



Print Advertising in a Digital Era: A Strategic Analysis of Brand Impact through Business Standard

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Abstract

Print advertising continues to play a special and important role in brand communication strategies in the digital-first era. With a particular focus on Business Standard, one of the top financial newspapers in India, this study assesses the efficacy of display advertising in print media. The study uses exploratory factor analysis (EFA) and a structured survey of fifty-two marketing professionals to identify seven important factors that contribute to the success of print ads. The findings show that print is still an effective medium for conveying thorough product messaging, guaranteeing long-term engagement, and boosting brand reputation. In order to increase the impact of print advertising, the study ends with strategic recommendations for media planners and marketers. These ideas include better creative design, targeted advertising, and integration with digital platforms.

Keywords: *Print advertising, display ads, brand recall, media effectiveness, Business Standard, marketing strategy*

Introduction

Background

Advertising is a central pillar of modern marketing, serving as a crucial interface between brands and consumers. While digital advertising has gained momentum due to its targeted reach and measurable performance metrics, print media—particularly newspapers and magazines—continues to offer unique benefits. These include heightened credibility, physical tangibility, and strong audience engagement. Display advertisements in print formats such as full-page, half-page, and inserts harness visual design and editorial trust to generate lasting

impressions. This study investigates the continued relevance and impact of print display advertising in *Business Standard*, a leading financial daily in India. Business Standard is a great place to look at how print ads affect brand awareness, recall, and perception because it has a dedicated readership of business leaders, policymakers, and investors.

Research Objectives

The main goals of this research are to:

- Compare the cost-effectiveness of print versus digital advertising.



- Find out how print display ads affect brand awareness and memory
- Look at how people think about brands that are shown in print media.
- Identify critical success factors for effective print advertisements.
- Provide strategic recommendations for advertisers and media planners.

Scope and Significance

Scope

This study is primarily focused to understand the effectiveness of print display advertising across a few industries where visual communication plays a pivotal role. These include industries like Fast Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG), finance, technology and automobiles that heavily rely on visual branding to appeal to the consumer interest. Ads in this field must reflect high brand strength, and the quality of the product or innovation should be extravagant, making it very critical to design and medium.

Type of audience: Urban and semiurban professional, Print consumer (i.e, apt to read newspapers including Business Standard). These individuals often hold decision-making roles or are influential consumers in their respective domains. Their engagement with print is not only habitual but also

purposeful, as they seek in-depth information, credible analysis, and professional insights—attributes strongly associated with reputable print platforms.

In terms of format, the study is limited to display advertisements in *Business Standard*, such as full-page, half-page, and inserted ads. These ad types are visually driven and strategically placed within the editorial content of the publication to attract reader attention. Display ads are different from classified ads or simple announcements because they use eye-catching images and well-thought-out layouts to tell brand stories, show off product benefits, or send out promotional messages. This makes them great for campaigns that want to build a brand.

Significance

The author manages the Adobe Digital Insights research team, which publishes data on digital marketing and other topics through its blog. Print media budgets often are squeezed, and knowing the true impact of print can enable brands to decide whether the continued investment is worth it. With the potential limitations of print now more broadly understood, these new studies are paramount in helping brand owners who want to know if print still provides brands with recall, trustworthiness and customer



engagement, be it working in conjunction with digital channels.

Suffice to say that for media planners and advertising strategists, the research is particularly enlightening on how print works in an integrated media mix. It discusses the pros and cons of print advertising and also serves some ideas for boosting this medium along with other channels. For planners, that data is integral to optimizing campaign reach and efficiency when dealing with huge budgets. The researchers use it to decide about the media placement, timing, and creative execution in a more data-driven way.

The research is important for publishers and print media companies, as it provides a window into what advertisers need in today's competitive environment. By understanding ad formats that work, the creative elements marketers are drawn to and anticipating a way forward for how print can evolve to meet new expectations allows publishers to fine-tune their offering. If they don't do this, by either innovating the format of their ads, solving incremental capabilities which are necessary in an integrated digital world, or bundling media packages together (among other strategies) they lose appeal to premium advertisers who will simply spend their money elsewhere.

