Film Industry and Social Media Promotion: A Study on Three Contemporary Bengali Films

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Abstract:
Film promotion has now been considered as important as actual making of the film. Although the history of film marketing can be traced back from the days of the inception of the film itself, it has reshaped its periphery time and often. Promotional medium has changed regularly along with the advancement of technology, starting from handmade posters to wallpapers, to radio jingles, television advertisements, trailer launch, promotional tour and so on and so forth. New Media as well as Social Media is the latest addition in this arena. Social media provides online platform to share, interact diverse opinions. Like every other field, film industry too has embraced the immense potentiality and the power of interactivity of the social media. Different literatures show the scope and possibility of using social media in regard to film marketing and promotion. Indian film industry as well as Bengali film industry is not too far behind from this trend. Social media in India can be seen as a major game changer in the last few years acting as a platform against corruption, autocracy, atrocities against women etc. With the rise in number of people using this latest medium, social media thus can act as a major player in the realm of film marketing and promotions too.

Keywords: Film Marketing, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube

Introduction
Marketing communications has undergone a massive change with the emergence of social media which brings customer to the centre point of organisation. Through its user friendly and interactive nature, social media has now become omnipresent in our every day’s life. Film industry, like every other sector, has embraced the potential of social media for its marketing and promotions. Marketing, although always are engulfed with numerous dark shades, it is now considered as important as the actual making of the product. With the development of technology, film industry had gone through various phases using radio jingles, television advertisements, music launch, promotional tours, trailer launch etc. as its marketing mediums.

Apart from Bollywood, the most prolific film industry in India, regional movies too has also started using the potential of social media in terms of promotion and marketing. Amongst six major regional film industries in India (Telegu, Tamil, Maratha, Bengali, Kannada and Malayalam), Bengali film industry, recently, has gained a lot of attention in the latest 62nd National Award Ceremony in different categories by presenting innovative and thought provoking movies to the pan Indian audience. Contemporary Bengali film industry, other than generating diversity of contents in their films, or using technical innovations, has also taken the facet of marketing sincerely. Due to lack of proper research on the role social media has played by creating hype among its users before or after the release of a particular movie in context of marketing of Bengali film industry, this paper will try to explore the scope of convergence between Bengali cinema and social media in regard to marketing and promotions. In order to establish this objective, this paper will take three contemporary selected Bengali movies (ChaderPahar of 2013), (Chotushkone of 2014) and (Open Tee Bioscope of 2015) which have used social media platform (especially Facebook, Twitter and YouTube) extensively for their marketing to exemplify how Bengali film industry has started utilising the prospective of this latest medium. After conducting an online survey on social media users and by analysing posts of Facebook pages of these three movies, the paper will try to show that despite various restrictions and limitations, social media can able to revitalise the entire process of film promotions and marketing and if can be effectively used, it would have significant impact on Bengali cinema viewers in keeping them engaged on different movies.

Different literatures related to marketing and film industry have concentrated either on the effectiveness of social media in predicting box office revenues of the movies or in highlighting the effort of websites and blogs in creating awareness about movies. All these literatures are predominantly based on Hollywood movies.

A very few literature have examined the role of social media in terms of marketing of Indian film industry. In context of Bengali film industry, due to unavailability of any researched documents on contemporary Bengali cinema and its promotion, researcher has to depend and rely heavily on various newspaper reports and some internet sources. Some of the literatures are reviewed in very brief.

Perception of movie marketing
Finola Kerrigan in her book ‘Film Marketing’ stresses on the importance of marketing as a whole while considering movie marketing. She also highlights that if the aim of movie marketing is to satisfy audiences it is not only necessary to ask audiences regarding their likeness about a movie but to place the movies correctly to appeal the target audience. Thus marketing for a movie is as important as any other product which starts from developing a new product and the process continues all the way to distribution and exhibition (Kerrigan, 2010).

