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Imbibing the Marketing Trends in the field of Performing Arts

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Abstract

Marketing in the cultural sphere has its own characteristics due to certain market requirements in this field of activity. It is distinguished by a special approach to traditional categories of marketing activities, thus defining the content of its functions. This paper discusses marketing strategies for performing artists in the Indian scenario, especially. It outlines basic marketing tools like promotional kits, resumes, bios, publicity shots, press releases, and work samples that artists can use. It also discusses developing an overall marketing strategy and using online marketing tools and sites to get work. Networking, listening to audiences' needs, and developing relationships are important. The use by cultural institutions of the whole complex of marketing technologies will not only improve the quality of services provided by a given institution in a certain market segment, but will also allow moving to a new stage of evolution of the whole market of sociocultural services, which corresponds to the requirements (needs) of consumers to a greater extent and to enhance the reach.

Key-words: Arts marketing, Marketing strategy, Digital Marketing, Social Media, Technology, Arts management, Indian Performing arts

Introduction

The Indian performing arts sector, encompassing classical dance, theatre, music, and folk traditions, is a cornerstone of the nation's cultural identity. However, in today's fast-paced, technology-driven world, traditional marketing approaches are

insufficient for engaging younger audiences, expanding reach, and sustaining artists' livelihoods. Innovative marketing techniques are playing a transformative role in revitalising these art forms while creating economic opportunities for artists and cultural institutions.

One of the most significant marketing innovations is the integration of digital platforms (Traian. (2021). Social media networks such as Instagram, YouTube, and Facebook are now indispensable tools for promoting performances. Artists and organisations create visually appealing content—teasers, behind-the-scenes videos, and live streaming of rehearsals—to spark audience curiosity. Platforms like Instagram Reels and YouTube Shorts have become effective storytelling mediums, allowing even niche art forms like Yakshagana or Kathakali to reach a global audience. Digital ticketing platforms such as *BookMyShow.com* also streamline event promotion and attendance, making traditional performances more accessible.

Another notable trend is the use of influencer collaborations and cross-industry partnerships. Performing artists collaborate with popular social media influencers or brands to showcase the fusion of tradition and modernity. For example, Bharatanatyam and Odissi dancers have collaborated with fashion designers and lifestyle brands, presenting classical art forms in visually captivating campaigns. Such initiatives not only raise awareness but also position these art forms as aspirational cultural experiences.

Content marketing and storytelling play a crucial role in audience engagement. Documentaries, artist interviews, and mini-series highlighting the history and evolution of Indian performing arts are increasingly popular on platforms like Netflix and Amazon Prime. These narratives create emotional connections with audiences and foster a deeper appreciation for cultural heritage. Similarly, podcasts and blogs offer accessible platforms to educate audiences while subtly marketing performances and workshops.

Innovative marketing in performing arts also includes immersive experiences and hybrid events. Many organizations now offer virtual reality (VR) and augmented reality (AR) showcases, allowing viewers worldwide to experience live performances in a 360-degree format. Hybrid events, combining in-person and online experiences, ensure that cultural programming remains inclusive and resilient, even during disruptions such as the COVID-19 pandemic (Ulziibadrakh et.al. 2025).

Certain specialized authors considered arts marketing (theatre, music, dance, visual art) as being the marketing of "difficult" products due to their role in educating the audience and perpetuating beliefs and values throughout generations, by using

submission at various cultural stimuli. In this situation, the marketers have offered to the audience an intangible aspect, a service that is quite difficult to promote (Cacovean, 2015).

Community-driven marketing is another powerful technique. Grassroots campaigns, local collaborations, and workshops in schools and colleges foster audience loyalty. Artists often engage in cultural festivals, CSR initiatives, and collaborations with NGOs to broaden their reach, especially among rural communities. This approach strengthens the cultural ecosystem while nurturing future patrons of the arts.

