

# How Companies have used Crisis Marketing for Branding their Products during and after the Covid Pandemic

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**Abstract:-** In this research paper discussions have been done on the rationale and background of the research topic. The objective is to understand crisis management and how it has helped the businesses in India during and after the corona virus pandemic. It has described the methodology used for the collection of data. This research has followed philosophy (positivism), approach (deductive), design (descriptive) and data collection (secondary, thematic analysis) here. This research have evaluated the strategies followed by business in crisis marketing and have recommended strategies for improving crisis marketing. The literature section had presented the basis of the crisis marketing and this aspect had not only given the sense of this concept but also provided the significance of it in business. Moreover, it has given the workability aspects of product branding and the COVID effect which had been occurred in the marketing tactics. Lastly it explained the reason behind the creation of gap with the literature section. All the sections of literature had presented its relevant information on the basis of a crisis management theory named "*situational crisis communication theory*" and justified the mentioned statements.

## I. INTRODUCTION

The emergence of Covid-19 has disrupted the economies all around the world. It has taken a toll on the activities of the business. Most of the businesses were forced to shut down due to the negative impacts of Covid-19. The emergence of the corona virus pandemic has affected the behaviour of consumers and it has also disrupted the strategies as well as policies for marketing. Due to this crisis, the businesses in India have to face economic downturns. It has forced businesses to restructure their business strategies and models to cope with this era of crisis (Debata *et al.* 2020). This research would shed light on the use of crisis marketing by the business during and after the Covid-19 pandemic for the branding of their products.

### A. Research objectives

The objectives of this research paper are as follows:

- To develop an understanding of crisis marketing in different businesses.
- To understand the approaches used for crisis marketing in India.
- To evaluate the role of crisis marketing on business during and after the corona virus pandemic in India.
- To recommend strategies for the improvement of crisis marketing.

### B. Rationale

The *issue* is that the emergence of Covid-19 has resulted in deterioration in different types of business.

It is an *issue* now because, in the post-pandemic period, most of the businesses were forced to shut down due to the consequences brought up by the corona virus pandemic.

It is *still an issue* because the businesses are thriving to get back into their former position after the pandemic era. The businesses faced problems in retrieving revenue and operating the marketing or various operations of the business.

This *research paper shed light on* the approaches and strategies for crisis marketing that have been used by businesses in India during and after the corona virus pandemic.

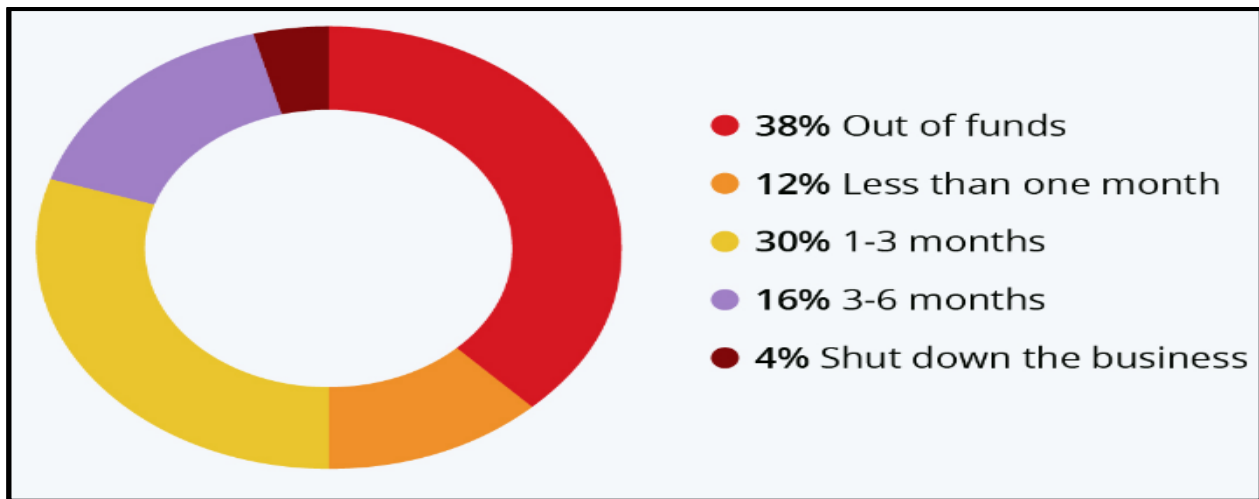


Fig. 1: Impact of Covid-19 on Indian businesses

(Source: Statista.com, 2020)

