

Humour Marketing in Food Delivery Apps: How Zomato and Swiggy Stay Relevant , But Struggle to Convert Engagement into Sales

Zomato and Swiggy have built some of the strongest brand voices in Indian digital marketing. Their feeds are filled with memes, pop culture references, and witty one-liners that consistently go viral. While this strategy has helped them dominate online conversations, it also reveals an important marketing insight: high engagement does not always translate into high sales.

This blog analyses how humour-based content works for these brands, supported by real examples, and why its impact on revenue remains limited.

How Zomato and Swiggy Use Humour to Build Brand Relevance

Both brands have successfully positioned themselves as culturally aware, youth-friendly, and extremely relatable.

Example 1: Zomato's Relatable Hunger Memes

Zomato frequently posts tweets such as:

These posts go viral because they reflect real consumer behaviour. The audience sees themselves in the content, leading to high shares and saves.

Marketing impact:

- Builds relatability
- Strengthens emotional connection
- Increases brand recall

Example 2: Swiggy's Topical Marketing

During major events like cricket matches, movie releases, or festivals, Swiggy posts content like:

Such posts ride on trending moments and capture attention instantly.

Marketing impact:

- High real-time engagement
- Makes the brand feel culturally plugged-in
- Strengthens relevance among Gen Z audiences

Example 3: Push Notification Humour

Zomato notifications such as:

These messages are creative, but often function more as entertainment than motivation to order.

Marketing impact:

- Improves brand personality
- Encourages app opens
- But does not consistently trigger purchase behaviour

The Engagement vs. Sales Gap

Despite viral content, both brands rely heavily on discounts and offers to drive actual transactions.

1. Consumers consider memes entertainment, not motivation

A user may like a funny post while travelling in a metro, but that does not automatically create hunger or purchasing intent.

2. Discounts influence decisions more than content

Order volumes clearly spike during:

- ₹100 off offers
- Free delivery campaigns
- Festival discounts
- Membership benefits like Zomato Gold and Swiggy One

When these incentives reduce, order frequency drops even though humour content remains constant.

3. Humour lacks strong conversion strategy

Most meme-based posts do not include:

- Clear call-to-action
- Links to specific restaurants
- Product nudges
- Feature awareness

This limits their performance marketing value.

Strategic Insight: When Branding Wins but Performance Suffers

Zomato and Swiggy have clearly won the branding game. Their humour-based communication delivers:

- High brand recall

- Strong emotional connect
- Cultural relevance

However, in marketing terms, much of their content operates at the top of the funnel (awareness and engagement) rather than the bottom of the funnel (conversion and retention).

This creates a classic case of strong vanity metrics (likes, shares, comments) but inconsistent impact on revenue metrics.

How These Brands Could Improve Conversion

Instead of removing humour, the strategy should evolve:

- Humour + exclusive app-only offers
- Memes that highlight discounts
- Funny content with direct order links
- Storytelling around real user benefits
- Relatable posts that promote new features

For example:

A meme about “salary credited vs salary gone after ordering food” could directly link to a budget-friendly collection or offer.

Conclusion

Zomato and Swiggy’s humour marketing is a masterclass in brand building. They have successfully created online personalities that audiences genuinely enjoy engaging with. However, humour alone does not sustain business growth.

In performance-driven categories like food delivery, consumers ultimately respond more strongly to price, convenience, and value than to entertainment.

This case highlights a key marketing lesson:

