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OUT-OF-HOME

Real estate OOH ads need to get out of the rut: Experts

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The real estate sector is largely unorganised. This has been a primary reason why real estate ads fail to create impressive innovations and attractiveness.

On an average, out of home occupies 50 per cent of the ad space in a real estate brand's media mix. However, not much eye-catching work has been seen in outdoor media formats from this category. The key elements of a real estate billboard have remained the same for years – the apartment design, the location and the cost. The challenge always has been about how inventive one can get in bringing it to life.

Aneil Deepak, Head – Ideas, Creative and Planning, DDB MudraMax has an interesting observation to make in this respect. He remarked, "Creative agencies have either become poets or wall paper designers. The truth about out of home is that you have too little time to decipher the poetry. The ones who are seeing these advertisements are also smart enough to realise that the sexy lady sleeping on a sprawling green lawn is just an image bought from Shutterstock."



Most real estate brands use the same creatives when they use OOH as a reminder medium to their main campaign, where a singular thought has to be driven. That is strategic, believes Upendra Singh Thakur, Co-Founder, Origin Beanstalk. "Having said that, execution of the same thought can be different as per the location and ambience of the outdoor space. Now that's creativity," he added.

Origin Beanstalk recently used outdoor as the lead medium for the launch of Sunteck City, a luxury real estate brand. The agency used multiple creatives to convey the same thought, changing the creative every 15 days to avoid monotony.



Using single creative strategically can be effective, but only if customised. "At present, there is a single creative that is displayed across vehicles. Ideally, it should be customised as per the display vehicle. A billboard is about largeness, that's where a drawing room or a golf course could be presented in all its bigness. That sense of space could never be accomplished in a bus shelter. Bus shelters could be used to talk about the price or the location. Theatres are about, well, theatre. So they could be used to dramatise the experience of staying in the property," advised Deepak.



Real estate brands are also experimenting with long-term campaigns. For instance, early this year, Tata Housing rolled out innovative campaigns at select strategic sites for six to eight months. What worked for them was innovation and smart strategy.

Getting it right

These apart, there are a few other things that real estate brands need to get it right. According to Thakur, "The key element, besides keeping the messaging short and simple, is to have an eye for detail and design each media as per their size and location, both of which are very important to get the right impact, and not treat them like mere adapts of one master layout. While this holds true for all brands, it is important for real estate brands to have the call for action and the location of the project upfront and easily readable. This will help to evaluate the effectiveness of the creative and the return on investment."

Having said that, real estate brands have started conversing with the consumer rather than hardcore property selling. They have also started giving importance to concept selling than just using the building elevation and interiors.

However, most brands continue to prefer quantity over quality while selecting sites and treat OOH creatives as mere adapts of the print campaign.

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