From Kerrigan’s point of view it can be assumed that movies are considered as ‘product’ which was important to promote to the right audience, at right place and at right time.
Importance of social networks

Emily Mabry and Lance Porter in their research work “Movies and MySpace: The Effectiveness of Official websites versus Online Promotional Contests” examines the effectiveness of two online promotional tactics by comparing online survey results of official movie site and movie contest promotion within MySpace. Through their article they stressed on the effectiveness of movie campaign by social networking sites as websites and blogs does not have interactive capacity to communicate with the users (Porter, 2010). From their article it can be inferred that social networks differ from traditional web sites in the way consumers interact with them, creating a distinct new area of research. As consumer habits change, there is growing need to understand how consumers interact on these social platforms. One related area of research involves word of mouth on the Internet, also known as electronic word of mouth (eWOM), which is often facilitated through the use of social networks.

Social media and theatre attendance

In the article “Current trends in the Marketing and Promotions of Movies Using Social Media” by Bonnie Wilcox highlights the relationship between social media marketing and theatre attendance. One of the most pertinent questions highlighted in the article is: what social networking sites are the most popular for men and women under 30? Using data collected from Experian Simmons National Consumer Study, Winter 2012, a number of useful statistics can be determined. After Google, Facebook and YouTube are the second most visited websites by women and men, respectively. In this article author also had done extensive research on how movie studios are using social networking websites to market new releases. This study had also undergone an online survey, the result of which suggests that social media promotion can improve theatre attendance in a vast manner (Wilcox, 2012).

Gerbrandt in his article “Does Movie Marketing Matter” (June 11, 2010) while discussing on the importance of movie marketing highlights on the issue that in contrast to just every other product release, movie faces singular challenge: it must create national brand name recognition within a span of few days to a couple of weeks. He had also highlighted on the issue that along with the ascent of the social media there have been calls to shift of large portion of media budgets to internet, especially given that medium’s lower ad rates, massive inventory and ability to target key demographics (Gerbrandt, 2010).

Bengali film industry

Coming to Bengali film industry, the report Media and Entertainment in East India: Bengal published by FICCI, clearly highlights the recent accelerating trend from analogue to digital medium in context of content production to content consumption in the field of Bengali film industry.

It also stresses on the fact that social media especially Facebook and Twitter are increasingly being used to promote films as well as to keep the audience engaged. It also adds that although only a portion of Facebook followers are actually going out to theatre still their conversation in peer groups also influence others to consume content (Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu India Pvt. Ltd, 2012).

In the first decade of twenty first century the number of people connected to internet worldwide increased from 350 million to more than 2 billion. In the same period, the number of mobile phone subscribers rose from 750 million to over 5 billion. According to the report of Internet and Mobile Association of India, by June 2014 there are 243 million internet users in the country amongst which 168.7 million people are social media users. Facebook, in India, itself, has crossed 100 million active users. (IAMAI, 2013) Social media in India can be seen as a major game changer in the last few years acting as a platform against corruption, autocracy, atrocities against women etc. Social media thus can act as a major player in film marketing and promotions too.

Film, irrespective of its geographical region and the language used has been indubitably proved universal because of its powerful combination of moving images finely blended with sound. It is considered as the most popular art form despite of its novelty in comparison to other conventional medium. The 62nd national film award ceremony of 2015 has remained very astounding for Bengali movies as they have bagged 13 national awards in different categories. With so many other factors working behind this striking success, innovative promotional strategies have also worked for this feat.

The Journal of the Bengali Motion Pictures Association had coined the word Tollywood in 1930’s. Other than Bollywood, the prime six important language films that are recognised by NFDC are Telugu, Tamil, Maratha, Bengali, Kannada and Malayalam. In the current years, Bengali cinema has started reinventing itself both in terms of box office collection and in regard to national and international acclamation. 70-100 Bengali movies were released per year with a budget of Rs. 200,000 to Rs. 150 million per movie. Both multiplexes and single theatres are used to release Bengali movies. (Cinema of West Bengal, n.d.).

After the turmoil period of Bengali cinema in 1980’s and 90’s it has come back with a bang containing original and experimental contents and technical innovations. Promotional strategy also has been changing in the scenario of Bengali movies, taking help of the most potent medium of the day.

Along with other conventional mediums of marketing, Bengali film producers and directors even have started promotion through Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Instagram etc. Exclusive
movie website creation, official fan page launch, status update, post film reviews, trailer launch in YouTube, social media contests for gaining premiere passes are some of the very common promotional features used by the producers of Bengali cinema industry. It mainly targets Bengali cinema viewer all over the world through virtual communities to create hype, share pictures, musicals, posters, trailers etc. to promote their movies.

