

## ASCI Engages Hyderabad's Advertising Ecosystem Through Agency 3.0 Forum

**Hyderabad, June 15, 2026:** Reinforcing its commitment to engaging with advertising and marketing stakeholders across India, the Advertising Standards Council of India (ASCI) partnered with Agency 3.0, a first-of-its-kind gathering of agency founders and leaders in Hyderabad on June 11. The forum brought together more than 100 founders and representatives from over 50 agencies to discuss how artificial intelligence (AI) is reshaping the future of the agency business.

Convened by Harmony, a business operating system for agencies, the event centred on the idea that the agency business is entering its third major phase of evolution. While Agency 1.0 was defined by advertising and creative craft, and Agency 2.0 by the shift to digital, Agency 3.0 is being shaped by AI, compelling agencies to rethink how they create value, structure teams, deliver outcomes and maintain profitability.

As part of the programme, **Ms. Saheli Sinha, Director - Operations, ASCI**, led a session with agency founders and leaders focused on the future of advertising and building consumer trust agencies in the age of AI. Sinha touched upon how India's advertising landscape is being redefined by digital, with optimism around AI as an enabler. She detailed also how transparency in communication is the foundation of brand credibility and ad trust. It is self-regulation, she pointed out, that balances innovation, brand trust and credibility.

Another discussion featured KV Sridhar ("Pops"), Global Chief Creative Officer at Nihilent and founder of HyperCollective; Akshay Gurnani, founder of The Cofoundry and co-founder and former CEO of Schbang; and Turab Lakdawala, Managing Director of Tempest Advertising. The session was moderated by Srikant Rajasekharuni, founder of Harmony. The panel addressed areas like working with new-age brands, building an agency business and inspiring the younger generation to join the advertising industry. The session provided participants with insights into how AI is reshaping agency business models and workflows, while underscoring the continued importance of human creativity, strategic thinking, and responsible practices.

Recognising Hyderabad's growing importance as a hub for innovation, entrepreneurship, and creative services, ASCI's participation in the event reflects its commitment to building stronger connections with regional industry ecosystems and encouraging conversations around the opportunities and responsibilities that come with technological transformation.

Manisha Kapoor, CEO and Secretary-General of ASCI, said: "Hyderabad's agency ecosystem is vibrant, ambitious, and asking the right questions about where AI takes the industry. Conversations about responsible advertising practices are more relevant now than ever. As agencies rethink their models for Agency 3.0, self-regulation and consumer trust aren't constraints on growth; they're the foundation of it. ASCI is committed to being part of this conversation in Hyderabad and every market that is shaping India's advertising future."

Srikant Rajasekharuni, Co-founder of Harmony, Redmatter agency and convener of Agency 3.0, said: "The agency business is shifting fast, and none of us can do it alone. Margins are tighter, clients and resources are changing, the market is less forgiving, and profitability is now survival. We have to learn from the stalwarts and share openly, because there's enough market for all of us; we're peers, not competitors. That's why I built Harmony, an operating system that syncs productivity with budget to give founders actionable insights to stay profitable, built by someone who has lived these challenges."

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Navneeth, Co-founder of Convey Labs and 3DM agency, the event’s associate sponsor, added: “AI should raise the bar, not lower it. The real risk is making mediocre work faster, not better. At Convey Labs we use AI voice agents to do the opposite, helping agencies convert more of the leads their campaigns work hard to earn.”

### **About the Advertising Standards Council of India (ASCI)**

The ASCI, established in 1985, is committed to the cause of self-regulation in advertising, ensuring the protection of consumer interests. ASCI seeks to ensure that advertisements conform to its Code for Self-Regulation, which requires advertisements to be legal, decent, honest, and truthful and not hazardous or harmful while observing fairness in competition. ASCI looks into complaints across all media, such as print, TV, radio, hoardings, SMS, emailers, internet/website, product packaging, brochures, promotional material, point of sale material, etc. ASCI has collaboratively worked with various government bodies, including the Real Estate Regulatory Authority of Maharashtra as well as Telangana, Department of Consumer Affairs (DoCA), the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI), the Ministry of AYUSH, and the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting (MIB). In August 2023, the ASCI Academy, a flagship program of ASCI, was launched to build the capacity of all stakeholders to create responsible and progressive advertising. ASCI Academy aims to raise standards of advertising content through training, education, outreach, and research on the preventive aspects of advertising self-regulation.

<b>The Advertising Standards Council of India</b>	<b>Avian WE</b>
Ashraf Engineer <a href="mailto:ashraf@ascionline.in">ashraf@ascionline.in</a>	Manvi Singh <a href="mailto:manvis@avianwe.com">manvis@avianwe.com</a>
	Stuti Agnihotri <a href="mailto:stutis@avianwe.com">stutis@avianwe.com</a>