

Telling the News Story Effectively: Content Strategy of the Regional News Channels of Rajasthan

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Abstract

In terms of popularity and success of a news channel, content is king. Content can be the same but the packaging and presentation in media terms, "playing with the story" decides its fate on TRP charts. Of late, news channels are coming up with variety of content strategies to cater wide interests of the audience including breakings, live, exclusives, data journalism, fast news to name a few. There is a dearth of secondary literature on various types of content strategies adopted by the news channels. This research paper will be helpful in creating an inventory of the content delivered by the media organizations. This research paper is based on the content packaging being used by the regional news channels of Rajasthan during prime time band. The researcher has used Primary & secondary literature as well as self observation based exploratory study.

The study has been carried out on ETV Rajasthan and Zee Rajasthan News out of the eleven news channels of Rajasthan. The selection has been made on the basis of highest TRP ratings.

Key words: Content Strategy of news channels, regional news channels, regional media in India, regional news channels of Rajasthan, content strategy, prime time band

Introduction

The media industry of India has entered a new phase in terms of audience-preference. A lot of news channels are coming up these days with new ideas and attractive packaging. After considering huge competitive environment in the national media, big and small media houses are eyeing on exploring regional markets being less competitive and to give its audience a local flavor. Low operating and overhead costs also make them profitable ventures even though the figures are not as significant as compared to the national channels. In terms of advertisement, because of the rock bottom rates and local appeal, these channels are giving tough competition to newspapers.

Most of the media houses today are operating more than one channel and have presence in more than one genre. These networks are getting even bigger and stronger by merging with major national networks or expanding themselves in new territories. Asianet, the first regional language channel in India is now part of the Star network whereas ETV which has 12 regional channels has now been bought over by the Reliance group. The expansion of regional news channels can be seen as a part of Reliance Jio's Rs.150,000 crore endeavour (The News Minute.com). After all, the business of news is no longer lucrative, with short

term profits out of the picture; it has to graduate into something much larger for becoming a sustained profitable venture.

According to the FICCI-KPMG Report 2016, the television industry in India is estimated at INR542 billion in 2015, and is expected to grow at a CAGR of 15 percent to reach INR1,098 billion in 2020.

The number of TV households in India increased to 175 million in 2015, implying a TV penetration of 62 percent. The number of Cable & Satellite (C&S) subscribers is estimated to have reached 160 million. Excluding DD FreeDish, the number of paid C&S subscribers is estimated at 145 million in 2015, implying a paid C&S penetration of 83 percent. TV households are expected to increase to 200 million by 2020, with paid C&S subscriber base expected to grow to 174 million by 2020, representing 87 percent of TV households (FICCI-KPMG Report 2016).

TV advertising revenue growth for broadcasters across genres in 2015 is better than expected, in spite of a high base in 2014 due to the general elections. The total TV advertising market is estimated to have grown at 17 percent in 2015 to INR181 billion, higher than the 13 percent projected in last year.

According to BARC Ratings, Television viewership continued to be driven by Hindi and Regional GECs, which accounted for majority of the total viewership, contributing 58 per cent to the total viewership over the period Week 41, 2015 to Week 7, 2016, based on data from BARC India (TG: All 4+, Market: All India, Period: Wk 41, 2015 to Wk 7, 2016).

Total news channels viewership is accounted for 6.5 percent in which Regional news viewership is accounted for majority of the total viewership contributing 3.5 percent followed by Hindi news 3.0 and English news 0.3 percent.

The media in Rajasthan has now become a lifeline for the people of the state, whether in print or electronic; all are devoted to contribute in distributing socio-economic-political news to far flung areas of Rajasthan. In recent years, the media industry of Rajasthan has evolved in its true sense and every big and national media houses are setting up their network in the state.

If we talk about the status of electronic media in Rajasthan, DD Rajasthan and ETV Rajasthan were the only sources of regional television news content but with the emergence of local news channels like Jan TV, HBTV (formerly BTV now taken over by Hathway), First India News, A One TV and Patrika Groups yet to be launched channel, have totally changed the scenario of the regional media.

The state with diversified culture is emerging as a huge market for big media houses and players like Zee Media Corporation Limited, Sahara Samay, India News and Samachar Plus are doing anything and everything to establish in the market. Now, Regional news channels in Hindi are competing with national news channels in the state. In order to obtain a constitutional status for Rajasthani language, the state government has taken up an initiative to broadcast a bulletin in the state language. ETV Rajasthan launched its first state language bulletin called '**Aapni Khabran**' on November 7, 2014.

However, Rajasthan is not an easy market for the electronic media in terms of content and advertising, news channels are managing to survive in the industry

by consistently experimenting with their content strategies. ZEE Rajasthan News serves as the finest example to explain the current situation of the regional news channels of the state.

