

# Cloning In Indian Advertisements: Getting Two For The Price Of One?

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## ABSTRACT

Due to the presence of various niches in a large segment and to cater to the maximum possible audience within it, the concept of the multiple roles played by the same person in Indian cinema is being used with greater frequency in Indian advertisements. Clones serve the purpose of controlling advertisement costs and at the same time, target the segment and niches within it effectively.

**Keywords:** Cloning, Celebrity, Double Role, Niche, Segment

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## CLONING

Cloning refers to a technique of producing genetically identical copies (clone) of an organism. Cloning in biology is the process of producing similar populations of genetically identical individuals that occurs in nature when organisms such as bacteria, insects or plants reproduce asexually. Cloning in biotechnology refers to processes used to create copies of DNA fragments (molecular cloning), cells (cell cloning), or organisms. The term also refers to the production of multiple copies of a product such as digital media or software. Human cloning is the creation of a genetically identical copy of an existing or previously existing human. The term is generally used to refer to artificial human cloning; human clones in the form of identical twins are commonplace, with their cloning occurring during the natural process of reproduction (Russel, 2005).

**Figure 1: Actor John Abraham In Yamaha Fz Motorbike Advertisement (Lord Of Streets)**



Source: Yamaha Fzs new colours advt John Abraham.mp4,  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-9w-8Bt7I04> accessed on April 2, 2012

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**Figure 2: Actor John Abraham In The Philips Trimmer Advertisement**



Source: Bollywood Hunk John Abraham - Making Of 'Philips Ready Shaver' Ad, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2JhAQTQ5qF8>, accessed on April 2, 2012

**Figure 3: Actor Abhishek Bachchan In Idea Cellular 3G Advertisement (2011)**



Source: Idea Cellular 3G TV ad Gym, [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AV\\_cnpmrW7E](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AV_cnpmrW7E), accessed on April 2, 2012

**Figure 4: Actress Kareena Kapoor In Sony Vaio (Laptop Advertisement)**



Source: Kareena Kapoor sizzles in Sony VAIO ads, [http://www.kheladi.com/News/2011/7/25/Kareena\\_Kapoor\\_sizzles\\_in\\_Sony\\_VAIO\\_ads](http://www.kheladi.com/News/2011/7/25/Kareena_Kapoor_sizzles_in_Sony_VAIO_ads), accessed on April 24, 2012

## **CLONING IN ADVERTISING**

In the present paper, cloning in advertising is referred to using a human model in two or more different forms within a particular advertisement. The model in various forms tries to depict multiple utilities of the product, which also fits in with the brand/product image and the model's image. Being a newly developed marketing communication strategy, the time period is restricted to the calendar year 2011.

**Exhibit 5 : Actress Priyanka Chopra In Samsung Refrigerator Advertisement, 2011**



Source: Priyanka Chopra Samsung Refrigerators advertisement,  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T0TXsIShybM>, accessed on April 27, 2012.

Yamaha Motors (India) advertised its FZ Motorbike colour variants with John Abraham (see Exhibit 1) in three roles (clones) in its TV commercial advertisement, and enhanced its market share in the Deluxe bike segment from 9% to 14% between April and June 2011 (Dewan, 2011).

The Exhibit 2 depicts Philips new-Style Sutra application, five in one grooming kit, where Philips depicted actor/model John Abraham in 5 different styles (clones) in a TV advertisement to grow its personal-care appliances business, especially men's grooming products. According to industry estimates (2011), the personal-care appliances category estimated at 2 million units (2011) witnessed a 35 per cent growth in 2011. Hair dryers made up bulk of the sales (1.2 million), followed by hair stylers (0.2 million), hair straighteners (0.35 million), male shavers (0.2 million) and trimmers (0.35 million) (Khicha, 2011).

Idea Cellular showcased actor Abhishek Bachchan in three different styles (clones) in an Idea 3G TV advertisement for its third generation mobile technology (see Exhibit 3), which played a role in increasing the company's revenue market share from 8.8% in Q3 (2008) to 13.3% in Q3 (2011) (Rashmi and Pratap, 2011).

