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# Korea Feels The Heat

In a first, South Korean giants sweat as desi AC players turn on the heat. **By Rajiv Singh**

## Volta's Topples LG...

It was in 2006 when Volta launched its new brand positioning with a tag 'India ka dil, India ka AC.' Though it might have won 'India ka dil' a long time back, it took the homegrown brand a decade to become 'India ka AC.'

According to the latest GfK numbers, Volta ended FY'17 with a 19.5% market share. Its bugbear — South Korean biggie LG — logged in 18.4%, forcing it to cede the coveted crown to its Indian rival. Volta continued to maintain its lead in the first two months of the first quarter of this fiscal.

Pradeep Bakshi, President of Volta, would however like to set the record straight. "Volta has been the clear leader in the room AC business since the last five years," he says. What has helped the brand gain leadership, he lets on, is a well differentiated product portfolio, positioning based on sharp consumer insight, highest distribution reach and brand equity, and a customised approach for the Indian market.

The imagery of 'trust' being part of the Tata group, the 'all-weather' and 'energy efficient' brand positioning all had a role in reinforcing dominance. "The brand is seen as the expert in the space of comfort and cooling," he says.

It has been a remarkable comeback, reckon marketing experts. Volta had

ceded ground to Korean rivals, starting the late 90s and the early part of last decade. "It's a tenacious brand and the latest numbers only reinforces the belief that Indian brands can beat the global biggies," says Ashita Aggarwal, head of marketing at SP Jain Institute of Management and Research.

In 2012, when Volta introduced its all-weather AC backed by a character called 'Mr Murthy' in its TV commercials, it took a huge leap in terms of connecting with consumers. While other brands were shouting themselves hoarse about features, Volta had Murthy talking to people.

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## ...Lloyd Batters Samsung

When in February this year, lighting and electrical appliances major Havells announced its move to buy the consumer durables business of Lloyd Electrical and Engineering for a staggering tag of ₹1,600 crore, it surprised many. Experts deemed it a 'costly' buy.

Havells chairman and managing director Anil Rai Gupta, however, stuck to one of the basic tenets of marketing: value is always bigger than price.

Cut to July. In less than 50 days since the acquisition got completed in May, Lloyd has done business of close to ₹300 crore. Gupta stands vindicated. "It is a good and satisfying start," he says. "I always see value."

The real value, however, can be gauged from the fact that the little-known Indian brand, which has always been under the

radar and recently roped in Amitabh Bachchan as its brand ambassador, has trampled South Korean biggie Samsung in the AC segment.

From a meagre 2.8% market share in financial year 2015, Lloyd closed the last financial year with 7.1%. The rapid growth continued in the first two months of this fiscal: 8.5% in April and 9% in May. The numbers, when contrasted with Samsung, presents a stark picture.

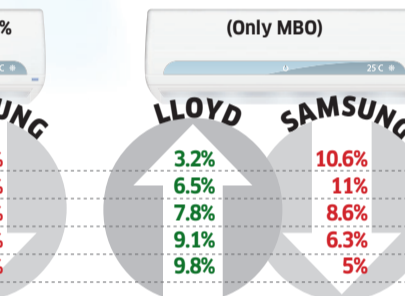
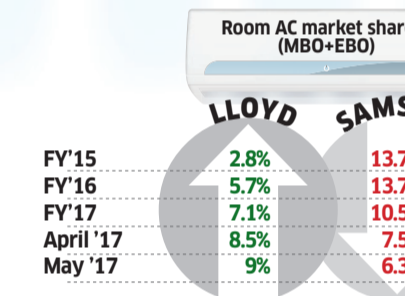
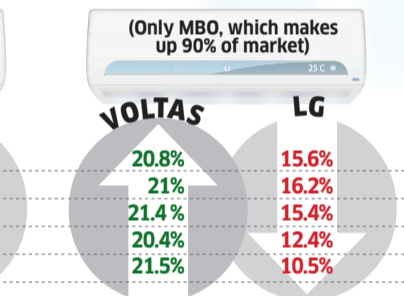
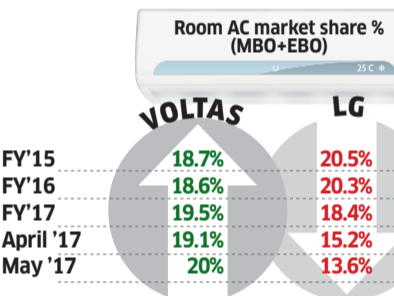
When Lloyd was crawling at 2.8% in FY'15, Samsung was lordling with 13.7% market share. It closed FY17 with a lower share of 10.5%, but still ahead of its unlikely rival. However, in April and May this year, it dipped to 7.5% and 6.3%, respectively.

