

than about cutting cost.”

The spend-little-on-marketing concept has been around for a while. It's a mindset that gets you to make 1 like Rs 150, she says. It's not just because you don't have money. The inclination is in a company's culture industry has it, even large companies such as CitiBank and Unilever have tried it, by being online or associ themselves with sports. But it's the start-ups that seem to have polished the tricks and branded them as t 'FM' is a way of life for Paul.

Some years ago, big-buck IT companies found out a frugal way to recruit, Padaki reminds us. “The HR pe their internal communications and started rewarding employees for referrals. The result: What used to be page appointments pull-out in newspapers has come down to four pages. And for a fifth - or a lakh of rup cost of newspaper insertions, the companies got the talent they wanted.”

For Bangalore-based brand guru Manosh R. Sengupta, it's nothing but *jugaad*; a value system rather than marketing jargon. Improvisation in the face of scarce resources is a genetically ingrained survival skill in it is this DNA that in many ways defines us from the rest of the world. Says Brand-@titude's Parent, Nurl Mentor, “For me, the concept of frugality has always existed in India. In fact, it is a way of life for us.” The conscious entrepreneur makes do somehow with whatever little resources there are at his or her disposal. here is the improvisation that gets into the game.

Spurred by recession

As Padaki sees it, “Recession was one of the best things to happen to the marketing world, it has made m invent and re-invent the way to market.”

Today's commonplace platforms - blogs, the Internet, Facebook, Twitter and YouTube - give you instant r and interaction and quickly tell you where you stand. The newbie venture knows its market reach almost Ten years ago you had to wait for the results to know if you had made it or not.

In Paul's view, low-cost marketing is not about saving money but about how effective your message to buy there are eye-popping successes such as direct marketing star Tupperware, offbeat prize campaigns such Mahindra 'guess the price' campaign for Xylo, she remarks, “We have not done that good a job with low-c marketing, for the majority of brands is hooked to mass media. In India, the social media penetration is l are low and companies cannot do online marketing alone.”

It's unconfirmed but apparently some new ventures gained 30 per cent by value when they thought up the 'priceless' market drives.

Brand-@titude's Sengupta recalls how upstart soapsud Nirma years ago 'walloped' an MNC detergents b a mix of price competitiveness; focus on trade margins and the radio - and later the TV - to promote the frugal jingle still airs and has a high recall.

Of late, umpteen new domestic cell phone manufacturers have sprung up and easily sliced the pie off MN such as Nokia, Samsung, Sony Ericsson or Motorola. Sengupta observes, “The Indian mobile handset ma are a sparkling example of how to take on the MNC giants in a David vs Goliath scenario. The segment th the lower portion of the pyramid seeks affordable solutions to achieve its sense of aspirations and Indian made it possible through pricing and reach ... an area where the fancier MNC brands have failed. Additio brands have better insights into the consumer psyche and offer apps that are more utility-oriented.”

None of these efforts required any big spends or big media. So, frugal marketing, which always existed, h buzzword and caught on.

Sengupta is certain that “Frugal marketing, if not already there, will inevitably become a cornerstone of a marketing culture. We already see it happening. CMOs are under pressure to justify marketing ROI, and inevitably leads to innovation.”

The day may not be far when the social media and digital technology - the platforms that we now put in t

marketing bracket due to their low cost - will very soon become part of the mainstream thanks to alert, ex marketers - as Jessie Paul and Sengupta foresee it. Although small companies even now get pushed into 'ads', Paul believes that gradually "low-cost marketing is already so much a way of life" that more and more companies will have to look at it. One day it may be the full new order.

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Keywords: [Advertising](#), [Conventional media](#), [social marketing media](#), [Electronic media](#), [Social media marketing](#), [Flipkart](#)

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