the occasion, becoming vaccination centres, implementing social distancing norms, integrating technology for touchless shopping and also becoming more community centres and thus meeting the needs of people starved for social and public interactions, having borne the brunt of prolonged lockdown

phases. Given the potential they offer to tap relevant audiences they are also emerging as go-to places for brand advertising. While malls have always been seen as potential hubs by advertisers, the introduction of digital interactive technologies and their evolving role as spaces for experiential brand story telling means that their significance as advertising mediums goes up even further.

Says Jayen Naik, Senior VP - Operations and Projects at Nexus Malls, "Malls have historically been great places to advertise for brands. And malls across the country and overseas have further fortified this position by adding to the inventories that brands can consume. The fact is that malls are one of those few places where advertisers find the right kind of audiences which meet the demographic and psychographic potential buyers for their brands as well. People who come to malls are a captive audience. These people have come in with an intent to make a purchase and the signages and branding within the premises aid, and at times, influence their buying decisions."

Sharing the advertising opportunities in the mall, Jayen adds, "At Nexus Malls, we have also added various avenues where brands can advertise. We have increased signage spaces on the façade, inside the mall we have added digital screens and ad panels, and in fact, we have even gone a step further and made available the option for brands to partner us in our marquee events and campaigns, thereby giving them exposure not just in-mall, but also across all our advertising and marketing which we do for the event, which includes print advertising, outdoors, radio, social media and much more.



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Jayen Naik, Senior VP - Operations & Projects, Nexus Malls

We from us which can aid their cause and ours. We are also upgrading the façades and interiors of the Forum Group of malls, which we have recently acquired. This will help brands even in South India an opportunity to advertise with Nexus Malls across India. At the moment, we have a wide range of inventory which includes digital, large facades, parking, washrooms, near cinema, in food court etc. We have close to a thousand advertising sites available across our portfolio.”

Agrees Shibu Philips, Business Head - Lulu Global Malls, “When there are 35,000 pairs of eye balls coming into the mall and when they are going to spend at least 1.5 - 2 hours time in the mall, then every brand is interested in the space. We are also focused on creating impactful advertising spaces like LED and signage both inside and outside the mall. We understand that both our internal retailers and external brands have their own communication requirements and we accordingly create the spaces for them.”

Says Sachin Dhanawade - Chief Operating Officer (COO) Retail & Real



Shibu Philips, Business Head - Lulu Global Malls

Estate, Grauer & Weil (India) Limited, which operates Growel’s 101 Mall in Mumbai, “Advertising inside malls can influence buying decisions of consumers, especially for those brands that are present within the mall. It is more of a targeted marketing which caters to a premium segment of audience rather than masses. Hence conversions are higher. Also, since people come to malls for some leisure time their mind is more receptive, they are not pre-occupied or distracted. Mall visitors are open to trying out new products or learn about new launches etc.”

He adds, talking about the advertising opportunities in the mall, “At Growel’s 101 we have ample open space as well as closed spaces that can be creatively utilised by brands for advertising. The mall façade has two long strips of screens besides 5 hoardings, while inside the mall there are two large screens – one in the main atrium and the other at the side atrium at the entry of the mall. Besides, there are variety of ambient media branding sites strategically placed at various touch points across the mall.”



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Sachin Dhanawade - Chief Operating Officer (COO) Retail & Real Estate, Grauer & Weil (India) Limited

Sharing his views on malls as advertising spaces, Abhishek Bansal, Executive Director, Pacific Group, sums it up quite succinctly, "Media sites in a mall offer more eyeballs and dwell time compared to transit branding sites on roads and transit media."

Speaking about the sales and footfall numbers, Jayen from Nexus says, "While we have reached 100% sales of precovid times, our footfalls are at a healthy 70%. People who are coming to malls are coming in with an intent to shop, which can also be seen in the consistent brand activations which happen across our portfolio. Key fashion brands are now more keen on coming out of their stores and taking up spaces, because they do see returns in terms of walk-ins and sales at their stores in our malls as well."

Adds Shibu Philips from Lulu Global Malls, sharing this experience in terms of footfalls and sales, "In the two malls that we are currently operating we ran a luggage fest and the response was so good it beat the myth that people are no longer buying travel luggage. The number of pieces we sold was more than the 2019 numbers."

Speaking about the brand segments using the malls more actively for advertising, Jayen explains, "Anyone who can spend and genuinely looked at this as an opportunity has advertised with us since reopening. The automobile segment in particular benefits a lot from advertising and display in our malls."

Further speaking about the impact of in-mall advertising on sales for retailers in the mall, he adds, "There is no link between the brands sales

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Abhishek Bansal, Executive Director, Pacific Group

and the advertising sites which they take up at our malls. However, there are times when we do offer them some signages and sites to put up their content as a support function to up their sales or when they have recently launched. There is a notable impact of the sales going up, when they brands do take up space at the malls. ”

Adds Abhishek from Pacific Group speaking about the impact of ads on sales, “We have seen an increment in sales when brand acquire the media sites in the mall.”

