

# Revisiting the Queen of Indian Mascot: The Amul Girl

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## ABSTRACT

A mascot is a very unique way to promote a product or brand or company that helps the brand or company reach height. It also gives exclusive looks to the brand or company and makes the brand quickly recognizable. It also represents the company's voice, tone, color, vision, and mission through its unique characteristics, attire, and appearance. In India, many mascots have originated to promote their brands in the market but amongst them, only some mascots survived to taste the glory of success. It's very hard to make a mascot successful for its brand or company due to many issues. Sometimes the creative individuals could not represent or relate their mascot with concept or message according to the vision-mission of the company/ brand or some mascot very selectively, rarely can get blend with any issues, incident, activities, natural or national situation. These are some common reasons for which a mascot barely survives in the field of advertising and marketing. But there is a mascot who has been enjoying the glory of success in Indian advertising for more than 50 years and that is the mascot of Amul- the biggest dairy company in India and it is popularly known as Amul girl. This cute moppet originated in the year 1966 and this girl with red & white polka-dotted is very flexible and dynamic with a very charming for whom no subject is taboo. Amul girl is a very iconic mascot in the Indian advertising industry who can say every burning issue, political matter, and scam with a very innocent, cute, and creative approach. The study will analyze this mascot and its approaches & appearance in the advertisements to understand the real value of the mascot for the company or brand.

**Keywords:** Promotion, Visual Communication, Advertising, Mascot, Indian Brand

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## INTRODUCTION

A mascot is a very important visual element which largely used in the advertising industry ([www.wikipedia.org](http://www.wikipedia.org)). It can be any person, animal, object, or anything used to represent a group with a specific identity, such as the brand name of any product. A mascot can be a fictional character, representative of a particular brand, company, trade, institute, and so on. Mascots are mostly used in the sports industry and then for children's products. It is a very effective element in the field of creative art. The advertiser has been using this mascot for a very long time. Etymologically the word '*Mascot*' originated from the French term '*maschette*' which means lucky charm. This was used to describe that it brings good luck to the household. It is often said as "Brand Mascot"; because a mascot always represents a particular brand, company, trade, event, and so on. In branding, the mascot represents the goodwill of the product, along with that the mascot denotes

the vision, mission, type of product, and notion of the brand/ company. Ultimately, a mascot will adopt all the features, qualities of the product or the brand in itself and represent it with a unique visual language (Becker & IGI Global, 2008). Sometimes for branding, using a mascot is a big advantage for promotion and marketing. Regarding such types of sales and promotional activities mascot is a very useful option for the advertisers and the company/ brand with less expenditure. Usually for promoting the product/brand using of brand ambassador is the most common option and mostly brands/companies hire film celebrities, sports personalities, etc who charge very high for the endorsement, apart from that a celebrity can endorse multiple brands or products at the same timeline. In these cases, the mascot always comes up as a savior for the product/ brand/company. It is very cheap, evergreen, creative, and has endless appearances. A smart organization always opts mascot rather than a brand ambassador. Currently in the era of digital technology, with the help of animation, a mascot can be blended with any type of concept or topic (Becker & IGI Global, 2008).

Mascot gives better options and exposure than any other promotional method. It very easily turns the attention of people towards itself and generates curiosity within the people regarding itself. Through mascots, creative individuals utilize the psychological factors of the human mind regarding the storytelling through a fictional character. Mascot triggers potential customers to get to know more about the product/ brand/ company/ business. In the mascot, the advertiser can add various elements and make it attractive with his/ her creativity, which extends the scope of attraction, and entertainment for the people. Here are more chances to change the ideas in no time. Due to high competition in the market effective branding with useful strategies is very important (Fournier, Breazeal & Avery, 2015), which helps the company to make a good bond with people or consumers (Fournier, Breazeal & Avery, 2015). In this case, using of a mascot always become a good and smart decision for the advertisers and for the company/ brand/ business as well (Caufield, 2012). Today everything related to animations and graphics is done easily on computers with fewer expenses (Lowe. 2003). Using a brand ambassador in the advertisement can cost a lot of time, money, location, and other many resources. Such an option becomes a tough job and needs lots of money as well. A mascot only needs graphics an imaginative mindset and some tools. After some years a brand ambassador will be changed in looks and form, so if the company needs to change it then they have to go through the same procedure. But a mascot never gets old by its look; even it will be evergreen and become more beautiful and vivid with the help of the creativity of the graphic artist or illustrator, for example – The mascot of Asian Paint ‘*Gattu*’ was introduced in the year 1954 by the famous cartoonist R.K. Laxman (Pinto. 2015). Still, the brand has a mascot in the present era who becomes the identity of this brand. A mascot is a support for business on a long-time basis. It’s not a one-time option for the business. Mascot only needs a change in role. Here are some of the great examples of the best Indian brand mascots throughout the best advertising industry.

