

Khushboo Gujarat Ki: Branding a Fragrance

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*“Gujarat Tourism is outstripping Centre's Incredible India campaign”
Amitabh Bachchan, Brand Ambassador Gujarat Tourism on his Blog, Jan 22 2012*

Case Summary: *From a state which was never in the tourist evoked set to emerging as one of the preferred domestic destinations; Gujarat is a classic case of how a focused branding initiative can revamp the image of a State. Shot over 17 destinations across three years, the “Khushboo Gujarat Ki” campaign reflecting diversity of Brand Gujarat with Mr. Amitabh Bachchan as the brand ambassador culminated into an equal number of promotional films across varied communication platforms thus proved to be a “turning point” for the state's tourism industry.*

I. Need For the Fragrance

Gujarat has always been an affluent state in terms of heritage, archaeological sites, ecology, wild life sanctuaries spiritual locations, deserts, beaches & more. The enterprising Gujarati with his risk taking ability, the rich delectable flavors of Khakhra, Dhokla, Undhiyo, the mesmerizing ethnic treasure of vibrant festivals, the abundant folklore, the enticing colours of Bandhej & the strong inherent values had already created a special place for the state on the global map as a “destination with immense potential”. The state was replete with almost every ingredient well in sync for becoming a major tourist hub. What was probably missing was the most coveted discerning tourist.

The need of the hour was to change the perception, not just of the average Gujarati within the state but also of tourists across the country & the globe, pulling them to visit the state more than anything else for its natural joie de vivre & diversity. Due to the various temples & pilgrimages, Gujarat always attracted spiritual tourism however the other destinations of tourist interest like the beaches in Kutch which were lesser known needed promotion. As expressed by the man behind the state branding campaign Mr. Piyush Pandey, “**Creating a market for things that already exist but no one has any knowledge of is always a challenge**”. Overcoming this huge challenge could only have been possible by kick-starting a powerful branding campaign showcasing the immense hidden potential in the State.

Tourism Corporation of Gujarat Ltd (TCGL) – the tourism body decided to take up this mighty challenge. From 2006- 2008 they ran a campaign informing people about various tourist attractions in the state through the print medium. “**However, they were not very catchy**” realized Mr. Sanjay Kaul, IAS, Commissioner of Tourism & Managing Director, TCGL.

On 12th January 2009, the 5th Vibrant Gujarat Summit –one of the biggest platforms meant for showcasing an overall positioning of the state was hosted by the government in Ahmedabad. The focus of the summit that year was based on “Globalization of Gujarat Tourism & it was aimed at addressing “tourism building” in the state. The summit saw the presence of national & international tourism dignitaries, experts & investors alike. It was here that the idea for a strategic branding initiative for propagating the state as a tourist destination in a big way germinated. The challenge was mammoth and to meet it successfully one of the most charismatic celebrities & the biggest superstar ever of Indian celluloid Amitabh Bachchan was brought on board as its brand ambassador, however the celebrity had laid down a pre-condition that the role would be accepted provided creative genius Piyush Pandey of the much celebrated advertising agency Ogilvy & Mather (O&M) was signed on. The Tourism board agreed Mr. Piyush Pandey was brought in. Noted film maker Shoojit Sircar donned the producers cap. Things gradually fell into the right place and thus was born the campaign - 'Khushboo Gujarat Ki'. The campaign connected all the state's attributes and worked very well for the state.

II. Growth of tourism branding

The current scenario points at the progression of tourism as one of the largest service industry in the country with a major contribution of 6.23% to the national GDP and a substantial contribution of 8.78% to the total employment. So far as world economy is concerned tourism has emerged as one of the most prominent

sectors with the revenues having multiplied to the third largest industry only after oil and automobiles. Changing demographics has been one of the key determinants influencing the growth of tourism in the country. Rising Indian youth population with a high disposable income and a passion to experiment, explore something new was consistently giving an impetus to the concept of “Destination Branding”.

The world tourism organization predicts that India is expected to become the leader in tourism in south Asia by 2020 with around 8.9 billion arrivals.

