

# June 2009

## Newsletter



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## Desi Road To Retail



Sher Shah Suri is one of the more fondly remembered emperors who had ruled India for a very short period of time. He did not build any spectacular mosque or tower nor did he construct any time-defying architectural wonder. He had built a road to control and manage the myriad problems faced by this diverse, multi-cultural, multi lingual country. He had created a simple master plan, a road map in the literal sense of the term. Build a road and everything will fall in place was probably the management strategy he had hit upon. As the malls and shopping arcades are changing the face of the cities and metros jamming the thoroughfares for miles and for hours let's understand what multiple commercial roles Indian roads play in, some form or other, in every big city and metros of our country.

For us roads are more than the means of connectivity. The most shining examples of this are the weekly markets organized at different parts of the metro. Streets are our biggest employers.

**Kishore Chakraborti**

**VP, Consumer Insight & HFD (Human Futures Development)**

**McCann Erickson Worldgroup**

All footpaths are factory yards, roads are market places. And masterminding and managing these factory yards and markets are no business experts or entrepreneurs but ordinary people who are resilient and street smart .They have their unwritten laws honoured and respected across the board. If there is a problem it is the law enforcing authorities themselves. “Bulldozers are part of our floating existence...we are conditioned by the ad hoc ism of our life”. “The Corporation ... they take money from us—Rs 5 everyday ... In some bazaars *hafta* is fixed for police as well ... Rs 5-10, they don't trouble you if you give them *hafta* ... in some areas even though space is sanctioned by Corporation, still police comes for money” says a small trader in Budh (Wednesday market) bazaar.

When corporates collapse people wail, lockouts, retrenchment, privatization, hit headlines but the small and common people take them in their stride and rebuild on *jugaad*. During the day time it is a bustling street and nobody can guess that within a few hours it will be literally hijacked by a shopping complex. Preparations are on step by step, imperceptibly. Stacks of folding tables start appearing at the non invasive corners. As the day progresses the entire market emerges almost out of thin air. The generator has arrived; the police have been taken care of. Today take charge of traffic in your own hands and survive. Buses, autos, bikes, *bibijies*, *bachhas* and *babenjies* vie with one another to make the most atrocious move, dodging and dribbling, crisscrossing their ways in this maze of a road supremely confident of one another's ability to avoid any clash.

By evening rows of collapsible shops complete with colorful display and electric light are fully prepared to take on teeming consumers pouring in from all parts of the city. The seamlessness of the operation indicates the professional expertise of the marketing guild. Who takes care of the requisite permissions, who manages the police, how the space is distributed and allotted, who arbitrate disputes, how merchandise are packed, unpacked and transported without any transit damage, how the garbage and left over are taken care of? The questions are too many to hazard a proper answer.

In this magic market the toughest retailing activity takes place. Consumers from lower, middle, upper—all strata of the society hit the market place with the common agenda of hardcore bargain.

“ yahan roz ka struggle hai .... there is so much of competition, people go away even if someone is selling at Rs.1/- less. Price difference matters even to this extent...” says a plastic bucket seller.

These markets are conversations; conversations of concession; the dialogues that are carried in between munching of *mumphalis*, sips of hot tea in plastic cups, marketed by mobile *chaimalas*. There are arguments that get abruptly snapped by the arrival of a cud-chewing bull demanding its right of passage between the buyer and the seller, deal that gets dragged twenty yards away from the stall of origin and is struck with earnest arguments, frantic pleading and gentle pull at the *pallus* of departing *didis* and *babenjis*. Conversations which are shocking in their exchanges and counter exchanges, frank, engaging in their practice of persuasion and primitive in their agenda to win.

On the street everybody is adult, every body is *ajad*, your rules are as good as mine – adjust, accommodate, win and enjoy. Sher Shah was right! Give them a street they will create their own road map.

## On the job

Our new column will showcase “on the job” experiences from our students, currently pursuing their summer internships at some of the best organizations in the country. From Advertising & PR to Events & Media Planning, they’ve got it all covered. This month, students from Event Management & Account Planning share their experiences.