Research Methodology

Sampling and Data Collection

Sample Size: 52 marketing heads from large and mid-sized corporations

Sampling Method: Purposive sampling—targeting professionals with prior experience in using print advertisements

Data Collection Tool: Structured Google Forms questionnaire

The analysis and interpretation of the data collected from 52 marketing heads of large companies. The data was processed using SPSS software, and Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) was conducted using Principal Component Analysis (PCA). The goal was to reduce the number of variables and identify key factors that influence perceptions of print advertising.

KMO and Bartlett's Test

Table KMO and Bartlett's Test

KMO and Bartlett's Test		
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.440
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	96.268
df		105
Sig.		.717



Interpretation

The KMO value of 0.440 suggests a moderate level of sampling adequacy, indicating that while the data may not meet the ideal benchmark for factor analysis (commonly considered to be 0.6 or above), it is still acceptable for exploratory purposes. The Bartlett's Test of Sphericity yielded a significance value of 0.717, implying that the

variables show a level of intercorrelation sufficient to proceed with factor analysis cautiously. Despite some statistical limitations, the analysis was carried forward to uncover underlying patterns and dimensions that could offer valuable insights, especially given the expert-based and targeted nature of the sample (marketing heads of large companies).

Communalities

Table Communalities (Extraction Values)

Communalities		
	Initial	Extraction
increase our brand's visibility	1.000	.553
position our brand	1.000	.573
engages with our display	1.000	.696
generate business leads.	1.000	.606
increases in sales or inquiries.	1.000	.571
strengthen relationships with clients	1.000	.754
enhances brand's reputation	1.000	.576
better credibility	1.000	.538
product or service information	1.000	.822
sufficient budget	1.000	.617
(ROI)	1.000	.650
long-term marketing strategy	1.000	.821
competitive advantage	1.000	.718
s more innovation and creativity	1.000	.747
increase print advertising budget	1.000	.749
Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.		

The communalities show how much variance in each variable is explained by the extracted components.

Key values include:

- Product or service information:
0.822



- Long-term marketing strategy: **0.821**
- Strengthen relationships with clients: **0.754**
- Increase print advertising budget: **0.749**
- ROI: **0.650**

Interpretation

Variables like *product information* and *long-term strategy* have high communalities, meaning they are well-represented by the extracted factors. This suggests that these variables play an important role in influencing the perception of print advertising effectiveness.

Total Variance Explained

Table Total Variance Explained

Component	Total Variance Explained								
	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	2.211	14.741	14.741	2.211	14.741	14.741	1.581	10.539	10.539
2	1.628	10.856	25.596	1.628	10.856	25.596	1.575	10.499	21.039
3	1.483	9.890	35.486	1.483	9.890	35.486	1.415	9.432	30.470
4	1.346	8.975	44.461	1.346	8.975	44.461	1.379	9.195	39.665
5	1.180	7.865	52.326	1.180	7.865	52.326	1.356	9.039	48.705
6	1.077	7.180	59.506	1.077	7.180	59.506	1.354	9.028	57.732
7	1.066	7.108	66.614	1.066	7.108	66.614	1.332	8.882	66.614
8	.950	6.334	72.948						
9	.935	6.236	79.185						
10	.830	5.534	84.719						
11	.651	4.338	89.056						
12	.526	3.506	92.562						
13	.481	3.210	95.772						
14	.335	2.233	98.005						
15	.299	1.995	100.000						

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

This table presents how much of the total variance is explained by each principal component:

- Component 1: 14.741%
- Component 2: 10.856%
- Component 3: 9.890%
- Component 4: 8.975%
- Component 5: 7.865%
- Component 6: 7.180%
- Component 7: 7.108%

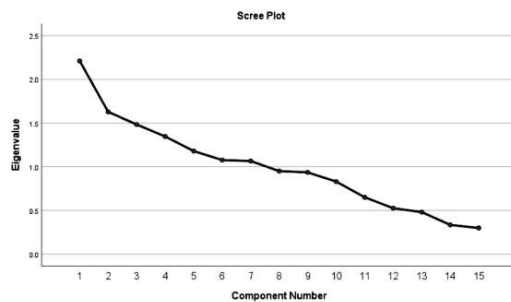
- Cumulative variance explained: 66.614%

Interpretation

Seven components were extracted with eigenvalues greater than 1, collectively explaining 66.61% of the total variance in the dataset. This indicates that the majority of the



variability in the data can be explained by these seven factors.