Sony Vaio's TV commercial with actress Kareena Kapoor (see Exhibit 4) focuses on a variety of colours for their laptops in India. The message in the advertisement is that Sony has launched the variant 'Laptop Skins' concept. Skins are quite popular abroad and offer a lot of designs to be put up on the laptops in the form of thin laminates. Hence, the skins provide a lot of flexibility in the designs. This advertisement targets India's increasing working women population. Sony's strategy of selling half a million units in (2011) in India used this concept to increase sales. According to the IDC Report 2010, Sony has become the fastest growing laptop brand in India, with a 100% rise in sales for the years 2010 and 2011. Sony aspires to occupy the first spot in the consumer laptop category as 20 % of Sony India's revenue comes from its Vaio series of laptops (Marketing Brainstorm, 2011).

Samsung is the second largest player in the global refrigerator market, with a share of 11 percent after US rival Whirlpool's 14 %, depicted clones of Bollywood Actress, Singer and Songwriter, Priyanka Chopra for home appliances in October 2011 in a TV Commercial for the Indian Market. In this advertisement, the actress acts as a vegetable and an ice cream to depict the dual sensor control of Samsung Refrigerator (see Exhibit 5). Between 2009 and 2010, Samsung increased its market share from 10% to 17% and expects its Indian operations to contribute upto 5% of its global revenue (Raghuvanshi, 2011).

## **WHY ARE CLONES USED?**

Advertisers are implementing this concept to strike a deeper emotional connect with the new-age consumer, and to reflect the brand's diverse facets to the consumers. They are identifying variables to predict characteristics and behaviours by using a mix of quantitative and qualitative approaches to segment consumers on the basis of specific characteristics, and thereby, formulating the marketing communication approach accordingly.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

To understand the concept and impact of the recent phenomenon of cloning in advertising, it is necessary that a review

of celebrity endorsements and brand building be discussed, since cloning happens to a modification of the classical form of use of celebrities in endorsements and brand building.

❖ **Celebrity Endorsements** : “A Celebrity is an omnipresent feature of society, blazing lasting impressions in the memories of all who cross its path” Kurzman et al. (2007).

A celebrity endorser is “an individual who enjoys public recognition and who uses this recognition on behalf of a consumer good by appearing with it in an advertisement” (McCracken, 1989).

Friedman and Friedman stated that “a celebrity endorser is an individual who is known to the public for his or her achievement in areas others than that of the product class endorsed” (Friedman & Friedman, 1979).

Celebrity endorsements are an omnipresent feature of present day marketing (Meenaghan and O'Mahony, 1998). Billions of dollars spent on celebrity endorsement contracts illustrate the importance celebrities play in the advertising industry (Kambitsis et al., 2002).

The use of celebrities in advertisements is not a recent phenomenon (Kaikati, 1987). Celebrities have been endorsing products since the mid-nineteenth century. For instance, one of the early examples involves Queen Victoria associating with Cadbury Cocoa (Sherman, 1985). With the emergence of cinema and later television, more and more celebrities from a different background were used commercially in television commercials and print advertisements. Agrawal and Kamakura (1995) cited that by 1992, approximately 20% of all television commercials in USA featured famous people. Shimp (2003) further justified Agrawal and Kamakura's point through his research findings that between 1979 and 1997, 25% of all US-based commercials used celebrities. On the contrary, from a UK perspective, a report in Marketing indicated that advertising which used celebrities was a key to gaining national headlines (as cited in Erdogan, 1999). In the same paper, it was mentioned that celebrities can be used to communicate and reinforce companies' marketing communications and brand positioning effectively. Use of celebrities as part of marketing communication strategy had become a common practice for major firms in supporting corporate and brand imagery. Firms are drawing parallels with their products and themselves to celebrities in expectation that it will enhance the impact of marketing communications and increase revenue. The impact of celebrity endorsement on any brand as well as on consumer's purchase decision is very critical. Celebrity endorsement has become a popular approach in the branding procedure, both in terms of gaining and keeping attention, but also in creating favourable associations leading to brand knowledge and distinct brand images. The use of celebrity endorsements increased to approximately 25% of all advertisements in UK and US, and approximately 70% of all advertisements in Japan (Shimp, 2003). The late '80s saw the beginning of celebrity endorsements in advertising in India in a big way. Film and TV stars as well as sports persons began encroaching on a territory that was, until then, the exclusive domain of models. There was a spurt of advertisements featuring stars like actors Tabassum (Prestige pressure cookers), Jalal Agha (Pan Parag), and sports persons like Kapil Dev (Palmolive Shaving Cream) and Sunil Gavaskar (Dinesh Suitings). Of course, probably the first advertisement to cash in on star power in a strategic, long-term, mission statement kind of way was Lux soap, a brand which has, perhaps as a result of this, been among the best-known soap brands. One of the first sports endorsements in India was when Farokh Engineer became the first Indian cricketer to model for Brylcreem (Daneshwary & Schwer, 2000).

