SIMC-B Event Partner for India's First Classical Music Reality Show ‘Naad Bhed’

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Abstract: Symbiosis Institute of Media and Communication, Bengaluru, SIMC-B is a B-School offering MBA in Communication Management. It aims to serve the multi-faceted needs of the Media and Communication Industry in particular, and the Society in general, through events, education, training and research. SIMC B as the Knowledge Partner for “Naad Bhed” took care of consistent communication strategy and implementation in providing publicity for the Event across South India. Through the consistent communication and promotional activities of the Institute, the Bangalore City alone witnessed more than 300 participants auditioning for the event. SIMC-B students also helped in the administration and registration during the auditions in Karnataka.

In order to sensitize the young Managers-to-be in Media and Communication by giving a fillip to their creativity, SIMC-B encourages creative pursuits in order to sensitize its students to culture, heritage, literature, fine arts and the performing arts. SIMC-B has tied up with SPICMACAY and conducts workshops, seminars and performances at its premises regularly. The students of SIMC-B have also been involved with the branding and publicity of SPICMACAY. Hence when SPICMACAY teamed up with All India Radio and Doordarshan to produce ‘Naad Bhed’ the Country’s first - ever Classical Music Reality Show, modelled on the Indian Idol format, SIMC-Bpartnered with SPICMACAY as the Event Partners.

SPIC MACAY, Society for the Promotion of Indian Classical Music and Culture amongst Youth, is a voluntary movement founded in 1977 by Padmashree Dr Kiran Seth, a Professor at IIT-Delhi. The objective was to reform the quality of formal education by increasing awareness about the diversity of Indian heritage and enlivening the young mind to absorb the values embedded therein.

Naad Bhed, a Music Reality Show, is an initiative by SPICMACAY along with Doordarshan- the Indian Public Service Broadcaster and All India Radio. With the youth increasingly drawn to either Western pop music or Bollywood songs, Classical Music is losing its pride of place in the cultural heritage of the Nation. In order to popularize Classical Music form and bring it to the mainstream, Naad Bhed was launched. It provided a platform to those learning Indian Classical Music. Naad Bhed’s pivotal focus in on Carnatic and Hindustani vocal and Instrumental. A first of its kind in India, Naad Bhed was unique in its own way as it aimed at according respect for Indian Classical Music and not to merely improve the TRP of the programme. The Show fostered the exchange of traditional Indian values and generated awareness of the cultural traditions and heritage of India. After three preliminary rounds, the performance of the final set of contestants was broadcast in Doordarshan. The programme attracted participants from all parts of the Country and they were shortlisted after three preliminary rounds through the familiar pattern of elimination.

Key words: Promotion, Communication, Event Management, Traditional Media, Publicity.

Introduction

Indian Classical music has a history spanning millennia and having developed over several eras, it remains fundamental to the lives of Indians today as sources of spiritual inspiration, cultural expression and pure entertainment. The Classical Music genre of India is said to be one of the oldest
unbroken musical traditions in the world. India is made up of several dozen ethnic groups, speaking their own languages and dialects, having very distinct cultural traditions. Music plays a pivotal role in defining the Indian Cultural Heritage. During the past century, music has made its presence felt on the concert platform and has captured the attention of appreciative audiences around the world. Even after centuries of refinement, Indian classical music remains highly creative because of the important scope provided for spontaneous improvisation by various contributors to the field. It retains its roots in pure melody and rhythm and the subtle and intricate interplay of these essentials is its essence. SPICMACAY along with Air India Radio and Doordarshan launched “Naad Bhed”, the Music Reality Show to encourage and provide a platform for young talent passionate about Indian Classical Music. SIMC-B as the Event Partner worked for the promotion of Naad Bhed in South India.

Pre Event Initiatives

Areas of involvement included pre event activities such as

- Creating promotional material – posters, mailers etc, announcing the Event, reaching out to the target groups of participants from schools and colleges besides IT companies (having young population adult) both in the urban and rural areas.
- Social media was actively used for dissemination of information and also getting registrations.
- Screening of the applications
- Video and Photography of the auditions
- Helping in managing the Karnataka auditions, its administration and registration
- Co-ordinating with local artists who were the accompanying musicians as well the judges of each panel.
- Interviewing the judges and giving the recordings for being aired by AIR and Doordarshan.