It would be tough, reckon marketing experts, for the South Korean consumer durable player to stage a comeback.

"Oops, that's a big loss," says brand strategist Harish Bhojra. In the category of air conditioners, just as in the case of any other consumer durables, it means a loss of home or office for the next six years minimum. "ACs have a habit of blocking repeat buys. To that extent, this loss is a heavy one," he says.

Bhojra contends that the alarming dip in market share might be due to a combination of act of omission or commission by Samsung and its hungry rivals.

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Source: GfK; Motilal Oswal; EBO is exclusive brand outlets and MBO is multi-brand outlets

# IDIOT SAVANT OR JUST IDIOT?

IDFC Asset Management creates yet another near half hour branded content film with no brand. What does it hope to achieve?

BY RAVI BALAKRISHNAN | MUMBAI

Assuming you were among the 400,000 plus people who saw One Idiot — IDFC MF's film on investing wisely on YouTube — and lasted through its nearly 35 minute run time, the pros-

pect of a sequel should fill you with joy. The Return of One Idiot will be out end August or early September, clocking in at a generous twenty five minutes.

Except, instead of immediately figuring out how many ways the brand could be shoehorned into so much running time, IDFC Asset

Management opted for a different route. While the first film talked about the category, even if it didn't flog the brand, this time around there's no reference to IDFC at all.

Why, you wonder, would a brand

**One Idiot:** The most skinflint resident of the building, roundly mocked for wearing his Hawaii chappals thin and — this struck us as a little bizarre — for buying his own vegetables, turns out to be a crorepati several times over because he saves, invests and doesn't splurge. His circle of influence gradually spreads through a building full of chronic spenders, starting in the face.



**The Return of One Idiot:** In a presentation to a college on how he made his fortune, the idiot speaks of people who hadn't planned well enough — from cab drivers in Mumbai behind the wheel well into their 70s and 80s to the mother of an old school mate, languishing in an old age home.

spend the time, the money and hire a name director — Amol Gupte, famous for his work on *Taare Zameen Par* and *Stanley Ka Dabba* among others — for something where the brand doesn't even have a 'blink and you'll miss it' appearance? Is it still branded content if there's no brand?

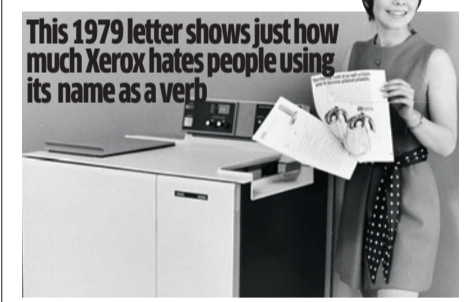
The team however believe the films serve a greater purpose. It's pointless flogging specific products and offers, in a category where penetration is abysmally low — at just 5%. Instead the question business ought to be grappling with, as IDFC Asset Management CEO Vishal Kapoor puts it, is "How do you get people to become savers in the first place and take their financial outcomes more seriously than they typically do?" IDFC Asset Management is revisiting the idea, encouraged by the success of the first film which worked better in seeding the thought than a traditional ad campaign; Kapoor says it was popular with both investors and distributors.

The team were clear they wanted a sequel in a similar space. And so, Amol Gupte found an enthusiastic client when he approached Rishi Kakar, director — marketing, IDFC Asset Management with an idea he'd got after spending a lot of time speaking to people at old age homes, and informally interviewing the drivers of Mumbai's black and yellow cabs.