The Indian market is not an easy audience to target for the advertisers. The people (consumers) in the country are segmented in terms of beliefs, ethnicity, region, culture, language, dialects, norms and values. Other aspects such as economic inequality within the country separates it in a way, which has resulted in a large number of lower and upper middle class, with a relatively smaller class falling in the middle class segment (income basis). This demonstrates a vast disparity in purchasing power and decision making aspects, one which the advertisers keep in mind. Indian advertisements have been playing an important role on both recall and persuasion through brand differentiating messages (Dixit, 2000). Very often, various advertising styles are used by advertisers to influence consumer brand choice behaviour and among these different available choices; one very popular choice is celebrity endorsements (Alsmadi, 2006). Especially In India, it is not difficult to find motives for the increasing use of celebrities in advertisements as Indians have always been in awe of stars, especially of the celluloid world. Unlike their foreign counterparts, they have always put the celebrities on a high pedestal, implicit with the belief that their celebrities could do no wrong (The Hindu, 2001). Indeed, some people are seen to admire, imitate, and become mesmerized with their favourite celebrities, which forms the main reason for them being an important advertisement technique (McCutcheon et al., 2003).

Today, celebrity endorsement is being seen more and more as an integral part in an integrated marketing communication strategy. Pringle (2004) suggested three macro factors present in the market that justifies the validity of celebrity endorsement as a promotional strategy. The first factor is the increasing opportunity for interactivity between brands and their consumers. Second is the “era of consent” situation present today, where consumers have more control over the messages they receive. And lastly is the increasing media fragmentation and commercial communication clutter (Temperley and Tangen, 2006). Pappas (1999) examined the value of star power in an endorsement and pointed towards how well-designed advertising helped celebrities convert their star power into brand equity. Increased consumer power with increased awareness over programmed advertisement has made advertising more challenging. To ease this threat and to help create and maintain consumer attention towards advertisements, celebrity endorsement strategy is seen to be advantageous. Celebrities have the potential of helping the advertisement stand out from the surrounding clutter (Sherman, 1985). Furthermore, one probable solution in the face of any organization with tarnished image is the hiring of a celebrity to restore it. Celebrity endorsement assists in the image polishing of the company's image (Erdogan, 1999).

A stream of studies identified attributes like trustworthiness, similarity, likableness, expertise that caused a celebrity to stand out as a persuasive source, which in turn creates a sense of certainty (Mustafa, 2005). It is shown by research and experience that consumers show greater propensity to spend, when products that relate to their desired image are endorsed by celebrities (Alsamadi, 2006). It helps them to take more notice of celebrity endorsements and improve their level of product recall (Bowman, 2002).

