

Executive Summary - Group 13

In this campaign, we collaborated with Apostrophe Patisserie, a home bakery in Bengaluru, India, to boost sales of their customized cupcakes by leveraging the cultural fervor surrounding the Indian Premier League (IPL), one of the biggest cricketing leagues in the world. Recognizing the immense popularity of the Royal Challengers Bengaluru (RCB), a team in the IPL, we crafted two distinct Instagram ad creatives targeting cricket enthusiasts in Bengaluru. One ad celebrated local team pride with a playful nod to RCB's star player, while employing a rivalry-based humor referencing the Chennai Super Kings (CSK), another team in the IPL. The other ad targeted a general focus encompassing all teams to cater to a wider audience. Over a two-week period with a \$100 budget, we ran these ads on Instagram, monitoring engagement metrics. The campaign revealed that ads resonating with local identity and emotional triggers significantly outperformed others, underscoring the effectiveness of culturally relevant and emotionally charged advertising strategies.

Organization and Product

Apostrophe is a solo woman-run home bakery in Bengaluru, India, renowned for its tasty cakes and cupcakes. Operating primarily through Instagram and WhatsApp, Apostrophe caters to a diverse clientele seeking customized baked goods. With the IPL season in full swing, we collaborated with the bakery and aimed to capitalize on the cricket craze by promoting IPL-themed cupcakes, catering to the city's sporting spirit.

Target Segment

Our campaign targeted Bengaluru residents aged 18–35, focusing on tech-savvy individuals, young professionals, and students who are ardent followers of the IPL, particularly fans of the Royal Challengers Bengaluru. Given RCB's status as the most followed IPL team on Instagram, with over 17.8 million followers, we anticipated that this demographic would be highly receptive to team-centric marketing.

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Bengaluru, often referred to as the "Silicon Valley of India," hosts a vast number of tech companies, including giants like Infosys, Wipro, TCS, IBM, and Accenture. This thriving tech ecosystem has attracted a significant influx of professionals from across the country, making Bengaluru a melting pot of cultures and communities. As a result, the city's population has surged, with migrants constituting over 50% of the total population.

This diverse and dynamic demographic, coupled with a strong cricket culture, helped us set up our experiment perfectly, ensuring a healthy mix of support from teams other than RCB.

Course Concepts and Hypothesis

We formulated two primary hypotheses:

1. Consumers exhibit increased engagement with products that align with their personal interests, such as IPL fandom.
2. Emotional arousal and identity-relevant cues, like team loyalty or rivalries, enhance the effectiveness of advertisements.

To test these hypotheses, we incorporated several consumer behavior concepts:

- Classical Conditioning: Associating the positive emotions of cricket fandom with the product.
- Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM): Utilizing both central and peripheral routes to persuasion through team-specific content and humor.
- Social Identity Theory: Leveraging in-group (RCB fans) and out-group (CSK rivals, other teams) dynamics.
- Motivational Theory: Appealing to hedonic motives like enjoyment and pride.
- Attention and Perception: Employing visual salience and novelty to capture attention.

The Advertisements

We developed two Instagram ads:



Common Design Strategy

Both ads were developed to resonate with IPL viewers and cricket enthusiasts in Bangalore through the following common approaches:

Seasonal Relevance: We aligned the campaign timing with the IPL 2025 season (March–May) to ensure contextual resonance.

Sensory Appeal: The use of trending AI-generated animated characters, vibrant team colors, and visually rich cupcakes helped capture attention (L03: Attention & Perception).

Emotional Engagement: Both ads were designed to evoke positive affect—either through humor, pride, or celebration (L08: Affective Appeals).

Promotional Hook: We included a “Buy 5, Get 1 Mango Cupcake Free” offer in both creatives to introduce a behavioral nudge based on price sensitivity (L09: Decision-Making).

Brand Integration: The bakery’s name “Apostrophe” was subtly integrated into the visuals (e.g., on jerseys) to maintain branding without distracting from the core message.

Ad A: “Ee Sala Cupcake Namde!”

This ad followed a more targeted and emotionally charged design process:

Cultural Anchoring: The headline “Ee Sala Cupcake Namde!” was a playful rewording of the iconic RCB chant “Ee Sala Cup Namde,” which translates to “This year, the cup is ours!”—a slogan deeply rooted in local fan culture. The background of the slogan is that despite being a consistent performer, RCB has never won the IPL.

Central Route Persuasion: We relied on meaningful content such as the reference to Virat Kohli’s jersey number (18) and the 18th season of the IPL, encouraging elaborative thinking from fans (L08: Elaboration Likelihood Model).

Visual Focus: The creative highlighted a single animated boy in an RCB jersey, laughing joyfully with a red cupcake, thereby invoking in-group identification and pride (L11: Social Identity Theory).

Rivalry Cue: The yellow lollipop (reminiscent of CSK's team color) added a subtle jab, triggering affective rivalry and increasing ad memorability through emotional arousal.