As per a published report in business daily – The Economic Times with rising income, experts visualize two categories of Indian travelers growing “at the top end and the bottom end”. The report indicates the upsurge & rise of “what is called the consuming class- India's middle class, estimating growth from the present 5% to 50% by 2030 predicting an expected six fold growth in HNI's by 2030 — which amounts to around 0.2 million in 2011 to over 1.2 million by 2030”.

With the advent of the new millennium tourism scenario in the country was suddenly becoming intensely competitive. Unlike the 80's & 90's visiting a destination was no longer a family affair. It was more like finding a “respite to the challenges of tough city life”. The rapidly burgeoning concept of weekend vacations leisure and entertainment had further fuelled tourism growth in the country. As the tourism market opened up & evolved it offered a fertile ground for competitive branding to lure the discerning tourist.

The Competitive scenario:

The competition was spearheaded by “Incredible India”, the umbrella branding initiative of the ministry of tourism that delightfully projected core values of the country addressing varied nuances & capturing vivid moods of the Indian culture. The campaign was executed with a strong positioning, attractive brand elements, intriguing narration & a single minded devotion of branding India as a world class tourist destination”.

However prior to this initiative tourism branding in the country never so intensive Restricted merely to policy formulation and a few brochures and pamphlets. “**Incredible India** a major success.

Incredible India with its high reach, tremendous recall value and some sort of a Halo effect posed an apparent threat for individual domestic destination brands to stand out on their own as a separate entity.

The decision to undertake an aggressive branding campaign & leveraging it for building the state tourism brand & creating a distinct identity was rational

In 2006 when Gujarat initiated with a string of print ads the tourism department was inspired by the roaring success of Kerala's Tourism branding campaigns - an initiative by a state tourism which almost stole the thunder from the amazingly successful “**Incredible India**”. When the Umbrella campaign almost looked like overriding the entire tourism brand wagon. Kerala with its aggressive marketing strategy & very divine value proposition of “Gods Own Country” in all its campaigns positioned the state as an inexpensive affordable and alluring destination, making it a favored brand for all seasons. Kerala had created a unique almost meditative brand image for itself making it rather formidable for competing states to get a differential Image. It always had a strong brand presence as an alluring destination for all seasons.

While on one hand domestic brands like Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Goa, Rajasthan, Jammu & Kashmir were also getting aggressive in their branding initiatives leading to Cannibalization as one of the major branding challenges. Malaysia, Thailand and Australia on the other hand were also fast making their way into the tourist's mind space with catchy taglines & delightful execution.

Amidst this competitive clutter brand Gujarat was striving to create an individual brand positioning and carve a differential niche for itself as a “Tourism destination with immense potential”.

Challenges faced

- Gujarat was perceived as a **Traditional State with a deep rooted cultural ethos conventional values & Entrepreneurial spirit** primarily due the risk bearing ability of the average Gujarati.
- Though the state had some recognition as “a destination with immense potential due to this strong perception state was never in the tourist's evoked set. Hence there was an urgent need to change perception.
- Lack of information about the tourism potential of the state was a major concern. Creating visibility & awareness for the latent tourism potential was another major challenge for the state.
- Other states were fast gaining an edge in terms of Brand building recall, tourist footfalls, revenue etc.

Given the context that its print advertisements released in 2006 could not generate any impact for the state tourism, this looked like a formidable challenge for brand Gujarat. TCGL realized the impending doom

and thus followed a decision to launch an aggressive creative campaign & communicate it intensively across media platforms. The decision to undertake an aggressive branding campaign & leveraging it for building the state tourism brand & creating a distinct identity was rational.

Creative translation of Fragrance

The state of Gujarat was grappling with the challenges of a conservative brand image. The average national perception connected to it was that of a culturally affluent state more recognized for its spiritualism and tradition rather than its diversity as a tourist destination. The Gujarat Tourism board was conscious of the fact that the state had all the prospects & potential to be a wonderful tourist destination. They were proud of the places they wanted to promote- fabulous sites and stunning vibrant culture. However their major concern was “We have a lot to offer, so how can we showcase that”? This was exactly the brief that was given to ad man Piyush Pandey of Ogilvy& Mather the advertising agency, which ingeniously translated the brief into an entire creative campaign.