Another reason for the use of celebrity endorsements is because it has a strong impact on the learning style and memory, which is critical to marketing communication success. This is because most consumers are not in a purchasing situation when they come into contact with the brand message. Marketers make use of celebrity endorsements as they lead to better information storage in the minds of the consumers, which can be readily retrieved when the purchasing situation arises (Schultz & Barnes, 1995). All these lead to the conclusion that celebrity endorsements may have a positive effect on consumer choices (Goldsmith, Lafferty and Newell, 2000; Mathur, Mathur & Rangan, 1997).

Mittal (2006) studied the effectiveness of celebrity endorsement in brand recall and purchase decisions. The reason identified for success in celebrity endorsements was found to be physical attractiveness of the celebrity, source credibility and brand congruency.

The above study involved the collection of primary data from one city, Indore (Madhya Pradesh). Since then, there has been a significant change in both macro & micro economic variables. Another possible lacuna in the findings is the reason of physical attractiveness of a celebrity. The study restricted it to celebrities from within the fashion and entertainment industry.

A controversial study (Kaur & Singh, 2006) pointed out five risk factors in celebrity endorsements. However, it is to be noted that the above research was done with the presumption that celebrity attraction is with a large market segment, which to a certain extent is true. On the other hand, cloning form of advertising restricts to niches. The work of Sharma (2006) reinforces the previous arguments of segment based targeting. Chavada (2012) suggested that celebrity endorsements play a very strong role in brand building and product selling. Aggarwal & Dubey (2012) projected the celebrity as a decisive factor in deciding the choices of products for their fans. The study investigated a large number of products and concluded that there is a shift in the decision making from the consumer end to the celebrity. This could be possible only if the celebrity has a larger than life image & straddles multiple segments with respect to the product. However, the study by Madan (2010) proposed that a celebrity acts as a push factor, particularly in the case of highly aware & selective customers.

## **THE USE OF MULTIPLE CELEBRITIES**

“Endorsers entail making use of more than one celebrity to advertise a single product” (Hsu and McDonald, 2002). Some spokespersons are “shared” by different advertising firms, i.e. they are promoting more than one brand (Tripp et al., 1994). Golf champion Tiger Woods endorsed American Express, Rolex, and Nike. Actress Catherine Zeta-Jones endorsed T-Mobile and Elizabeth Arden. James Bond actor Pierce Brosnan promoted Omega, BMW, and Noreico. Top model and actress Milla Jovovich is a spokesperson for a broad range of brands, including L'Oréal, Banana Republic, Christian Dior, Calvin Klein, and Donna Karan. Hsu and McDonald (2002) studied the effectiveness of the 'milk

moustache campaign' on consumer perceptions, and found that endorsing a product with multiple celebrities “can be beneficial for appealing to various audiences to which the product is aimed.” Luxury watch manufacturer Omega, for example, promotes its brand by matching selected celebrities with the company's product lines.

In India, some celebrities are endorsing several brands or a specific brand is endorsed by different spokespersons. For instance, actor Amitabh Bachchan is endorsing Parker Pens, Hajmola, Navrattan Oil, Cadbury Dairy Milk and many more. On the other hand, Coca-Cola has been endorsed by Hrithik Roshan, Aishwarya Rai Bachchan, Aamir Khan, Virendra Sehwag among others in the last few years. Advertisers point out to the 3Cs that enjoy mass adulation in the Indian sub-continent - Cricket, Cinema and Curry. In fact, Mr. Jaydeep Dasgupta, Associate branch Director-Mumbai, Mudra feels that the concern of all marketers today is that whether this special form of celebrity endorsement affects consumer's brand attitudes? Madhurkar Sabnavis, Country Manager- Discovery O & M points out that multiple endorsements affect the endorser's credibility as people know that a celebrity is paid to sell the product (Tripp et al., 1994). The question is, does this special form of celebrity endorsement affect consumers' brand attitudes? In the same work, it was found that generally, endorsement of as many as four products negatively influences the celebrity spokesperson's credibility (i.e. expertise and trustworthiness) and likeability. They further added that these effects are independent of the celebrity, i.e. the perceptions based on even well-liked stars can be influenced. Reasons may be found in the lack of distinctiveness, with one famous person endorsing several products instead of concentrating and representing one specific brand. Though these findings may be valid, it does not automatically mean that the concept of multiple product endorsements is useless. The above result needs to be validated on a larger scale.

