

SECRETS
TO
SUCCESSES

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY - BUILDING LEGACY

PRIYA ADHYARU-MAJITHIA

Ideator – Jatin Trivedi
Y J Trivedi & Co.

Jatin Trivedi, a leading Intellectual Property Rights lawyer in Asia and senior partner at Y J Trivedi and Co., celebrates power of entrepreneurial excellence on the occasion of the completion of golden jubilee of his law firm. The book, conceptualised, by Trivedi catalogues how effective legal solutions align with long-term business objectives and how IPR builds legacies. This book is the culmination of Trivedi's law firm's efforts in raising awareness on IPR.



Author – Priya Adhyaru-Majithia

Priya Adhyaru-Majithia, author, influencer and art activist, has contributed to various newspapers including The Times of India, Ahmedabad Mirror and DNA in last two decades. In the book **Secret to Success – IPR building Legacies**, she celebrates the torchbearers in the business pantheon of Gujarat. The book is a catalogue of ideas that produced concrete success. And it testifies to the fact that protecting intellectual property is a catalyst for rapid growth across all enterprises.



Abellon



JADE BLUE™



Vini



Claris



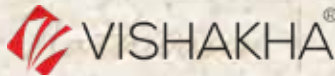
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SECRET
TO
SUCCESS

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY - BUILDING LEGACY

PRIYA ADHYARU-MAJITHIA

S E C R E T T O S U C C E S S

25 success stories of icons of Gujarat discussing their brand strategy

written by **PRIYA ADHYARU–MAJITHIA**

Published by **ZEN OPUS**, Ahmedabad

ISBN : 978-93-90521-97-5

SKU : ZO-E-H-J-31-147

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First Published : July 2021

Price : ₹1800/-

Published and Printed by



ZEN OPUS

Hinglaj Mata Compound, Behind Manmohan Complex,
Navrangpura Police Station Lane, Navrangpura, Ahmedabad–380009

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PREFACE

CELEBRATING THE TORCHBEARERS

People inspire people. And some inspire extraordinarily, becoming iconic figures. Jatin Trivedi, the intellectual property rights (IPR) champion; author and art activist Priya Adhyaru-Majithia; and The Indus Entrepreneurs (TiE), an entrepreneurial community's Ahmedabad chapter; have attempted to celebrate the torchbearers in the business pantheon of Gujarat.

Giving is living. The book's aim is to give back to society. The *raison d'être* is to raise awareness about intellectual property rights (IPR). This book — ***Secret to Success*** — collects stories of strength. The book illuminates a truth: patenting or filing for copyright and the registration of trademark or design help businesses grow. Trivedi's law firm, Y J Trivedi & Co, has remained committed to offering ethical services in IP litigation, IP management, IP audit, and IP valuation. And this book is the culmination of all the firm's efforts in raising awareness about IPR.

The book acclaims the power of innovative ideas. Gujarat is a land of enterprises. Ideas are the backbone of any successful enterprise. The book is a catalogue of ideas that produced concrete success. And the book testifies to the fact that protecting intellectual property is a catalyst for rapid growth across all enterprises. These accounts will inspire a generation of aspiring entrepreneurs to dream bigger. The book does not focus on the numbers — market caps or top lines or bottom lines. The focus is on learnings and the journey.

Moreover, a romantic view is taken of first-generation entrepreneurs. Often, people tend to ignore the struggles of the second generation. The book focuses on the second generation and on the challenges they face in taking the business to the next level. These heroes are not really unsung, but they certainly deserve more attention. The book attempts to bring to the fore people from diverse backgrounds.

Rewind to 2019. Trivedi was planning a continuum of events including awareness seminars, discourses, and IP congregations for celebrating the firm's 50th year. The idea of giving something back to society, something tangible yet aesthetic, kept cropping up. Trivedi's desire to create IP awareness inspired Priya to encapsulate the concept of IP power in the book that you are holding now.

So, ***'Secret to Success – Intellectual Property - Building Legacy'*** was born.

– Narendra Raval – Guru



Indian-origin Raval, who served as a priest at a Swaminarayan temple, relocated to Kenya as a teen to serve at another temple. However, the monk evolved into a steel tycoon. Today, Raval — placed in the Forbes list of Africa's richest — is at the helm of \$500-million Devki Group that manufactures cement, steel and aluminium. He also runs an aviation business.

CHAMPIONING IP: INSTINCT TO PROTECT

He was born with the instinct to protect the powerless.

Jatin Trivedi, quadragenarian, is a third-generation intellectual property attorney and senior member at Y J Trivedi & Co., — a boutique intellectual property law firm. His firm was founded in 1970 and is globally renowned for its unmatched contributions to the IP arena. The firm has received several favourable landmark rulings from the Supreme Court of India. The rulings have been cited at lower courts in over a thousand legal matters. As part of the firm's golden jubilee celebrations in 2020, the firm initiated umbrella campaign hosting a series of projects and events advocating the cause of Intellectual Property Rights (IPR).

Committed to IP for Three Generations

The story of Y J Trivedi & Co. is three-generations old. Jatin Trivedi's great-grandfather, Shri Tuljashankar Trivedi, was a police officer. While the instinct to protect the meek inspired the senior-most Trivedi to wear the police uniform, his son Joitashankar Trivedi chose law with the same mission to protect. The industrial revolution in the post-Independent India had promised new beginnings. The city was transformed into a hub for textiles. However, due to the lack of exposure and awareness, several companies were facing the problem of counterfeits. J T Trivedi's protective instincts led him to help these enterprises. He opened a law firm that championed the cause of intellectual property rights — which was a road less travelled. "My grandfather believed in doing something unique yet significant that would benefit people around him. His legacy was later continued by my two uncles, while my father Y J Trivedi separated and opened his own firm, Y J Trivedi & Co in 1970, after earning a degree in law," said Jatin Trivedi.

Be it destiny or desire or both, when the youngest Trivedi of current generation had to make a career decision, he decided to follow his father's footsteps. "When I used to attend office at the age of 16, I was interested in pursuing criminal law. However, when I studied that branch I understood that by practising criminal law you sometimes end up defending anti-social elements. Later I took interest in civil law but found its pursuit dissatisfying. Within a short span of two years, I understood my true calling. Pursuing a career in IP law, I felt, is satisfying and rewarding, because you can help the lot which is worthy and in turn you earn many blessings. You interact with a positive, promising and enterprising minds. The most important thing I have learned as a professional from both iconic IP lawyers — my grandfather and father — is that never compromise on your ethics and fight to lay down principles," said Jatin, who sphere heads the entire organisation today.



The learnings from father and grandfather has groomed Jatin into a visionary leader. Under his leadership, the organisation has taken a quantum leap. Due to his notable contribution in bringing awareness towards IPR, he is elected on responsible positions at various prestigious forums including World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI), Confederation of Indian Industry (CII), The Gujarat Chamber of Commerce and Industry (GCCl), Gujarat Electronics and Software Industries Association (GESIA), The Indus Entrepreneurs (TiE) and The Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry of India (ASSOCHAM). The youngest Trivedi's networking potential has elevated the firm's stature into an international boutique law firm today.

The Firm's IP: Their Ethics, Principles

"We proactively fight to lay down principles," he said. The idea is to save the scapegoat and empower the worthy. Trivedi's firm strives to establish a connect with society and to contribute to the strengthening of the ethical core of enterprises.

"When YJT fought to bring justice to Muktjivan Colour Lab – one of the leading photo studios in Ahmedabad – in the 1990s, the ultimate goal was to curb the menace of counterfeiting. There have been cases where clients were unable to afford the cost of litigation but the firm supported and stood by them in principle and practice. When the Muktjivan case judgment was delivered in 2001, the SC ordered an injunction that specified a number of clauses that deterred what can be termed as the illegitimate practice of invading the legal right of others. That judgment has been referred to in more than 1,500 cases since then. And that is YJT's contribution to the cause of promoting awareness about Intellectual Property Rights (IPR)."

Trivedi, presently serving as Co-Chairman of The National Council of IPR, ASSOCHAM, went on to say, "When YJT obtained a judgment in 2001 in the Cadila v/s Cadila case, the SC again laid down guiding principles based on the matter. Till today, this case is being referred to in various courts."

The firm's milestones show that brilliantly angled applications of sections and sub-sections of the Intellectual Property Rights Law is its forte. And this expertise is the result of their three-generation-old professional experience. The fiery will to fight for justice is the group's identity. The firm offers a wide gamut of specialized legal services that include patenting, registration of trademark, protecting design or copyright, IP audit, management, agreement, litigation and valuation. Today the firm's managing partner Y J Trivedi along with senior partners Jatin Trivedi and Gopi Trivedi have been recognised as IP Experts in Asia's leading IP Lawyers.

Notwithstanding turbulences and threats, the firm has remained steadfast in its principles. "The case ceases to be a client's case when it is in our hands. We are committed to getting justice. The firm's principle and purpose are giving back to society. The tireless march for bringing in an IPR revolution continues. As the firm is celebrating 50 years of unmatched professionalism, we envisioned this project to document the power of innovative ideas. The making of this book — **Secret to Success** — boosts our effort in our mission to raise awareness on Intellectual Property Rights(IPR). We are thankful to The Indus Entrepreneurs (TiE) for joining us in support for the cause," concluded Jatin, known for his pleasant demeanour that has earned him august popularity among the country's top corporates.