Due to Covid-19 around 38% of the businesses in India went out of funds because it was difficult to generate optimum revenue in this hard time. Around 4% of businesses in India had to shut down due to lower generation of profit and changing consumer behaviour as a result of Covid-19 (Statista.com, 2020). 16% of the businesses shut down due to slash marketing and due to the pressure of tax payments; it became difficult for the companies in India to operate their businesses. Looking into these consequences the companies operating in India have opted for crisis marketing to stand through during the hard times of Covid-19.

## II. METHODOLOGY

### A. Research Approach

The approach to the research has been defined as the planning that helps the researcher in deciding steps for the collection and analysis of data in a detailed way. It helps in addressing the problem in a better way. It is of three types "**Inductive, deductive and abductive research approach**". This research has followed a "**deductive research approach**". A deductive approach for the research helps in developing hypotheses for the research that can be tested and confirmed and rejected in the process of research (Bergdahl *et al.* 2019). This choice of research approach has helped the researcher in understanding the strategies that are used under crisis marketing by the businesses in India.

### B. Research Design

The design of research provides the framework of research techniques that can be followed in the process of research. This design allows the researcher to make use of suitable methods that can amplify the research process and deliver success to the research (Atmowardoyo, 2018). It is of five types "**diagnostic, experimental, descriptive, explanatory, and correlational research design**". In this research, the research has followed a "**descriptive research design**". Descriptive research design helps in describing the phenomenon of the research in a systematic way. It assists in obtaining information useful for describing the problems of the research (Sahin, and Mete, 2021). This research has

followed descriptive design because it has helped the researcher in understanding the role of crisis marketing during and after Covid-19 in India.

### C. Data collection and data analysis

The collection of data can be described as the process of gathering, measuring, and analysing the data for the research. It helps in developing accurate insights for the research. It is of two types, "**primary and secondary methods of data collection**". In order to proceed with the research, the use of "**secondary methods of data collection**" has been done. Secondary data collection being economical helps in saving time and efforts of the researcher. It also helps in making use of existing information in order to enrich the research (Garcia, and Mayorga, 2018). The analysis of data helps in interpreting the collected information. It helps in extracting data most suitable for the research thereby developing better insights for the research (Pandey, and Pandey, 2021). It is of two types "**qualitative and quantitative data analysis**". In this research, the choice of "**qualitative method**" has been done for the analysis of data. The researchers have performed "**thematic analysis**" for the better interpretation of collected information (Grant, and Kara, 2018). It has provided flexibility to the research and has helped the researcher in understanding the aspects of the research topic. These methods have helped the researcher in analysing the role of crisis marketing for business in India in the era of Covid-19 and have helped in serving strategies that can be used to improve this technique of marketing.

### D. Research limitation

- This research has adopted a secondary data collection method due to the Covid-19 pandemic. However, the use of primary data collection would have enriched the findings of the research.
- The relevant article other than the English language could not be used in this research.

### III. DATA FINDINGS

#### A. Crisis marketing in businesses

Marketing plays an important role in the operations of the business and the branding of products. It helps the business to spread awareness about their product among people and attract customers. This in turn helps in elaborating the customer base and increasing the sales of the companies by generating revenues from the business. A business might suffer an economic downturn during the era of crisis making it difficult to gain revenue. A crisis in business can occur in various ways. A business might suffer a crisis due to natural ways (such as coronavirus), technological crisis (such as corrupted software),

organizational misdeeds, or loss of management values. This crisis negatively impacts the organizations and the branding of their products. During the situation of crisis, the market becomes volatile, and the behaviour of customers changes which become difficult for companies to evaluate. As a result of this, the businesses have to face sudden fluctuations impacting their revenue gain. In this situation, it becomes difficult to predict the long-term behaviour of the market and it demands a change in marketing techniques to derive better solutions that can help the company in the time of crisis. In this situation, general marketing could not give fruitful results to the company.