Scree Plot

The Scree Plot is a graphical representation used to determine the optimal number of components to retain in factor analysis. It plots the eigenvalues against the component numbers in descending order.

In this study, the Scree Plot showed a noticeable "elbow" after the 7th component, indicating that the first seven components account for the most significant variance in the data. After this point, the curve flattens, suggesting that the remaining components contribute very little additional explanatory power.

This observation supports the results of the Total Variance Explained table, where the first seven components had eigenvalues greater than 1 and together accounted for a substantial portion of the total variance.

The Scree Plot justifies the retention of seven components for further analysis,

enhancing both the accuracy and interpretability of the factor solution.

Seven Key Dimensions of Print Advertising Effectiveness

Strategic Planning and Budget Allocation

On the other hand print advertising is thought of as a branding play and not one that will immediately respond to the ad. In contrast to digital campaigns that correlates with real-time measuring and refining, print ads must be both intentional (thought out) and present for a good length of time in order to gain the trust (and memorability) needed for any brand-related message. While the ad spend on print media may only comprise a fraction of their overall marketing budget, many businesses continue to adhere to this traditional form of exposure. For brands with niche or professional audiences – the benefits of physical material are even more pronounced. The fact that print is featured in media planning demonstrates that it still has an important contribution to brand perception and awareness.

Engagement and Visual Appeal

The success of a print ad relies profoundly on its design aesthetics. The visual and stylistic aspect of the content (to include color-scheme,



typography, layout and imagery) are an important factor in determining how the reader will interact with it. Good advertising is engaging and strengthens brand memory. Top creative design and high investment were two factors that figured into the study; according to respondents, both of those things led directly to success. Since print ads are not like digital advertisements, that can easily be skipped or even blocked, they have a longer window of exposure and are experienced in a totally disturbance-free environment which makes the visual quality an undeniable factor to consider.

Client Relationship Building

When it comes to device preference, print media is so far the best integrator of all these, which makes it a powerful means for relationship-building — an absolutely key element in B2B marketing. This is also used by companies to generate credibility among their existing and prospective customer base, as print has the trust of people. High-value — Because of its assumed level of legitimacy, print is also frequently deployed for any communication requirement involving corporate decision-makers, investors or institutional clients. Print media can give the appearance of being serious and committed often essential where

brand reputation and trust are paramount in premium sectors, enabling long term relationship driven strategies.

Informational Value

Print advertising has long been praised for its capacity to deliver a large amount of technical information in an easily digestible, structured manner. You can run print ads with in-depth product descriptions, specifications or feature comparisons that would overwhelm a banner ad or bite sized social media post. This has made print the media of choice for industries such as finance, healthcare and tech that require a higher level of clarity and depth to inform decision-making. Insights from this study reveal that marketers most strongly value print for its ability to educate and inform, particularly in locales where differences are subtle and need encapsulation.

Credibility and Creativity

High credibility of the medium helps in print advertisements. News and magazines the people read especially from known newspapers and journals when compared with content online. The trust also gives additional impact to print ads, so they are particularly good for launching new products or repositioning brands. Even then, there



are also creative aspects to print that present an opportunity for beautiful design using new formats such as those created by textured paper, fold-over or pass-through covers and multi-page inserts. Credibility combined with creative liberty, allows brands to leave an imprint on the mind.

Brand Visibility and Competitive Edge

Print media advertising requires strategic ad placement to help a brand get noticed in the crowd of similar products in the market. Select the right publications and your ad will reach the relevant audience in positions ranging from front pages, business sections or a premium spreads. The engagement rate is even higher as nodes publications in specific industries and reader profiles, whose content is very close to what the audience likes. This

aims at reaching only a portion of the audience to be able to give brands an extra edge, especially in industries where there are more brand offerings.