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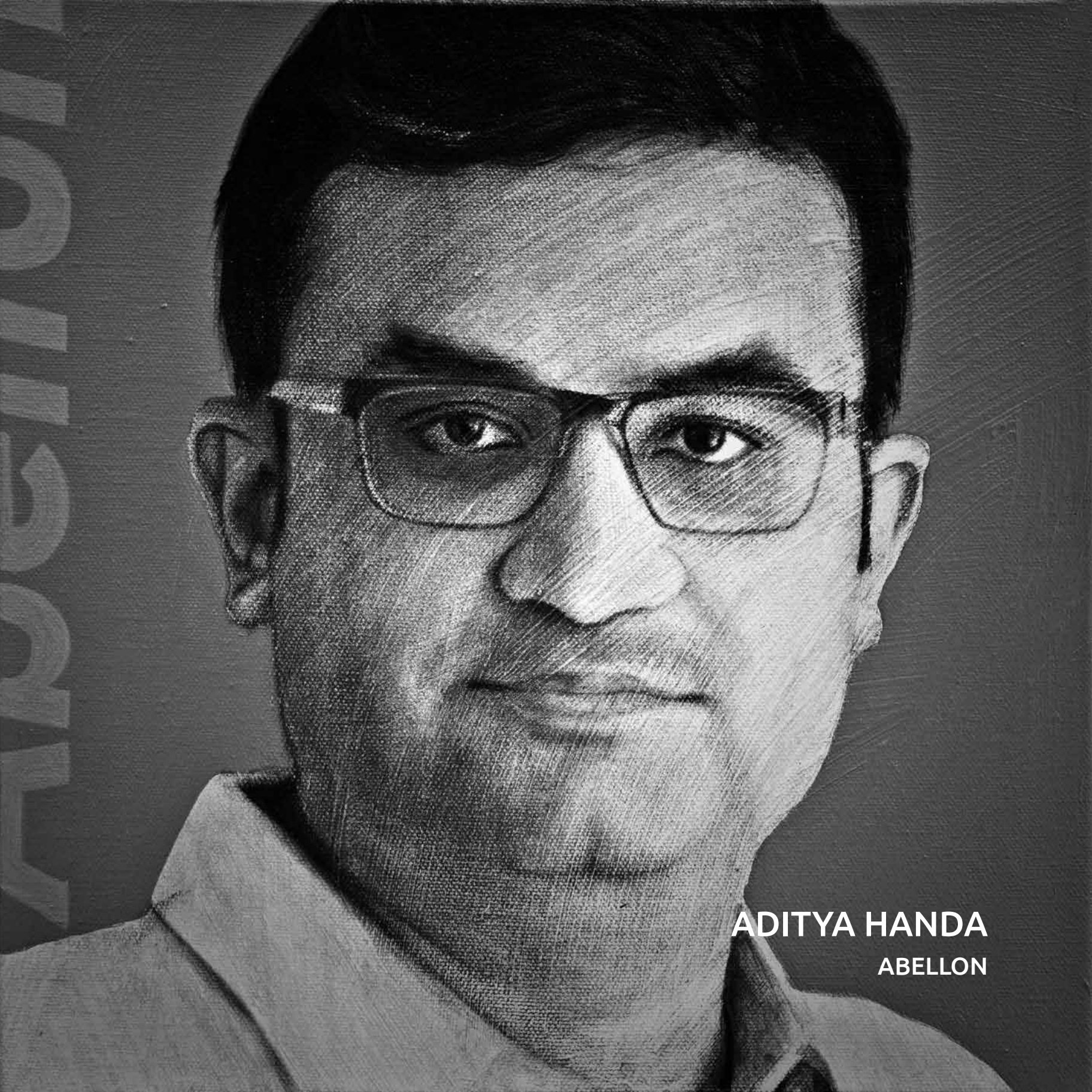
INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY - BUILDING LEGACY

PRIYA ADHYARU-MAJITHIA

The logo for Abellon, featuring the word "Abellon" in a green, italicized, sans-serif font, centered within a white rectangular box.

ABELLON

Abellon aims to productively harness the country's abundant urban and agricultural waste resources to produce renewable energy. The company has commendable futuristic goals of reducing environmental degradation, improving human health and well-being, and promoting energy self-reliance for the nation.



ADITYA HANDA

ABELLON

hah | Kunal Patel | Mauli Teli | Maulik Mehta | Maulik M
Desai | Pathik Patwari | Priya Gandhi | Rohan Shah | Shanbhar
Patel | Aditya Handa | Akshat Doshi | Ankit Chona | Arjun
s | Chandu Virani | Chitrak Shah | Darshan Patel | Dishit
Engineer | Kalpit Gandhi | Kamlesh Patel | Kanha Bakeri | Kaushal
Shah | Kunal Patel | Mauli Teli | Maulik Mehta | Maulik
Desai | Pathik Patwari | Priya Gandhi | Rohan Shah | S
| Vashist Patel | Aditya Handa | Akshat Doshi | Ankit Chona
Arpit Vyas | Chandu Virani | Darshan Patel
| Kairav Engineer | Kamlesh Patel | Kanha
Sparakar | Kunal Shah | Mauli Teli | Maulik
Mokariya | Parag Desai | Pathik Patwari | Priya Gandhi | Rohan
Shah Chauhan | Vashist Patel | Aditya Handa | Akshat Doshi
Arjun Handa | Arpit Vyas | Chandu Virani | Chitrak Shah |
Dishit Nathwani | Kairav Engineer | Kalpit Gandhi | Kamlesh Patel
Kaushal Sparakar | Kunal Shah | Kunal Patel | Mauli Teli |
Maulik Mokariya | Parag Desai | Pathik Patwari | Priya
Shah | Shanbhar Chauhan | Vashist Patel | Aditya Handa
Ankit Chona | Arjun Handa | Arpit Vyas | Chandu Virani

PLANET PROFITS FROM HIS BIZ

He is the scion of the times. For him, the bottom line is not profit alone – it is the planet!

Indeed, Aditya Handa is on a mission to help heal the earth. But when the young and restless Handa completed his graduation, he too, like every dutiful child, joined his family business, Claris. He was then completely unaware that he was destined for something bigger.

“I started my career in the pharma business and worked in Claris from 2005 to 2008. These were the formative years which taught me the centrality of IP to business,” Handa said. “I learnt how IP elevates the value of a business. The pharma industry is highly IP-oriented.”

IP AND BUSINESS

Handa said that key insights he gleaned during his early years were that building IP is crucial and requires time and investment. “But once it is done, it has the capacity to create phenomenal value, both financial and social,” he said. “At Claris, we developed new drugs which benefitted many. This also brought us huge financial success. In that process we – as a pharma manufacturer – started waking up to the growing trend of brand consciousness. We developed our own research and development unit.”

Handa said that in that phase, he realized that research is not rocket science but a basic tool to understand how to ramp up a business. “Research, if translated into managerial processes, can yield new ways to streamline internal processes and document procedures,” he said. “It can also help in developing new products and in methodically building a unique IP to establish an upscale market presence.”

I learnt how IP elevates the value of a business. The pharma industry is highly IP-oriented. Building IP is crucial and requires time and investment.



Handa's initial years at Claris sculpted him into an efficient businessperson. And his interest in building a unique IP led him to explore newer frontiers. After working in Claris for three years, Handa left for the US for pursuing an MBA in 2009 and then Abellon happened.

"In 2010, I decided to focus on the renewable energy sector. A decade ago, there were few business houses in India which focused on the energy business," he said. "Therefore, there was tremendous scope to establish a brand-new identity – both implicitly and explicitly. The explicit means was to register patents in the field of bio-energy. India was still treating waste as worthless."

MISSION : VALUE FROM WASTE

Handa went on to say: "The mindset of using waste - city, livestock, and industrial waste - as a resourceful element to generate energy had yet not developed. I saw this as a business opportunity."

So he started a business to generate value or energy from waste, a business that could extract by-products like fertilizers from waste.

There are innumerable methods to generate value from waste. However, Handa at Abellon scientifically standardized methods with exact measures after many cycles of experiments and R&D.

He explained that because few major corporates operated in the renewable energy sector in the country, Abellon became the leader and frontrunner. "Today, Abellon is known globally for its intellectual properties which have primarily come from its technological development and unique R&D skills," he said. "Abellon has applied for 18 patents which is

the maximum number of patents any company in the energy sector has filed in the country. And the annual turnover has reached INR 250 crore in 2019."

Handa went on to say: "Our IP – implicit and explicit - is our strength which has established and expanded our market presence. Because we have technological edge over our counterparts, we generate good revenues."

As Handa spoke, his enthusiasm and intonations genuinely conveyed pride; the kind of pride that comes naturally when one isn't obsessed solely with business and minting money. Handa radiated a sense of fulfillment that derives from being engaged in the crusade of bettering society and reaping just rewards.

THE GOOD OPTIMIST

Abellon has adopted an integrated approach to business and has divided the areas of expertise into three zones. Goodwatts converts waste into energy, generates solar energy, and develops solar parks. Goodsteps provides biomass heat solutions, installs rooftop solar solutions, and uses solar energy for agriculture. Goodroots focuses on dairy farming, fodder management, and agro-forestry.

"The potential for growth in this sector is tremendously huge," Handa said. "New waste is generated every day. However, we are still just working on the ways to ensure that the mountains of garbage we have created don't keep growing bigger. We will have to expand our waste processing capacity dramatically to be able to clear mountains like Pirana."

Handa is optimistic. "Our country is changing day by day. There is growing awareness on air pollution





and waste segregation,” he said. “Discussions on issues such as hygiene and civic responsibility have become more frequent and serious. Thanks to national campaigns like Swachh Bharat.”

Handa’s mission is to infuse urgency and innovation in initiatives to achieve environmental goals. His business vision is to make India clean and energy-independent. And Abellon is an instrument to achieve this vision.

“My objective is to create economic growth and the modus operandi will be environmentally sustainable

and will promote energy-independence and benefit local communities,” he said. “We are working to find innovative solutions to achieve these goals by interlinking knowledge and technological expertise from diverse disciplines, while aligning efforts with the local communities and stakeholders.”

THE ROAD AHEAD

Surveying the road ahead he said: “We as a country need tighter action plans and effective policies to bring positive changes. In India, waste segregation is

a tedious process that eats up a large amount of time and energy because we get mixed waste.”

Reports on municipal solid waste characterization shows that India generates large components of food, plastic, paper, and other materials in mixed waste and hence processing becomes difficult. Some farmers continue to burn waste which adds more toxins and pollutants to the air.

Sharing some vital statistics from the annual report of the Union ministry of environment, Handa said: “India is the leading generator of waste but it has severely limited capacity to recycle or treat waste.” He said the ministry has projected that India will generate 145 million tonnes of waste per year by 2030. “And the projected number gives a hint about the scalability of this business,” he said.

Handa said for him, growing his business is moving India upward on the global environmental performance index. “For me business growth is bringing financial benefits to the hand that picks waste and helps Abellon recycle and treat it,” he said. “And for achieving this, Abellon is working closely on integrated projects for waste-to-energy generation under the aegis of the Swachh Bharat Mission. Abellon is also working hard to meet the ambitious target of generating 100GW solar capacity by 2022 by developing solar parks.”

One of the smartest solutions to the energy problem is replacing fossil fuels with biomass fuels. “Using a densified form of biomass made from wood or agricultural residue as an alternative to diesel, LPG, and natural gas for home heating and cooking is a smart solution and hence Abellon has come up with a range of biomass pellet-based eco-appliances for commercial cooking,” Handa said. “Biogas is the most simple and low-cost solution to promote a zero-waste economy. Therefore, Abellon is setting up compressed biogas plants at key locations across the state to contribute to the country’s biomass mission. The plants will process various sets of waste including animal waste, food waste, garden waste, and agricultural residues.”

Handa said the national goal to set 5,000 biogas plants across the country has given the opportunity to Abellon to participate in this segment. Abellon is also setting up Waste-to-Energy (WtE) projects at five locations across the state under the public-private partnership model. Abellon is boosting its biogas business. The demand is colossal and the potential is boundless.