Theoretical framework

Media and Communication Research is a diverse and stimulating field of inquiry. Over the years, with contemporary shift towards vast disciplinary genre, media studies have rapidly developed a very significant body of theory and evidence. With convergence of social media and film as our primary consideration, a look on some major body of surviving theories become necessary. The major harp will be on how people create groups and motivated by their peers in social media in keeping them engaged about a particular movie before or after its release.

Some traditional theories like Social Penetration theory, Social Exchange theory could be considered as valid paradigms in explaining how people form relationships in a social network, how they express opinions and how they pass on information to others. Before going deep into these, the most pertinent question which raises at the outset while discussing on social media is what is social about social media? In sociological theory, there are different concepts of the term social. Some say that all media are social because they are part of society and aspects of society are present in the technological artefacts.

There are different types and connotations of the term social like information, communication, cognition, community etc. In this context, understanding social media of course falls within the gamut of social theory and social philosophy. Understanding social media means to engage in different forms of sociality in the internet in the context of society. (Fuchs, 2014) If we have to answer the question that what is social about social media, we have to mention three most important classical positions of social theory proposed by Emile Durkheim, Max Weber and Karl Marx. Durkheim harps on social facts, while Weber stresses on social relations and Marx emphasises on social cooperation. This three notions of sociality can be easily clubbed together to form a model of human activity. Media, especially social media, are techno social systems in which technological structures interact with social relations and activities in complex ways which finally proofs the sociality of social media.

As social media is grounded on the social structure, the need of analysing individuals which are very much a part of society will definitely come. Social Exchange theory, explores exchange of views and opinions between small groups or individuals. The theory states that humans are likely to engage to activities which are rewarding and avoids those which are high a cost. In social media, users are generally seen to exchange views only on the topic they get direct reward. Social media sites have been recognised from long as people use this more for consuming information than generating. Framed in this theory, in our study, it can be seen that users mostly take information about a particular movie from either their official page or tweets but do not themselves participate in the promotional strategy of film actively.

From the analysis of different existent theories, a clear connectivity between existing theories and usage of social media on motivating audience in engaging themselves about movies before or after release can be measured. This paper will take three major Bengali hits of the recent times which have used social media vehemently for their marketing along with traditional mediums to analyse how much social media has been able to keep audience engaged about a particular movie and simultaneously draw audience to the theatre.

Chader Pahar

ChaderPahar (Mountains of the Moon) is a 2013 Indian adventure drama film based on the famous novel of 1937 by eminent Bengali novelist BibhutibhusanBandopadhyay. It was directed by KamleshwarMukhopadhyay and was produced by MahendraSonoi and Srikant Mehta under the banner of production house Shree Venkatesh Films. This was the first Indian Movie to be shot extensively in South Africa. The film depicts the story of the journey of an ordinary Bengali village man named Shankar, which was played by Dev, a very popular face in Bengali film industry, to South Africa’s Mountain of the Moon in search of gold and diamond mines. The film was full of adventures and exploration with amazing cinematography of the beauty and wildness of Africa. This film is the most commercially successful film of the time. The film was released in Bengal on 20th December 2013 and collected approx. Rs.90 lakh in the first day by breaking all previous records of Tollywood films. The film had also collected Rs. 4.83 crore approx. in the first week of its release. (Chader Pahar, n.d.)

Chader Pahar along with other conventional mediums have vehemently used social media as its one of the major promotional medium. At the onset of 2013, different graphic designers had posted unofficial posters of Chaderpahar in social media to create interest among audiences on the movie and to strike the chord of Bengali’s nostalgic and goose bumping novel of their childhood and teen age. These posters had featured Dev in the foreground with background similar to the cover page of the novel itself. Shree Venkatesh Films had released the official theatrical trailer of the film in November 2014 on the occasion of Children’s day at Kolkata Nicco Park. The trailer, immediately after its release, went viral on web and received more than 32000 views in
the first day itself. The trailer scores hit on its showcasing of South Africa, the land inhabited by lions, snakes and other terrific dangers which Bengali film viewers have never seen before. The trailer contains breath-taking landscapes of South Africa with wonderful human animal interaction. Panoramic shot of wilderness in every bit of the trailer raised interest among viewers especially kids to go for the movie.