Thus, it has been observed that celebrities endorse brand(s) and have an impact in various forms over the targeted segment and influence buying behaviour. However, research regarding multiple endorsements by a single celebrity of a single product/brand within the same communication message has not been done. The subsequent section presents a discussion on this aspect.

## **BACKGROUND**

The term 'Cloning in Advertising' is derived from what is colloquially called as “double role” (identical copies) in Indian movies. Gemini Productions (a South Indian film studio) explored the dual aspects of an individual ego in *Nishaan* for the first time in 1948. Generally, Indian film makers represent age-old moral conflicts by using double roles. The concept has been depicted by using twin brothers, father and son, with the help of external props like beard, heavy voice, clothes, etc. to distinguish between the two characters.

This concept of using a double role in Indian movies is generally a mode of expression of imposing both the characters on the minds of the people by one actor, and reflecting two or more characteristic images or personas on the screen. This cloning (double role) is now being adopted by Indian advertisers as well.

## **MEANING TRANSFER**

The cloning concept transfers the multitude of separate meanings attributed to the clones that feature in the advertisement and are associated with the product. The specific meaning transferred to the product indicates that the clones partaking in the process have certain features in common, provided the clones used in the advertisement have different sort of appearance or characteristics. Thereby, the symbolic meaning they transfer will be complimentary and in this way, the product or brand promoted is expected to acquire a wider spectrum of transferred meanings. Furthermore, the human clones used have similarities with respect to the segment and hence, the association with the product/brand is expected to be strong (McCracken, 1989).

## **CREATING DIFFERENT NICHES**

In today's competitive marketing environment, firms focus on different competencies with greater flexibility and responsiveness enough for niche market(s), and these competencies are distinctive capabilities. Advertisers are implementing clone strategies to promote the product along different niches of a market and communicate by mixing the desired colour and taste of the audience in different cloned expressions and forms in the advertisement.

There are a number of different markets and within each market, there are different market segments or sub-divisions that can be targeted to grab the market share. Different segments have different needs for a particular product. Niches present within a broad segment can be targeted with clones. This is more applicable when psychographic variables