“Currently, the total biogas production in India is 2.07 billion m³ annually; the potential range is 29-48 billion m³ per year,” Handa said, indicating that he is bracing with all his might to contribute to the country’s mammoth endeavours. ■



VISHAKHA

Vishakha Group is known for its integrity, quality, and innovation. At Vishakha, people push their boundaries to create unique and futuristic solutions that make lives better. The group's leading businesses are flexible packaging, making solar renewable products, material handling solutions, drip irrigation systems, pipes, plastic agricultural films, and liners.



AKSHAT DOSHI
VISHAKHA

Shah | Kunal Patel | Mauli Teli | Maulik Mehta | Maulik M
Desai | Pathik Patwari | Priya Gandhi | Rohan Shah | Shanbhar
Patel | Aditya Handa | Akshat Doshi | Ankit Chona | Arjun
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Shah | Shanbhar Chauhan | Vashist Patel | Aditya Handa
Ankit Chona | Arjun Handa | Arpit Vyas | Chandu Virani

THE HOPE MISSION

He always looked forward to his next goal,” said Akshat Doshi, 30, a second-generation tycoon and the youngest team leader of Vishakha Group. He was talking about Jigish Doshi, 60, his father and the founder of their business empire that today boasts of an annual revenue of Rs 1,200 crore. They, like many business families, started small. But their giant strides have put them in the ranks of big winners.

“My grandfather (Nagindas Doshi) owned a small shop that sold plastic household items in Pankornaka when my father was pursuing his bachelor’s degree in chemical engineering in Nadiad,” Akshat said. “The family couldn’t afford a hostel room for him in Nadiad. So he would commute using a bicycle and train. And he studied under streetlights.”

After completing his degree course, Jigishbhai – the youngest of three brothers – was ready for the next challenge. “The family earned small but never hesitated to help others. To help an acquaintance, we had lent some money,” Akshat said. “However, their small plastic workshop remained a loss-making venture and hence they couldn’t return the money but passed on their business to us. My father decided to start making jabhala-thelis in that workshop in Rakhial in the 1980s. He worked hard. He made small carry bags but dreamed big.”

Akshat, who has a master’s in management, joined the business a decade ago. He looked around his 15 by 10 feet cabin and said, “The workshop where they made those thelis was even smaller than this cabin.” His tastefully appointed cabin is on the second floor of the company’s secondary corporate house at their 90,000-plus sq m Vadsar manufacturing plant. The company currently has seven such manufacturing

With the vision to keep growing, Vishakha diverted the generic business of trading in plastic granules and branded its plastic manufacturing vertical in 2001. Today it has become an iconic business entity.



plants in Gujarat, HP, Mundra, West Bengal, and South East Asia and a central corporate house in Prahladnagar, Ahmedabad.

OPPORTUNITY KNOCKS

In 1991, the Doshis got an opportunity to trade in plastic raw material. Jigishbhai decided to focus on plastic granule trading with a meagre loan of Rs. 50,000 from his father (which he repaid later) and stopped making carry bags. “Those were testing times. The Iraq war disrupted their business. The market trends were volatile and unpredictable,” Akshat said. “He worked harder notwithstanding the fluctuations and challenges. He took the challenges as opportunities and the growth story began. A decade later when trading business increased, he decided to get on with plastic manufacturing. My father came to see this land which was in name of Vishakha Poly Fab. He trusted his gut feeling and invested in this plot. And since then we have retained this name and the business has been exponentially growing.”

Today the name Vishakha, which Jigishbhai instantly and intuitively accepted, has become their identity. “We are one of the market leaders in flexible packaging business and in making solar renewable products,” Akshat said. “We have expanded in manufacturing drip irrigation systems and pipes. Our forte is plastic agricultural and industrial products, and canal liners and films. The group is known across the globe for its quality and innovation.”

FLEXIBILITY IS THEIR IP

Vishakha is famous for its high-strength flexible packaging films and provides customized packaging solutions. “We manufacture up to 9-layered co-

extrusion films for advanced packaging solutions. Our exclusive brand for retail and household segment is Zipfresh. These zip-lock pouches are massively in demand and are found in every kitchen,” Akshat said. “We also make injection moulded products. Vishakha has one of the country’s largest injection-moulding machines with the capacity of 3,800 tonnes. We make big bins, pallets, crates, dustbins, educational products, and customized injections. We excel in creating innovative solutions for material handling and storage. Our Israel-inspired applecart design won us global acclaim in 2006.”

After Vishakha diverted the generic business of trading in plastic granules and branded its plastic manufacturing vertical in 2001, it grew to become an iconic business entity. Apart from scaling up its manufacturing efficiencies, Vishakha also expanded its verticals from 2006. Vishakha Irrigation Pvt Ltd’s ultra-modern plant with the latest machinery and equipment was set up in 2006. Ankit, quadragenarian, Akshat’s cousin who joined Vishakha in 2004, said: “This unit offers drip irrigation system, HDPE & PVC pipes and fixtures, MDPE gas pipes, greenhouse project systems with a wide product range. Another offshoot, Vishakha Renewables Pvt Ltd, makes EVA encapsulant and back sheet films for solar modules at the Mundra plant.”

The vision is to keep growing, said Akshat. “When my father started manufacturing he didn’t have a blueprint for the company’s future. But he had a plan. The broad plan was not to stand still but to keep moving and working hard,” Akshat said. “He never followed any micro-level business plan. And that will be our strategy too. We grab opportunities that come to us and never say no to business. Every





Akshat Doshi

Ankit Doshi

requirement, however different or unique, is an opportunity for us. Our business philosophy is to be as exceptionally flexible as our packaging solutions. And that has become our intellectual property, our asset and our sole identity that have equipped us to set new benchmarks in the packaging industry.”

Giving concrete data on progress, Akshat said that Vishakha produced 1,000 metric tonnes of packaging films annually in 2001. Today, it makes 36,000 metric tonnes a year. And this is just another beginning or a leap for one of the company’s three verticals. Since its inception, the group has made substantial investments in research & development and has keenly focused on customization of products. “Our ultra-modern production technology allows us to manufacture unrivalled quality multi-layered extruded films, including medium and high-barrier films, thermoforming films, laminated films, vacuum pouches, liners, liquid packaging films, and lidding films,” Akshat said.

MOBILITY IS KEY

“We expect to grow by 50% in 2021,” added Akshat. Vishakha – which means the one with many branches – is recording rapid growth in each of its three verticals: flexible packaging, agricultural solutions, and renewable energy. “The renewable energy segment is growing dramatically. We have planned a major expansion in flexible packaging business too. We are

hardcore manufacturers and hence our focus is on optimizing efficient utilization of the floor,” Akshat said. “Further technological upgrades, innovations, and product customization are on the menu. We plan to make the brand more visible in the interiors of India and scale up our exports. Today, we export to 20 countries and we are working hard to expand our footprint.”

He went on to say, “We plan to tap into the trend of rising brand consciousness in the country. For growth, we have focused on two areas. One is establishing water-distribution channels across villages and farms. Second is establishing gas-distribution networks in cities. Farmers are becoming conscious of brands they use in irrigation. we give 25 years performance warranty on our solar products which perhaps none of the existing players is able to. And that is gaining extraordinary attention. Another major target is setting up gas-distribution channels in metros and sub-metros around the country. Things are changing quickly and hence we have short-term targets. We don’t follow or form long-term plans. The short-term target is to penetrate the country’s markets across villages and cities and also to grow the global footprint. We believe that mobility is the key to success and refuse to stand still. We grab each business opportunity and grow with it. The only plan, in a nutshell, is to be at the top and grow ethically and with integrity because that is in our blood.” ■



HOCCO

Back in 1944, the Chona family started sharing its family's culinary magic with the city of Ahmedabad. This small but targeted effort brought them big rewards and thus Havmor was born. Havmor won over millions of fans with its irresistible taste, quality, and unique ice cream flavours. Chonas' iconic Chana Puri also created multitudes of loyal customers. Their well-guarded recipes and passion for food have kept them immensely popular. Tastes have evolved over time and so have their business practices. However, what has remained unchanged is their commitment to serving best food to their patrons. Following their family tradition, Chonas continue sharing their culinary expertise through their chain restaurant 1944 and ice cream brand Huber & Holly.



ANKIT CHONA
HOCCO

1944 -
**A SUGAR STORY
AND
SOME MORE
SPICE**

The Partition of 1947 tore Satish Chona away from his house, job, and an ice cream shop in Karachi. Despite being uprooted, Chona came to India with his sweet dreams intact. He had been a ground engineer in the British Overseas Airways Corporation (BOAC) in Karachi, where he used to run a small ice cream shop since 1944.

“Havmor had only three years to cross the border. My grandfather had to leave behind his ice cream shop in Karachi, but he never let go of his ice creams passion,” said Ankit P Chona, in his late thirties, a third-generation businessman. Ankit had hit the headlines in 2017 when he sealed a Rs 1,020 crore deal for Havmor with Lotte Corporation – a South Korean multinational conglomerate that consists of over 90 business units employing 60,000-plus people.

Before settling down in Ahmedabad in 1951, the senior Chona had tried setting up his Havmor ice cream business first in Dehradun and then in Indore. But his tale could not take off in those two cities. When he was searching for the home base, someone suggested Ahmedabad. “He heard that Ahmedabad had hot weather and warm people who loved ice creams,” recalled Ankit. Chasing his dream, the senior Chona arrived in Ahmedabad. “He stayed at the railway station and made ice creams by the night and sold them during the day,” said Ankit.

Hard work, soaring ambition, and honesty paid off and his business grew. “In 1954, he opened a first Punjabi food restaurant on Relief Road in rented premises. The owner had one condition: serve only vegetarian food,” Ankit said. “This condition – which initially seemed a limiting factor – turned out to be a blessing in disguise. All the Punjabi restaurants in the

The handholding of the brands was a smooth affair because we have always been precise in protecting and documenting our IP – comprising our brands, trademarks, and designs.



city served non-vegetarian items. However, Havmor was the only one which served vegetarian fare. This became the unique selling point. The restaurant became extremely popular. Ice creams, then made in a small basement below the restaurant, were the bestselling items. My grandfather was content with the growth.”

BRACING FOR BRAND BATTLE

Pradeep Chona, who is driven by an intense entrepreneurial zeal, joined his father’s business in the 1970s. He focused on strengthening Brand Havmor. “He registered the brand and its sub-brands. He tirelessly worked to grow the business – both by adding products and increasing their reach,” Ankit said. “He set up the company’s first automatic ice cream making plant in 1990. The restaurant business also kept flourishing along with the ice cream empire which was then the primary focus. The name was becoming bigger day by day. Distant relatives in Hyderabad tried to take benefit of Havmor’s growing popularity. They opened an ice cream shop bearing the same name in Hyderabad. My father was alert and aggressively addressed this issue. He took legal steps and pinned them down. They were forced to change the name. He uncompromisingly defended the brand name and made Havmor stronger. He eliminated all the grey areas which could have weakened the Havmor brand.”