Fig. 2: Crisis marketing in business

(Source: Deshpande, 2021)

In order to cope with the situation of crisis, businesses opt for crisis marketing. Crisis marketing helps the business to evaluate various marketing techniques and tactics in order to lead the business out of a difficult situation. It also helps in securing the future of companies and better branding of the products (Wilson, 2020). In crisis marketing, the companies opt for various practical solutions that can be used to handle critical times. This approach of marketing assists businesses in reaching their target market and gaining the attention of potential customers. It also assists the businesses to operate in a proper framework and fulfil the desires of the organization during hard times.

#### B. Discussion of strategies for crisis marketing

The organization can face crisis be it through natural causes or negative deeds of the organization. These challenges faced by the organization can increase the stress of the organization. In times of crisis, the companies adopt certain strategies to mitigate this situation of crisis. The strategies that the businesses use for crisis marketing are as follows:

Communication within the company holds utmost importance during marketing. The business makes use of targeted communication in order to maintain the trust of customers and restore the reputation of companies. In the strategies for crisis marketing, the businesses use transparent and credible communication and it is also considered as the best strategy for business. As the demands of customers change frequently, the business has included diversification of branding in the strategy of crisis management (Ezra, 2020). Businesses in today's context are using various advertising channels to elevate the role of crisis marketing in the business. They are opting for digital strategies to make the customers aware of the products.



Fig. 3: Strategies involved in crisis marketing

(Source: Coolman, 2017)

In order to elevate the activities of customer retention, the companies have involved trial offers and vouchers in crisis marketing. This has helped companies to attract new customers as well as retain old customers. Restaurants are using digital platforms and lucrative offers to pull the customers and elevate their revenue gain. The companies have focused on attracting customers with the help of lucrative messages in crisis management. The reason behind this is they are trying to restore the reputation of the business and improve it by relying on the values and strengths of the company. These approaches are followed by businesses in order to carry forward the activities of crisis marketing and improve the branding of products.

*C. Impact of crisis marketing during and after covid-19 in India*

The crisis of coronavirus has resulted in changing the behaviour and sentiments of consumers. However, with the emergence of the coronavirus pandemic, the sales of the companies dropped and the business had to face negative consequences. In this era of crisis, the businesses had to suffer losses and economic consequences. Many industries such as airline, hospitality, rector sector in India had to face the heat of the pandemic. In this situation, the businesses in India have adopted crisis marketing to help them cope with the negative consequences brought up by Covid-19 (Hoekstra, and Leeftang, 2020). Many businesses in India opted for digital marketing, the retailers’ involved digital medium in their marketing to get the best of results and for better branding of the products. It has been seen that during Covid-19, 37.4% of the business opted for a marketing channel mix and this has helped the business in generating sponsorships and promotions.

