



PUBLIC RELATIONS | CRÈME DE LA CRÈME | OGILVY PUBLIC RELATIONS  
AMARARAJA BATTERIES | BRINGING THE WORLD HOME TO RURAL INDIA

#### SITUATION ANALYSIS

The “real” India lives in rural villages - over 70% of Indians live outside of the country’s urban areas. While there is one India that is optimistically racing ahead towards emerging as a powerful global economy, there is another India that seems to be grappling with its debilitating past. If India is going to continue to progress and strengthen its economy, it is essential that India’s villages progress as well.

Amararaja Batteries Limited India (Amararaja), and Amararaja-Johnson Controls USA, a leading player in the Indian automotive battery sector, sought to develop and implement a corporate communications campaign that would empower people living in rural areas by giving them better and faster access to valuable information, while simultaneously promoting social and economic transformation in India’s villages through effective use of Information Technology (IT).

#### OBJECTIVES

Amararaja wanted to strengthen its brand awareness and provide tangible benefits to the communities. With competition increasing from unbranded batteries and rural India being besieged by aggressive promotions of multitude brands, Ogilvy Public Relations Worldwide (Ogilvy PR) was entrusted to create an organic link between Amararaja and its key customers - rural farmers.

#### AUDIENCE ANALYSIS

The target audience for this campaign was rural Indian farmers and their respective families. These groups constantly seek information on various issues pertaining to their quality of life.

#### STRATEGY

Ogilvy PR’s challenge was to determine the right cause to align Amararaja’s core attributes of progressiveness and innovativeness with its target audience.

To determine what motivates and drives the target communities to action, Ogilvy PR conducted primary surveys and farmer group discussions in diverse Indian markets. The survey results produced one single insight, “Why is it that all the information reaches the cities first, and touches rural villages last?” Rural Indian communities expressed their desire to explore and learn more about the world without being uprooted from their villages. Farmers recognized a severe gap in obtaining timely information of the things that mattered most to them - agriculture, education, health and employment. They felt that if this critical information was easily accessible, it would give them increased knowledge and control over their lives.



WPPED  
CREAM  
2007

From this insight came the core idea that Knowledge is Power, and that power is only possible for these Indian farmers if the information was readily available. This led the team to the creative expression, “Gyan ke sang, Unnati ki Umang” - Knowledge Brings Prosperity.

Ogilvy PR created a Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) campaign on behalf of Amara Raja and sought to bridge the information divide in rural India by providing Indian villages with IT solutions to enable them to further grow and develop. In addition, Amara Raja achieves brand awareness as the product becomes a part of the farmer’s life; hence, communication originates from and stays within the village as opposed to aggressive outside-in marketing.

This strategy required a variety of methods that not only ensured platforms for quick information dissemination, but also provided robust communication on how to use the platforms. It was imperative to leverage all this for larger brand goodwill. Another important element was to demystify computers and attract children and youth to the digital platform in rural India.

#### EXECUTION

The “Amaron Amara Gaon” CSR campaign was launched to provide essential and available IT solutions and digital communications usage to India’s rural populations. The campaign was also used to leverage Amara Raja’s brand and extend its corporate reputation to key audiences. Specific campaign tactics included:

- Engaging NGOs and service providers in each target region, with the support of a well-known information and communication technologies (ICTs) organization Drishtee Foundation, to help the team set up the IT infrastructure in villages.
- Establishing “Knowledge Delivery” IT kiosks in core villages, each serving an additional 20 satellite villages. The internet-enabled, local language kiosks provided information pertaining to agriculture, education, employment, health, women’s issues and e-governance.
- Hosting “Community Conversations” (or Choupals) around pertinent farmer information, such as rural development and quality of life discussions. These served to connect Amara Raja with core consumers in a personal manner.
- Hosting local folk forums and edu-tainment evenings in an effort to make ICTs less intimidating to new users. The team also created and organized a character-based folk drama “Gyan ke Sang, Unnati ki Umang” (“Knowledge Brings Prosperity”) to convey the campaign theme directly to target audiences.
- Organizing school trips and private tutorials with school children and company representatives to help them learn how to use the technology, overcome their fear of the mouse and give them a personal, hands-on experience.
- Launching the campaign and kiosks at local press conferences to introduce India’s media representatives to the campaign at both the local and national level, and highlight the positive role Amara Raja plays in India’s rural farm communities.
- Scheduling and facilitating media visits to the village kiosks in order to garner media coverage of the rural IT revolution by providing reporters with interaction at the local community level.



WPPED  
CREAM  
2007

#### EVALUATION

The campaign not only helped to build greater awareness for Amararaja, but also served to increase the company's government relations efforts as local government officials took notice of its good work. Employee relations were also strengthened Amararaja's workforce motivated around the cause. One employee stated, "It feels good to be a part of larger goal of human development than just promoting batteries." Below are a few examples of the campaign's success:

- An Internal study measuring the impact of the campaign areas stated that 73 percent of consumers said they knew the work that Amararaja was conducting on behalf of the communities; 40 percent said that they would definitely visit an Amararaja dealer when they were in need of a battery; and 89 percent stated that Amararaja's community outreach and corporate visibility actions was laudable.
- The team held 16 individual press conferences and two media visits to the kiosks, which resulted in over 80 distinctive press stories-78 percent of the team's targeted media. This coverage surpassed Amararaja's goals for media coverage during the campaign.
- Hindu Business line, a leading English daily in India, reported Amararaja was "doing CSR in true sense of the word" and described the campaign as "an innovative way of connecting with India."
- Over 200 kiosks were established across six states, 776 villages and 3500 community conversations, reaching over one million villagers with 500,000 unique visits to the kiosks within the campaign's first year.
- One entrepreneurial youth stated, "Amararaja has given me a chance to be visible in my village and also serve the villagers. It has provided me with employment opportunity." - Arun Bora, Sonitpur, Assam, India. 100 percent of the population in the village, Gujarat, have email addresses and use the kiosk at length.
- The client stated, "Let me take this opportunity to recognize the uniqueness of the Amaron Amaragaon Communication initiative. That such an encompassing communication program has been successfully piloted is heartening." - Mr. Indeevar G, Head-Automotive Aftermarket, Amararaja.

The campaign successfully began to bridge the information divide between India's populated cities and rural villages. Amararaja's CSR campaign assisted in improving the quality of life for India's rural farmers and their families and also connected the company with its key stakeholders. The services provided from kiosks have increased the farmers' access to knowledge, agricultural yields, computer literacy levels and government services, thereby conveying Amararaja as key enabler of progress. In addition, a diverse and far-reaching network of partnerships was developed on behalf of NGOs and media. Overall, the return on investment for Amararaja was almost 300 percent.