**Amul Girl:** Amul a very popular leading dairy brand in India which was founded in the year 1946 in Gujarat, it was accomplished by a cooperative team/ body and i.e Gujarat Co-operative Milk Marketing Federation Ltd. (**GCMMF**). When the company decided to create a mascot for their brand Amul (Anand Milk Union Limited) approached the cartoonist Eustace Fernandes. Then a cute moppet was born in the year 1966 with blue hair ponytail and who wears red polka-dotted frock. Known as “Amul Girl” (Naqvi, 2007). She is the iconic girl for whom no subject is taboo, who can say every

burning issue like political matter, national/ global issue, scams, any activities, and so on very easily with a very decent and entertaining approach. She became very popular with the people of India within a very short period of time. Amul girl shows that a mascot can be funny, humorous, decent, and bold to achieve the goal but never taking sides and never hurting. She is can be Gujarati, Bengali, Madrasi, Marathi, and else the region and topic needed her to be (Chowdhury. 2016). The creator Sylvester daCunha and the cartoonist Eustace Fernandes designed and utilized her quality in such a way that she can blend with any kind of subject with ease. Amul girl is the longest-running brand mascot in India. People have loved her so much dt she has completed her 50 years with huge success. According to Sylvester daCunha, she is the little heroine who has been showing her acting skill for the last 50 years and succeeded in over 4000 hoarding with the tagline “*Utterly Butterly delicious Amul*” (Chowdhury, 2016). Through the Amul girl, the company not only wins the hearts of millions of people along with it, but this polka dot-dressed chubby girl also became a very favorite of young children. The use of cartoons in the advertising campaign Amul attracted the young kids; it gives youth fresh, healthy feelings in the minds of the viewer. Amul advertisements are unique in nature and it’s their USP (Unique Selling proposition). The slogan or tagline has always been ‘*Utterly Butterly delicious*’. Apart from this, the execution of the advertisements is done in such a way that it creates a curiosity in the mind of the viewer – “what will be the next? (Sunam, 2020)” The common and unique feature of the Amul girl is that she always comes with new messages and these messages are the recent issues of the nation and about other nations too (Pal, 2016). But these will not be possible without the creative skill of the advertiser and without the help of multimedia, because creating a cartoon figure as a brand mascot is totally a matter of technology. When any drawing has turned into a digital image, then it comes under the multimedia technology and blending it numerous subjects, looks are not possible to do it as manually. Multimedia and its other application make it easier for advertisers, especially when it is a matter of animated cartoon characters.

### **Case study on AMUL GIRL:**

Amul Girl is the most popular mascot in the Indian advertising industry, which not only helped in the promotion of her brand but has also created her own identity amongst the people of India. It was 1966, and the advertising for a product called Amul butter was assigned to an agency named daCunha Communications. Under the supervision of Sylvester daCunha and Eustace Fernandes, a very cute blue hair with a ponytail, red polka-dotted white frock dressed as a moppet was created, and she became popular as Amul girl. She is the most iconic girl in the advertising industry for whom no subject is taboo. deChuna created a powerful competitor to give proper response to the Polson’s butter girl. Amul girl has presented in numerous looks in the advertisement but in the brand, she has a universal pose holding a slice of buttery bread with licking her own lips with a tag line – “*Utterly Butterly Delicious Amul*”. This cute little moppet wins the hearts of millions of people. She has been ruling like a queen in the field of advertng for the last 52 years, particularly in the screen of hoarding no one can beat her. In the years 1978, Amul introduced its mascot in a television commercial. The cute moppet with a blue hair ponytail who wears a red polka-dotted frock has a great impact in the field of Indian advertising and in the mind of the people as well. She is the only mascot existing in the Indian advertising industry who is ruling not only in television commercials, she is the queen and most popular face in the print media as well. The advertiser has been using this mascot very creatively for the last 52 years and they blend her with the burning issue (Sunam, 2020). The most interesting part of Amul girl is that in print media she is very powerful, she conveys every message on any topic very cutely with ease, wittiness is her main weapon that grabs the pulse of the target audience. The