Digital Marketing and Social Media Integration

In the digital age, a strong online presence is essential for any art form. Indian classical dance can benefit significantly from various digital marketing strategies:

- **Social Media Campaigns:** Platforms like Instagram, YouTube, Facebook, and TikTok can be used to share performance clips, behind-the-scenes videos, tutorials, and even short-form content to engage a younger audience.
- **Website and Blogging:** A dedicated website with details about the history, styles, and upcoming performances will help provide useful information and serve as a resource. Blogging can also be used to write about the evolution of the dance, the lives of prominent dancers, and other relevant content.
- **Live Streaming:** Hosting live performances on platforms like YouTube or Facebook can expand the audience base beyond geographical limits.
- **Collaborations with Influencers:** Partnering with social media influencers or cultural bloggers can help attract attention to performances and events, especially when targeting a younger, tech-savvy audience.



Branding and Positioning

Branding plays a significant role in creating a strong identity for Indian classical dance companies, solo performers, or dance festivals. Some important aspects to focus on include:

- **Creating a Strong Artist Identity:** Dancers and organisations need to develop a unique brand persona. This could be based on their signature style, interpretation, or innovative fusion of classical dance with contemporary elements (Oham, Ejike. 2022).
- **Positioning through Cultural Storytelling:** The stories told through the dance performances can be marketed as narratives that go beyond entertainment. They can be positioned as culturally enriching, educational experiences that provide an immersive understanding of Indian traditions.



Partnerships and Collaborations

In order to broaden the appeal of Indian classical dance, collaborations with other art forms or industries can be highly effective:

- **Cross-Art Collaborations:** Collaborating with musicians, theatre groups, or even contemporary dance forms can create unique performances that attract a wider audience.
- **Collaborations with Corporates and Government:** These partnerships can help fund performances, festivals, and workshops. Corporates are often keen to support cultural events as part of their corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives.

- **Tourism Boards:** Promoting classical dance performances as a part of cultural tourism packages can attract international visitors.



Experiential Marketing

To create lasting impressions, Indian classical dance can be marketed as an immersive experience:

- **Interactive Workshops:** Organizing workshops where audiences can learn about the dance form, its history, and even try out basic moves can create a deeper connection with the art.
- **Cultural Festivals:** Hosting large-scale festivals or events with a mix of dance performances, talks, and exhibitions can engage a diverse audience.

7. Content Marketing and Educational Programs

Indian classical dance, rich in its history and technique, offers an opportunity for content-driven marketing. Educational programs can be designed for different age groups, including:

- **Online Courses and Tutorials:** Offering dance classes or cultural education online allows people worldwide to learn and appreciate classical dance.
- **Documentaries and Web Series:** A documentary series highlighting the history, significance, and contemporary relevance of Indian classical dance can appeal to a broader audience, including those interested in history and culture.

Event Marketing and Sponsorships

Performance events can be a major avenue for marketing. Dancers and organizations can partner with sponsors and utilize event marketing strategies such as:

- **Promotional Tie-Ups:** Partnering with high-profile sponsors or brands for dance events can enhance visibility and add prestige.
- **Cultural Events and Competitions:** Organizing annual or biennial dance festivals or competitions with diverse categories (e.g., dance, music, storytelling) can attract attention from both the media and the audience.