| Table 1: Double Roles in Bollywood Movies |                 |  |
|---|-----------------|--|
| Year                                      | Film            | Double Roles   |
| 1951                                      | Afsaana         | The late actor Ashok Kumar played the role of two brothers, both loving the same girl.   |
| 1952                                      | Anhonee         | Nargis was equally adept at bringing out the conflicting qualities of both, the gregarious courtesan Mohini, as well as her dignified half-sister and heiress, Roop.   |
| 1961                                      | Hum Dono        | Dev Anand played a double-role as the jovial Major Verma as well as the somber Captain Anand in this saga of mistaken identities and romantic idealism.  |
| 1968                                      | Do Kaliyaan     | Neetu Singh (aka Baby Sonia) a picture of pluck and pizzazz as twin sisters - Ganga and Jamuna - who swap places to bring their estranged mom (Mala Sinha) and dad (Biswajeet) together in this 1960s-style family caper, Do Kaliyaan. |
| 1969                                      | Aradhana        | Rajesh Khanna played the role of a pilot father and pilot son.   |
| 1970                                      | Humjoli         | Mehmood, played a triple avatar as grandfather, father and son in this movie.  |
| 1971                                      | Sharmilee       | Raakhee's turn as the look alike sisters Kanchan and Kamini who're in love with the same guy (Shashi Kapoor).  |
| 1972                                      | Dastan          | The thespian Dilip Kumar played two vastly different characters; one of a judge and the other- a stage actor.  |
| 1972                                      | Seeta Aur Geeta | Hema Malini played the dual responsibility of conveying shaky and sassy as two long-lost sisters in and as <i>Seeta Aur Geeta</i> .  |
| 1975                                      | Mausam          | Sharmila Tagore played the betrayed, crazy mother as well as her foul-mouthed, sex worker daughter.  |
| 1976                                      | Ram aur Shyam   | Dilip Kumar played the double role, with dramatically opposed behaviour.   |
| 1978                                      | Don             | Amitabh Bachchan played a double role, trying to pass off for the ' <i>namumkin to catch hold of Don</i> ' among crooks and excuse himself as the ' <i>Ganga-kinarewala Vijay</i> ' to the cops.                                       |
| 1982                                      | Angoor          | Sanjeev Kumar - acted as unacquainted twins caught in the middle of confusion and familiarity in this movie.   |
| 1982                                      | Gazab           | Dharmendra plays a bumbling ghost with bunny teeth and frizzy hair.  |
| 1986                                      | Aakhri Raasta   | Amitabh Bachchan having a face-off with his idealistic cop son.  |
| 1989                                      | Chaalbaaz       | Sridevi, played a double role of twins separated at birth.   |
| 1989                                      | Appu Raja       | Kamal Haasan's portrayal of Appu, the revenge-thirsty circus dwarf and his mechanic brother Raja in this cult classic.   |
| 1990                                      | Kishen Kanhaiya | Anil Kapoor played a double role both as the Bollywood-obsessed hero and the terrified heir reduced to a slave .   |
| 1991                                      | Hum             | Kader Khan played a rigid army man who bears striking resemblance to a disastrous, itch-ridden theatre actor.  |
| 1992                                      | Sangeet         | Madhuri Dixit - as the guilt-ridden mother and her blind trusting daughter estranged by circumstances.   |
| 1994                                      | Andaz Apna Apna | Paresh Rawal played a rich tycoon Ram Gopal Bajaj and his vile scheming crook of a brother Shyam Gopal Bajaj, caught in a battle of who's who.   |
| 1997                                      | Judwaa          | Salman Khan played identical twins, different as chalk and cheese (one's a swindling tapori, the other a well-bred Ritchie Rich).  |
| 1998                                      | Dushman         | Kajol's histrionics and richness as an actress in a powerful delivery of twin sisters in this movie.   |
| 2002                                      | Makdee          | Shweta Prasad's delightful conviction as the valiant Chunni as well as the passive Munni in this movie.  |
| 2007                                      | Om Shanti Om    | Shahrukh Khan played dual role, one of Om Prakash Makhija and another of Om Kapoor.  |
| 2009                                      | Kaminey         | Shahid Kapoor played a double role of Guddu and Charlie, ideologically-crossed twins caught in the inevitable mistaken-identity scenario.  |
| Source: Dhawan (2007) and Verma (2012)    |                 |  |

result in formation of niches within a segment. Advertising using one character is just not good enough to capture the niche markets and is neither able to strike deeper emotional connect with the new-age consumer who has been affected by different cultural, social and technological changes (Rajagopal, 2007).

Advertisers dig deeper in the market to penetrate every single niche in a market place and set the business or product promotion apart from competition with regard to the lifestyles, symbolism and taste of the niche audience.

## CONSUMPTION

The common theme of cloning is consumption. Advertisers express this ideology of consumption in its most synthetic and visual form. Advertisers rely on the themes of happiness, youth, success, status, luxury and fashion while designing advertisements using clones. This is a hidden persuading concept presenting information about the products by specially designed messages for different segments of the population. This shows the coming of age and maturity of advertising in India by presenting more accurate representation of different consumer groups in India. Cloning is all about respecting individual freedom regarding choice and decision making (Noreen, 2011).

## CONCLUSION

Cloning is catering to marketing communication with multiple niches within a segment, which have very thin lines of separation. The marketers in their attempt to control the cost and make it affordable to target segment(s) and niches, have started exploring this form of creative expression. As mentioned by Kotler (2011), the market place is progressing from mass production to mass customization; in the same way, it looks that cloning is becoming a form of mass customized advertisement.

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