The agency knew that creating a market for things that already exist but no one has any knowledge of is always a challenge. However, Piyush Pandey aptly envisaged, “When there is no knowledge of something, then there is absolutely no need to be overtly creative. Do it in a fashion that people will find it interesting”.

Key Challenge:

- To Build the brand image of Gujarat as a vibrant tourist destination
- To depict the potential diversity of Gujarat in its entirety
- To enhance the visibility & presence of Gujarat across varied media

Creative Strategy:

- **Building Brand Image:**

Creative packaging of value proposition, use of a charismatic brand ambassador, promoting festivals, tie-ups & collaborations with other states, road shows & events, use of innovative media like metro wraps.

- **Emphasizing Benefits & USP:**

Detailed depiction of cultural nuances, vibrant festivals & unique aspects of the state.

- **New uses of existing tourism product:**

Creative branding of Kutch, projecting Rann Utsav depicting vibrant folklore International Kite Festival & Monsoon Festival at the exotic Saputara hill station.

- **Offering a range of destinations:**

Diversity & unique mix in terms of geographies, festivals, culture & traditions etc.

- **The Target Group**

Indian Families from Gujarat and other neighbouring states and foreign tourist. According to Mr. Piyush, the Focus was to attract the tourists who visited the neighbouring regions like Rajasthan or Goa.

- **Brand Communication Strategy:**

For a tourist the perception of a destination is that of an intangible product with a combination of sensory behavioral & affective experiences generated through varied stimuli like Brand elements, emotions & environment that create an association. Literature observes that unlike a typical tangible product market, a “destination brand” is more likely to be a corporate or umbrella brand since it allows the destination’s individual operators’ brands to have certain qualities or attributes. (Gnoth, 2007)

The Brand Communication was designed in a manner that could bring about a robust strong trustworthy, traditional & vibrant brand image offering diversity of destination to the tourist.

The brand identity embodies what brand Gujarat aspires to signify and its multiple traits.

It reflects “a set of associations that brand Gujarat seeks to address and maintain”. It represents a vision as to how brand Gujarat as a tourism brand should be perceived by its target audience symbolized effectively by various brand elements like logo portraying a lion, a bright orange color & a tagline

that create a distinct visual look clearly differentiating it from the competitor brands.

The	Intangible	Attributes	(Emotional)	The Tangible Rationales (Functional)
•		Diversity & Legacy	•	Festivals
•		Culture & ethnicity	•	Architecture
•		Magnificence & creativity	•	Locations

Table 1.1: Identity Attributes

The presence of Mr. Amitabh Bachchan as brand ambassador was a conscious attempt to add credibility to the brand personality of the state as a trustworthy tourism brand.

Value Proposition & Positioning

While Vibrant Gujarat was the positioning for the State as a whole, O&M the agency cracked a specific positioning for branding the tourism line of Gujarat which was - “**Khushboo Gujarat ki**” (Breathe in a bit of Gujarat). The objective was to highlight Gujarat as a unique mix of varied tourism destinations and festivals since the state was rich in its offerings consisting of monuments, festivity, religion, food, history, handicrafts etc.

The positioning “Khushboo Gujarat Ki” was adeptly blended with various brand elements into a story making it lucid & extremely easy to comprehend thus ignoring the possibility of ambiguity.

The word – Khushboo (Aroma/ Fragrance) was a conscious effort to metaphorically signify the diversity as the core value proposition generating an enduring association with the brand.

Campaign Phases:

“Khushboo Gujarat Ki” the creative campaign reflecting diversity of Brand Gujarat with Mr. Amitabh Bachchan as the brand ambassador was shot over 17 destinations & was spread across a period of three years.. It was showcased in 3 major phases through varied communication platforms.