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## SIDE TAKE



This 1979 letter shows just how much Xerox hates people using its name as a verb

Xerox is a known stickler when it comes to its corporate trademark, but that's not new. In light of longtime book critic Michiko Kakutani stepping down from her role Thursday, a reporter for The New York Times tweeted out an amazingly anachronistic letter to the editor from an upset Xerox employee. The typewriter-written letter, dated August 2, 1979, is directed to a mis-gendered "Mr. Michiko Kakutani" in response to an article in which Xerox's name is used as a verb. "There is no adjective xeroxed. Rather, one should use copied, photocopied or duplicated," Maggie Lovaas, a field market analyst, wrote on official Xerox stationery. "If in the future you wish to use the name Xerox, it should be used with a capital 'X' and no 'ed.'" The article in question, titled "Pat Carroll Pat Carroll Pat Carroll," is a profile on the mid-century actress Pat Carroll. The author, Ms. Kakutani, verifies the company's name while detailing the decor in Carroll's house. "Miss Carroll's reconverted farmhouse has become something of a Steiner archive; it is filled with books by Stein and about Stein, as well as xeroxed Ph.D. theses and obscure literary journals devoted to that most famous of salon keepers," reads the piece.

Source: Business Insider

# "The digital supply chain needs to be cleaned up"

Unilever's global chief marketing and communications officer, Keith Weed, on cleaning up digital, learning what not to do and more

BY RAVI BALAKRISHNAN | MUMBAI

The marketing communications industry has been beset with problems that did not exist or were nowhere near as severe just three years ago. What's your view on these challenges?

The digital supply chain does need to be cleaned up. We seem to lurch from one issue to the other. Ad fraud, viewability, verification and measurement all had their day in the sun. The problem is we look at them independently instead of holistically.

There are the three Vs: Viewability, Verification and Value. When it comes to viewability: for some reason, people are championing the idea that 50% of

pixels in the digital world, count as a view. Can you imagine if in a TV commercial, 50% of the TV would count? I don't believe that should be the case in digital. We need to agree at an industry level that a view is 100%.

Verification was not so much of an issue when the digital media industry was quite small. But now it's half the media market and third party verification is critical to get the right level of accountability. We can't have digital media companies grading their own homework as the Americans would say.

Which brings me to brand safety: you want to make sure your ads are appearing in a suitable environment. There's been a lot going around (the issue) with Google and YouTube and some compa-

nies decided to move away. We didn't. I am a great believer in partners: you are better off staying and working through issues.

We did not perceive ourselves having a brand safety issue since we had high guard rails in place. Of course it's up to media companies to provide a suitable or safe environment, with better classification of content types. You can buy news and it could be the BBC or someone with an affiliation with a terrorist group. Clarification of inventory is im-

portant. But within that, advertisers and media companies should use the tools that are in place.

Some of the companies who got caught out were not using tools to ensure they were buying better media. If it's too good to be true, if you are buying really cheap, chances are it will be a cheap site that you are on.

One step beyond brand safety is ad fraud. We talked about the \$10 billion issue around ad fraud with 60% of traf-



fic on the internet being bots. From our perspective, we go out of the way to ensure we buy good quality media and in a recent study, we had the lowest levels of ad fraud.

The last one that adds it all together is measurement. I still don't think we are there yet. We need one measurement system across media. At the end of the day, it's one consumer and one advertising budget. That's the biggest unlock we could get to as an industry.

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**WE SEEM TO LURCH FROM ONE ISSUE TO THE OTHER. THE PROBLEM IS WE LOOK AT THEM INDEPENDENTLY AND NOT HOLISTICALLY**



# GoP: Game of Promotions

From the mildly amusing to the downright crazy - the promos that are keeping Game of Thrones at the top. By Delshad Irani

In addition to providing something to look forward to at the weekend, Game of Thrones, a fantasy telly drama now elevated to the status of a global cultural event, has also inspired some inventive promotions over several seasons of ice and fire, blood and gore, scheming and fighting for the Iron Throne. This season is no different. White Walkers led by the Night King took a stroll in London. In Moscow, a bunch of Free Folk joined regular folk for a special screening in the Metro. A 'Marathrone' marathon from Rome to Milan has runners chasing a truck screening all six seasons of the massively popular show. In India, Star World's running a Twitter contest called Game of Predictions, while Hotstar, the video-on-demand platform, warned against piracy in its campaign - 'Torrents Morghulis' that's High Valyrian for all torrents must die. Despite the warnings and many new and legal ways of watching the show, Dragonstone, the first episode of Season 7 was ripped off 90 million times.

Here's a roundup of some of the more interesting GoT action.