Ankit’s Ahmedabad office throbs with the energy of an art café. Well-appointed with trendy furnishings and interiors, the office is filled with the tempting aroma of freshly baked waffle cones. Exquisite wall pieces line the room. “My father, an art collector, comes to office, a little less now. He has worked so hard in his life that now he can sit back, relax, and enjoy art,” Ankit said.

REAPING OFF IP REWARDS

After completing his graduation in science, Ankit worked in the restaurant business in the US. When he entered the family business, Havmor was a well-established and popular brand which had earned special trust from consumers due to its quality products. “After entering the business in 2006, I spent initial years at the manufacturing unit to understand the processes,” Ankit said. “Later, I started scaling up the business outside Gujarat via the franchise model. A decade later in 2016, Havmor offered over 250 flavours of ice creams. And we had a network of 50-plus franchises. The restaurant business had also grown and we owned 13 restaurants then. The South Korean confectionary giant wished to increase its footprint in India and wanted to invest in one of the most popular home-grown ice cream brands. When they approached us, I explored the proposal with the idea to form a partnership. However, the multinational giant was interested in a total buyout of Brand Havmor along with its popular sub-brands such as Zulu Bar and Mango Dolly. I studied the options carefully and decided to go for it. The handholding of the brands was a smooth affair because we have always been precise in protecting and documenting our IP – comprising our brands, trademarks, and designs. The big deal materialized smoothly because the generations before me had worked hard on establishing, growing, and protecting Brand Havmor. The deal happened due to the goodwill that the brand had earned.”

FUTURE IS FABULOUS

Ankit made millions in one right deal. And now he is busy building another brand – Hocco, an acronym for House of Chona Collaborative. The name was





conceptualized in September 2019. The fast food joint that Chonas opened in 2015 was named '1944' to commemorate the ice cream journey that the group had started that year in Karachi. The group sold off its ice cream vertical. However, the restaurants are still owned by the group. "We are converting all Havmor restaurants into Hocco eateries. And our ice cream brand is now called Huber and Holly," said Ankit. "All these brands fuse into one identity with the number 1944. Reading the phrase – Since 1944 – the consumer recollects the quality experience that the brand offers."

Today, the group has 10 Huber and Holly ice cream outlets in Ahmedabad, Mumbai, Pune and Hyderabad. "These ice creams are freshly churned out and are a niche product. We plan to widen the network to 100 outlets in a couple of years," Ankit said. "The group is spreading awareness about Hocco and Huber and

Holly using social media, hoardings, and billboards. And these brands are rapidly growing."

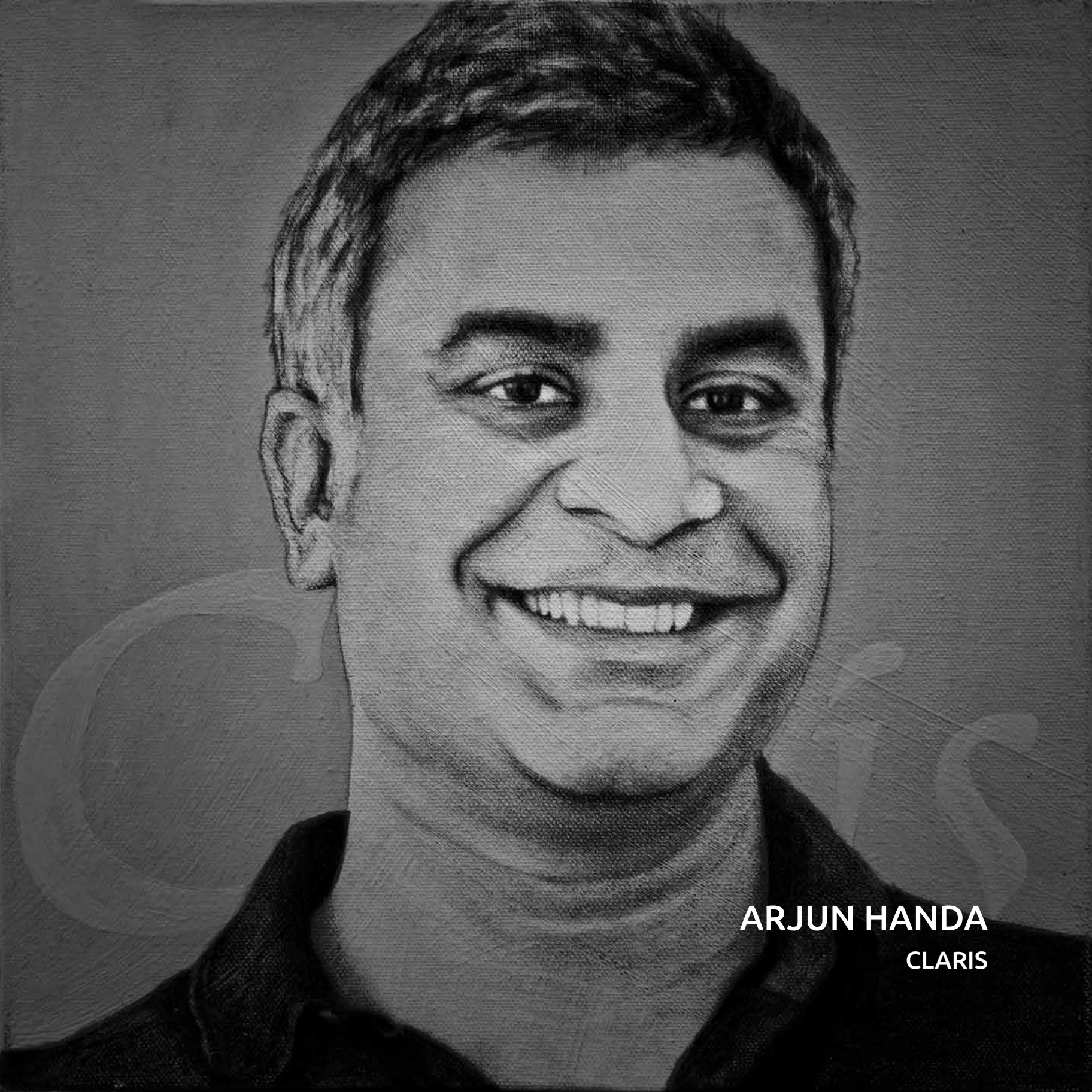
The most novel feature the junior Chona is adding to the family business is nutraceuticals. "Today's consumer is health conscious and is looking for better or healthier lifestyle choices. Responding to market demands, I plan to introduce brand-new nutritious products."

Ankit went on to say: "At the beginning of the year 2020, we launched a new brand, PHAB – protein powders, protein bars, and protein shake. The quality and affordable rates have given tough competition to imported and Indian protein brands." – His aim, it seems, is to tell a new story, which is spicier than 1944's Channa Puri yet sweeter than Huber and Holly's Charcoal lychee. ■



CLARIS

Since its inception in 1999, Claris Lifesciences Limited (Claris) has created a niche in highly-specialized sector. In the span of 17 years, the company created nearly a billion-dollar valuation and established a global business model that helped garner several stringent international regulatory approvals. These include approvals from the US FDA, MHRA (UK), TGA (Australia), MCC (South Africa), ANVISA (Brazil), INVIMA (Colombia), and GCC FDCA. Claris Lifesciences Limited (Claris) was the Holding Company of Claris Injectables Limited, a wholly-owned subsidiary dealing in the Specialty Injectables business that was carved out in November 2014. Claris Injectables was sold to Baxter International Inc in July 2017.



ARJUN HANDA
CLARIS

hah | Kunal Patel | Mauli Teli | Maulik Mehta | Maulik M
Desai | Pathik Patwari | Priya Gandhi | Rohan Shah | Shanbhar
Patel | Aditya Handa | Akshat Doshi | Ankit Chona | Arjun
s | Chandu Virani | Chitrak Shah | Darshan Patel | Dishit
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Maulik Mokariya | Parag Desai | Pathik Patwari | Priya
Shah | Shanbhar Chauhan | Vashist Patel | Aditya Handa
Ankit Chona | Arjun Handa | Arpit Vyas | Chandu Virani

INJECTING THE WILL TO WIN

Like a champion surfer, the elegant and meticulous Arjun Handa has mastered the art of catching wave after wave, riding them all with self-assurance and triumphant determination. Handa is both a courageous entrepreneur and a top-notch tycoon.

Before Handa took over as the MD of Claris group in 2007, he spent three years at its plant to understand the chemical and mechanical intricacies of developing a product. He worked with his technical and management teams to get deep insights into research and development, purchasing material, setting up plants, refining manufacturing, and streamlining distribution channels.

SURVIVING AS A CHALLENGE

“I joined Claris in 2004 when resources and growth was a challenge. I used to work 100 hours a week; often starting at 9am and keeping at it till 2am, six days of the week and would then work half Sundays as well,” Handa said. “I decided to work hard because I had a lot to learn. If Claris had to grow and achieve ambitions for all of us then there was no choice but to continue to be at it. I held a commerce and management degree but I was always interested in technical areas and that part of the mind helped me understand the complex technical challenges of pharma. As a young boy, I was always told that only excellence is the option, failure is ok, but mediocrity is not and that fuelled my perseverance.”

“Finally, I spotted two problems and took on those tasks to solve them,” he said. “First, the US needed cheaper medicines and had a big market, second, India did not have certain medicines. The endeavour was to manufacture the medicines in India, meet qualitative

Only if one has comprehensive knowledge of the process that was patented can one develop another process or method to create a similar medicine without infringing on the inventor’s patent.



parameters, and sell these medicines in the US at cheaper rates while also making them available in India.”

CARVED A NICHE

To fulfill his dream, Handa made long-term investments in products, people, markets, branding, and in building his capacities. And the decision to foray into the US markets needed mettle.

“For about eight years, we devoted resources in thorough research for developing medicines, determining the right molecules, clearing clinical trials, getting the requisite approvals, and developing modern manufacturing methods and technological capacities,” Handa said.

Making sense of the complications relating to patents helped Claris carve its niche, Handa said. “The most serious impediment to progress was the lack of knowledge on the innovators’ patent,” he said. “For us, it was vital to understand pharma patents. Only if one has comprehensive knowledge of the process that was patented can one develop another process or method to create a similar medicine without infringing on the inventor’s patent.”

Handa went on to say: “In a manner of speaking, Claris had developed a third way of making a medicine using the molecule Propofol; and then Claris created Profol –a drug that cleared three criteria of purity, efficacy, and safety.”

Then came the bolder step, Handa said. “We were able to develop and file for registration for propofol in U.S.,” he said. “Similarly, for specific bulk drugs – Hydroxyethyl Starch and Iron Sucrose – we had to

deal with complex clinical trials and the patent law framework of Europe.” He said “Claris sailed through because it was not afraid of patenting laws and did not let them become a limiting factor.”

Understanding patents and developing a way to avoid patent pitfalls elevated Claris to new heights. “After this, Claris entered a different phase where the challenge was growth through management rather than just resources,” he said.

Even growth depended on clarity about patents’ legal framework. “To sustain ourselves in the US pharma market, we had to be ready to come up with alternatives or solutions for drugs that would go off patent every year,” Handa said. “The US was a big market and there was an opportunity to make a significant number of injectable generic products. We dealt with US companies that were trying to discourage competition using patent laws. There were Indian companies that tried to literally copy our methods in creating some medicines and had given brand names that sounded similar to ours and confused customers. We used patent laws for establishing the competitive advantage.”

EMERGING AS A BUSINESS LEADER

The experience of having worked as a ‘teammate rather than a boss in the same way one does while playing football’ is an asset that Handa banks on. His experience at the entry level at Claris’s manufacturing plant from 2004 to 2007 and his clear-eyed approach to goals were major factors in making this former professional soccer player an undisputed business leader.

Armed with an MBA from Northeastern University,



Claris



Boston in the US, this passionate entrepreneur transformed Claris from a small family-owned business venture (1999–2006) to one of the largest global pharmaceutical companies for specialty injectables (2007 to 2017). “The life of a businessman is full of challenges,” he said. “I can easily divide my life into two distinct parts: the initial years that were a matter of survival, and the later years when our focus turned to growth. I could overcome these challenges because I invested in my people.”

KEY AREAS: FINANCE AND PEOPLE

Handa believes that managing people is the central aspect of success. “Claris was recognized as a ‘Great Place to Work’ eight times in a row because we invested in managing our people,” he said. “Business has everything to do with people. People will raise capital for you. People will find the product for you. People will sell it for you.” He said building a big company starts with building a good team. “My team’s quality decides my product’s quality and my company’s quality,” he said.

Under his watch, Claris has received several

regulatory approvals, including from the US FDA, the UK’s MHRA, and Australia’s TGA. It has also received prestigious awards for manufacturing excellence and quality from the Indian Drug Manufacturing Association and from Frost and Sullivan.

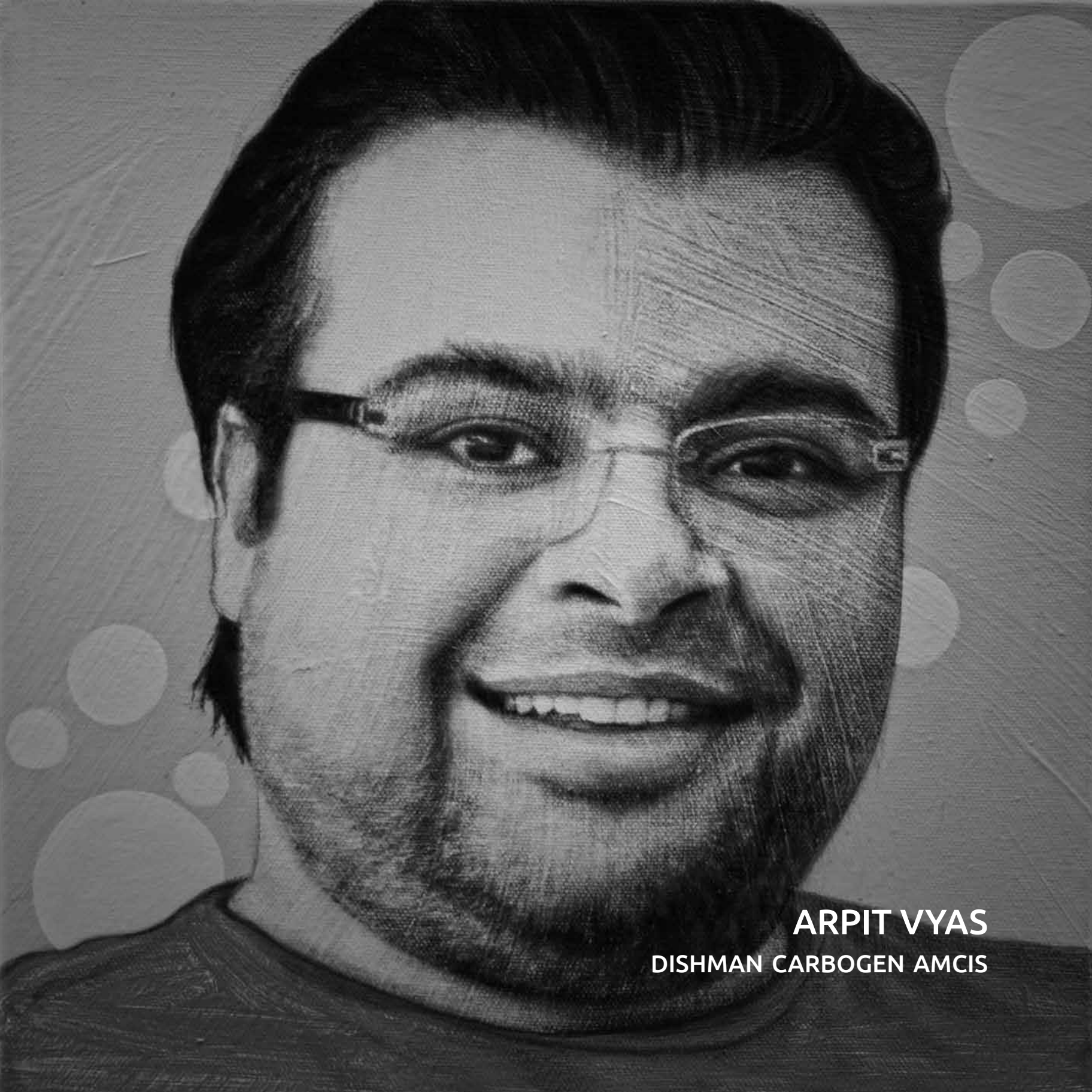
After an INR 4,237 crore deal with the US’s Baxter International Inc for the sale of Claris’s generic injectable business was sealed in 2016, Handa started a venture-capital finance company to mentor entrepreneurs and nurture start-ups. “Entrepreneurs are romantic. They think everything is just going roll out the way they have planned,” he said. “But that is not how life unfolds. I want to train aspiring minds to plan for failures and to be prepared for ups and down. It is necessary to develop a logical approach to business and understand that failures are going to be an inseparable part of the journey.”

Handa is also busy researching new business opportunities. He ended the conversation saying, “I choose to remain an entrepreneur because entrepreneurship excites me.” ■



DISHMAN CARBOGEN AMCIS

Since its inception in 1983, the Dishman Group's focus has been on research and development of various in-house technologies for manufacturing quaternary ammonium compounds (quats) and active pharmaceutical ingredients. The group's first facility was built in 1987 in Naroda. In 1996, the company initiated its expansion at Bavla, its current headquarters. Through several acquisitions, the Dishman Group has expanded its reach across the globe with multiple manufacturing facilities in India, Europe, and China. Its goal is to promote and utilize Indian research caliber and capabilities for global pharmaceutical and biopharmaceutical companies.



ARPIT VYAS
DISHMAN CARBOGEN AMCIS

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Shah | Sham
Ankit Chona | Arjun Handa | Arpit Vyas | Chandu Virani*

RESEARCHING HOPE FOR GLOBE

Dishman's Arpit Vyas is the emblem of victory that has been secured after valiant striving.

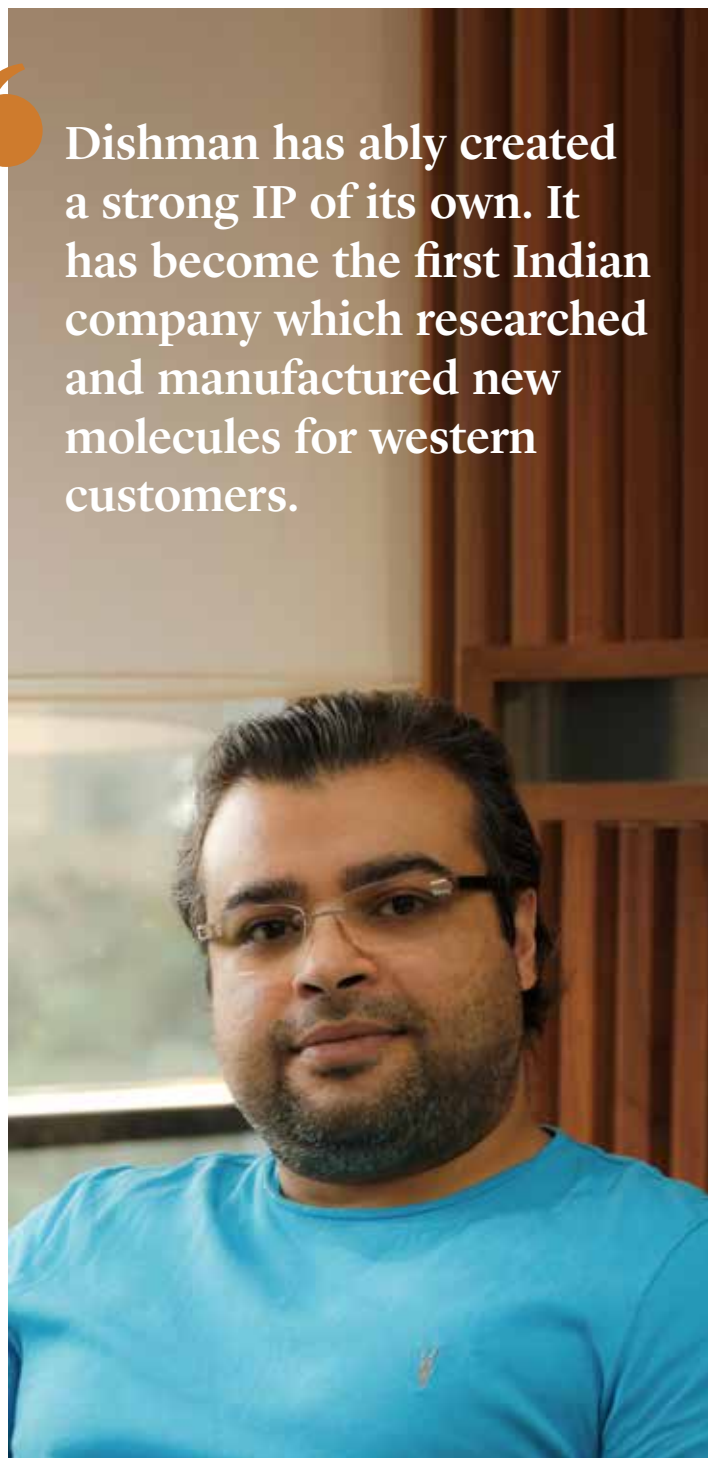
"My father, Janmejy Vyas, sold his house and invested the money to fulfill his dream project: Dishman Pharmaceuticals and Chemicals Ltd (DPCL) in 1983," recalled Arpit and his eyes sparkled in awe and affection.