Zee Media Corporation Ltd (ZMCL) has entered the regional market with elaan to deliver news and entertainment content under the terrestrial entertainment network (TEN) format in the name of Zee Marudhara. But as soon as it realized that this format does not suit the market of a state like Rajasthan, the focus has been shifted into a pure-play news channel and changed its name to Zee Rajasthan News airing a mix of The new tagline of the channel is 'Khabaro Mein Dum, Sabse Aage Hum' (Impact in our news, we are ahead of everyone). The changes were effective from 30 March, which is also celebrated as Rajasthan Day.

This is the second time the channel has been rebranded. Zee Marudhara was launched as Zee Rajasthan Plus in July 2013. The name of the channel was changed to Zee Marudhara in January 2014. It is a 24-hour Hindi language news and current affairs channel focused on the state of Rajasthan. The channel mainly covers regional as well as national and international news and current affairs, sports and entertainment. The flagship shows of Zee Marudhara were 'Aaj Ki Badi Khabar', 'Marudhara Express' and 'Apno Shehar Apni Khabaran'.

In the wake of emerging needs for the local media, the year 2014 saw the launch of new regional players including Bhaskar news (Hindi), A One Channel in Rajasthan and also News 7 (Tamil) and TV New (Malyalam) in other parts of the country. Also, the past year witnessed a huge initiative taken by the regional broadcasters to improve the content quality and credibility of information delivered by the regional players. The regional and small news channels joined hands to form a separate outfit called the 'All India News Broadcasters Association'. This first-of-its-kind association of regional news players was formed with an aim to work towards creating a level playing field in the country on a par with the national news channels. Apart from focusing on the problems of the industry, the association will work towards ensuring ethical journalism, curbing paid news and ensuring guidelines for self-regulation (Televisionpost.com).

As per census 2011 data, the state has 1,674,646 TV households, while in Jaipur city the number is 47,998 which is increasing day by day. DTH platforms have given an impetus to the distribution level as a result television advertising witnessing a steady growth. As far as television penetration in the state is concerned, Tata Sky has occupied the 60% market; Dish TV is covering 30% while cable has only 5% share and Airtel, Videocon and Reliance etc share the remaining market which turn out to a 80:20 ratio. Zee Rajasthan News and ETV Rajasthan are the only channels that have 100 percent penetration on DTH in the state. India News Rajasthan, First India News and Samachar Plus Rajasthan are only on cable while Sahara Samay Rajasthan is on Videocon and cable both.

Review of Literature

As per the definition given by Rachel Lovinger (2007), "content strategy is using words, data, infographics and other formats to create unambiguous content that supports meaningful experiences". Her article was the first to shed light on content strategy as viable, valuable piece of practice.

As per the definition given by Kristina Halvorson (2010), "Content strategy is the practice of planning for the creation, delivery and governance of useful, usable content". She further classified content as text, data, graphics, video and audio. News channels use these in different formats to deliver varieties of news content. According to Halvorson, a strategy is a holistic, well-considered plan for obtaining a specific goal or result. It is carefully considered, well-articulated plan of action, achievable and executable.

It is clearly understood that each and every channel decides content strategy keeping in mind the policy, ideologies of the channel including types of audience a channel is catering to and their preferences etc. The ultimate motive of experimenting with content strategy is to attract more and more viewers and maintain reliability and credibility of the channel among viewers. There are different factors that influence content strategy of news channels and that is why content strategy varies from channel to channel. Ultimately, a news channel delivers the ideology, inclination etc through their content strategy. So, it plays an important role in establishing and popularizing of a news channel.

Broadly we can define content strategy as a unique way of using different content formats to generate competitive edge. News is a commodity, not a mirror image of reality. To say that the news is a product shaped by forces of supply and demand is hardly surprising today. News content is clearly a product. Its creation and distribution depends on the market value attached to the attention and tastes of different individuals, the technologies affecting the cost of information generation and transmission, and the news values pursued by journalists and media owners. (Hamilton 2004).

Shendurnikar (2011) in her research article "Media for the Masses: The changing face of regional languages in Indian Media" concluded that media is an important ally in the process of development of Indian languages. She further stated that exposure to regional media, its quality and its penetration are supposed to be directly related to the growth and survival of these languages. Researcher has a firm belief that regional media can alter the status of Indian languages in the society and also impact their use on a day to day basis. The researcher also stressed on the need of improving the content quality of regional media. Researcher further assessed that content should be more informative and debatable rather than disseminating trivia and sensational news.

Vozhdaeva (2010) in his research titled "The crisis in commercial regional TV: Main challenges and future solutions. A comparison of Russia and the UK" discovered that the UK runs the risk of losing regional TV broadcasting beyond the BBC and there is a threat to alternative regional TV news providers. According to the researcher, many regional media companies have downsized and cut off salaries by a large extent. The researcher found out that the rapid rise in the number of digital channels put television stations under the threat of losing the value of its advertising license and it is the result of huge shift in the audience's interest in digital channels. Regional news channels of Rajasthan are facing the same challenge. Zee Rajasthan news has downsized its operations due to increase in expenditure at the same time decrease in the revenue generating sources. Most of the staff members are called off to its Noida based headquarters and the bulletins are on aired from their only.