**A song, and a long wait, of Ice and Fire**  
That would be the appropriate title for this event - a Facebook Live video of a block of ice melting. That's right. Tens of thousands of people watched 69 minutes of video of a flamethrower changing the molecular structure of ice. Viewers were invited to click on the 'Fire' symbol to set pyro-man in action. The payoff: the big reveal of Season 7's premier date.

## Walk like a White Walker

According to Taylor Herring, the PR agency responsible for the stunt, it took eight weeks to create the full costumes, and each actor spent four hours in makeup before hitting the streets of London as white walkers led by their Night King. The stunt left many doing a double take as they went about their daily business like buying morning coffee or taking the Tube to work, only this time in the next seat is a dead, cold creature. The walkers were also spotted at Oxford Circus, Tower Bridge and The Tower of London and Buckingham Palace's Throne Room. King's Landing is the other way, boys.



## I stitch and I know things

At Belfast's Ulster Museum on display is a 66-metre long tapestry depicting all the major events from the past six seasons of Game of Thrones - from Jaime Lannister showing Bran Stark out of a window to the Battle of the Bastards. Now that's something worth looking at for 69 minutes. (See *A Song And A Long Wait...*) Publicis London created the Bayeux Tapestry for Tourism Ireland, which has been milking its association, as one of the show's main filming locations, for the past four years.



## What does Jon Snow know?

The answer to that and many more GoT mysteries and questions about Westeros and Essos, its grand, good and evil houses, wights, dragons and Dothraki, lie with a cheeky GOTBOT. The result of an unholy union of Facebook Messenger and Game of Thrones. There's a name for that kind of thing in Westeros. The creator, Catch Digital, a UK-based digital agency, has given ample personal-

ity to the chatbot which answers with GIFs, japes and naked snaps of Jon. For instance: What is Hodor's favourite cereal? Raisin Bran. Why do Lannisters have such big beds? Because they push two twins together to make a king. GOTBOT even has answers for all your questions about who's alive, dead, beheaded, walking dead and resurrected. GOTBOT: "Let's face it, they're probably dead. But tell me their name and I'll spoil it for you."

Catch's founder and managing director, Jonathan Smith said: "With 1.2 billion monthly active users on Facebook Messenger, the potential audience for chatbots is huge. We knew we wanted to create a Facebook chatbot and wanted to get our clients excited about the future of AI and how it might benefit their business. What better way to do so than creating our very own chatbot? And who doesn't like Game of Thrones?"

Learn High Valyrian in just 5 minutes a day. For free.

Start learning

## Where can I park my dragon? (Translate to High Valyrian)

Like Vulcan before it, High Valyrian is destined to join the universe of real world languages. Popular education and language app Duolingo added the ancient, and not real, language of Essos to its archives after much testing. At last count, almost 54,000 people signed up to learn High Valyrian. This course is constructed in collaboration with linguist David J. Peterson, who developed Valyrian and Dothraki languages, which are a critical part of making GoT and 'A Song of Ice and Fire' an immersive experience. The language is "spoken by educated Westerosi, and regarded as the language of nobles, poetry and dragons". The course is free.

## Some survival phrases:

Yes - Kessa  
No - Daor  
Woman - Abra  
Man - Vala  
More pigeon pie, please - Toli rhuqo lotinti, kostilus.  
Where are my dragons? - Skoriot nuhyz zaldriresse izi?  
I would like a trial by combat - Vilibazmosa iderenni emilun.  
Seven hells! - Sikudi nopazmi!

Get Started

Winter is here Delshad, get cozy!

#WHYGOEVENBOTHERCONDITIONINGMYHAIR

## the twitter index

The weekly Twitter Advertiser Index lists the brands which have generated most engagement with users on the platform

THE BRAND ENGAGEMENT INDEX AS ON JULY 26, 2017

**1) @SamsungMobileIN:** SamsungMobileIN launched a new smartphone #GalaxyOnMax with a camera which can capture quality photos even in low light. To promote the phone and this feature, it ran a #BringAliveTheDark activity on Twitter which got users to tweet about the low light moments they wished to capture. The winners would stand a chance to win the new phone.

**2) @titanwatches:** For #WorldEmojiDay, @titanwatches celebrated by running an interesting quiz that got sizable engagement from its followers. The quiz made use of different emojis to create song titles, countries or cities and asked participants to guess what they were supposed to represent. There were about 10 questions in total and participants who got all answers right stood a chance to win a Titan gift hamper.

