



# Wagh Bakri Tea's secret to long-lasting success

*India is a gigantic tea-drinking nation so much so that it has become the largest consumer of tea in the world, consuming nearly 30 per cent of the global output. The industry has grown to own many global tea brands, one of them being the Wagh Bakri tea which has a legacy that dates back to 1892. The brand recently made news when it was used by marketing expert Philip Kotler in his latest issue of "Marketing Management" as a case study of a successful brand. Rashi Bisaria of Pitch spoke to Parag Desai, Executive Director, Sales, Marketing and International Trade, Wagh Bakri Tea Group about the origins of the brand and how it continues to weave its magic over loyal customers.*

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## **This brand has a legacy which goes back to Mahatma Gandhi. How has the brand evolved over the years?**

Our founder Shri Narandas Desai was a very good friend of Gandhiji. In 1892, Shri Narandas went to South Africa and on 500 acres of tea estate he learnt the intricacies of cultivating and producing fine tea. Eventually, racial discrimination marked his return to India with nothing but a certificate from Mahatma Gandhi for being the most honest and experienced tea estate owner in South Africa.

He started with one retail outlet of tea in Ahmedabad, and grew to seven outlets. He chose the name "WaghBakri"- to symbolise how tea can be a medium to connect all classes and masses of society. (Wagh/ Tiger) and (Bakri/ Goat).

To meet the growing demand for quality tea we started the packaged tea business with the name Gujarat Tea Processors and Packers Ltd. in 1980. Today we have a turnover of more than Rs. 750 crores and we are the 3rd largest packaged tea company in India. We have a presence in Gujarat, Rajasthan, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Delhi NCR, Goa, Chhattisgarh and Andhra Pradesh. We are also a recognized name globally and export to more than 30 countries.

Apart from our brands- Good Morning, Wagh Bakri, Mili and Navchetan, we have specialty tea like Darjeeling, Organic and Green Tea. We have flavoured tea bags of Lemon, Masala, Ginger, Elaichi, Early Grey etc. We also have Instant Tea and Iced Tea in various flavours.

We have launched our "Wagh Bakri Tea Lounge" in Mumbai & Delhi where we are serving around 40 varieties of tea with authentic Indian snacks in a five-star ambience. This is an attempt from our end to upgrade the image of tea and to educate consumers about different types of tea servings.

## **What are those features about the brand that have remained the same over the years?**

From the inception, our philosophy is to 'Build a relationship' over a cup of tea. This has not changed. Our brand is synonymous with Quality Tea. This factor is our key to success. Our loyal customers know

our consistency and -quality. We have brands to cater to every segment of the society, from premium to masses through the different categories- Good Morning, Wagh Bakri, Mili and Navchetan.

## **What do you think is the reason behind Philip Kotler having cited this brand as a case study in his latest tome?**

Dr. Kotler is a close observer of brands and has been acknowledged as the 'marketing Guru' around the world. Dr. Abraham Koshy, co-author of the book has also been

focus is to give quality tea to consumers. We have a wide range of products from brands like Good Morning, Wagh Bakri, Mili and Navchetan to specialty tea like organic Darjeeling green tea as well as Instant premix tea and Ice Tea. It helps both ways, in brand development and market development.

## **What have been the latest marketing initiatives Wagh Bakri has undertaken to get noticed in the market?**

We do frequent campaigns for each of

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closely observing our brand. They considered using us as a case study to help students and professionals understand how the "Wagh Bakri" brand with its quality parameters and wide range of products is capturing the market. The case study reflects how our efficient distribution network and commitment to give quality products gives us a competitive edge. Also, catering to every strata of society helps us reach a wider consumer base. The case study also reflects our philosophy of 'Building relationships'.

## **How is Wagh Bakri remaining relevant in these competitive times?**

We are the largest quality tea buyers in India. We focus on our quality and consistency in taste. Our R&D department has a scientific laboratory as well as human assets for tea testing and tasting. Personally every Director of the Company tastes hundreds of cups of tea daily. Our entire

our brands. These could be Print or TV advertisements, radio campaigns, online campaigns, OOH and activations etc. In our latest campaign, we had an OOH campaign for our Mili brand in Mumbai. The idea was to connect with our vast consumer base.

We had identified more than hundred BEST bus locations in Mumbai and did bus shelter campaigns for Mili Tea.

Recently, we had a tie-up with Balaji Motion Pictures for co-promoting their movie 'Once Upon A Time In Mumbai Dohara'. This enabled us in connecting with the youth. We had an international promotion campaign for the same, including advertisements, TVCs, OOH and online campaigns.

We also do region-wise activities. In Maharashtra we recently had an activation campaign around the Ganesh festival. Similarly, in Gujarat we will have activities around the Navratri festival. ■

*-rashi.bisaria@exchange4media.com*