

Soul of Life! Healing hearts, bringing smiles and spreading love.

Posted by: kulsoom | November 23, 2011

Common Broadcast Policy Seminar



I entered the premises of IoBM with so many things running in my mind about the seminar that was about to take off in a while. Everyone looked so prepared and fascinated as the seminar was one of its kind and had to be executed in such fashion that it would become a milestone to be remembered by the Media Students at Institute of Business Management. The anxiety, the adrenaline rushes in our nerves, the esteemed guests and the students were making me nervous while I was on the verge of starting the Interactive Dialogue between students and Media Panelist.

The event began with recitation from Holy Quran, followed by the keynote speech given by me, describing the topic and the purpose of having this gathering on a bright Sunday morning. Mr. Parvez Jamil who is one of the finest teachers at the institution and has the most unconventional style of teaching, took over the ceremony and talked about his heart and soul associated with this idea.

Now the idea was basically about having a common broadcast policy for all TV channels, Radio Channels and Newspapers in which all the media professionals could agree upon talking about a single core issue prevailing in the society and through which a human interest story can be established. The idea was to ask each channel for an air time of couple of minutes to talk about one thing that would benefit the people of this country. Repeatedly telecasting something would have an image set on the minds of the public. And hence a little effort for masses will help them come out of their blues for the time being.

When the interactive dialogue started off, most of the panelists were of the strong opinion that this is a completely fairy tale idea and useless to talk about when the entire media industry is rushing towards making money. They diplomatically pointed out that youngsters are supposed to bring revolution to this country. After having an argument of responsibility of electronic and print media, all of us mutually agreed to the fact that a positive image of Pakistan needs to be portrayed through our programs, our writings, our social media accounts and through every possible gesture of ours. I gave it a thought and evidently came up with the idea of rewarding students who are already striving towards creating a change in the perceptions of people who get this wrong image of media in Pakistan in general. One of the ideas is to start a blogger's campaign and to give away study funds to students who would want to write good things about Pakistan. Secondly I had this idea of conducting workshops on citizen journalism in different institutes, guiding the students to make use of mobile technology for positive purposes on twitter and Facebook.

The seminar got me going with innumerable ideas and Insha'Allah would be working to portray them soon down the road :)

I take this opportunity to thank all my Media Class fellows for making a dream come true and assisting in every possible manner that they could. Nevertheless there are still people with big hearts and open minds who support such constructive debatable initiatives.

Parvez Jamil
29-11-11



Positive is Credible

Imagine a common media policy

By Parvez Jamil - Nov 14th, 2011 (4 Comments)



In order to ensure that media's individual and institutional interests are kept intact while pursuing a common editorial or broadcast policy to address core social issues, it has to be innovatively considered and agreed upon that media organizations have to adjust just a fraction (0.1) % of their work and financial priorities as they venture for their set and standard patterns of business promotion and breaking news exclusiveness for almost the whole ((99.9%) of their time and priorities management.

IMAGINE an inventive and effective common broadcast or editorial policy for Pakistani electronic and print media to practically and positively address core social and humanitarian issues in such an innovative manner that financial and credibility interests of the concerned media individuals and organizations are not adversely affected! However, anything distracting from the set pattern of any professional practice, inclusive of standard media trends, is challenging to propose and demanding to digest. But if novelties were supported by seriousness of purpose, penetrative thinking and logic towards a noble cause, they may at least be pondered for a little food for thought.

The very idea of a common editorial or broadcast policy seems and sounds mere idealism and may not carry the appeal to divert media prodigies from their routine business and work priorities. But in such idealism lie answers to core social and humanitarian issues, especially when the tried and tested forms of media information and entertainment leave much to be desired. As media continue mostly (99.9 % of their time and priorities) with their set and routine broadcast and editorial policies, media brains are capable of devising such a fractionally (0.1% of their time and priorities) uniform policy whereby their individual and institutional interests are not hampered and they rise over and above self and ego to mutually address distressing public issues towards what is known as social transformation.

MODUS OPERANDI

Rising above ego with home work done on how common grounds be secured without compromising on institutional interests, CEOs, Presidents and Heads of Electronic Media and Managing Editors, Editors and Executive Editors of Print Media meet to finalize modus operandi for a mutually agreeable broadcast and editorial policy in the larger interest of vital information and levelheaded entertainment for the common man. During this meeting a number of nagging social and humanitarian problem areas need to be identified before they are commonly and persistently addressed one by one both by print and electronic media. For example, such core issues as soaring prices, power crises, unemployment and immobilization; child labor, child abuse, senior citizens and women's rights; health, pollution and environment; academic, behavioral and career counseling of the young nation and so on.

True, such issues already continue to be addressed by media. But a novel print media policy has to be exclusive in the real sense of the word when it comes to endeavoring for social change. First, a core issue has to be identified before it is commonly addressed by leading newspapers over and over again through editorials, leader and opinion articles, features, interviews, supplements, news reports, news analysis, special reports, pictorial and graphics contents for a month or so. At the same time the same very issue may be projected through PTV, PBC and private TV and FM Radio channels, consistently and regularly for a month or so., preferably on the national hook up in what may envision a common editorial and broadcast policy with feedback and follow up pertaining to influencing public opinion positively and to benefit the common man through vital information in order to address core issues of society.