Kuthiala, B.K. and Singh in their research titled "Analyses of Rural and Developmental Content in Indian Television News" (2006) analyzed the concept of diversity in the media content. The researchers found out that there is a strong urban bias operating in the whole production process of television news channels. As a result the media players project nation as 'Urban Middle Class India' and do not either cater to vast population of the nation or give proportional representation to rural population. Study reveals that developmental issues like education, health, water, food, electricity, agriculture, poverty, unemployment etc. are least reported issues in television news. A developing country like India where more than 70 per cent population still lives in villages, agriculture is the mainstay but news producers surprisingly did not find it worth including in their news bulletins.

According to the Ofcom's Communications Market Report (2014) based on news consumption in the UK, television is the most-used platform for regional and local news, with 77% of adults watching this at least once a week. In the survey, 'local' is defined as 'the area in which audiences live' and 'regional' is defined as 'local area and surrounding areas in the wider region'. As per the findings, 15-24 (65%) were less likely than those aged 55+ (89%) to watch regional news on TV on at least once a weekly basis, but are more likely to use local news websites, with almost one fifth (17%) of 15-24s doing this compared to 4% of over-55s.

When respondents were asked about how important local media sources were to them, they rated regional and local news on television as most important for local news and information (56%), followed by the internet (46%). Also, the high personal importance of regional and local news on television is further highlighted by the finding that 49% of those who use any local media say television is the source of most personal importance to them.

According to the Pew Research Center Report titled 'A Boom in Acquisitions and Content Sharing Shapes Local TV News 2013', local television in the U.S. saw massive change in 2013, big owners of local TV stations got substantially bigger, thanks to a wave of station purchases. Almost 300-full power local TV stations changed hands in 2013, at a cost more than Rs. 5500 crore. The impetus for most of these acquisitions and operating arrangements is economic but it also has an effect on the local news that audience receive.

The research report prepared by "Australian Communications and Media Authority" titled Regional Australians' Access to Local Content (2013) described local content as content that relates to events or people who live in a regional local area, such as local news, local weather, local sport and local community events. This content can be available through a range of communications and media sources including television, radio, online, social media and newspapers.

To survive in the regional market, media companies need to localize their content and be sensitive to local culture. Content needs to be repurposed to suit local audiences. India has several internal markets with different languages and consumer preferences. For example, the Media and Entertainment market in South India is distinctly different from that of North India. To succeed, global

companies need to adopt different strategies for each region, as there will be differences in demand, the type of content desired, the mode of distribution of content and the revenue models employed.

Research Objectives

Regional and local media are supposed to serve as responsible media for strengthening the cultural and societal values through their news and programming content. Despite the industry's problems, the local TV stations are still producing high-quality broadcast journalism of tremendous value to the community at the same time reaching a broader audience than newspapers in terms of size, diversity and socioeconomic status. This paper aims at exploring the content strategies adopted by ETV Rajasthan and ZEE Rajasthan News. The reason behind taking these two news channels for the study is that these two news channels are on top of the list of news channels of the state in terms of TRP ratings. The researchers has explored the time devoted to different reporting beats while giving focus to other content strategies such as breakings, exclusives, ticker, chroma etc. The study is helpful in understanding the changing landscape of regional news channels.

As the purpose of the study is to understand the news presentation and content configuration of these two news channels, the two sub objectives are formulated:

1. The study will explore time and number of stories covered in different news beats by the regional news channels.
2. The news presentation formats of ETV Rajasthan and Zee Rajasthan News in prime time band.

Research Methodology

Research Design

The researcher has done Exploratory Research to find out the news delivery formats used by the regional news channels of Rajasthan that are ETV Rajasthan and Zee Rajasthan News. Gone are the days when an anchor used to sit in the studio to read out the news from ticker. Now, as per the demands and time spent by the audiences, the news channels are adopting different formats which are faster in terms of news delivery and more reliable and trustworthy. Regional news channels are not far behind in adopting the latest trends in news delivery.

The study has explored various content strategies adopted by ETV Rajasthan and ZEE Rajasthan News to enhance the credibility of news items. The study has also shed light on the content delivered by the news channels in terms of the beats covered during primetime band. Since it is of utmost importance for the news channels to have the flavor of the state, the researcher has touched upon the area and has studied how regional are the regional news channels which means whether they are focusing on the state capital or they are covering the events catering to the entire region.

Data Collection Methods

The primary and secondary data has been collected to conduct the research. Primary data has been collected through the observation method. ETV Rajasthan and Zee Rajasthan News, the most popular regional news channels of Rajasthan were observed to study the content strategy adopted by these two news channels. Also, the content was studied on different parameters chosen by the researcher keeping in mind the research objectives designed for the preparation of the research paper.