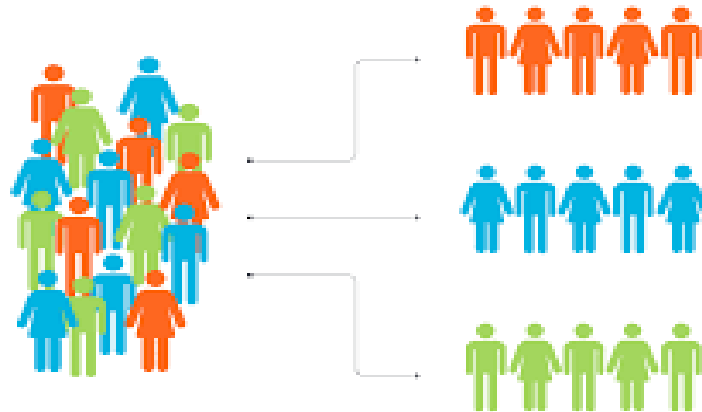
Challenges and Solutions

- **Challenge 1: Audience Engagement**
Solution: Use social media to share interactive content (e.g., live Q&A with dancers, polls on favorite dance styles, etc.) and engage audiences beyond just attending performances.
- **Challenge 2: Perception of Being Traditional or Outdated**
Solution: Incorporate fusion elements (with contemporary music or other art forms) to attract younger audiences while maintaining the essence of classical dance.
- **Challenge 3: Limited Reach and Accessibility**
Solution: Expanding online content (e.g., virtual performances, educational webinars) to reach a global audience and create a sense of inclusivity.

Utilizing Data Analytics and Audience Insights

To further refine marketing strategies, dancers and organizations can use data analytics tools to gather insights about their audience's behavior and preferences. Key ways to do this include:

- **Audience Segmentation:** Analyzing demographic data from ticket sales, social media interactions, and online engagement can help in creating targeted marketing campaigns. For example, data can reveal which types of content resonate most with specific age groups or geographic locations, guiding future marketing decisions.



- **Performance Analytics:** Tracking attendance, online streaming viewership, and audience feedback from performances can provide valuable information on what types of performances (e.g., classical vs. fusion) or specific dance styles (Bharatanatyam, Kathak, Odissi) attract the most attention, helping performers and organizers tailor their offerings.
- **Personalization:** Using data to personalize marketing communications (email newsletters, promotions, or recommendations for upcoming events) can enhance the audience experience. For instance, sending an email with information about a particular dancer's upcoming show, based on a previous interest in similar performances, can increase engagement.

Globalization and Cross-Cultural Marketing

While Indian classical dance is deeply rooted in Indian culture, its universal appeal can be highlighted through cross-cultural marketing initiatives. Here's how it can be approached:

- **Collaborating with International Dance Festivals:** Indian classical dancers can collaborate with international dance festivals or cultural exchange programs in various countries. By performing alongside other traditional or contemporary dance forms, they can showcase the versatility and universality of classical dance.



- **Fusion and Cross-Genre Performances:** As global cultural exchange increases, performing artists can experiment with integrating elements of Indian classical dance with other global dance forms or genres (such as ballet, contemporary dance, jazz, or hip-hop). These fusion performances can make the art form more accessible to audiences unfamiliar with Indian classical traditions while maintaining its essence.
- **Highlighting Indian Classical Dance in the Global Context:** Marketing efforts can emphasize how Indian classical dance reflects universal themes such as love, devotion, nature, and human emotions. This approach could appeal to international audiences who might appreciate the emotional depth and storytelling aspects of the performances.

Conclusion

In conclusion, Indian performing arts marketing has shifted from traditional word-of-mouth strategies to dynamic, technology-driven innovations. By leveraging digital platforms, cross-industry collaborations, storytelling, immersive experiences, and community engagement, artists and cultural organizations are redefining how audiences interact with art. These strategies not only preserve India's rich cultural traditions but also position them as globally relevant, appealing experiences for diverse audiences. As technology continues to evolve, innovative marketing will remain central to the growth and sustainability of the Indian performing arts sector.

The exploration of branding in the performing arts reveals a rich and dynamic landscape where historical practices, contemporary strategies, and theoretical perspectives converge. The evolution of branding in this sector has transitioned from traditional, community-based approaches to sophisticated, technology-driven strategies. Digital media and technological advancements have significantly expanded performing arts organizations' reach and engagement capabilities. Successful case studies, such as the Royal Opera House and the musical "Hamilton," illustrate the power of innovative branding in building strong, resonant brands. However, challenges such as content oversaturation and maintaining artistic integrity remain significant

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