Phase	Highlight	Execution
I	Key destinations focusing on the magnificence of the Lions of Gir, the ethereal beauty of Kutch, the sanctity of Dwarka, Somnath, the historical significance of Gandhi Ashram, Dholavira and Porbandar	September 2011
II	Captures the other major attractions of Gujarat, like the vibrant festivities of Navratri, RannUtsav, Modhera, Patan, with a focus on Traditional nuances.	January 2012
III	Saputara, Ambaji, Adalaj, Buddhist trail, focusing on the community’s culture and architecture, also promoted sites of interest to Parsi Sikh & Jain communities.	September 2013

Table 1.2: Campaign Phases

Creative format

Unlike Kerala & even Rajasthan where the stunning locations & brilliant visuals lent a singular reason for visit, In Madhya Pradesh, where the places were a little better known, the agency went into symbolism and dramatization. Gujarat offered multiple reasons to visit by virtue of its diversity in locations, culture and regions. The agency had realized that selecting a perfect fit idea in the branding campaign was probably a tall order. Hence on the suggestion of the Brand Ambassador Mr. Amitabh Bachchan, travelogue was the format selected for executing the campaign on television, while print ads were executed in the advertorial (layout resembling an editorial) format.

Communicating & Implementing the Fragrance:

The media mix & strategy

A 360 degree launch plan was designed adopting a multi-pronged strategy for communication. First time ever for any domestic tourism branding initiative a Concentrated Targeted approach was followed by Tourism Corporation of Gujarat Ltd (TCGL) – the tourism body.

The Commissioner of Tourism TCGL Shri Sanjay Kaul IAS felt that if the branding could translate to recall, it would eventually lead to footfalls.

The tourism body called for a multi-agency pitch to promote brand 'Gujarat' in international markets and further develop the tourism brand in India. At that point of time Sobhagya Advertising was the incumbent on the business. The strategy banked on tapping different agencies for different communication initiatives. To provide a creative vision and strategy to take Gujarat Tourism forward, the challenging onus of crafting the “creative strategy” for majority of the media (Print, TVC’s, Outdoor, Radio, Digital) was on the bankable shoulders of the most celebrated global agency Ogilvy & Mather (O&M). The media plan was perfectly in sync with the creative canvas for which Group M, Kolkata was roped in. Subsequently the campaign was also initiated on popular FM radio stations at frequent intervals.

A judicious mix of channels with a blend of continuous and pulsating schedule was planned. The campaign aired especially during the festival seasons when the customers interest in the state was high & it was also run out of sync with competitors schedule aimed at grabbing the tourists’ mindshare.

Innovation for reach

Over the years domestic tourism has been on the rise; positively outpacing the international tourism growth in the country. Hence to take this initiative a notch higher, Gujarat Tourism was on the lookout for a unique platform that could not only bring a “slice” of the state closer to the people of the national capital but also effectively hit at the increasing influx of foreign tourists coming to India. The objective was brought to realization by BIG Street, the OOH arm of Reliance Broadcast Network Ltd. The agency conceived and executed “Metro Wraps” a branding initiative inside the premium Reliance metro airport express stations as well as a full end-to-end wrap of a Reliance metro train. This was the “first of its kind” initiative by a state tourism board for destination branding.

Creative “Metro Wraps” were put up all along “Delhi Express line”, covering seat headrests, side walls, roof-top panels and glass panels on the luggage rack aimed at spreading the flavor of Gujarat across the national capital passionately urging the discerning traveler to surrender in the fragrance & “breathe in a bit of Gujarat”.

2% of the total campaign budget was invested for the purpose with an outcome that the Kutch campaign projecting the kite festival saw a four times increases in number of tourists.

Below the line communication (BTL)

The media packaging was complemented with interactive below the line activities (BTL) focusing on attracting travelers from across the country. These covered informative road shows, sound and light shows, summits, activations & press meets aimed at creating awareness about Gujarat as a tourist destination & highlighting important festivals & traditions which were an essence of the state.

Launching of the “Fragrance”

The Campaign which was initiated in May 2010 was finally launched in September 2011 on 31 TV channels on prime time slots prominently on Star, Zee, National TV and niche channels like Animal Planet, Discovery. News channels as well as international channels CNN, Sky news, NDTV.

The strategy was indeed a smart move in giving the campaign a desirable launch. The endeavour to focus diversity of Gujarat in its entirety justified by the positioning “Breathe in a bit of Gujarat”(Khushboo Gujarat Ki) through this approach, apparently seemed to pay off rich dividends for the Brand.