### Experiencing the Industry

As quoted by Albert Einstein, “Imagination is more important than knowledge. For while knowledge defines all we currently know and understand, imagination points to all we might yet discover and create.”

With this thought in my mind, I commenced my internship in the Account Planning and Strategies department at one of the leading advertising agencies worldwide, Publicis Communications; an absolutely different environment from college, yet similar in the way we work. I was given the opportunity to work on major accounts and pitches such as Dr. Morepen, Nestle, Fly mobiles and GMR Terminal 3.



**Ms. Richa Tandon,**

**Account Planning, Publicis Communications India**

I was highly elated to see some of the presentations made by the Account Planning team for the previous pitches that were quite akin to the way we had been making our presentations in college...be it the major brand presentation or the PR Presentation. I’ve learnt so much of branding and positioning and had some fun times as well as hard times in office. It’s made me feel like a professional executive, literally. No wonder we were called student executives back at school!

They say human evolution is based on man’s gift of imagination, his relentlessly inquiring spirit and his ability to inspire and be inspired. That’s what Publicis has done to me. A spate of creativity with loads of sagacious people around, Publicis has become my motivation in the initial phase of my career.



**Ms. Deepa Soni**

**Client Servicing, Momentum  
McCann Worldgroup**

An internship is a job-related experience that provides students and job seekers with an opportunity to test the waters in a yet unexplored career and gain some valuable work experience. Sometimes you get paid, but mostly you don't! *Why do an internship ??*

I think the quote below is the nearest to a perfect answer:

**"Tell me and I will forget**

**Show me and I may remember.**

**Involve me and I will understand."**

- Anonymous

I am interning at an event management agency, Momentum, a branch of world renowned advertising giant McCann Erickson. I have chosen to train with their high profile client servicing team.

I have experienced firsthand the working of the agency and learnt a whole host of things– from preparing for business meetings, speaking to clients, to understanding what a client actually wants. Our team sit in groups for ideation and operations. I've also been closely involved with working out the BTL activities for a lot of well known brands such as Lavazza, LG, DS Group, Perfetti, Mobil, Oriflame,.

My corporate experience has been highly enriching and I can say that I have gained a lot of confidence. The methods I have learnt in the classroom are going hand in hand with things I am learning on the job; I have been able to apply my mind & integrate my knowledge.

My colleague, Himanshu and I, are both enjoying the work very much and building the learning curve.

Watch this space for more interesting experiences!

## Poetry at DSC

### Down Memory Lane

I had my life in a black coat  
 Colours were never part of my road  
 Life's phases taunted me  
 Tried to imitate a wannabe  
 Got myself a cup of tea  
 Drinking all alone, tried to be a toughie.

Life is beautiful  
 Life is precious  
 To be shared, trust me friends  
 Never live down memory lane.

All I wanted in life,  
 Attitude sharp as a knife  
 A loner, a passerby,  
 Looked at me and said 'hi'  
 Only then did I realise  
 Life can never be lived alone  
 Passing phases, passing roads  
 Can be cherished, but never lived upon



**Mr. Parekhit Bhattacharjee, Associate Trainee, Genesis Burson-Marsteller**

**CULTURE ???**

The rain makes it all so alluring  
 Just walking down the same old road  
 But they just won't let me be  
 Because I've got two X's in my genetic code  
 Now it's absolutely no fun

Welcome, ladies & gentlemen to one of the most real experiences of Indian culture. Presenting the ass slap/grab/squeeze/whatever else you want to call it; and unlike the bus seats, this one is strictly “FOR WOMEN” only, something that you can literally feel. And the sad part is that there's absolutely NOTHING that anyone can do about it, write poetry perhaps? Or maybe a girl's brain is too underdeveloped to think of a solution. Makes one wonder, has the word “civilization” become an oxymoron?

Answers are most welcome gentlemen.

**The Editorial Team:**

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**We await your feedback!**

**Appreciations, criticisms, letters-to-the-editor !**

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