Research Sampling Techniques

Judgmental sampling technique has been used to conduct the research. For the research paper, the researcher has observed ETV Rajasthan and ZEE Rajasthan News for seven days from 19th August to 25th August 2016 during evening primetime band i.e. 7pm to 9pm. Structured observation method was used to study the news content. Different parameters have been designed to go deeply into the formats used by the news channels.

Data Analysis Techniaques

Simple average and simple mean were applied on the data collected by the observation method to identify average number of stories and average time allocated to each beat. Content formats were deeply studied keeping in mind the existing formats used by other news channels that are available in secondary data.

The researcher had taken the interview of a few media experts from ETV Rajasthan and Zee Rajasthan News to find out the primetime band considering the regional and local audience. The researcher brought to notice that the audience tends to switch on their television sets to watch regional news channel at 7pm as by this time people reach home from their offices. According to the media experts, after 9pm they shift their focus to national news due to which they switch to national news channels. The researcher has deeply studied both the channels during primetime band for a period of seven days including weekends.

Data Analysis

(1.1)

| Name of the News Channel | WEEK DAYS | | | |
|--------------------------|-----------------|---------------------|--------------|--------------|
| | 7pm | 7:30pm | 8pm | 8:30pm |
| ETV RAJASTHAN | Mharo Rajasthan | Mharo Rajasthan | Pink City | Central Hall |
| ZEE RAJASTHAN NEWS | State @ 7 | Rajasthan Superfast | News & Views | News Scan |

DATA ANALYSIS

(1.2)

The programme schedule of ETV RAJASTHAN & ZEE RAJASTHAN NEWS during Primetime Band on Week Ends i.e. (Saturday & Sunday)

| Name of the News Channel | WEEK END | | | |
|--------------------------|-----------------|---------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| | 7pm | 7:30pm | 8pm | 8:30pm |
| ETV RAJASTHAN | Mharo Rajasthan | Mharo Rajasthan | Pink City | Central Hall |
| ZEE RAJASTHAN NEWS | State @ 7 | Rajasthan Superfast | Dr. Subhash Chandra Show | Dr. Subhash Chandra Show |

Interpretation

E-Tv Rajasthan: Mharo Rajasthan is a one hour news bulletin which includes news stories from all over the state. The bulletin includes Anchor Visual, Anchor Visual Byte, packages etc. covering different news beats. The format of the story decided upon the importance of the news and the visuals availability. Pink City as its name suggests covers stories from Jaipur City. This is also based on a traditional news bulletin format. Central Hall is a magazine programme that brings about political situation awareness and discussion on current affairs. The anchor of the show is Mr. Hari Shankar Vyas.

ZEE Rajasthan News: ZEE Rajasthan News' show State @ 7 as its name suggests covers stories from all over the state. This is a break free show. It covers the important happenings from the state catering different beats in the package formats only.

Rajasthan Superfast is based on a fast news bulletin concept. It covers 70 news from the state, 10 news of national importance, 5 of international importance, 5 important happenings from business, 5 from sports and 5 from the entertainment industry.

News & Views is a debate show. The topic of the debate is chosen from the most important happenings of the state. The show is hosted by Purushottam Vaishnav.

News Scan is an interview based exclusive show. A topic from the day's important happenings is chosen and accordingly a celebrity or personality related to that topic is interviewed by the anchor.

Dr. Subhash Chandra Show is a platform where Dr. Subhash Chandra engages with youth from across India and interacts on different topics. The core concept is to motivate the youth, inspire and share ideas and also help young entrepreneurs and aspiring minds for business.

DATA ANALYSIS

(1.3)

Total number of stories covering different reporting beats

| Beats | Pol itic s | Crime /Accid ents | Sp ort s | Busin ess/ Econo mics | Law and order | Festi val/ Reli gion | Art & Culture/Tra vel and Tourism | Heal th | Develo pment (JDA, RHD) | Entertain ment & Lifestyle | Educa tion | Co urt | Total |
|------------------------------|------------------|-------------------------|----------------|--------------------------------|---------------------|-------------------------------|--|------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|---------------|-----------|-------|
| ETV Rajast han | 85 | 67 | 7 | 16 | 15 | 29 | 12 | 19 | 41 | 6 | 28 | 11 | 336 |
| Zee Rajast han News | 50 | 190 | 15 | 15 | 70 | 35 | 15 | 35 | 56 | 20 | 25 | 27 | 553 |

Footnote: Total number of stories shown on ETV Rajasthan and ZEE Rajasthan News covering different beats from 19th August 2016 to 25th August 2016 during 7pm to 9pm.

Data Interpretation

As you can see in table 1.3, there is a huge difference between the stories covered during prime time band on ETV Rajasthan & Zee Rajasthan News despite the fact that ETV Rajasthan has devoted one and a half hour on regional news while Zee Rajasthan News has only one hour to be spent on regional news. The time spent on advertisements by ETV Rajasthan was definitely on higher side as compared to Zee Rajasthan News. The another reason why it has covered less number of stories despite having more time spent than Zee Rajasthan News is repeated number of stories. During the research, it has been found out that ETV Rajasthan has included many stories in 8:30pm slot which had already been carried in the previous bulletin. Thus, the researcher has left those stories uncounted in the study.