The statistics published in Economic Times - Aug 17, 2013 the total no of tourists in Gujarat in FY2013 touched 2.54 Crores which was 13.62% higher than 2012

Today, the unique White Rann attracts a variety of tourists including the widely travelled tourists. Economy in Kutch has boomed and local artisans have benefited due to the festival

The Khushboo Gujarat ki campaign not only created a solid awareness for the campaign but today Gujarat's tourism has grown and now it stands on the fifth spot among states in India, after Rajasthan, Kerala, Maharashtra and Goa.

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Personal Interviews

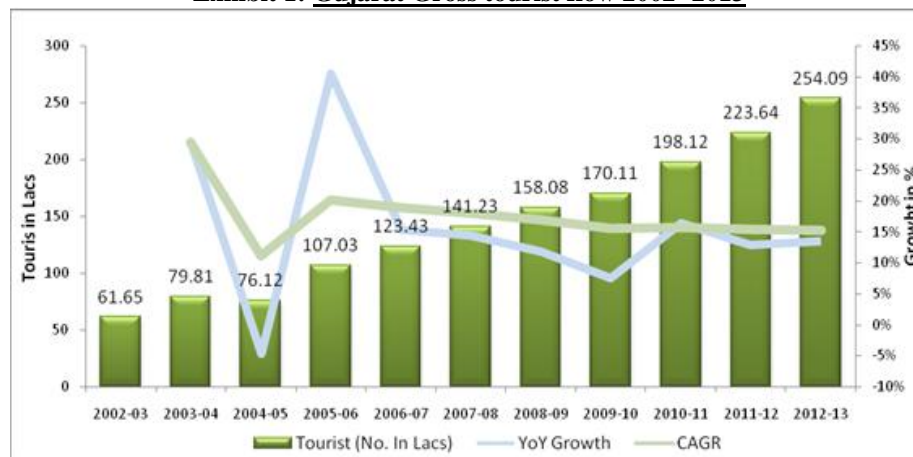
- [14]. Mr. Piyush Pandey (Chairman and National Creative Director O&M)
- [15]. Mr. Pankaj Mudholkar (M.D, Akriti communications)

Opinions, comments Inputs:

- [16]. Mr. Sanjay Kaul IAS (Commissioner of Tourism & Managing Director TCGL)
- [17]. Mr. Naresh Sharma (Reliance (ADAG) Metro Branding, New Delhi)
- [18]. Mr. Rishabha Nayyar (Director Design & Strategy, Lowe Lintas, Mumbai)
- [19]. Mr. Saurabh Dasgupta (Innocean worldwide, New Delhi)
- [20]. Mr. Dheeraj Kshatriya (Independent Brand consultant)