Brand Positioning and Lead Generation

Brand identity and positioning established by print advertising. Print Campaigns Print campaigns, when executed consistently, lend an air of authority, dependability and exclusivity to a brand. This works particularly well in premium brands or services where perceived value is key. In addition, print can deliver quality leads by capturing an engaged and frequently high-intent audience. Print ads inspire a potential customer, who prefers a more substance over flashy and fast-paced digital promotions requiring an on-the-go commitment to meaningfully engage.

Comparative Assessment: Print vs. Digital Advertising

Metric	Print Advertising	Digital Advertising
Credibility	High	Moderate
Engagement	Deep	Short-lived
Measurement	Indirect (surveys)	Real-time (clicks/CTR)
Cost	Higher per insertion	Lower CPM
Target Audience	Older, niche	Younger, broader



Recommendations for Brands and Media Planners

Integrate Print with Digital Channels

Although it may not be the primary means of reaching audience, brands could possibly look at dovetailing print advertising with digital platforms to up interactivity and measurability. Integrating QR codes, personalized URLs or unique campaign hashtags in print ads can help enable consumers to move smoothly from a tangible asset to online experiences. For example, a luxury watch brand might include a QR code on the page to an advertisement in a magazine that leads viewers to an embedded video of behind-the-scenes content or product demonstration (thus encouraging engagement with their consumers).

Prioritize High-Quality Creative Design

Print ads must grab and hold an audience's attention long enough to make the sale — which is where their visual appeal comes into play. Speaker: And you know that might mean you need to invest in your graphic designers as specialists or take some content management time and build it up into a real creative team. Apple's print advertising (and really all of their ads) are great examples of this due to their clean, minimalist design always recognizable as an Apple ad and reaching viewers every time.

Leverage Print for Relationship Marketing

For high value customers, companies can use print media to build & maintain the relationships effectively. Print-newsletters, brochures or even invitations are perfect examples of this but other print formats offer a tactile and thoughtful way to communicate with clients. For instance, banks and wealth management firms frequently use personalized mailers to build trust with High Net Worth Individuals (HNIs) which foster higher customer retention rates.

Communicate Technical and Detailed Information

For industries requiring more in-depth product information, print ads are a great medium. It is a format that enables details like technical specifications, how the app or tool is to be used and elaborate on features without drowning out your audience. These applications are critical for verticals such as pharmaceutical, where print media is often the only precise way to share drug information with medical professionals and stakeholders.

Track ROI with Innovative Techniques

If in case a marketer is using print campaigns, then they better supplement these channels with



tracking mechanisms like unique promo codes or dedicated landing pages or custom contact numbers. With these print ad feature, advertisers can tie particular customers actions to the individual print ads. Or, if a company runs an ad in Business Standard with a code (let's say "BS2024") that readers can enter online and receive a discount or exclusive offer then marketers have the ability to track response rates.

Invest in Long-Term Brand Building

Print media as part of a long-term plan to build and strengthen brand equity is a good idea. Consistent and high-quality print ads in well-known publications help people get to know, trust, and see the brand over time. For example, Rolex has consistently been in high-end print media, which has helped it maintain its image as a timeless and prestigious brand.

Target Industry-Specific Publications

Advertisements should be placed in the publications which focus on their desired audience or their particular industry segment. That way they can share marketing messages with a much more developed and interested audience." If you are a fintech company trying to reach out to financial decision-makers, running an ad in Business Standard, read by CFOs, investors and

policy influencers can deliver the advertiser bang for buck.

Conclusion

Print media, especially for premium titles such as Business Standard still provides the critical services of credibility, engagement and depth in communication despite digital advertising growing at an unprecedented level. This study shows that print advertising is still an important part of a multiple media strategy. Seamlessly tying print to digital media, paying for reach and not placements, targeting niche segments allow brands highest return on advertising investment.

Future research can consider AI-driven personalization in print advertising and sustainability as a lens to probe the future of print media. One lesson, however, remains: print advertising may be declining but it is certainly not fated to die off.

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