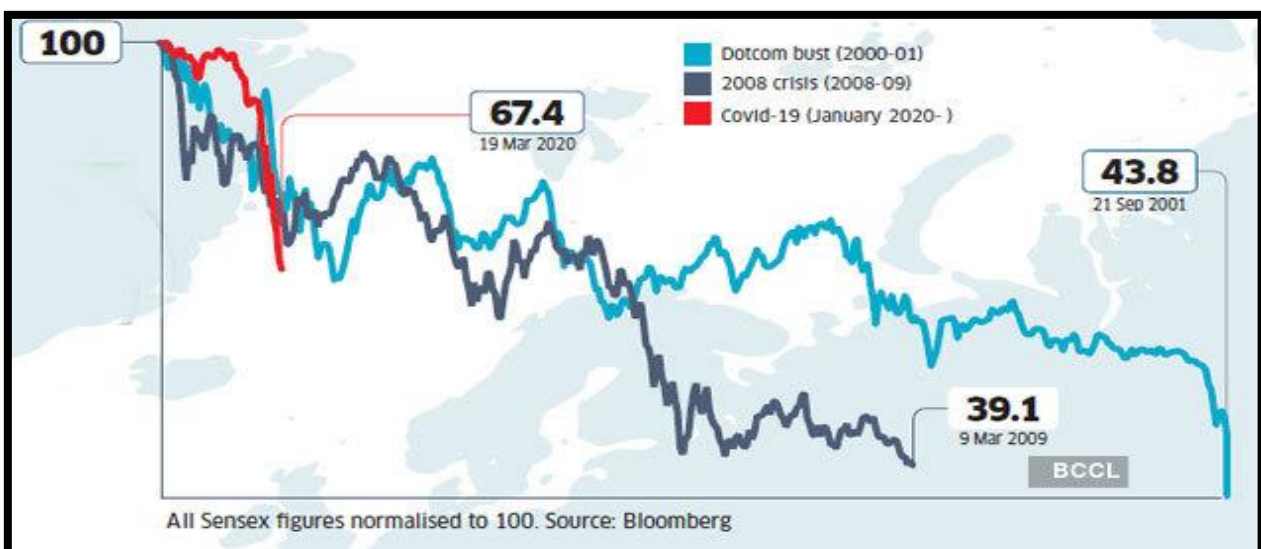


Fig. 4: Impact of Covid-19 on businesses

(Source:Mehta, and Bhardwaj, 2020)

As the use of crisis marketing involves innovations it has also helped the business in India to come up with new ideas such as retelecasting of popular serials by entertainment media. The companies like "Curefit,

Reliance Jio, DD national" have adopted a crisis marketing strategy. As the gyms were closed during the pandemic "Curefit" opted for an online medium and started giving online workout and yoga sessions to the people.

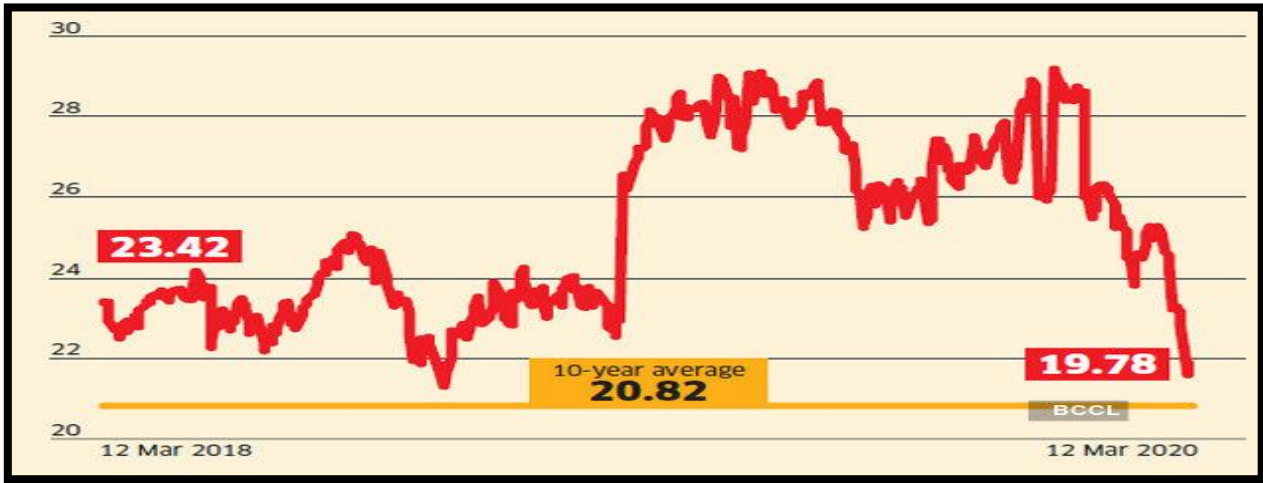


Fig. 5: Impact of Covid-19 on stock market

(Source: Mehta, and Bhardwaj, 2020)

This benefited the company in branding its product as well as helped people as they could attain the classes at the comfort of their homes. DD National started "retelecasting of episodes of Ramayan and Mahabharat" as a strategy for crisis marketing during a pandemic. It has helped the organizations to cope with the negative effects of Covi-19 and also to glue down the customers with the companies. Even after Covid-19, the strategy of crisis marketing is helping the companies to secure the future of businesses in India. It is helping the companies to develop contingency plans and better branding of the products.

D. Evaluation of approaches for crisis marketing

Though crisis marketing helps the organizations in enhancing the activities of marketing during a hard time, the following approaches can be taken for making improvements in the strategy of crisis marketing:

The development of a marketing contingency plan can give better insights to the organization about the problem. It can also help the companies in delivering the annual goals and earn better profits. The organization should mitigate any spread of misinformation within the organization or with the customers. In the situation of a crisis, it is easier to spread misinformation. Thus organizations should look into the news sources and make use of the right medium in order to inform customers about the changes taking place in the organization (Gosain, 2020). As Covid-19 has drastically affected the business in India it is important for the companies to focus on providing quality services in order to retain the customers. Businesses can opt for personalized services for the customers looking into the restrictions of a pandemic.