Official Facebook page for the movie was created containing interesting information about the location and stories of shootings. Sharing stills and posts related to the movie went viral on Facebook. The director himself had also posted various fascinating scoops about the movie. In twitter, producers had tweeted various interesting and attention grabbing posts and snapshots regarding the movie with hashtag #ChaderPahar.

Apart from this, back to back different shooting related videos were also posted in social media and were made viral.

The episodes were released by Shree Venkatesh Films under the name ‘ChaderPahar Diaries’ Along with the videos some of the interesting facts regarding movie were also shared in Facebook like the odds cast and crew had faced while to shoot with African lion, black mamba, the snake and with the tribes of Africa. These facts had gone automatically viral in social network sites with different interesting comments.

Chotushkone

Chotushkone is a 2014 Bengali crime thriller which was directed by SrijitMukherji, who won National Award for Best Direction for this movie. It was produced by Reliance Entertainment and DAG Creative Media. Chotushkone unfolds four stories of four directors who had come together to make a film with a common theme ‘death’. They were all renowned director-actors who knew each other from before. It is a twisted plot with potholed narrative and with constant flashbacks merged with the present days.

The film casts Aparna Sen, Chiranjeet Chakraborty, Gautam Ghose and Parambrata Chattopadhyay. The director wanted to cast Rituparno Ghosh, eminent filmmaker of the time but his unfortunate death compelled the director to change the cast. The film was released in Bengal on 26th September, 2014. (Chotushkone, 2014). The film was intensely promoted through social media along with other conventional mediums like radio jingles, television ads, posters, wallpapers etc. SrijitMukherji, the director himself has fervently promoted through his own Facebook profile and fan club pages. In the month of August after completion of the production of movie he wrote in his Facebook profile, “A film which was conceived four years back. A film which saw death, withdrawal, betrayal, sabotage, multiple postponement and unimaginable adversity. My most accident and illness prone child for which I have fought and sacrificed the most. And thanks to the indomitable spirit of my team, won.” This post has more than 1,058 likes and shared by number of people. It helps to create hype about the movie among social media users.

Official Facebook page was created by Reliance and DAG Creative Media group in the month of August only. The link of the page was shared by the fan club members of the director. Page was regularly updated with snaps from location, interesting posters by different graphic designers, comments of viewers, posts etc. The official poster depicts 5 cards with the alphabets ‘K’ for king, ‘Q’ for Queen, ‘J’ for Jack and ‘Joker’ with the last and final card marked ‘A’ hidden inside the sleeve of the person holding the other cards. ‘A’ depicts the unknown factor which controls the four angles of the film. This poster raised tremendous curiosity among the mass and it went viral on web. A contest was also organised in Facebook in condition of gaining premiere passes to analyse audience’s interest about the movie. The contest was a huge success. YouTube trailer for the film was launched in August 30, 2014. The trailer went viral on the web immediately. Along with the trailer, music jukebox was also launched on YouTube and the songs touched people’s emotions. Music videos were also shared in different forums and pages of Facebook.

In twitter director had tweeted various posts with hashtag #Chotuskone and it was simultaneously retweeted by fans and followers. After the release of the movie, directors, actors and producers had shared opinions and status of viewers in their own profile. They had also shared the information about ticket selling of Chotushkone from different halls. Reviews of different newspapers and blogs were also shared in social networking sites to spread the words among social media users. Fan clubs had also organised different contest regarding the movie and share posts and posters in their fan page.

Open Tee Bioscope

Open Tee Bioscope is a 2015 Bengali film which was directed by Anindyo Chatterjee. It was produced by another eminent director of Bollywood ShoojitSircar. The film was released on 15th January, 2015. (Open Tee Bioscope, 2014) The film revolves around the adolescence period of a boy and his friends in early 90’s North Kolkata. The film very easily goes deep in the heart of audience by taking people back into their teen age. The film had crossed 100 days limit in theatre and was running successfully.