Communication Strategy

- TV/Radio/ Advertising/Partnering
- Designing, printing and disseminating publicity and promotional material such as posters
- Word of Mouth – Schools, Colleges, Corporates, Industrial Associations, Residential Complexes, Clubs - Cosmopolitan, Inner Wheel, Rotary Club, Bangalore Club, Indiranagar Club, Koramangala Club, Catholic Club, Lion's Club, Sadhashivanagar Club amongst others.
  - Fine Arts and Performing Arts Clubs such as Chitrakala Parishath Rangashankara, Rashmigopi's Shankara Foundation, Film Chamber of Commerce, Suchitra Film Society, Music and Dance Academies.
  - Foreign Trade Offices, Max Muller Bhavan, Basava Bhavan.
  - Social Media – Face book, Twitter, YouTube, LinkedIn

The above communication strategies were aggressively implemented by the students of SIMC-B for promoting India’s first nationwide classical music competition organized by SPICMACAY, AIR and Doordarshan.

Registration

Registrations were done at the venue, apart from on-line, by the students apart from personal interaction during door- to- door promotions and website registrations. This gave our students hands on experience and exposure of organising an event such as this one which was very specialized and not mainstream and the hardships faced for ensuring its success.
SIMC-B students visited the Bangalore, Mysore Mangalore and Dharwad auditions and helped in video capturing the Event. The participants from various districts across the State auditioned with full enthusiasm and the event was judged by accomplished artists in the field of Indian Classical music.

Results

The promotions were so impacting that Bangalore alone witnessed more than 300 participants auditioning out of 1600 participants all over the Country. This amounts to approximately 20%. Karnataka was the only State to receive entries in both Hindustani and Carnatic categories. After the first preliminary auditions for Carnatic Music held in Mangalore and Bengaluru, 36 candidates were shortlisted for the Regional Round. For Hindustani Music, auditions were held in Dharwad and Bengaluru and 44 candidates were selected to go to the Regional Round. The Regional Round for both Carnatic and Hindustani Music was held in DD Bengaluru Kendra Studios from 14-24 September 2013. Of these, 19 candidates were selected to represent Karnataka in the National Round for Hindustani Music held in Kolkata. The National Round for Carnatic Music was held in Chennai where 19 candidates were selected. The Finals took place in Mumbai from 12th to 20th December, 2013.

Impressions about Naad Bhed

With a national broadcaster, Naad Bhed received very encouraging response from the Country with many aspiring candidates. It helped in gaining immense popularity for Indian Classical Music amongst the younger generation and also provided a platform for them to exhibit and nurture their talent. With accomplished and respected artists as the jury members, not only the participants but also the viewers gained insights into the intricacies of Classical Music. The participants felt a sense of pride and left with indelible experiences in their mind.

Conclusion

Naad Bhed was one of the most successful Indian reality shows that focussed on preserving long lasting interest in Hindustani and Carnatic Classical Music art forms. The Event featured participants from across the Country with dreams and aspirations. One of the contributing factors to the success of Naad Bhed was that it focused on instrumental and vocal as separate categories having separate set of jury. This encouraged the youngsters to participate and showcase their talents.

Naad Bhed motivated the participants and helped them to face the real world with courage and confidence unlike other reality shows which demotivates and demoralises the participants at times, given the ruthlessly competitive spirit. But presentation of Classical Music form requires a more serene approach, which is what the Show format succeeded in doing. Naad Bhed broke the stereotype that all reality shows are replicas of the Western world.

This Event also gave them our students hands on exposure and experience in understanding the process of organizing a pan India event of this scale and making it a great success. This turned out to be a great learning for the students of SIMC-B as they are pursuing their MBA in Communication Management, the specializations being Advertising and Public Relations. SIMC-B looks forward to working for more such enriching programs. Naad Bhed is still being actively telecast on National Doordarshan, anchored by the noted Film Actor Shabana Azmi.