Zee Rajasthan News has left ETV Rajasthan way behind in terms of number of stories covered during prime time band. Though, the number of stories covered in 7pm bulletin is very less due to the format of covering important stories in the package format but thanks to 'Rajasthan Superfast' show based on speed news format has raised the number of covered stories.

It is clearly visible from the table 1.3 that ETV Rajasthan has given priority to the stories related to political beat while ZEE Rajasthan News has covered crime related stories more. If we look at the table 1.4, the time spent by ETV Rajasthan on Political beat is almost 3 hrs while Zee Rajasthan News has devoted only 12 minutes to political beat which is quite worth mentioning.

'Rajasthan Superfast' of Zee Rajasthan News fetched stories from all over the state but crime was the most preferred beat. Politics is the most preferred beat in ETV Rajasthan while crime and Zee Rajasthan News has spent maximum time on crime and accident beat followed by development stories and politics stood at second and third position respectively.

ETV Rajasthan

From the data given in the table (1.3), it can be clearly said that the regional news channels are no different from any national news channels when it comes to giving preference to specific news beats. Though, experts believe that three C's Crime, Cricket & Cinema sells on news channels. This equation may hold truth to national news channels but as far as regional news channels are concerned Politics and crime sells. A sense of satisfaction could be felt after seeing a sufficient number of development news, ETV Rajasthan has covered which means may not be fully but partly the news channel is serving the society. ETV Rajasthan reporters attempted to do exclusive stories on security issues in Asia's Biggest Colony Mansarovar & lack of street lights in Sitapura Industrial Area RIICO which indeed is the hub of engineering and technical institutes.

The researcher found out only one women empowerment related news which was quite disturbing. It was also shocking to see that the news of Hetram and Sapna Punia who were representing the state in Olympics were covered as anchor visuals and not even a single package was carried during prime time slot.

ETV Rajasthan has very timely and effectively used *ETV Ki Khabron Ka Asar* (Impact of news covered by ETV) during the bulletins.

ZEE Rajasthan News

The highlighting and interesting fact that researcher found out was that ZEE Rajasthan News has something different and unique to deliver whether in terms of news content chosen or may be the news programming formats. In the State @ 7, anchor gone live straight from the newsroom which is usually seen on national news channels, has ultimately enhanced the quality and importance of the show. The second thing which is important to mention here is the kind of news stories selected by the programme producer of the show. The stories important from a common man's point of view were shown in the detailed packaged formats not necessarily from politics.

As you can see in table (1.3), crime related news is shown in huge number which means the focus was given to crime related news. But the twist in this tale is that the origin of most of such stories is the different parts of the state. Since, regional news channel is supposed to cover all the kinds of stories from each and every district but sadly in the name of news coverage from the districts the audience only receives crime related stories.

Due to Rajasthan Superfast, a show based on fast news concept, the number of news stories is more if the channel is compared to ETV Rajasthan. Alike ETV Rajasthan, Zee Rajasthan News has used **ZEE Rajasthan News Ki Khabar Ka Asar** (Impact of news covered by ZEE RAJASTHAN NEWS). The channel also timely declared of being number one regional news channel of the state.

DATA ANALYSIS

(1.4)

Total time spent on different reporting beats

| Beats | Politics | Crime/Accidents | Sports | Business/Economics | Law and order | Festival/Religion | Art & Culture/Travel and Tourism | Health | Development (JDA, RHD) | Entertainment & Lifestyle | Education | Current | Total |
|--------------------|----------|-----------------|--------|--------------------|---------------|-------------------|----------------------------------|--------|------------------------|---------------------------|-----------|---------|--------------|
| ETV Rajasthan | 3 hrs | 2 hrs | 4 min | 2 min | 6 min | 10 min | 2 min | 10 min | 1 hr | 3 min | 20 min | 3 min | 7 hrs |
| Zee Rajasthan News | 12 min | 42 min | 17 min | 6 min | 30 min | 20 min | 5 min | 20 min | 38 min | 6 min | 4 min | 20 min | 3 hrs 40 min |

Footnote: Time duration spent on different beats shown on ETV Rajasthan and ZEE Rajasthan News from 19th August 2016 to 25th August 2016 during 7pm to 9pm.

Interpretation

The prime time of both the channels ETV Rajasthan and Zee Rajasthan News is 7-9 pm yet the above table is showing different time spent on stories. The reason behind this difference is the format of the programmes showcased on both the channels. Mharo Rajasthan, a 7pm show on ETV Rajasthan is one hour news bulletin which covers stories from all over the state. Pink City showcased at 8:30 pm is yet another bulletin covering stories from state capital. Central Hall is a magazine programme that covers stories from national politics and has nothing to do with the regional news. Therefore, stories covered in this show were not relevant for my study thus it won't included.