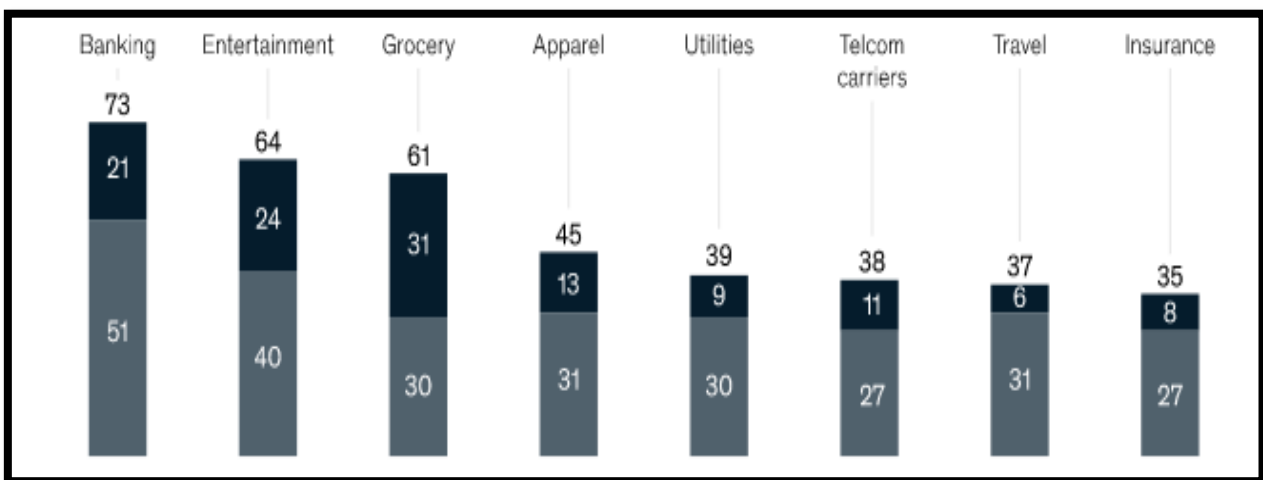


Fig. 6: Adaptation of digital strategy by business

(Source: Hoekstra, and Leeftang, 2020)

**Personalized experience** improves crisis marketing and companies would be able to collaborate with the customers by SMS or voicemail services (Deshpande, 2021). Crisis marketing can be enhanced by prioritizing content development. Spreading awareness about the products with the help of better, innovative, and lucrative content helps in attracting customers. Customers get thrilled when their needs are addressed and solved by the businesses.

#### IV. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

##### A. Conclusion

This research paper has concluded that the use of crisis marketing has helped the businesses in India to cope with the hard times during and after the Covid-19 pandemic. This research paper has evaluated the role of crisis marketing during and after the corona virus pandemic. This research paper has discussed the background and rationale of the research topic. The understanding of the research topic has been developed by reviewing various literatures. This research has followed the descriptive design, positivism philosophy, and deductive approach respectively. The data have been collected with the help of secondary methods and thematic analysis has been performed to analyse the data as well as answer the research questions. The analysis has shown that crisis marketing has helped businesses to stay in the competition during and after the pandemic era and it has imparted positive results in the branding of products. Recommendations have also been given to the business in this paper on how they can improve their strategies for crisis marketing.

##### B. Recommendation

In order to be in the competition and cope with the crisis of corona virus pandemic the business can make use of the following approaches:

- **Contingency plan:** As found out through the analysis the development of a contingency plan can help organizations in coping up with hard times. These plans provide back support to the organization and help them to stand in the situation of crisis.
- **Personalized experiences:** These features can help the organization in attracting most of the customers. As found from the analysis Covid-19 has brought many restrictions; these experiences can help the organization to provide services without any physical touch.
- **Restricting misinformation and developing communication:** Better communication with the help of digital media would allow businesses to communicate effectively with the customers. This in turn would help in building the trust of the business among the customers during hard times.

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