PUBLIC ISSUES

For example, countless patients of cancer, cardiac, kidney, diabetes, arthritis, tuberculosis etc., cannot financially afford specialist treatment. They can go to cheaper hospitals but here patients rush is such that

they are unable to get individual attention for diagnosis and treatment. If electronic media picks up a health problem and consistently, rather than occasionally, provide expert advice to the suffering public on the national hook up and if leading newspapers do the same as a consistent and persistent national strategy to combat a disease through information dissemination, the net result will benefit the common man indeed.

For instance, common man is helpless when it comes to the issue of meager income and rocketing costs. When men at the helm of affairs cannot do anything about inflation, what can be expected of the common man! Media is comprehensively highlighting facts and figures on soaring prices and their adverse affects on lifestyles. But can experts on economics and finance inform and train common man through print and electronic media in common man's language consistently on theme after theme on how to economize. After all, economics is all about economizing. There has to be a purpose for economists' M. Phil and PhD research and there has to be a meaning to media's positive and projection for the common man.

For example, another neglected paradigm of top priority for a creative media policy is to help positively influence our children's mindsets and those of their parents and counselors on the promise and potential of a variety of diversified career options, especially when the rat race leads to a just a handful of glamorous careers resulting in the degeneration of not only the individual creative potential but also leading to the stagnation of the development process of the country. It is with logic, reason, creativity, appeal and attraction concerned media brains can transform young mindsets towards diversified career options in physical, natural, biological and environmental sciences as well as arts, humanities, social and management sciences where sky is the limit towards individual and societal growth and rewards.

Once it is creatively, sincerely and comprehensively ensured by media prodigies at a national level meeting that by formulating a common media policy on core social issues their personal, institutional or organizational interests are not hampered, such issues have to be identified in common and addressed simultaneously and consistently for a week, fortnight or a month or so one by one. While each newspaper can address a core issue daily in its own way for a given period through reporting, features, editorials, leader articles and interviews, PTV and private TV Channels and PBC and private FM Radio channels can address in their own respective ways any hard core common man's social and humanitarian concern. While each Radio or TV channel can devise its own program and each newspaper can form its own editorial policy on a particularly identified core issue to be highlighted every day for a given number of days or weeks, the same issue may be simultaneously be published in national newspapers and broadcast on the national hook up at least once and at the same time.

JUST A FRACTION

In order to ensure that media's individual and institutional interests are kept intact while pursuing a common editorial or broadcast policy to address core social issues for public welfare, it has to be innovatively and mutually considered and agreed upon that each media organization has to adjust just a fraction (0.1) % of their time and priorities as they may keep venturing for their set and standard patterns of business promotion and breaking news exclusiveness for almost the whole (99.9%) of their time and priorities management. The real question, however, remains whether our trend-setters can rise over and above self and ego towards what is known as corporate social responsibility or a noble endeavor.

True, media is already generating human interest stories, including addressing social issues with their subsequent remedies. But we know, in the heart of our hearts, there is something missing somewhere in terms of ingenuity, commitment and seriousness of purpose in this particular connection. When the same issue is highlighted, questioned, addressed and resolved through print and electronic media, over and over again by concerned experts daily from a week to a month, as may mutually be agreed upon, the common man would definitely and doubly benefit from it: It is primarily because only the suffering and impoverished souls know better how important is free and expert medical consultancy, how vital are specialized tips on economizing in times of soaring inflation, how indispensable is a free and professional legal clinic kind of a facility, how instrumental are free and appealing tips on seeking quality education at affordable cost, how crucial it is to excel in an interview and get selected for a job, how innovative it is to turning child labor into skills schools towards a welfare society etc.

How popular have we made "Mothers' Day, Fathers' Day, Valentine's Day, and Women's Day" etc. through commonly pursuing such themes so much that we know about such annual occasions by heart throughout the year. Similarly If media can pursue any core social, civic and humanitarian issue with the same vim, vigor and vitality through devising a creative, consistent and common editorial and broadcast policy, there is no reason why it cannot help usher in an era of positive thinking, information and relief for the masses, sooner or later and somehow or the other. It is a question of media brains of Pakistan closing their ranks and calling it creativity, care and consideration for the common man.

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Towards a common media policy

Parvez Jamil

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The very idea of a common editorial or broadcast policy seems and sounds mere idealism and may not carry the appeal to divert media prodigies from their routine business and work priorities. But in such idealism lie answers to core social and humanitarian issues, especially when the tried and tested forms of media information and entertainment leave much to be desired. Rising above ego with home work done on how common grounds be secured without compromising on institutional interests, CEOs, Presidents and Heads of Electronic Media and Managing Editors, Editors and Executive Editors of Print Media meet to finalize modus operandi for a mutually agreeable broadcast and editorial policy in the larger interest of vital information and levelheaded entertainment for the common man. During this meeting a number of nagging social and humanitarian problem areas need to be identified before they are commonly and persistently addressed one by one both by print and electronic media. For example, such core issues as soaring prices, power crises, unemployment and immobilization; child labor, child abuse, senior citizens and women's rights; health, pollution and environment; academic, behavioral and career counseling of the young nation and so on.

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—The writer is Head of Public Affairs and Faculty Advisor, Media Management Program at IBM Karachi.