As you can see the table 1.1 & 1.2, where format of the shows has been discussed, it is clearly understood that on Zee Rajasthan News, only one hour is devoted to the regional news during prime time band. Rest of the two shows are discussion and interview based programmes respectively and don't cover news stories. Thus, these two shows were out of the researcher's study.

ETV Rajasthan

As you can see in table (1.4), 7 hours is the total time spent on delivering news content during primetime band between 19th August and 25th August. Mharo Rajasthan is a one hour show in which 40 minutes of time is spent on showing news. The total time spent on delivering news content in Pink City programme is 20 minutes. Politics and crime tops the chart when it comes to time spent on beat wise news content. Development, human interest stories were given 1 hour time spent.

The stories covered in the programme called 'Mharo Rajasthan' were mostly anchor visuals/anchor visual bytes and the stories which were found utmost important carried as a package but in a very less number. Another thing which needs attention is that many stories shown in Mharo Rajasthan were repeated in **ZEE Rajasthan News** : In the table (1.4), time allocation given to each beat is quite balanced as compared to ETV Rajasthan. Time spent on crime and development

related news tops the charts but beats like politics, sports, religion, law and order, health and court are also given sufficient time. State@7 covers important stories of the day and all were in the form of packages. While each news covered in 'News Superfast' is of 20 second duration.

Total number of headlines covering different reporting beats

Table (1.5)

| Beats | Politics | Crime/Accidents | Sports | Business/Economics | Law and order | Festival/Religion | Art & Culture /Travel and Tourism | Health | Development (JDA, RHD) | Entertainment & Lifestyle | Education | Court | Total |
|--------------------|----------|-----------------|--------|--------------------|---------------|-------------------|-----------------------------------|--------|------------------------|---------------------------|-----------|-------|-------|
| ETV Rajasthan | 50 | 35 | 13 | 10 | 24 | 10 | 7 | 15 | 14 | 4 | 7 | 7 | 196 |
| Zee Rajasthan News | 20 | 33 | 9 | 4 | 8 | 7 | 13 | 14 | 9 | 12 | 3 | 8 | 140 |

Footnote: Total number of headlines shown on ETV Rajasthan and ZEE Rajasthan News covering different news beats from 19th August 2016 to 25th August 2016 during 7pm to 9pm.

Interpretation:

ETV Rajasthan

The number of headlines given before each bulletin is 7 so, the total headlines shown before four news programmes on 7 days calculated to 196. As the table (1.5) shows, political news occupied most of the headline space on ETV Rajasthan followed by crime and education beat. BRICS, BJP's Tiranga Rally, party meetings on Hingonia Cow Row etc were some of the important stories that sought attention of the reporters. Crime and education are also the beats that got satisfactory attention. Crime and accidents from all over Rajasthan were given priorities while Rajasthan University and other government universities elections' season was the reason behind education beat remaining in headlines. Monsoon conditions were also given prominent time in the headlines. State's capital i.e. Jaipur City based important happenings were carried as headlines and none or very few stories were given space in the headlines.

ZEE Rajasthan News

The researcher found out that Zee Rajasthan News has used News Flash instead of headlines. The top stories given in the name of headlines were only used before the opening of State @ 7 that to apprise the audience with the latest important happenings coming out from the state. In rest of the programmes Zee has used News Flash. The number of headlines given before each bulletin is 5 so, the total headlines shown before four news programmes on 7 days come out to be 140.

Though, crime stories were given more space in the headlines and news flash but these stories belonged to the districts and not restricted to Jaipur City which was quite satisfactory. Health, Art & Culture and state development related stories were also given importance to be carried as headlines.

DISTRICT WISE NEWS COVERAGE

Table (1.6)

| Districts | ETV Rajasthan | Zee Rajasthan News |
|----------------|---------------|--------------------|
| AJMER | 13 | 28 |
| ALWAR | 7 | 24 |
| BANSWARA | 2 | 17 |
| BARAN | - | 16 |
| BARMER | 3 | 13 |
| BHARATPUR | 6 | 34 |
| BHILWARA | 7 | 18 |
| BIKANER | 7 | 20 |
| BUNDI | 3 | 22 |
| CHITTORGARH | 2 | 13 |
| CHURU | 4 | 17 |
| DAUSA | 1 | 14 |
| DHOLPUR | 5 | 25 |
| DUNGARPUR | 3 | 19 |
| HANUMANGARH | 2 | 8 |
| JAIPUR | 84 | 79 |
| JAISALMER | 10 | 9 |
| JALOR | 3 | 7 |
| JHALAWAR | 1 | 17 |
| JHUNJHUNU | 2 | 19 |
| JODHPUR | 12 | 32 |
| KARALI | 3 | - |
| KOTA | 12 | 12 |
| NAGPUR | 4 | 9 |
| PALI | - | - |
| PRATAPGARH | 1 | 10 |
| RAJSAMAND | 5 | 17 |
| SAWAI MADHOPUR | - | - |
| SIKAR | 7 | 17 |
| SIROHI | 3 | - |
| SRI GANGANAGAR | 9 | 21 |
| TONK | 2 | - |
| UDAIPUR | 10 | 16 |
| TOTAL | 233 | 553 |

Footnote: Total number of stories shown on ETV Rajasthan and ZEE Rajasthan News covering 33 districts of Rajasthan from 19th August 2016 to 25th August 2016 during 7pm to 9pm.