Khushboo Gujarat Ki: Exhibits

Exhibit 1: Gujarat Gross tourist flow 2002- 2013



Source: Annual Report 2013 GITCO

Exhibit 2: Gujarat tourism at No 9 - Pre Campaign

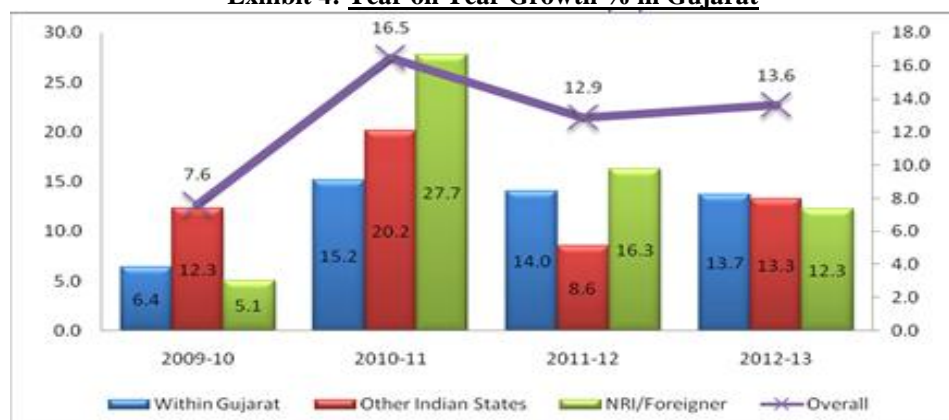
State	Rank in 2012	Number of tourist visits (mn) in 2012	CAGR (2008-2012)	Rank improvement (2008-2012)	Tourism spend (INR mn) 2011-12	% of Overall likely state expenditure 2011-12
Andhra Pradesh	1	207	12%	-	106	0.02%
Tamil Nadu	2	188	17%	1	307	0.13%
Uttar Pradesh	3	170	8%	(1)	261	0.06%
Karnataka	4	95	64%	6	2400	0.63%
Maharashtra	5	71	33%	-	4855	1.16%
Madhya Pradesh	6	53	24%	-	727	0.32%
Rajasthan	7	30	0.2%	(3)	281	0.10%
Uttarakhand	8	27	7%	(1)	1111	1.42%
Gujarat	9	25	12%	-	2691	0.71%
West Bengal	10	24	4%	(2)	430	0.19%
Bihar	11	23	17%	-	304	0.14%
Delhi	12	21	47%	4	155	0.10%
Jharkhand	13	20	36%	-	250	0.20%
Punjab	14	19	147%	3	224	0.19%
Himachal Pradesh	15	16	13%	(3)	174	0.52%
Chhattisgarh	16	15	141%	3	479	0.29%
Jammu & Kashmir	17	13	13%	1	1392	2.11%
Kerala	1	11	7%	(5)	1530	1.27%
All India	-	1057	16%	-	23991	0.49%

Source: India Tourism Statistics 2008 Ministry of Tourism
<http://tourism.gov.in/writereaddata/CMSPagePicture/file/marketresearch/New/2012%20Data.pdf>
 State wise/Sector wise Annual Plan 2011-12, Planning Commission

Exhibit 3: Tourist Origin in Gujarat

Source: Annual GITCO Report 2013

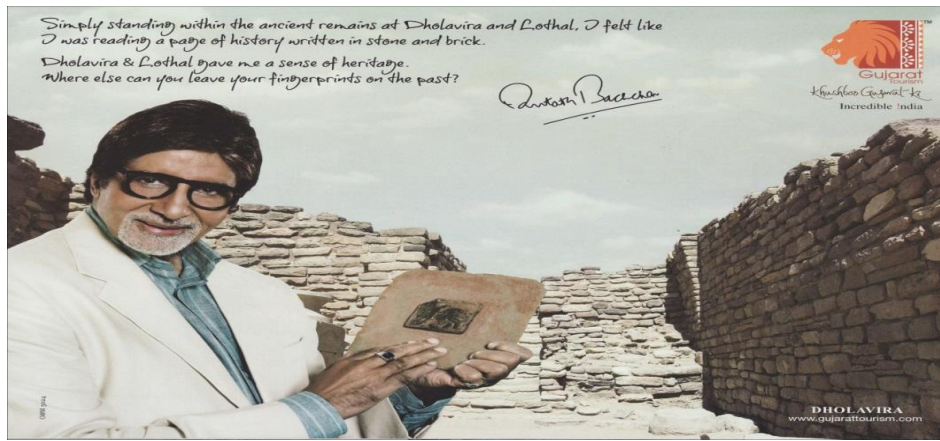
Exhibit 4: Year on Year Growth % in Gujarat



On a year to year basis, there is an overall growth of 13.62%. On an average all the origin wise segments have a comparable growth.

Source: Annual GITCO Report 2013

Exhibit 5 : Advertisement showing Brand Ambassador in Dholavira



Source: www.afaqs.com

Exhibit 6 : Advertisement portraying Somnath Temple



Source: www.timesofindia.com

Exhibit 7 : Picture depicting Rann of Kutch



Source: www.imperialtoursrajkot.co.in

Exhibit 8 : Promotion of Kite Festival - Uttarayan



Source: Gujarat Tourism Facebook page

Exhibit 9 : Advertisement showing Saputara Monsoon Festival



Source: Gujarat Tourism Facebook page

Exhibit 10 A : Delhi Metro wraps



Exhibit 10 B : Delhi Metro Branding



Source: www.bestmediainfo.com

Exhibit 11 : Gujarat Tourism stall at the India International Travel Mart 2011



Source: www.thehindu.com