Says Sachin from Growel’s 101 speaking about brands interested in mall advertising, “Besides the retail brands available within the mall at Growel’s 101 Mall, we see interest from Automobile brands, Banking and Finance sector, Travel & Tourism, FMCG, Electronic and White Good Brands, Cosmetic and Beauty Industry, OTT Channels, Movies, Television Channels and many more. ”

With the increased thrust on dynamic digital signage and communications by brands, malls are also better placed to be the right platform for it. As Jayen says, “For us at Nexus Malls, digitization of our inventory is a priority. Given the pace at which content is changing and the innovations which the creative teams intend to roll out for their brands, we as hosts need to be ready for it. We are also exploring various avenues to further the improve the experience for the brands when they promote themselves at our portfolio.”

Indeed as Laetitia Lim, CEO of Quividi, the leading audience and

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campaign intelligence platform for DOOH and digital signage, said at an international conference, "85% of CPG brands are planning to invest more of their marketing dollars in retail media networks, which also opens up expansion avenues for DOOH networks in this space and about 40% of those brands are looking for personalised messaging on this media. That gives the retailers the opportunity to add on a robust revenue stream."



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The Story Behind Times Square NYE Countdowns

Rafale Chang, CEO of Tiger Party provides a detailed account of what it takes to manage the synchronised New Year countdown on Times Square billboards, which the company has been managing over 11 years now.



Rafale Chang, CEO, Tiger Party

Tiger Party has been handling the synchronised New Year countdown on Times Square billboards for 11 years. What are the different innovations that you have introduced to make the countdown highly engaging for the audiences? If you could share your thoughts on both – the frontend display that wows the audiences, and the back-end tech solutions that make the synchronisation so seamless.

As one of the digital-out-of-home operators who manage the biggest

interactive billboards in Times Square New York, and executed the most interactive campaigns in the world, we feel honoured and proud to share the behind the scenes story with you:

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themselves on a billboard that leads to a different level of engagement and to spark their curiosity, anticipation, engagement, excitement, and joy is our mission.

The front-end display

As you may also know, how important punctuality is when it comes to NYE countdowns. Any latency, even 0.5 second, is going to critically affect the audience's viewing experience. The engagement and excitement will be interrupted if the countdown numbers on each billboard do not match. Therefore, our system is accurate down to 1/60 second, to make sure that the countdown clocks on different billboards are synchronised with the ball-drop without any delay. Moreover, our software's cue-based live control feature allows the show producers to switch to live-streaming when something special happens during the event while the other screen keeps on displaying the scheduled content.

The back-end tech solutions

Every second is crucial during a huge live event like Times Square New Year's Eve celebration. Therefore, to avoid any latency or delay

in transmitting, we chose Websockets over Long Polling connection. Although Long Polling enables more stability, Websockets provides a real-time full-duplex communication channel, which is very essential for a live event like Times Square NYE Countdown.

Typically, what kind of preparations are required, and what level of coordination is required with the screen owners, advertising brands, and others.

Coordination with the Times Square Alliances, Dick Clark Production, NYPD, media agencies, billboard owners and operators, event sponsors and even the Mayor's Office has already become our daily task while preparing for the NYE countdown event.

When most people in New York and the States are enjoying their holidays, on the other hand, the holiday season is our busiest time of the year. We are often jumping from meetings to meetings in the morning, con-calling with international sponsors at night. We did a rough estimate internally, as a joke, that we have exceeded 200 hours of preparation meetings in December 2020 for the NYE event.



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Do you think such a spectacular event is replicable in any other city, and whether you have explored having similar engagements anywhere else?

In my opinion, similar engagements can indeed be replicated in any other places, with the right kind of software and hardware. In the past, we have successfully synchronised billboards in different cities. In NYE 2016, we managed to synchronise the Countdown celebration in Dubai with Times Square via satellite. Dubai celebrated the New Year nine hours ahead of Times Square; therefore, with the synchronisation, revellers in Times Square were able to experience the Dubai New Year at 3PM.

We have also synced billboards across the globe in Taipei, Taiwan with Times Square for another campaign. Participants across the globe were able to wave, smile and interact with each other through the billboards. I personally think it was very cool that people across two cities were able to share the same experience together. The software we use to manage all those interactive experiences in Times Square, the GOTIGER, can be deployed at any kind of digital screens anywhere. With GOTIGER, I am confident to say that we can show the Times Square magic anywhere else.

How is the build-up to the big event coming up on the back of two tough pandemic-hit years?

