



Candle Day: Celebrating Light and Calm

Candle Day is a celebration of warmth, light, and tranquility. Observed by candle lovers worldwide, it highlights the soothing power of candles in creating a peaceful ambience and uplifting moods. Whether scented or unscented, candles transform ordinary spaces into comforting retreats. The day also marks a popular retail event, where enthusiasts stock up on their favourite fragrances for the season. Beyond their aesthetic appeal, candles symbolize hope, mindfulness, and renewal, reminding us to pause, breathe, and appreciate the small joys that bring light into our everyday lives.



"No one falls off" - a small glue brand riding on a big story.



"Ma on screen" - a small part in a national bank film, a big moment at home.



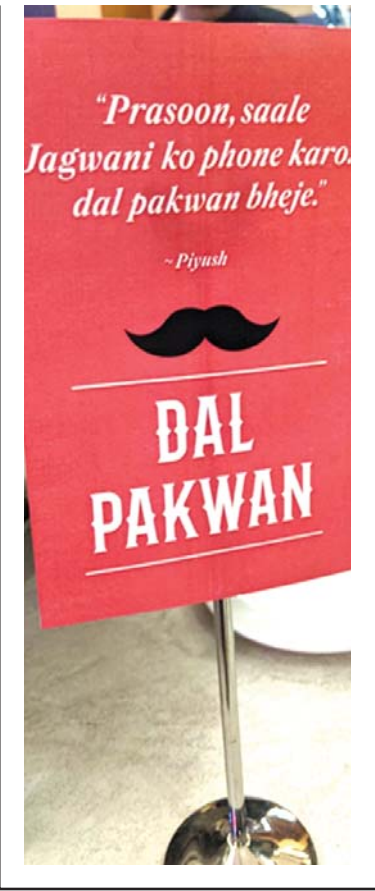
"Even the egg refuses to let go" - exaggeration as the truest kind of brand promise.



Jodhpur and Pushkar turning a painter's chart into "my kind of blue".



"Talking without talking" - when white stick figures sold networks by making you smile.

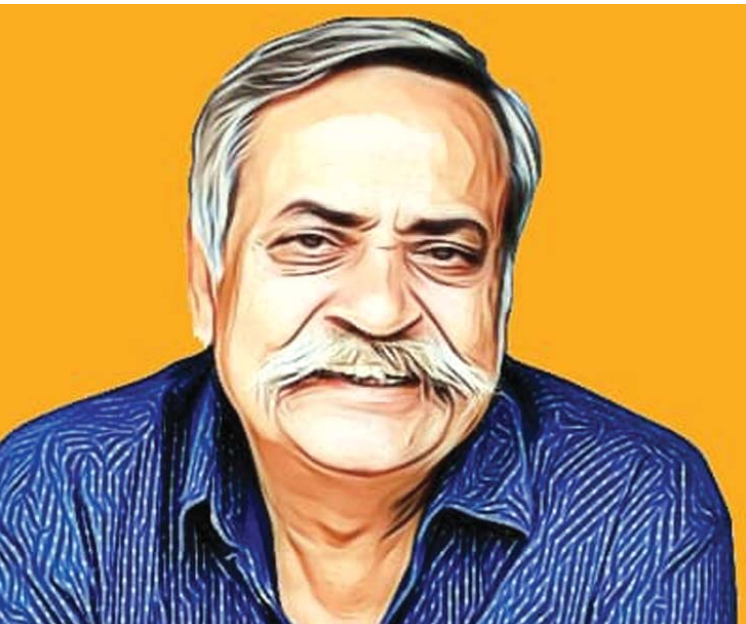


Pushpendra Bhargava (Jaipur-based hotelier, writer and chronicler of the city's everyday histories)

f the first part of this remembrance belongs to cricket grounds and college corridors, this one belongs to storyboards, studio floors and edit tables. The country's most influential adman, the mind behind Fevicol, Cadbury's 'Kuch meetha ho jaaye,' Asian Paints' 'Mere Wala Blue,' and the 'Do boond zindagi ki' polio films.



JAIPUR FOOT - when storytelling and public health pulled in the same direction.



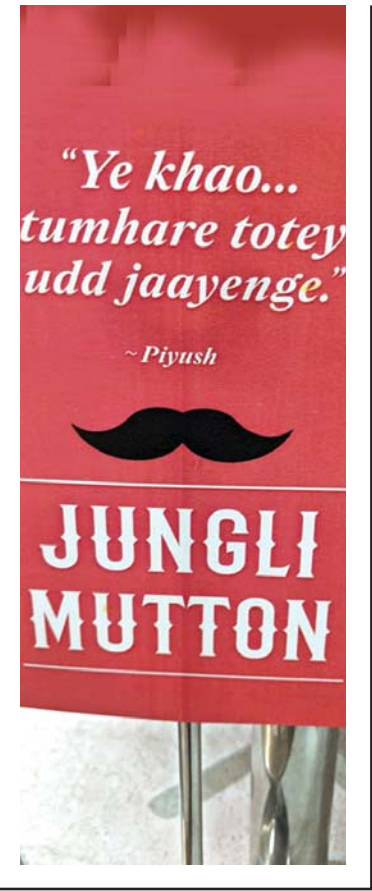
# How a Jaipur boy with a moustache changed the way India spoke in ads