Other than many unofficial pages, Open Tee Bioscope has an official fan page which has been continuously updated through different fascinating stories of location and shooting. Fans and followers had also promoted it through twitter page. The trailer of the movie was launched in the month of December in YouTube. The trailer contains voice over of the director which reaches
audience directly by reminiscing bits and pieces of interesting events of everyone’s teenage.

Open Tee Bioscope is slightly different from other two films as in this case; post release promotion has more effect on audience than pre-release. Audiences updated their Facebook status and share pictures and posts related to the movie after coming back from theatre. Soon after the release of the movie, songs were also become very popular. The pages contained various posts and reviews by audience and organised different game shows in the official page. One of the most popular games was the producers and directors had asked users to share their first crush of their teenage in the page. Social media users had shared these posts in different groups, forums and other friend’s profiles. The actors and musicians had also promoted regarding the movie on their own profiles.

Data collection

An online survey containing 22 questions was developed to find the effectiveness of social media in terms of promotions of Bengali movies. This survey was forwarded to 104 participants through referential sampling procedure. The criteria to choose these participants were that they should be both Bengali film viewers as well as social media users. The questions in the survey were prepared to gain insight on the social media habits of the participants regarding the film promotion of three specific movies that were taken as case i.e. ChanderPahar, Chotushkone, and Open Tee Bioscope. This survey not only finds whether the participants have actively engaged to the promotional strategy of the films through different social networking sites but it is also used to find a comparative study between promotional strategy that these three films have employed on different social media platforms.

Data analysis

The survey data was analysed using charts and graphs. From analysis it has been found out that among the participants who have responded to the survey, 55.9% (total count of 57) are male and the others i.e. 44.1% (total count of 45) are female. Therefore, it can be deduced that the survey does not provide emphasis on a particular gender group, however data collected from male participants tends to be higher.

It has been found out from analysis that the majority among the participants of this survey falls between the age group of 18-29. In fact, among the participants 65.7% lies in this group. The other age group that took part significantly in the survey is of the age group of 30-44. Their participation is 31.4%. There is only 2.0% participation for age group 45-59 and 1.0% only for age group 60+. From this it can be deduced that social media usage is more prominent with the young. Naturally, the movies that are targeting young audience have content that will woo the youth will find it more successful in promoting itself on social media platforms. ChanderPahar, Chotushkone and Open Tee Bioscope all of these movies have attracted the younger generations of Bengal and have made noteworthy impacts on social media promotion too.

Participants of the survey come from different social strata and thus have wide range of current occupations. We have observed nearly equal participation of people from Information Technology sector, Media Houses and Journalists, Educational sectors, Students etc. The survey does not focus on people with a particular occupation, thus capturing the social media usage habits of the participants en masse.

Analysis on Chander Pahar

The participants were first asked if they have watched the movie ChanderPahar released in 2013. The answer was a yes from majority. 86.3% of the participants have answered yes, that they have the seen the movie. Only 13.7% have answered in negative. ChanderPahar as we already know is attached to the nostalgia of Bengalis teen age and thus has attracted audience largely to theatres to see the transformation of their imaginations into audio visual reality. From the analysis it has been found that 20.0% of the participants have used Facebook as their primary source of information about the movie. 26.0% have used YouTube. Only 1.0% among them has used twitter. A huge number 53.0% have used other conventional mediums as primary source of information for the movie. Thus, it can be deduced that promotional activities of ChanderPahar was carried out in parallel in both social and conventional media with nearly equal force.

The participants were asked if they have ‘liked’ the official movie page that was created in Facebook. It has been found out that 35.0% of the participants ‘liked’ the Facebook pages and 65.0% did not. It has also been found out that only 11.9% of the participants have followed the tweets regarding ChanderPahar, while the majority i.e. 88.1% did not. However, most of the participants, 64.0% have watched the movie trailer or related videos in YouTube. Only 36.0% said that they have not seen the videos.