Arpit continued, "The name Dishman was created by fusing the names of his darling daughters: Mansi, my elder sister, and Devanshi, my cousin who is nicknamed Dishu. And since then, the company has become his most cherished baby. In 1987, he started manufacturing surfactants in a cramped 20 by 20 metre room in Naroda. He worked as the operator and the chemist. All manufacturing operations were handled by a three-member team. The business started growing at an exponential pace. Encouraged by the growth, he planned an expansion in 1991 and acquired land in Bavla. Adhering to the highest international quality norms, he gradually developed the Bavla facility and started manufacturing active pharma ingredients (APIs). His focus was on the global markets. He started going to the CPhI, the biggest global pharma and chemical industry event. He used to put up a stall to showcase Dishman's products and potential."

ESTABLISHING DISHMAN'S IP

The ultimate aim for the senior Vyas was to bag research contracts for developing molecules that multinational pharmaceutical giants need for their final products. By reducing formulation costs, he wanted to offer foreign countries the benefit of arbitrage margins. In 1996, Vyas initiated the expansion of the Bavla facility. In 2001, Dishman globally launched

Dishman has ably created a strong IP of its own. It has become the first Indian company which researched and manufactured new molecules for western customers.



services for contract research proposals and long-term manufacturing and supply. "Getting orders for such work was difficult. Because for developmental projects of that nature, an international pharma company has to open its secret formulation processes. It has to share the entire research sequence of trial and error with the contractor's firm," Arpit said. "And many international firms were hesitant to trust an Indian developer due to limitations such as the lack of high-quality infrastructure and research practices and the lack of tight adherence to protective legal framework. Only if an international giant trusted Dishman for its quality and credibility, would it choose Dishman to carry out trials and create something patentable. Generally, international companies fear sharing their half-baked (non-patented) formulas with Indian companies for further in-depth (Phase 2 or Phase 3) clinical trials. Because if a formula leaks, much can be lost. The final patent for that process or product or molecule could be filed/held by Dishman's customer if Dishman developed the right molecule. Dishman had ably created a strong IP of its own by then. Dishman was known for its emphasis on adhering to international quality. In this phase, Dishman had become the first Indian company which researched and manufactured new molecules for western customers. And these achievements built Dishman's IP. Dishman was growing bigger. When it was listed on the National Stock Exchange and the Bombay Stock Exchange, in 2004, its team strength had reached 1,000 employees and the annual turnover was Rs 200 crore."

TESTING TIMES

The energetic and enterprising Arpit returned to India from the UK in 2009 with a degree in chemical

engineering. "I reached back on 27th July, and 28th was my birthday, and 29th July was the day I joined office," he said. "I was so excited to start work that I couldn't stay away for even one extra day."

The excited junior Vyas was completely unaware of the looming challenges. "The initial impact of the 2008 global recession was unfolding. That could affect Dishman because it is a 100% export-oriented company," he said. "Dishman was holding on to an estimated 100-million-dollar research pipeline which was wiped out in 2010. And no new orders were flowing in. The company had made huge investments in developing world-class molecule research and chemical-handling infrastructure. This was the onset of testing times."

However, every challenge is an opportunity. "Sometimes, there is no support for you – you prevail with your own efforts and perseverance," said the junior Vyas. "A massive earthquake that had crippled Japan in 2010 destroyed a chemical manufacturing unit there. That unit was making a chemical compound called benzethonium chloride. This was one of the surfactants Dishman manufactured at its first plant in Naroda. Our manufacturing capacity was just 3 tonnes a month; and due to the breakdown of Japan's plant, the market demand had shot up to 20 metric tonnes a month. We changed our manufacturing focus from APIs to surfactants. I had to focus on the Naroda unit. We gradually upped our manufacturing capacity from 3 tonnes to 25 metric tonnes a month and we did that without any major investments. This adaptability saved Dishman from falling into financial troubles. We could stay afloat. At the same time, the investments the company had made for expansion in India and





abroad were huge. By 2013, 90% of the company's market holding was pledged. The company had also crossed many milestones and had expanded its manufacturing footprint both in India and abroad. But huge investments, rising interests on the loans, and the consistently falling Indian rupee were multiplying the company's financial burdens."

NO LOOKING BACK

The team is the real asset of any company. And internal bonds make an entity stronger. "Though

financial burdens were mounting, we continued to build on our fundamentals by improving our operational efficiency and capacity utilization," Arpit said. "I was meticulously searching for loopholes. During frank discussions with the core team, including strategist Mark Griffiths, director global, and Harshil Dalal, risk management committee member, we learned that the devaluation of the Indian currency was the most worrying factor. In 2014, we presented to Indian banks our case study and the challenges we have faced. However, they failed to offer us the right banking

solutions. Later, we took our case study to banks in Singapore. One of the private banks there understood the challenges and offered banking solutions that could help a 100% export-oriented operation to do business profitably. This was the turning point. We then started repaying Indian banks. The jolt that Dishman gave to Indian banks became the talk of the town. It caught the attention of policy-makers too. Due to Dishman's persistent efforts, in 2017 the Reserve Bank of India announced a change in the banking policy for exporters. This change has now created a better business environment and Dishman is bouncing back."

Over the past couple of years, Dishman has grown exponentially. One of the reasons is its aggressive rebranding strategy. "Now, Dishman and Carbogen Amcis are one entity. One company and two brands – that's the strategy we put in place a few years ago and it is working well," Arpit said. "Multinational giants are more trusting of our brand because Dishman has not remained a small Indian contract company. It has become Dishman Carbogen Amcis – a global contractual research and development giant. In 2009, the company's turnover was USD 180 million which had dipped to USD 100 in 2014. After India's banking policies changed and Dishman rebranded itself as a global giant, the annual turnover increased to USD 350

million annually. This upward trend is also reflected in the company's rising share value on the National Stock Market."

Today, Dishman Carbogen Amcis has a team of 3,000 employees of whom 350 are Swiss and German chemists with doctorates. In 2002, the company had one product for Phase 3 clinical trials. Today, the company has 15 products for Phase 3 clinical trials. Dishman Carbogen Amcis has two manufacturing plants in Ahmedabad, one each in China, France, UK, the Netherlands, and two manufacturing plants in Switzerland with one high-tech R&D centre.

GOING FORWARD

The company has intensified work on research technology and has boosted profitability by scaling down low-margin products and cashing in on high-value niche offerings.

"We have identified key areas for research and development which include oncology, cardiovascular and ophthalmic care, and drugs for diseases for which there is no cure right now," Arpit said. "Capabilities and capacities for conducting highly confidential clinical trials for multinational companies in these areas is our USP. Dishman is now profiting from its stronger IP as a global contractual research giant." ■



BALAJI

Virani brothers' entrepreneurial ardor is the secret behind their success. Their story is a classic inspirational saga of calamity spurring the pursuit of a sterling destiny. Drought forced their father to sell his ancestral agricultural land and give his sons a meagre sum to build a sustainable life. Bhikhubhai, Chandubhai, and Kanubhai failed in their first venture of making fertilizers. But they kept working harder. From taking up odd jobs at a boarding mess and at a cinema theatre's canteen in Rajkot, the brothers pressed on with their passion to broaden their horizons of accomplishments. Their hard work and vision helped them create a beloved chips-making empire which is known as Balaji.



CHANDU VIRANI

BALAJI

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Ankit Chona | Arjun Handa | Arpit Vyas | Chandu Virani*

THE POWER CHIP: MADE DELICIOUSLY IN INDIA

He is brave, so fortune favoured him by chipping in to help him make history.

“Success without failure is an unseasoned product that won’t satisfy your taste buds,” said Chandu Virani, 63, the founder and managing director of Balaji – the home-grown chip maker from Gujarat which is giving blue chip snack companies a run for their money.

Virani’s history offers a crunchy story in the genre that celebrates spectacular rise.

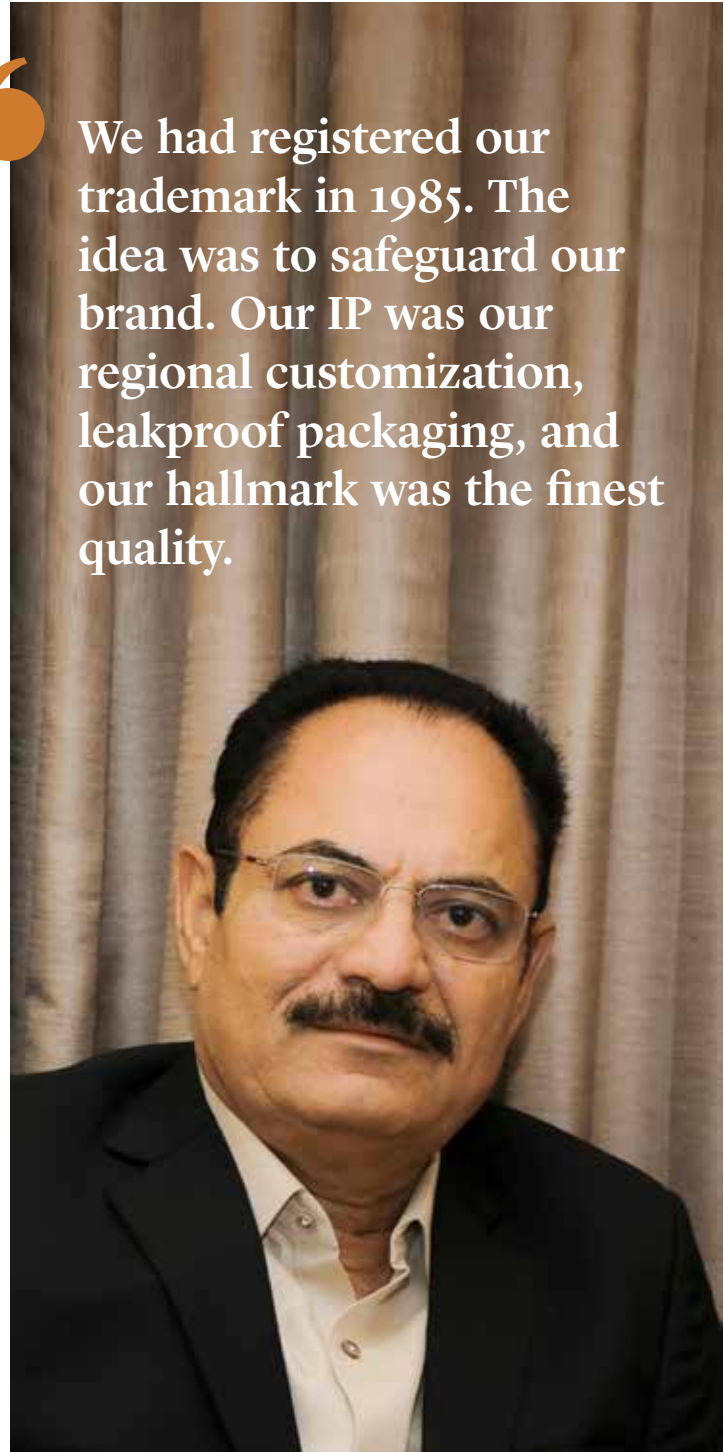
In the 1970s, his family was engaged in modest farming in Dhun Dhoraji village in Jamnagar district’s Kalawad region. The family had to work hard for two square meals. A series of famines disrupted the family’s earnings.

