

Industry sees double-digit ad growth during festival season

Ad spend projected to be ₹30,000 crore this time — growth of 15% over last year's ₹26,000 crore

VIVEAT SUSAN PINTO
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After losing two festival seasons to Covid-led restrictions, 2022 is seeing an uninhibited celebration of festivals. This is pushing up discretionary spend, which is attracting advertisers and brands, who are ready to capitalise on the momentum.

The festival season has begun with Onam and Ganesh Chaturthi held earlier this month in Kerala and Maharashtra, respectively.

Navratri, celebrated in the west and north, will begin on Monday. On the other hand, Durga Puja, Dussehra and Diwali will be celebrated next month across the country.

Top advertising and media agency executives estimate ad growth this festival season at around 15 per cent compared to last year. Spends are likely to surpass 2019 levels for the second time in a row.

They are likely to touch ₹30,000 crore this festival season versus last year's ₹26,000 crore and 2019's ₹20,000 crore, ad industry experts say. In 2020, ad spends during the festive period had fallen to levels of around ₹18,000 crore.

So, 2021 ad spend levels are higher on account of a low base. The 2022 dou-



ble-digit ad growth, in contrast, will happen on a higher base, which reflects a strong sentiment, experts said.

"All indications are that this festival season will be a good one," said Prashanth Kumar, chief executive officer (CEO), South Asia, GroupM.

He added, "This is also the first festival season after two years of restrictions due to Covid, resulting in an uptick on the ground. A double-digit advertising growth (over last year) is

likely during the period."

Amit Wadhwa, CEO, Dentsu Creative India, said advertiser sentiment remains upbeat this year. "I certainly see buoyancy in terms of mindset. There is clearly a propensity to spend among advertisers. I anticipate around 10-15 per cent growth in advertising this festival season over last year. Spends could well track at the upper end of this range, which is around 15 per cent," he said.

Most advertising and media executives expect categories such as television, print, digital and outdoor to be bigger beneficiaries of this uptick in ad spends.

Cinema advertising — while showing promise after the release of Brahmastra in September — will depend on the success of upcoming movies, experts said. Outdoor, for instance, is already seeing heavy advertising by entertainment channels and over-the-top (OTT) platforms. This comes as they attempt to draw the attention of shoppers and travellers to their upcoming shows and movie line-ups this season.

"E-commerce players, on the other hand, are already advertising on television and digital, since their online festivals have begun. Durable, retail and electronic majors will start their advertising activity now to cash in on the upcoming Dussehra and Diwali period.

Automotive advertising is ongoing due to a spate of launches that are happening and fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) will begin advertising in October," said Sajal Gupta, CEO, Kiaos Marketing, a Gurugram-based brand, media and marketing consultancy.