This New Year is the first NYE celebration open to the public after the pandemic and we couldn't be more excited to see revellers coming back to Times Square for the New Year Countdown event. Last year, we

witnessed the first-in-history virtual countdown in Times Square. Under COVID-19 guidelines, the Tiger Party production team had to work entirely outdoors for the first time, which required all signals to be transmitted through radio and antennas instead of optical fibre, as optical fibre is only available indoors. Therefore, we started our pressure test two weeks earlier than usual to avoid any possible glitches and to make sure everything go perfectly on the event day.

In addition, there were only a few essential vendor teams that were allowed in the Times Square "safe zone bubbles". The safe zone bubbles were three layers, each layer with a more restricted COVID guidelines. To operate on the billboards, our team was one of the very few allowed in the most restricted layer of the safe zone bubbles. To enter the layer, our members had to take the PCR tests every day until the event night and ID badges to pass through very strict security measures.

Our working time was longer than previous years because we had to spend extra time taking the PCR tests and passing through security. All these may sound very difficult but we were glad that we were able to pull off the first-ever interview via billboards with President Biden and his First Lady and the countdown event went perfectly. This year, all essential vendors and workers for the NYE event are still required to be vaccinated and masked. Safety is still our first priority. We also started our pressure tests early this year, since everyone is so excited to be back in Times Square and we want to create more engagements and laughter for the revellers.

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EV charging major Volta to now offer innovative DOOH ad platforms in Europe



Volta Inc., the industry leader in commerce-centric electric vehicle charging, has announced its expansion into the European market, with an initial focus on Germany, Austria, Switzerland, and France. The announcement was made at the NOAH Conference in Zurich.

With unique charging stations that feature high-impact, large-format digital screens located near the entrances of premier commercial locations, Volta's network is among the most utilised in the U.S. For consumers, Volta provides seamless, reliable charging that

complements their daily lives and routines. For site partners, the eye-catching displays and premium station locations help drive business by attracting more customers for longer periods of time. For advertisers, Volta stations double as an innovative, digital out-of-home advertising platform, allowing brands to reach shoppers seconds before they enter a store to make a purchase.

18th January 2022

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pDOOH platform Adomni records 1,200% revenue growth

Adomni, the leading programmatic DOOH advertising planning and buying platform, has announced significant growth in its US operations. In the past year, the company grew its ad revenues over 1,200% and has raised more than \$30 million in new growth capital. The company's release states that much of the growth in ad revenues are from front digital ad buyers who historically have not planned or bought DOOH. As major brands rethink their advertising playbook, Adomni and programmatic DOOH have emerged as a powerful way to capture consumer attention and drive performance marketing outcomes.



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Impossible is nothing, says adidas through art



Turning the thought 'Nothing is impossible' on its head, adidas has come up with an artistic campaign on the theme, 'Impossible is Nothing', aimed at inspiring athletes. The brand teamed up with St+art India Foundation to revamp the basketball court of Mumbai's St. Andrews High School, innovatively fusing the world of art and sports as a medium for powerful storytelling around credibility in sports. Fueled by its core belief - 'Through sport we have the power to change lives', adidas has created a larger-than-life canvas to inspire the world and deliver an impactful yet simple message: 'We See Possibilities, When We Come Together'. The striking urban arts intervention is yet another initiative by the brand to amplify its larger, 'Impossible is Nothing' narrative with a central focus on the importance of team spirit and collaboration in breaking new ground and achieving shared goals.

As Sunil Gupta, Senior Director, Brand adidas, India said, "At adidas, 'Impossible is Nothing' is more than a campaign – it's our attitude. This spectacular artwork captures the spirit of teamwork, inspiring young athletes to adopt the 'We over Me' mentality, because its only when we come together, we can drive change and achieve the impossible." Rendered by French artist Chifumi Krohom, the artwork features the artist's signature motif of 'hands' depicted in a pop-art style, with bold lines and bright colours.



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Nesterra from Sutlej Textiles, the flagship textiles company of the KK Birla Group, recently initiated an on-ground activation at the Mumbai International Airport. The brand weaved together a unique gifting experience and surprised passengers travelling during this festive season with special gift hampers from its high-end collections, thereby creating a more meaningful Diwali celebration this year. Each flap was specially customised with Nesterra designs from their exclusive collections. Once the passengers reached the designated belt, a special piece of happiness in the form of curated gift hampers from the house of Nesterra rolled out for each passenger with a personalised name tag on it.

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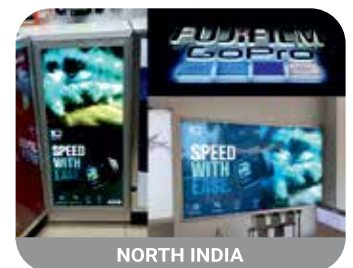
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