**3) @Vivo\_India:** @Vivo\_India held another round of #VivoCampusCarnival over a weekend where it was giving away some deals to fans who retweeted its tweets. The deals included offers on hotel stays, movie tickets discounts and offers on mobile data. The top winner would win the grand prize of a #VivoV5s Energetic Blue mobile phone, the latest phone released by the company.

**4) @dominos\_india:** To time around the #WomensWorldCup2017 buzz, @dominos\_india showed its support to the India women's national cricket team. The activity was also called Women In Blue and included 10 questions related to cricket and the India women's team. Fans who answered them all with the correct answers were eligible to win Domino's voucher worth ₹300.

**5) @MercedesBenzInd:** MercedesBenzInd recently started a #MBCertified program for people who are fans of their luxury cars and have always dreamt of it. In this program, fans can now buy a pre-owned Mercedes Benz Certified car at an attractive price. The company announced this program over a tweet which received lots of engagement - after all Mercedes Benz is one of the many desirable car brands longed for by many.

The index looks at the live list of all advertisers on the platform and measures the total number of user engagements with all the tweets that they sent out that week - specifically this is a sum of all the replies, retweets and favourites across all tweets that week.

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## "The digital supply chain needs to be cleaned up"



have a purpose and a delivery against our sustainable living plan - something around the environment and society. Many brands like Brooke Bond, Dove and Ben & Jerry's are brands that resonate with consumers. Last year, they provided 60% of our growth and grew 50% faster than the rest. We are not into correlation but if it looks and sounds like a duck, it probably is a duck.

**You'd launched Water Works at Cannes a few years ago, a system where people in more developed countries could help finance Pureit units to economically disadvantaged consumers. Why do you think it didn't do as well as expected?**  
Water Works was specifically trying to find an approach where through social media we would match people on one side of the planet to help people on the other side. What I learned is that actually it's easier and better and you will have greater traction getting people in a country to engage with issues within that country. It is very hard - although it's been done by some - to get someone in another country to empathetically engage with problems elsewhere, when they see problems in their own country. We will attempt to do more things on a national basis. We learned some good lessons on what not to do. It doesn't mean we've stopped the thought, we've just stopped that project.

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For the full interview, please visit [etbrandequity.com](http://etbrandequity.com)

**Unilever has acquired a reputation for being a very courageous marketer, especially after backing initiatives like The Six Pack Band for Red Label. How have you encouraged creativity and risk taking?**  
It's a necessity since life has got more cluttered. Reimagining creativity is probably the biggest challenge. There are two parts. One is to break through clutter and get noticed. And then, when people engage, you cannot expect attention any longer. It's a reward and not a given. And so, you need brands people care about. That's why we do a lot around brands with meaning and purpose - we call them the sustainable living brands. They

## Volta's Topples LG...

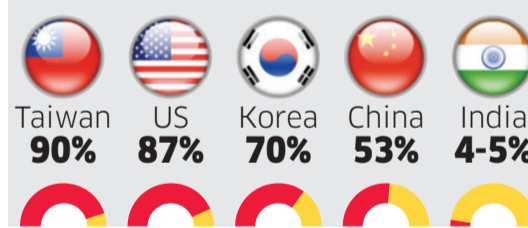
Aggarwal observes the Murthy campaign for Volta's not only helped in simplifying jargon, it also prodded people to use ACs all year round. What also worked was sticking to a wide portfolio. "It's a marketing disaster to put all your eggs in one basket," says Aggarwal. LG, she points out, lost out on this count. The Korean major, for its part, is sticking to its inverter AC gambit. LG, claims its AC business head, managed to transition from regular ACs to 100% inverter ACs range and leads the split AC market in India. "LG is far ahead of competition with 47% share in May in split AC inverter segment," asserts Vijay Babu business head of ACs at LG Electronics India.

Babu, though, concedes that the industry share of inverter technology within split air conditioner has increased from 12% in 2016 to 31% in 2017. This means losing out on 70% market, which is non-inverter! From a high of 16.2% share in FY16, LG slipped to 10.5% in multi brand outlets in May this year. Babu, however, is not pressing the panic button. Next year, the inverter AC

At times, MNC brands tend to get lulled into imagining their brand value will pull them through, but that seldom happens in the close-to-commodity category such as AC. The Indian players, Voltas and Lloyds, lead on performance, says Bijoor. A hard-working Indian product may be close to commodity, but at the same time is offering the ability to tame the Indian summer altogether. Apart from aggressive rivals, what also hit Samsung were two strategic blunders, say experts. First, Samsung exited the window AC market way back in 2012, citing de-growth in the segment. Windows, at present, is still over 12% of the Indian room AC market.