Interpretation

ETV Rajasthan

As it is shown in table (1.6), the picture is much clear that how regional are the regional news channels when it comes to pan state news coverage. State capital deserves to be on top in terms of highest number of stories covered. Ajmer known for Ajmer Sharif Dargah, where Ajmer University is located owns only 13 stories followed by 10 stories from Udaipur, City of lakes and tourist and Jaisalmer, The Golden City. Districts like Pali, Sawai Madhopur where Ranthambore National Park is situated and Baran are totally neglected by the channel which is quite indigestible.

After going into the depth of stories that belonged to the districts shown in Mharo Rajasthan bulletin, the researcher found out that mostly crime related stories and a few health and monsoon related stories were covered.

ZEE Rajasthan News :

The situation is not so different of Zee Rajasthan News from ETV Rajasthan. The number of stories is obviously much higher as compared to ETV Rajasthan because of Rajasthan Superfast which is based on fast news concept in which more stories in a very less time. The researcher found the absence of stories from the districts like Tonk, Pali, Sawai Madhopur, Karauli, Pratapgarh and Sirohi during the days when the study was conducted in the primetime band.

Most of the stories covered from the districts were from crime and political beats. Some development stories like road construction, agriculture techniques for farmers, health related issues were also seen during primetime band.

Table (1.7)

Various formats adopted by etv rajasthan & zee rajasthan news to deliver news content

| News Channel | Anc hor Visual | Anc hor Visual Byte | Packa ge | One to One/Intervi ew | Live | Voic e Over Shot | Two/T hree/Five Window Report er | Exclus ive | Piece to Came ra |
|--------------------|----------------|---------------------|----------|-----------------------|------|------------------|----------------------------------|------------|------------------|
| ETV Rajasthan | 213 | 157 | 20 | 6 | 5 | 16 | 9 | 5 | 1 |
| Zee Rajasthan News | 490 | - | 9 | 5 | - | - | 5 | 10 | - |

Footnote: The above mentioned formats (horizontal) were used to cover different stories shown on ETV Rajasthan and ZEE Rajasthan News from 19th August 2016 to 25th August 2016 during 7pm to 9pm.

The following news delivering formats were observed being used by ETV Rajasthan and ZEE Rajasthan News

AVO (Anchor voice over)

AVO is the most common type of news coverage. It usually runs for 25-45 seconds. The story is written in a gist. At first, the anchor starts to read the news and after reading one or two lines, anchor disappears and visual appears.

AVO Byte (Anchor voice over)

AVO Byte has two parts: An AVO and one or more bytes. This is the same as an AVO, except that as soon as the AVO ends, the byte is aired. Byte is a quote of a person that carries information related to the story.

Voice Over Shot

Voice over shot is similar to Anchor Voice Over. The only difference between the two is that in anchor voice over, the anchor starts to read the news and after reading one or two lines, anchor disappears and visual appears whereas in voice over shot the news reader reads the anchor and disappears as soon as he/she finishes then visuals starts to appear with the voice over done by the artist similar to the package. The package includes bytes, piece to camera etc but voice over shot is used when there is byte is not available and the story carries more importance.

Package

Package has three parts: Anchor, voice-over and sign off. At first a script is written with the visuals kept in mind after that voice over is done. Later the visuals are edited according to the script. While the bulletin on airs, the anchor reads its part and then visuals with voice over and bytes start appearing. Sign off is given by the reporter but it's not included in every story.

Live Remote

A Live Remote describes a news story where the channel has a cameraman and reporter on site reporting the event during a TV channels' news show. A Live Remote is kind of like a Full Package on steroids. It has got all the elements of a package, but this time the anchor cuts to the reporter who's on the scene. It may even include a live interview.

Headlines

A headline is like the 'head' of the news bulletin where the prime stories at that particular time are mentioned 'in brief'. The full stories are explained only later. Headline introduces the main stories going to be shown in the bulletin.

ETV Rajasthan and ZEE Rajasthan News on air top stories before the news bulletin begins. Though, ETV Rajasthan uses the name headlines while Zee Rajasthan News sometimes uses News Flash instead of headlines.

News Bulletin

News bulletins essentially include news stories in their order of importance and interest. Important happenings of the day get the pride of place. Human interest stories and sports news generally round off the major bulletins.