On questioning about how the participants themselves have participated in the social media promotion of the movie it has been found out that 25.0% of the participants have shared posts and photographs related to the movie in Facebook, 6.0% tweeted on the movie, and 21.0% shared YouTube videos. 64.0% of the participants did not actively participated in the promotion at all and 2.0% went for word of mouth promotions (chart 1). Quotes one of the participant, “Spoken about the film and discussed about it with peers. Recommended it as a must-watch film”

From the survey, it can be observed that while 35.0% of the participants have ‘liked’ the Facebook page of ChanderPahar, only 25.0% have shared their views on Facebook. Therefore, a lot of people tend to have listened or observed the posts but did not
actively participate in promoting the film. Promotional activity however reached these people and they got benefited. This nature is more apparent in case of YouTube. Here we see that 64.0% of the participants have observed the related videos but only 21.0% have shared the same. Twitter as a platform was not popular as a promotional tool in ChanderPahar.

Analysis on Chotushkone

From the responses of the survey it has been found out that majority 78.2% of the participants have watched the movie Chotushkone released in 2014. While only 21.8% have not watched the movie. Chotushkone was not only a commercially successful movie but it has claimed three national awards including the coveted ones such as best director, best screenplay and best cinematography.

The participants were asked from which primary source they have collected information about the movie. It has been found out that 36.5% have used Facebook, 25.0% have used YouTube and 38.5% have used other conventional media. None of the participants have used twitter. Thus it can be deduced that film Chotushkone has focused a lot on social media promotion. Their promotion was primarily centred on facebook and YouTube.

From the survey it has been found out that 49.5% of the participants have ‘liked’ official Facebook page of Chotushkone, while 50.5% did not. 21.4% have followed tweets on the movie while, 78.6% did not. 72.0% of the participants have watched trailers or other related videos for the movie in YouTube while only 28.0% did not.

On questioning about how the participants of the survey have participated in the social media promotion of the movie it has been found out that 37.4% have shared posts and photographs on Facebook, 8.1% have tweeted, and 20.2% have shared YouTube trailers and videos. Among the participants 50.5% have said they have not promoted the film at all, while 3.0% have said that they have used word of mouth promotion. Quotes one of the participant, “I have told my family members to watch the film”. It is an observation that while 49.5% of the participants have ‘liked’ Chotushkone official movie page but only 37.4% have participated in its promotion on Facebook, like sharing posts and pictures. Similarly while 72% have watched the YouTube videos only 20.2% have shared the same among their friends. Therefore it can be deduced though social media promotion has reached a lot of participants, only a fair percentage of them in turn have participated in social media promotion actively. (chart 2) Similar observation can also be made on twitter platform, though participation in twitter is actually very low. 21.0% have followed tweets while only 8.1% have tweeted back. Overall, Chotushkone had a sound film promotion strategy on social media. It is apparent from the high participation rate that is observed in the survey.

Analysis on Open Tee Bioscope

Open Tee Bioscope released in 2015 is a commercially hit cinema made using a small budget and has been directed by a rookie director Anindya Chatterjee. When asked, if the participants have watched the movie 46.1% have answered yes, while 53.9% have answered no. Therefore, despite being a commercially successful cinema Open Tee Bioscope has not attracted much fanfare from the participants of the survey.

The participants were asked from which primary source they have collected most information about the movie. Conventional media score high with 42.7%, followed by Facebook 38.2%. Only 19.1% of the participants have used YouTube as primary source while none have used twitter at all. From this it can be understood, that Open Tee Bioscope promoted primarily in conventional media. It has not effectively used social media as such.

Again from the survey it has been found out that 32.6% have ‘liked’ the official movie page of Open Tee Bioscope in Facebook, while majority 67.4% did not. Only 8.3% have followed tweets on the movie while 91.7% did not. 55.9% have watched trailers or other related videos in YouTube but 44.1% did not. On questioning about how the participants of the survey have participated in the promotion of the movie it has been found out that 25.0% have shared posts and photographs on Facebook, 12.5% have shared YouTube videos, while none have tweeted or re-tweeted any post on tweeter. An overwhelming 68.8% of the participants claimed they have not promoted the movie on social media, while 2.1% have used word of mouth promotion. Quotes one participant, “I have told my family members to watch the movie” (chart 3).