Circumstances forced Virani at 17 to migrate to Rajkot in search of a livelihood. On reaching Rajkot, the Class 10 dropout started helping students find lodgings. That did not fetch him enough money and his situation was dire.

A new cinema, Astron, opened in Rajkot and Virani and his brother were hired to manage its ticket window in 1974. But they went beyond the line of duty and managed a range of operations, including gatekeeping.

In 1976, the theatre owners offered Virani the chance to run the theatre’s canteen. The brothers sold cold drinks, wafers, and popcorn. This experience taught them that the fastest moving item was potato chips. They began getting wafers in bulk and packed them in small packs and sold them, rather than offering pre-packaged packs.

We had registered our trademark in 1985. The idea was to safeguard our brand. Our IP was our regional customization, leakproof packaging, and our hallmark was the finest quality.



Their enterprise returned some profit. The brothers then made sandwiches at home and sold them at the theatre. The earnings improved. The turning point came in 1982 when they got a big frying pan and started making potato chips at home. They named their brand Balaji – after baby Hanuman they worshipped daily at a small deri inside the theatre. Their entrepreneurial drive made them sell their homemade chips outside the theatre as well. The brothers bought a moped to do a series of feris to sell their product.

JOURNEY FROM BEING TO BECOMING

“The demand increased and we deployed an autorickshaw to distribute the wafer packs. As the demand grew, we bought a tempo and tried extending the reach of our product. In 1989, we moved to the industrial GIDC area and started commercial production with earthen stoves,” Virani said. “In 1992, we took a major risk and acquired automatic machines from a Pune-based company. However, the machines failed and we got no help from the manufacturer. This phase was critical to our survival.” Virani went on to say: “But our capacity to weather the storms and our faith in hard work paid off. We struggled for six to eight months and solved the mechanical and technical problems and resumed production.”

Balaji emerged stronger from the challenge and in 2000, the company launched new products such as sing bhujia, ganthia, and mung dal. In the same year, the Viranis also set up the state’s first fully automatic potato crisp plant. From 2014, Balaji has been the leading snacks player in India, capturing more than 60% of the country’s market share.

Today, Balaji’s annual turnover has reached Rs 2,000

crore. The company runs a 65-plus-acre fully automatic manufacturing plant in Rajkot and 50-acre plants in Valsad and Indore. Balaji family too has grown bigger, employing 5,000 people.

“We used to sell a few kilograms of handmade wafers in 1982 and earned a meagre Rs 50,000 a month by selling them in nearby areas,” said Virani. “Today, the production capacity is 18 lakh kilograms per day and the sales network spans 10 states of the country through a robust network of 1,500 suppliers who cater to more than 10 lakh outlets.”

WHAT CHAMPS ARE MADE OF

“The struggle taught us many lessons,” said the senior Virani – one of the three enterprising brothers who founded Balaji. “We learnt the importance of understanding the need of consumers, of product development, of investing in right people, and of developing a supply chain. He said he and his brothers learned from a continuous process of countless trials and errors.

The first stepping stone to success was using the right legal framework for registering the trademark and staying vigilant to protect it. “Our success inspired many, but there are some who want to reach the top without going through the labour of climbing the initial steep steps. Some players tried to imitate us and failed miserably. More than 15 companies attempted to copy our products and market was flooded with snack brands labeled Lalaji, Kakaji, Tirupati Balaji, Jai Balaji, and Mamaji. We never tried to defeat or challenge such other brands but made our brand stronger. We had registered and protected our trademark in 1985. The idea was to safeguard our brand and turn it into





the state's biggest chip maker. Our IP was our regional customization, attractive and leakproof packaging, and our hallmark was the finest quality."

Along with the focus on bettering their own brand and strengthening their IP, Balaji's astute ability to cater to regional tastes gave them an edge over their counterparts. For Gujarat, Balaji had masala wafers, while for Maharashtra they made chaat masala options, and for Rajasthan they offered spicier snacks. Another factor which propelled Balaji to newer heights was the depth of relationships it maintained with dealers and suppliers.

"A strong bond with employees makes a business house unshakeable at its roots and deeper ties with dealers and suppliers makes its branches and chains flourish. Balaji's strength stems from these qualities," Virani said. "Anyone who joins our business becomes a part of our family and when the entire extended family works hard to achieve a goal it seldom remains unattainable. Others may imitate you and may launch similarly named products, but they can never develop a trusted supplier network overnight. Our USP was our committed relationships with our people."

It is the investment in relationships that has helped Balaji establish its goodwill and hence even today they are helped by the word of mouth. "We have neither run big advertisements nor put up tall billboards," Virani said. "Our consumers are our brand ambassadors and our dealers and suppliers are our promoters. The aim is to satisfy our customers and give them the best quality at the lowest rates. This philosophy is our advertising

strategy which has always helped in exceeding our sales expectations."

Virani, a school dropout, today visits the most reputable educational institutions – including the Indian Institute of Management (IIM), Symbiosis, and SP Jain Institute – to give lessons on entrepreneurship, start-ups, and business management. Till date, more than 5 lakh business students have visited the Balaji plant in Rajkot. Blue chip companies and MNCs including Coca-Cola and Unilever invite the senior Virani as an expert at their staff-training workshops

WAY FORWARD

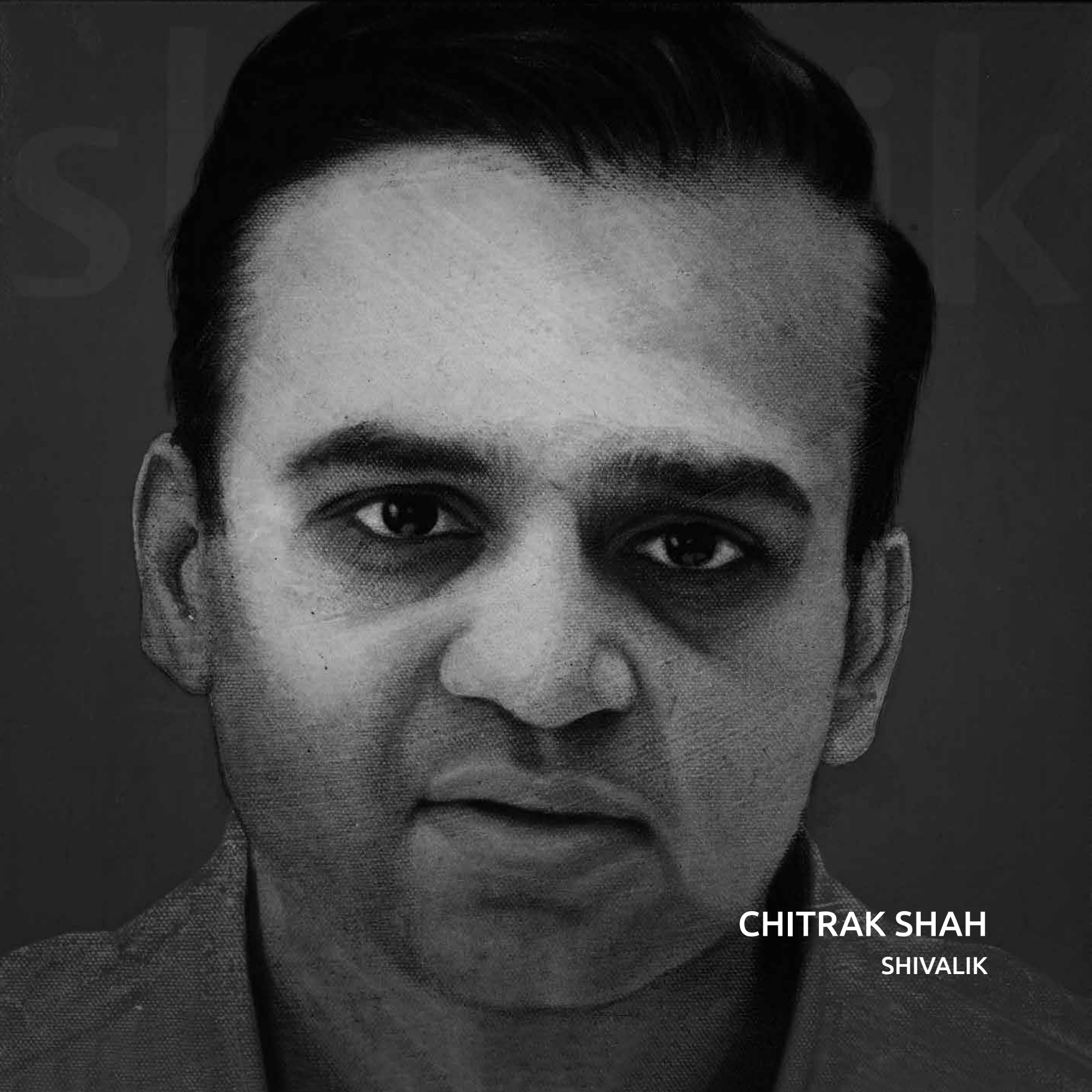
The second generation of Viranis – the son and nephews of C Virani – Keyur, Mihir, Pranay and Shyam are now working hard to drive Balaji to the second level of growth. The target is widening the reach and adding new products. "Today, Balaji dominates market of ten states in the country. The products are exported to 20 countries of the world and we are still marching ahead," Virani said.

Innovation both in terms of expanding the product line and adopting the latest technology is the strategy to go forward. Even today, despite enormous growth, Balaji has remained a fully family owned enterprise. "The best tactic for expansion is learning to develop the next line of products in sync with market trends. We are about to launch the instant noodles category of products responding to the market demand," Virani said. "Being adaptive and responsive to the market demands is the biggest lesson we have learned." ■



SHIVALIK

Shivalik developers are in the business of building a legacy of timeless elegance. Their creations dominate the city's skyline. They have been steadily conquering Gujarat's market in the segment of luxury residential and commercial spaces. Their focus is on their design and shapes. Their innovation is their hallmark.