Typography and Color: Bold, high-contrast typography on a red background reinforced urgency and excitement, consistent with sports communication design.

Ad B: "Cupcakes for Every Jersey!"

This ad took a broader, more inclusive approach aimed at wider audience appeal:

Inclusive Imagery: The visual featured four animated children each wearing different team jerseys (RCB, CSK, MI, KKR), symbolizing unity among diverse fanbases.

Peripheral Route Persuasion: Rather than relying on analytical elaboration, this ad captured attention through color-coded cupcakes, bright animated characters, and visual harmony (L08: Peripheral Cues).

Social Belonging: The caption, "Whether you bleed blue, yellow, red, or purple—we've got a cupcake for your crew!" reinforced collective identity and belonging (L11: Reference Groups).

Visual Layout: The symmetrical arrangement of characters and consistent cupcake positioning supported ease of processing and brand recall.

Promotional Emphasis: The "Buy 5, Get 1 Mango Cupcake Free" badge was designed to stand out in yellow against a deep blue background (the IPL's theme color), drawing attention to the offer using Just Noticeable Difference (JND) principles (L03).

Campaign Procedure

The campaign ran on Instagram over two weeks in April 2025, coinciding with the IPL season, which spans from March 22 to May 25. We allocated a total budget of \$100, evenly split between the two ads. Targeting parameters included:

- Location: Bengaluru
- Age Range: 18–35
- Interests: Cricket, Wedding cake, Rajasthan Royals, Sachin Tendulkar, Cupcake, Cricket, Bakery, Indian Premier League, Virat Kohli, Kolkata Knight Riders, Fruit, Desserts, Chocolate, Pastry, Candy, India national cricket team, Mahendra Singh Dhoni, Sprinkles Cupcakes, Cake, Rohit Sharma, Royal Challengers Bengaluru, Delhi Daredevils or Chennai Super Kings

We monitored the following metrics:

- Post-Level: Likes, comments, shares
- Account-Level: Follower growth, profile visits, interactions

Results

While Ad B had more views than Ad A, Ad A (RCB-themed) significantly outperformed Ad B (general-themed) across all engagement metrics.

- Views Ad A : 366,138 | Ad B - 384,128
- Likes: Ad A – 1051 | Ad B – 607
- Shares: Ad A – 21 | Ad B – 1
- Comments: Ad A – 22 (predominantly RCB) | Ad B – 21 (All comments were still RCB)
- Profile Visits: Increased by 200% - about 2500 visits during the campaign, with **both ads contributing equally**
- Followers before starting campaign - 1297 | Followers at the end of campaign - 1774
New Followers Gained - 477 (37% INCREASE)

Ad A's superior performance is primarily driven by its deep alignment with local team pride and the emotional connection that fans in Bengaluru have with RCB and Virat Kohli. This approach taps into the city's passionate and loyal fan base, which has propelled RCB to become the most popular IPL team on social media, boasting record engagement and a massive following. The campaign's focus on local identity and the hero status of Kohli resonates strongly with core supporters, reinforcing fan loyalty.

In contrast, Ad B adopts a broader, more inclusive strategy, appealing to the city's diverse population-including non-RCB fans who reside in Bengaluru. While this holistic approach ensures the brand reaches a wider audience, it does not evoke the same intensity of emotional engagement as Ad A. The results suggest that, in this context, campaigns that leverage strong local and cultural connections-such as the RCB-Kohli narrative-are more effective at driving fan engagement and brand affinity.

In summary, Ad A excels by capturing the fervor of loyal Bengaluru and RCB fans through targeted cultural relevance, while Ad B provides a balanced reach by engaging the city's broader, multicultural audience. This demonstrates that, especially in sports marketing, leveraging local pride and iconic personalities can outperform more generalized campaigns,

though both strategies contribute to a well-rounded marketing approach.

Conclusions and Insights

The campaign underscores the potency of culturally resonant and emotionally engaging advertising:

1. **Local Identity:** Ads that celebrate local affiliations, like team pride, foster stronger consumer connections.
2. **Emotional Appeals:** Positive emotional triggers, such as pride and joy, may be more effective than negative ones like rivalry-based humor.
3. **Consumer Alignment:** Aligning products with consumers' personal interests enhances engagement and brand affinity.
4. **Strategic Timing:** Capitalizing on major events, like the IPL, provides opportunities for timely and relevant marketing.

For future campaigns, Apostrophe could explore collaborations with local sports influencers or offer limited-time promotions during key matches to further capitalize on the city's cricket enthusiasm.

Appendix:

Times of India article illustrating high migration rate into bangalore -

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/bengaluru/bengalurus-migrants-cross-50-of-the-citys-population/articleshow/70518536.cms>

- Figure A1: Ad A (RCB-themed cupcake)



- Figure A2: Ad B (CSK-themed cupcake)



- Table A1: Instagram Engagement Metrics (Side-by-side Comparison)
- Screenshot A1: Profile insights during campaign week