It is thus an observation, even when the social media promotion for the movie found its target a certain percentage of them did not in turn promoted the same in social media. For example, while 32.6% have ‘liked’ the movie page in Facebook, 25.0% have shared opinions there. While 55.9% have watched videos in YouTube, only 12.5% have shared the same. Twitter as platform has not been used much for promotion in case of Open Tee Bioscope. It is apparent as only 8.1% have said that they have followed tweets on the movie.

Comparative study

From the survey it is apparent that Chotushkone has used social media platform much better than the other two movies. Participation in promotional strategy by users themselves is even much higher for this movie. The huge turnout of audience in theatre and the huge hype surrounding Chotushkone in social media bears testimony to this fact that Chotushkone is an example of social media promotional success. Open Tee Bioscope however, has promoted more on conventional media before the release of the
movie. And thus, despite being commercially so successful its social media presence is much less. It has started using social media platform more and users have also started sharing their posts only after the release of the movie. The hype surrounding this movie could have been build much more if they would have used the potential of social media platform in full force.

Chander Pahar also employed a very successful promotional strategy in social media. However, as the story of the movie is an integral part of a Bengali’s childhood dreams there was already much hype regarding the movie. Following on that the movie created social media hype. The results of the survey bear testimony to that. It can also be observed in Bengali film industry, YouTube is the most popular way of drawing people’s attention. More than 50% of the participants of the survey have admitted to have watched different trailers and videos in YouTube in average. Facebook follows closely, with over 35% of the participants following it on average for all the films. However, twitter as a social media platform is not yet so popular in this part of India. This is one social media platform that Bengali film industry must concentrate in future to promote films.

Facebook page analysis

The official Facebook pages of these three movies were also analysed to find people’s engagement in such communities. At nearer look of the official page of ChaderPahar in the recent times, it has been found out that only one brand post was posted on 16th March 2015 which caused 49 engagements. 49 engagements were broken down into 48 ‘likes’ and 1 ‘comment’. At closer look of the official Facebook page of Chotushkone in the recent times, it has been found out that two brand posts were posted on 23rd March, 2015 and six brand posts were posted on 25th March 2015. This caused a jump in the audience engagement in the official page. The total audience engagement in that time period was calculated to be 590. This engagement can be broken down into 430 ‘likes’ (54 per post), 3 ‘comments’ and 157 ‘shares’ (20 per post).

On the other hand, the official Facebook page of Open Tee Bioscope has 12 brand posts posted on the period from 14th March 2015 to 27th March 2015. It caused total engagement of 2131 which were broken down into 2047 ‘likes’, 44 ‘comments’ and 40 ‘shares’.

As challenges goes with more or less all success stories, social media promotion is also blamed for fake reviews, paid likes, negative tweets etc. As limitation is very much part of a creation, social media should also be utilised in proper channel to overcome its barriers. In the line of social exchange theory, it is very apparent from the study that people easily consume information about movies but very few of them have actually participated in the promotional strategy of the film actively. Not only film marketing team, it is also in the same way the responsibility of social media users too to participate actively in the film marketing process. Although it is not the ultimate time to comment on the future of social media in film marketing but it can be easily said that it has invigorate the whole film marketing process. Bengali film industry is just in the infant stage in using social media platform. Still, in the wake of just few years it has been able to create considerable impact on audiences in some way by giving them chances to participate in both content generation and content sharing. Another important factor which also came from the analysis is that despite how strategic the promotion may be; still now content of the movie heads the list to draw audiences to the theatre. As Kolkata based director SrijitMukherji, who is also a National Award Winner for Best Direction in 62nd National Film Award ceremony for his 2014 film Chotushkone says “I don’t think there is any gap between Bengali cinema and Bollywood. Good cinema is good cinema wherever it happens, be it ‘Haider’ or “ChotoderChobi” or ‘Chotushkone’. Content is the greatest leveller... I don’t really think there is a gap as such. If you are talking about national recognition and limelight, given how Bengali cinema is faring on the national scene of late, that gap or discrepancy or discrimination will be bridged in course of time,” to end in a positive note, it can also be said that in context of marketing too, if social media can be effectively used among Bengali cinema viewers, Bengali movies can also be able to compete with movies of other parts of the globe in the near future.

Reference


APPENDIX

![Chart 1](chart1.png)

![Chart 2](chart2.png)