creator of Amul girl deCunha realized very earlier that if there were only many things that one could say about food then it is Amul Girl. deCunha adopted a very unique strategy to boost the daily advertising campaign of the brand in such a way that it will connect with the public at the first glance. In 1966, he published Amul Girl's first topical advertisement. This print advertisement was titled 'ThoroughBread', where Amul girl was projected as a jockey who is holding a slice of bread while racing by riding a horse and the feedback was very positive. Along with that deCunha sarcastically represented the *Thoroughbread* as ThoroughBread. Since that day this Amul girl has been saying lots of things through food to all Indians . Then a cute moppet was born in the year 1966 with blue hair ponytail and who wears a red polka-dotted frock known as "Amul Girl". She is the iconic girl for whom no subject is taboo, who can say every burning issue, political matter, scam, and so on very easily in a cute and creative way (Sunam, 2020). After that, she became very popular with the people of India within a very short period of time. Usually, for the people, Amul girl plays a very different kind of character or role, who delivers messages with ease, decency and humor. These features make her very unique and different from others. Because a food company's mascot its very important to gain the trust of the people and sometimes humor becomes an effective key for the mascot to do a fair job (Jamieson, 2007).

Amul Girl becomes a milestone for the Indian Advertising industry that proved a mascot can create brand consciousness in the mind of the consumers and change the pattern of the market from the perspective of sales and promotion. A brand or product can be recognized by its logo, symbol, colors, and themes but this brand Amul is being recognized through its mascot. Eventually, Amul girl opened a door for the Indian market and the advertising industry a mascot can also understand and represent the core value of the company/ brand or product. In the case of Amul, it was a very challenging task to use a mascot instead of any popular celebrity because Amul produces dairy products and for the food product company it is very important to gain the trust of its potential audience. To do it with the help of a mascot that can't speak or deliver any famous dialogue from any super hit movie so it becomes a very difficult task for the advertiser. But the chubby ponytailed girl has done this remarkable job and completed her 50 years in the Indian market. Presently Amul girl is the most successful mascot ever in the history of Indian advertising. The visual language she has created in India that helped other brands or companies to form or introduce their own mascots like the Devil from Onida, Nirma Girl from Nirma Washing Powder, Chintamani from ICICI Prudential Life Insurance, Boomer Man from Boomer Bubble gum, Zoo Zoo from Vodaphone and etc.

**Findings:** Due to the remarkable quality of products Amul has gained a huge space in the dairy and food product market. But through its mascot i.e Amul girl, it has gained tremendous attention, responses, love, and appreciation from the entire nation. In India, Amul Girl can be counted as the most iconic mascot in the advertising industry. She has a very high level of communicative skills. Through her sense of humor, she gives a very effective result in the promotion of products. In terms of entertainment, awareness, national issues, and social life, Amul girl is always active. As a mascot, Amul Girl never discriminates, judges, or ignores any topic or issue. These qualities make this mascot very popular among the people and its become very rare for a mascot to get glory such way Amul girl has achieved. Along with her, Amul is also leading in the field of dairy food products. Hence, Amul girl becomes an example for branding, promotion, and marketing; additionally, she shows how a mascot can adapt and blend with all types of concepts, notions, ideas, and subjects.

**Conclusion:** Normally people say a mascot is a lucky person, animal, object, or creation that brings luck to the business/ company/ brand. But in the real meaning, Amul girl makes it true for its company. She also shows that for mascots nothing is taboo along with that understanding human values is also more important than sales & promotion. Amul girl becomes the queen of Indian mascots and with time she is getting more bold, beautiful, and humorous. The creator or illustrator has represented herself in such a way that approximately every month she appears in the national newspapers and in the gigantic hoardings with very new, different looks, concepts, and issues. Amul girls show that she has no limits because creativity is the only way to make a mascot immortal and successful in the field of advertising.

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