Secondly, the South Korean player has been focusing more on inverter ACs over the last year or so. This move, point out experts, has also turned out to be counter-productive. In its research report in April this year, Motilal Oswal puts the share of inverter ACs at 30% of the entire AC market. By 2020, inverter ACs are likely to account for

## Top AC penetration across the world



market is expected to grow further and LG will continue to maintain product leadership, he says. The fixation of the Korean MNCs with inverter ACs baffles experts. In spite of the dominance of smartphones, feature phones still make up over half the market. "And they are not dying," says Aggarwal. If one seeks to win market share in a country like India, then one has to be present across the categories so that a wider set of users can be catered to. Indians, she avers, have scored over the MNC rivals in understanding the needs of the local market and users. For the time being, 'smarter' Murthy has outsmarted the Korean giant.

## ...Lloyd Batters Samsung

50% of volume, the report predicts. Samsung, however, asserts it got its calculation right. "The non-inverter segment is de-growing," says Rishi Suri, director of Consumer Electronics at Samsung India. Inverter AC, he adds, is the need of the hour and this is what the consumers are looking for. "We have the highest market share in inverter segment," claims Suri, declining to share numbers. Samsung, he points out, wanted to come up with a product which is more meaningful for consumers, apt for the Indian market and is more energy efficient. For the time being, however, Suri's bet on inverter ACs is not supported by rapidly sliding market share. Gupta of Havells too has been betting on inverter ACs, but not at the cost of ignoring other segments. "If consumers want other options, why not offer them?" he asks, adding that one should not drive the market to change fast. For now, Gupta should be elated with the strategy of the MNCs to focus only on inverters as it helps Lloyd remain 'cooling ka baap'.

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## Idiot Savant Or...

According to IDFC Asset Management's Rishi Kakar, the film is a conscious attempt to step away from equating investment with conspicuous consumption. "The old family system is breaking down. There are several stories about people finding it difficult if they've not saved for old age. Retirement gets harder than it should be." And hence a film and a campaign about how not preparing for a future could mean a lifetime of drudgery and work. The branding was restricted to a logo in the first and the last frame of the film because the team felt anything more would detract from the message. Given IDFC Asset Management intends taking the film to schools and colleges, like it did with the first edition, chances of a buy-in are greater if there's no sales pitch. Besides as Kakar points out, "The brand's role is in delivering the cultural truth or message; for instance, the Pantene ad about breaking stereotypes. If you fit pieces of the brand into what's otherwise a nice story, people smell an agenda."

Amol Gupte came on board purely because there was no overt branding. He says "Someone might ask 'what are you selling?' I am just making people aware of the tragedy, the pitfall before the last step. Do you want to end up behind the steering wheel or on a watchman's stool when you are over 80? Once that shakes you up, you should carry it home." While IDFC Asset Management

has an impressive number of views - albeit spread over five years - and mostly positive commentary as validation, KV Sridhar, founder, HyperCollective was less than impressed with One Idiot. As a person who has created a fair share of longform films online for brands like DBS (Chilli Paneer Part II with its branching narratives) and British Airways, he feels the length is the most off-putting aspect of the film, even if it is delivering a very important message: "You may miss the content's relevance unless you stay to the end. This is a classic example of 'internet time is free so let's do a half hour, 10 minute or three minute film.' The depth of engagement needs to be examined. For something this long to work, it should be as gripping as a show like House of Cards on Netflix." He believes a simpler more engaging storyline would work better: "Getting the sweetspot on the content whether fiction or non-fiction is the real thing. It needs to be such that people watch 80%."

Poring through the viewership stats on YouTube, the average time spent on the film is 9:18, perhaps too soon for the entire message to percolate. But 2012 was, in terms of viewing options, and bandwidth, remarkably primitive compared to 2017. The 'idiot' has his work cut out for him this time around: getting people interested enough to watch before they get scared enough to start investing.

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