ETV Rajasthan still relies on tradition news delivery format i.e. news bulletin. Anchor sits in the standard studio to read out the teleprompter. This format was missing in Zee Rajasthan News during primetime band.

Debate/talk show/panel discussion

The debate is a format with limited use, in that it's generally restricted to political candidates running for office. But even though it's used only occasionally, it is still an extremely popular format during election season. Now a days, news channels are frequently using this format in evening primetime band. The producer chooses one important issue of the day which could be either from sports, finance, politics or any other topic of human interest and invite guests from the field related to the topic to discuss with the anchor or moderator on the show. Most debates follow a very strict format, which usually includes a moderator. The moderator is the most important person in the debate, in that he or she controls the topic for discussion, who is speaking, and how much time the speaker has. The moderator must also keep control of the debate and not let participants shape the direction of the discussion.

ZEE Rajasthan news' show News & Vies is based on this format. In this format, one of the most important happenings of the day is chosen for the debate and celebrities and people related to this particular topic are invited in the studio to have a discussion on the topic which is hosted by Purushottam Vaishnav. The screen is divided into five or four depending upon the guests are invited for the debate. Prior to this debate, opinion poll on the topic which is decided for the debate is taken in yes and no, the results are later shown during the debate.

Interview based programs

Interview-based programs also are a common feature of TV news channels and often take the form of talk shows. In regional news channels, a celebrity from the field of entertainment or eminent political personalities is interviewed. One more form is very popular, a relevant topic is decided and one or maximum two guests are invited as per the demand of the topic which could be human interest story or latest issues or developments. In this form of interview, audience plays a crucial role in making a successful program.

Zee Rajasthan News' News Scan is the interview based show on aired during prime time band. In this format, an important happening of the day of public's relevance is chosen and accordingly personality from that vary field is invited outside the studio for the interview.

News magazine programs

It is a regularly scheduled news program consisting of several short segments, in which various subjects of current interest are examined, usually in greater detail than on a regular newscast.

ETV Rajasthan's Central Hall is a news magazine program that brings about political situation awareness and discussion on current affairs. The anchor of the show is Mr. Hari Shankar Vyas.

Fast news

It is a new concept which is seen in almost every national news channel. In fact, regional news channels of Rajasthan are also adopting this concept and the programme based on this format is basically aired at around 9 pm in the primetime. This format is basically for the viewers who want to be informed about the important happenings of the day in one single programme. In this type of a programme, the top 100 or top 150 news of national, international or regional importance are shown and beats like sports, business, entertainment etc are covered.

Rajasthan Superfast is based on a fast news bulletin concept. It includes top 100 news from various fields out of which 70 news are shown from different parts of the state while 10 news of national importance, 5 of international importance, 5 important happenings from business, 5 from sports and 5 from the entertainment industry is shown.

TicKer

If you watch TV news carefully, you will notice that there is a thin strip moving at the bottom of the TV screen which carries information on various events and news one after another. The information is constantly moving. Ticker is sometimes also called scroll.

Both the channels use ticker appropriately and effectively to show important stories from all over the state. ETV Rajasthan is more fast and prominent in using ticker and the number is quite higher than ZEE Rajasthan News.

News Flash

A news flash is a latest update on a previously played story or a fresh update on the current story being played on-air. They show up on the screen like a 'flash' of 'lightning' in the middle of news.

ZEE Rajasthan News prefers to highlight the top stories in the name of news flash. Before each bulletin starts, NEWS FLASH appears instead of headlines.

Cartoon on law and order

This is a cartoon series introduced by ETV Rajasthan where in viewers get to see caricature on law and order situation in Rajasthan. This format is basically used to take a dig on political parties or the decisions taken by the government. This is on aired after every bulletin ends.

Discussion and conclusion

ETV Rajasthan and Zee Rajasthan News, both are popular regional news channels in the state. ETV Rajasthan has enjoyed the monopoly in the electronic media market because three to four years ago there were a few local and cable channels were running to cater vast audience of the largest state of the country. Though, a lot of national channels made their set up in Jaipur including Zee News, Samachar Plus, India News etc but ETV Rajasthan is still maintaining its position and credibility in the market. ETV Rajasthan still believes in using tradition news delivery formats and is the best source of spreading political awareness in the state. As far as Zee Rajasthan News is concerned, it's unique packaging and selection of news are the key points that helped the channel to give a tough competition to already established news channel i.e ETV Rajasthan.

Though, the region has seen expansion in the electronic media industry since a lot of media houses are exploring the market but it is very disappointing to say that these channels are limited to the state's capital and the regional flavor that every channel promises before having their set up in the region to contain in the channel is missing. All the districts of the state are not even properly covered and if they are covered, the news is limited to crime and politics. A media organization is expected to serve the society and to keep the audience informed about each big or small story from every nook and corner of the state but the regional news channels are lacking. Thrust areas are there where news channels could do wonders, a little bit of motivation and government support is needed.

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