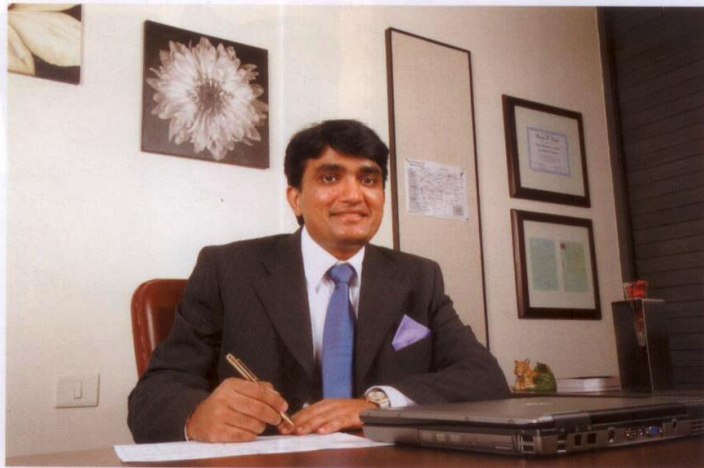


The right mix of packaging, engagement & merchandising

Parag Desai, Executive Director, Wagh Bakri Tea Group, shares with Point Of Purchase, his thoughts on how the brand leverages retail to reiterate brand positioning and more...Read on...



Parag Desai, Executive Director, Wagh Bakri Tea Group

To begin with, let's talk about your brand being featured in Philip Kotler's book as a marketing case study. Can you tell us more about that?

We are happy that our brand is being recognised as a case study for the Marketing and Management students. The case study describes how a comprehensive portfolio of brands, product variants and flavours provides significant competitive advantages to Wagh Bakri Tea Group. The case study also describes our brand portfolio and available product for every class of the society. Dr. Kotler has been a Guru on marketing globally for many decades as he has always carefully studied case studies like Wagh Bakri before writing in his book.

So how much of your marketing initiatives are focused on shoppers at retail? Do you have a specific approach to visibility at retail? Can you elaborate?

Most of our marketing campaigns at retail are focused on shoppers. We focus on retailers' communications with a view of helping purchase decisions. We

also include retailers' branding while designing campaign. This includes POPs, POS, posters, shop boards etc. We also make sure of product placements and visibility at retail

You also recently tied up with a Bollywood movie. How has this been extended to retail communications?

We have recently tied up with Balaji for co-promoting their movie- 'Once Upon a Time in Mumbai Doobara'. The movie is one of the most awaited Bollywood movies of the year. Also, the movie plot emphasis on our brand message- 'Hamesha Riste Banaye'. We made our campaign focusing on OOH, Print and TVCs. The focus is to connect Bollywood fans and our consumers. We have designed campaign on the global consumers who are hooked to Bollywood.

Is there a different strategy you plan for both GT and MT? Can you explain?

Yes. We have different strategies for GT and MT. GT is our traditional channel and we focus on the point communication whereas in MT we

try to involve more direct interaction with consumers, though there are many campaigns we design for both GT and MT, like wet sampling. The communication scale per retailer in GT is smaller compared to MT, but overall, the campaign size is huge when compared to MT.

Any observations with regard to MT and GT in terms of the challenges and in terms of the shoppers you need to address in both the spaces?

Shoppers in GT are more focused. In most cases they have pre decided what they want, so the scope for influencing their decision is limited. But in MT, most consumers are open to spending time on your product. It gives more scope to communicate with them. Hence, we keep special trained promoters to explain our range and quality.

Given that you are operating in a cluttered market, how crucial are factors such as packaging, merchandising and shopper activations? Could you explain your own approach towards each of these?

For any FMCG player, packaging, merchandising and shopper activations play significant role in retail communications. It not only helps for new brands but also helps to establish brand recall. We have separate teams for packaging as well as merchandising and shopper activations. These teams closely work with best agencies and external consultant, constantly improving and adapting new strategies.

Packaging specifically plays an important role in your category. What has been your focus on this?

We have a separate team of professionals with expertise in packaging and we also take the help of global packaging consultancy firms besides Market research and feedback from consumers to constantly improve our packaging. We consider both the creative as well

as scientific aspects of packaging. We also work with international packaging agencies.

Who do you tie up with for your merchandising designs and fabrications? Any challenges you face in this area?

We have a large professional supplier base which is well equipped with merchandising designs and fabrications. This also includes challenging activities we do during festivals, such as the Ganesh Utsav center activity in Mumbai for 10 days.

Do you have your own in-house merchandising standards?

Of course we have our own merchandising standards and they focus on -- Quality of production, periodicity, quality of man-power, timely completion of activity.

You have been mainly concentrating on Gujarat and Maharashtra; any observations you can share on the

shopper behaviour and trends at both MT and MT outlets in these markets for your category?

In Gujarat we are the dominant player, where in we use MT to promote our premium range and try to involve the young. On the other hand in Maharashtra, we use MT to showcase our flagship products/ brands and try to get customers of competitive brands.

What kind of activations and engagements do you do in these markets?

In Maharashtra we try to be part of Marathi culture. Hence we participate in many cultural programmes such as Ganesh Utsav, Dahi Handi, local theatres and local festivities.

Going forward are you looking at other markets? What plans on the retail front towards this?

We are now expanding our network in Uttar Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh and Delhi NCR ■

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