PART: 2

To understand Piyush Pandey's national impact from a Jaipur point of view, you have to see how he and his younger brother Prasoon took an industry dominated by stiff English and glossy sets, and replaced it with Hindi, small towns and ordinary faces - often with Rajasthan as backdrop. Prasoon, also a Xavierite, studied at the National Institute of Design, Ahmedabad, when design and visual communication were still new fields in India. He could have become an architect or product designer; instead, he chose advertising and films, setting up Highlight Films in Mumbai. Agencies like Ogilvy and Lintas trusted him with their biggest jobs. Inside the industry, people joked that even when another agency's logo appeared on screen, you could often sense the invisible touch of 'Piyush and Prasoon' in the way a film moved. In one sense, life and health didn't give them the long filmography we all secretly hoped for. In another sense, they already were our Warner Brothers. Together, they changed the visual and emotional language of Indian advertising - across Fevicol, Cadbury, Asian Paints, Vodafone, the polio campaign. Their work was our cinema in miniature, watched between news and serials.



"Jaipur's almost-Warner Brothers" - the two brothers whose work ran through Indian advertising.



household word through films like the legendary overcrowded bus, where passengers hang from every possible surface and yet no one falls; or the hen that pecks at a Fevicol tin and later lays an unbreakable egg. The product is tiny; the stories are big. We remember the jokes, the characters, the impossible situations - and Fevicol tags along in our memory.

The same pattern holds with Cadbury. With lines like 'Kuch khaas hai hum sabhi mein' and 'Kuch meetha ho jaaye,' Cadbury moved from being a foreign chocolate to being a cousin of mithai. The ads show exam results, first salaries, shy romances and small victories - captured in the immortal 'Pappu pass ho gaya.' The viewer first feels the nervousness, then the relief, then the sweetness of the moment. The chocolate bar arrives almost as an afterthought.

'Kuch khaas hai,' when chocolate joined the mithai tray and the report card. After covid, he designed another brilliant commercial with Shahrukh Khan's voice that could be used by small shops around India to take the name of their shop. Everybody got a chance to create and do an ad for themselves using SRK. He uses the biggest star to use your store.

This was another quiet revolution: in the best Pandey-era work, the advertisement was rarely about the product first. Do you recall this Kelvinator advert, with an old man sitting in his easy chair, his dentures resting in a water bowl on the table. Every time the fridge door opened, the dentures began to chatter and dance. The message was clear: that Kelvinator was 'the coolest one' - so cold even dentures chattered when it opened.

Fevicol is about buses and eggs, not chemistry. Cadbury is about Pappu passing, not cocoa percentages. The brand walks into a story that could have existed on its own -

and because we love the story, we remember the brand. His Rajasthan roots are clearest in the Asian Paints 'Mere Wala Blue / Blue City' campaign - shot in Jodhpur and Pushkar, with blue walls, narrow lanes, flags and terraces turning a shade card into a mood. The line 'Mere Wala Blue' is technically about a colour, but emotionally about belonging: everyone has their own blue, just as everyone has their own city.

Through it all, he married the vernacular and the modern. The thick moustache, the easy Hindi one-liners, the Rajasthan backdrops - all coexisted with global clients, Cannes Lions and ultra-modern campaigns like Vodafone's Zozoos. Those white, balloon-like characters explained complicated telecom services without a single technical word. They used gesture, timing and simple visuals - proof that charm can sell technology better than jargon.

His work also stepped beyond brands into public life. The 'Do boond zindagi ki' polio campaign, fronted by Amitabh Bachchan, used simple, direct storytelling to help India move towards being polio-free. And there were quieter gestures. In one case, Piyush did a voice-over job and donated the entire fee to Dr D.R. Mehta's Jaipur Foot, supporting a cause rooted in his home city. In another, his own mother appeared in a State Bank of India fixed-deposit ad, a recognisable Jaipur matriarch suddenly on national television - a reminder that his stories were peopled by those he loved.

A diamond doesn't know your age. 'Heere ko kya pata tumhari umar kya hai.' Piyush Pandey said this line to his mother while gifting her a diamond and Prasoon Pandey turned it into beautiful advertising.

Inside agencies, his influence was not just on scripts but on people. Younger writers and filmmakers recall his pre-meeting line -

'front foot pe khelo' - and his post-presentation verdict, "well played, partner." Many remember being scolded like a strict father and then getting a phone call later that evening, just to make them laugh again. He tried to build teams that argued fiercely about ideas but never forgot that they were humans first, job titles later.

"LIFE'S FANDA: JUST HAVE FUN, MAN!"

He loved simple food - aloo, daal, roti, chawal - and could be, as one friend wrote, a happy man in any corner of the world if those were on the table. He admired Sir Viv Richards, wanted to be friends with Will Smith, and told younger colleagues to work hard, follow their own dreams, and take care of their people.

## "#PEOPLE MUST LOVE IT FIRST"



Later, the world called him a 'creative chief,' a 'legend,' a 'lion-winner.' But in our circle, the pride was simpler: 'Yeh toh apna hi ladka hai - Xavier's ka, Stephen's ka, Jaipur ka.' That feeling never left.

Q. You've spoken about his school and college days. How did Xavier's and Stephen's shape the person who would one day rewrite Indian advertising?

A. Xavier's gave him roots; Stephen's gave him wings. At St. Xavier's Jaipur, there was sport, banter, mischief - the real education of listening to jokes, nicknames, the different ways people speak and carry themselves. You see that later in his work - less stiff, more true to how we speak, laugh, celebrate and complain. That is no small inheritance.

"From here to everywhere" - the streets that travelled quietly into some of India's most loved ads.

Q. You've spoken about his school and college days. How did Xavier's and Stephen's shape the person who would one day rewrite Indian advertising?

A. Before his generation, a lot of Indian advertising sounded like it was translated from somewhere else - English first, Hindi later, often stiff and a bit fake. Piyush turned that around. He brought in Hindi, colloquial speech, small-town humour, and a deep respect for the 'common man.'

He always said that the punch lines came from the people - from conductors, shopkeepers, friends, mothers, not just from brainstormers. Ads like Fevicol and Cadbury didn't feel like lectures; they felt like stories you might hear at a tea stall.

And crucially, he believed that 'people must love it first,' that was his real test. Long before algorithms and 'engagement metrics,' he would show a film to people around him and simply ask, "Did you like it?" One human to another.

Q. You've emphasised that he changed not just ads, but the sound of ads. What, in your view, made his voice different from what came before?

A. His mother's line was "Jo soya vo khoya, jo jaaga vo paaya" - who ever sleeps, loses; whoever stays awake, gains. That wasn't just poetry, it was a habit: waking early, watching people, catching details, staying alert to life.

And then, there was his own one-line philosophy, which he said half in jest, half in truth: "Life's fanda: just have fun, man." From the outside, it sounds casual, but if you read it with the first line, it makes sense: stay awake, work

hard, but don't lose your sense of play. His best ads are exactly that - playful on the surface, extremely disciplined underneath.

Q. Many younger creatives speak of him as a mentor. What, from your vantage point, defined the 'Pandey way' of leading teams?

A. There was a small ritual everyone remembers. Before a big meeting, he would say: "Front foot pe khelo" - go out there and play on the front foot. After a good presentation, the line was: "Well played, partner." Simple, cricketing language, but it instantly made juniors feel like equals at the crease.

People inside agencies also talk about his 'father mode.' If you mess up, he could really scold you. But very often, he would call later - the same day - just to crack a joke or check if you were okay. So, the culture was tough on ideas, soft on people. For someone from Jaipur looking at the ad world from far away, that is perhaps the most inspiring part. He was proof that you could be firm and kind, demanding and human, at the same time.

Q. What do you mean by Piyush and Prasoon are 'India's answer to the Warner Brothers'?

A. In one of our conversations, when we were talking about the future beyond Ogilvy, he laughed and said that once his stint there was done, he and his younger brother Prasoon would make feature films together and become 'India's answer to the Warner Brothers.' It was half a dream, half a joke - but with them, jokes had a way of coming true.

To understand Piyush Pandey's national impact from a Jaipur point of view, you have to see how he and his younger brother Prasoon took an industry dominated by stiff English and glossy sets, and replaced it with Hindi, small towns and ordinary faces - often with

Rajasthan as backdrop. Prasoon, also a Xavierite, studied at the National Institute of Design, Ahmedabad, when design and visual communication were still new fields in India. He could have become an architect or product designer; instead, he chose advertising and films, setting up Highlight Films in Mumbai. Agencies like Ogilvy and Lintas trusted him with their biggest jobs. Inside the industry, people joked that even when another agency's logo appeared on screen, you could often sense the invisible touch of 'Piyush and Prasoon' in the way a film moved.

In one sense, life and health didn't give them the long filmography we all secretly hoped for. In another sense, they already were our Warner Brothers. Together, they changed the visual and emotional language of Indian advertising - across Fevicol, Cadbury, Asian Paints, Vodafone, the polio campaign. Their work was our cinema in miniature, watched between news and serials.

Q. Finally, if you had to tell a young reader in Jaipur why Piyush matters to them - beyond awards and job titles - what would you say?

A. I would say this: he shows that you can come from a regular Jaipur family, study at Xavier's, live in a Stephen's residence, play a bit of Ranji, and still go on to change how an entire country talks about itself - without faking your accent, without disowning your city, without abandoning Hindi.

He took the moustache, the adda, the kachori shop, the small frustrations and jokes of ordinary life, and made them the heroes of national campaigns. He proved that the 'common man' is not a prop; he is the main character.

For Jaipur, that is a huge thing. It means our stories, our streets, our humour are not just background - they are good enough for prime time. And that, I think, is a legacy worth keeping.

Concluded

rajeshsharma1049@gmail.com



## BABY BLUES



By Rick Kirkman & Jerry Scott

## ZITS



By Jerry Scott & Jim Borgman

## THE WALL