CHITRAK SHAH
SHIVALIK

*Shah | Kunal Patel | Mauli Teli | Maulik Mehta | Maulik M
Desai | Pathik Patwari | Priya Gandhi | Rohan Shah | Shambhar
Patel | Aditya Handa | Akshat Doshi | Ankit Chona | Arjun
s | Chandu Virani | Chitrak Shah | Darshan Patel | Dishit
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| Vashist Patel | Ankit Chona
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Ankit Chona | Arjun Handa | Arpit Vyas | Chandu Virani*

SHAPE OF SUCCESS, UNCLUTTERED SPLENDOUR

Simplicity is his signature. Chitrak Shah, the co-founder of Shivalik Group – one of the state’s leading real estate developers – breathes minimalism. His words, desk, his monochrome clothing, his corporate house, and his commercial and residential schemes are emblems of uncluttered exquisiteness. His success, on the other hand, is built on a richly complex and endlessly inspiring concrete edifice of striving.

“For creating something simple, you need complexities of thoughts, strategies, and processes,” said Shah, 39, who started his career when he was barely 17 as a trainee at the construction site of Shivalik’s first project, Sanjay Tower. Before foraying into the construction business, Shah’s father, Satish Nyalchand, was a well-known stock marketer. He also toyed with an idea of trying his hand at the jewellery business but then chose to open a construction company in 1996.

Till 2001, we gave our projects randomly chosen names and had not thought of creating a niche identity,” Shah said. “At various stages of construction, we would end up naming the site with a different name and thus our identity remained scattered.”

From the various projects built by Shah’s construction company that delivered 1000 units during the 1996-2000 period, the residential project Shivalik Villa became the most popular. “We delivered 1000 units during 1996 to 2001 in total five projects. From these, Shivalik bungalows at Anandnagar became most popular. Due to the success of the residential scheme, we picked its label as the brand name and the sole identity of our company, in 2001,” Shah said. “Then Shivalik Plaza, the first corporate house, was created

For us protecting design and registering trademarks are vital. We are known for innovative designs and shapes – that is our identity. We have been utilizing the legal framework to take us forward.



in 2003. Establishing the group's identity boosted our business because it gave us clear visibility. Along with the best quality of construction, we attempted a crisp branding strategy and it gave us the desired returns."

SKYSCRAPING SUCCESS

In 2007, Shivalik expanded operations to Surat and Rajkot. Shivalik found its true success in vertical joint ventures, which took the group to new heights. Explaining the group's interest in verticals, Shah said, "In 2009, we added a new vertical dimension to our growth. Over the past decade, we have been focusing on vertical expansion and delivering more commercial and residential vertical joint ventures rather than being preoccupied with horizontals which don't give substantial rewards."

That thinking spurred a Shivalik masterstroke. The company dazzled the city by unveiling a sensation. "In 2011, we designed a commercial complex near Keshavbaug in Ahmedabad which was shaped like the Namaste gesture," Shah said. "And the city fell in love with that building. It encouraged us to innovate and we created the half-Namaste shape for Shivalik Abaise in 2013. Other striking shapes we have created include a rocket launcher and a cruise. And today, creating shapes that surprise and enchant has become our mastery and brand identity. With this one simple innovation we could transform our buildings into landmarks."

In 2016, the group launched many landmark residential projects and introduced vertical joint-ventures and flagship projects. "The group was aggressively focused on redevelopment in 2016. After that, in 2018, we formed a contractual construction

company that is taking the group ahead," he said.

Over the past two decades, Shivalik has developed 60-plus projects and has constructed more than 70 lakh sq ft and delivered 3,600-plus units.

OFF THE BEATEN TRACK

"Creating something outstanding and extraordinary has always been the aim," revealed Shah adding, "What led Shivalik to real success was the implementation of the right branding strategy which involved collating the group's identity under one all-encompassing name, experimenting with shapes of the buildings, and delivering quality infrastructure in time."

By 2030, Shivalik plans to reach the capacity of 60 million sq ft under construction at any given time. "The strategy will remain the same: to add more vertical joint ventures," he said.

On the protection of trademarks and design, Shah said, "There have been few cases of construction companies fighting in courts to protect their brand names or design. However, for groups like ours, protecting design and registering trademarks are vital." He went on to say: "We are known for our innovative designs and shapes – that is our identity. We have been utilizing the legal framework to take us forward in achieving our goals."

ANTICIPATING THE FUTURE

Innovation isn't limited to construction technology and tantalizing facades for Shah. Innovation also means doing something that nobody in the industry has conceived before. As for the shape of things to come, Shah said: "We are currently working on introducing green building technologies. The idea is to





create airy spaces with reflective glasses and imbedded solar energy systems.” He continued: “Within the next couple of years, all structures developed by Shivalik will be green buildings that cut the cost of electricity usage to half. Introducing this new concept of green building and sustainable building, is the immediate target.”

Shivalik is also planning to introduce idea of hassle-free living. “We have observed that in any residential project, the need for proper maintenance emerges after three to five years,” he said. To make maintenance easier, Shivalik is coming up with an after-sales support service. “When we buy appliances, we get maintenance schemes. Similarly, we are introducing an extended repairing programme in our upcoming posh residential schemes,” he said. “This step is especially curated to build a positive customer relationship and enhance the buyers’ trust in our construction and schemes. This is an innovative step that will boost the goodwill and brand value.”

Another innovative initiative that Shivalik is about to introduce is its Broker App. “We are also developing a digital network that will bring the broker community on a single platform,” Shah said. “With a single click on their handsets, brokers will get detailed information they need on any of our residential or commercial schemes. This will be the first of its kind real estate app or digital automation measure brought by any construction company. This is a simple step that will boost sales and is part of our expansion strategy.”

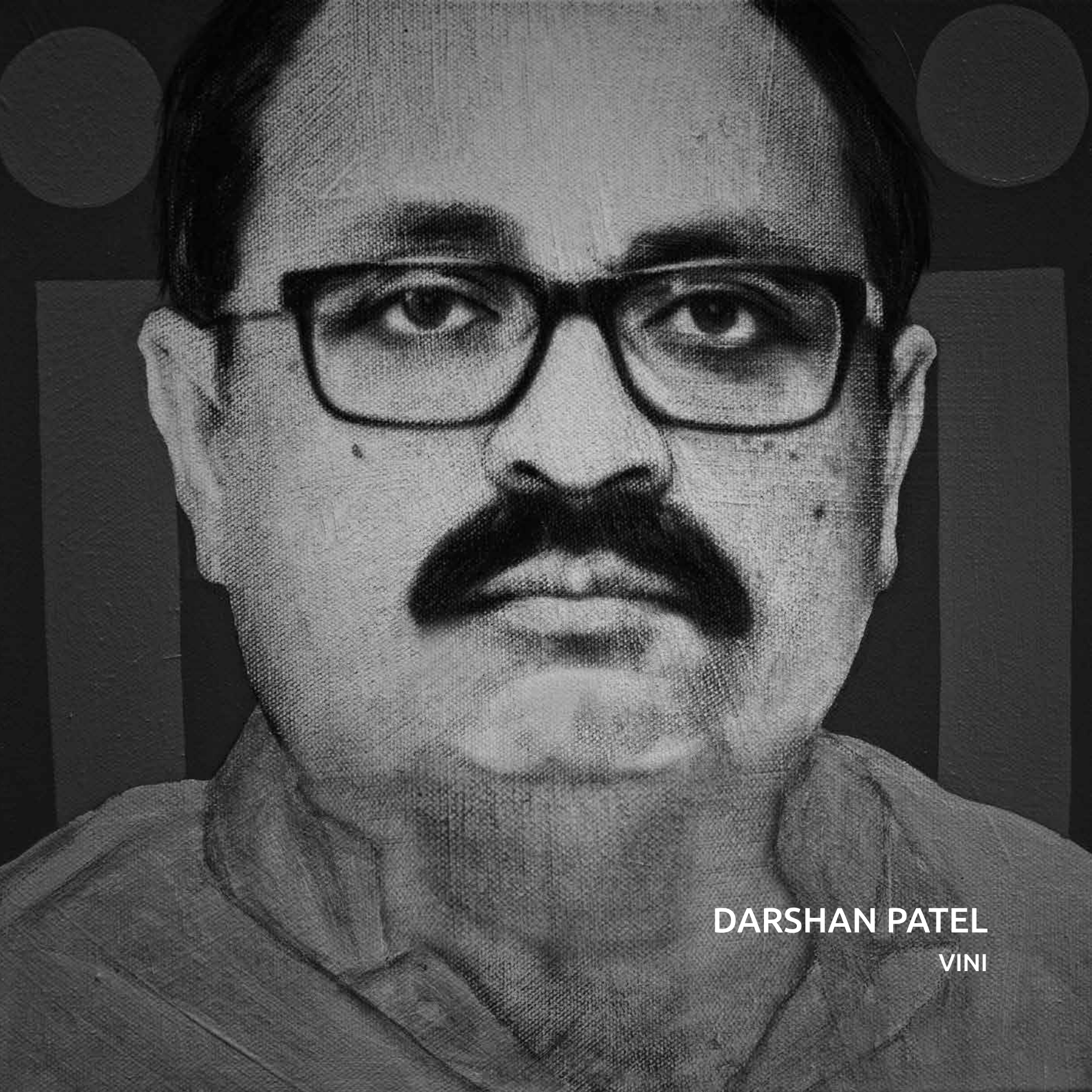
The bottom line: Shivalik strives to bring simplification in the address line. Shivalik is selecting prime locations and building landmarks. “Our buildings are used as landmarks for navigation and hence the address line for our buyers becomes short, direct, and simple,” Shah said. “Shivalik’s target is to reach the masses and bring them premium housing amenities at the most affordable rates. “We – Shivalik – are becoming a new standard that stands for innovation, simplicity, and world-class quality at the most competitive rates. This is Shivalik’s identity and the purpose of being.” ■



VINI

VINI is an entrepreneurial venture of Darshan Patel, the mastermind who rescued and nurtured Paras Pharmaceuticals Ltd. Patel is the creator of super brands such as Moov, D'Cold, Set Wet, Ring Guard, and Dermi Cool. He is an iconic business leader. In December 2010, Reckitt Benckiser Group bought Paras Pharmaceuticals for USD 850 million. Today, Patel's Fogg, a mega brand, has become a representational highpoint of VINI's business identity.

(The story on VINI is based on interview taken in 2019.)



DARSHAN PATEL

VINI

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LEAD OR BLEED: ICON CREATION THROUGH DISRUPTION

Settled into a comfortable executive chair, impeccably dressed in a crisp white shirt bearing the initials “DP” in black, Vini Cosmetics’ Darshan Patel exudes the aura of success.

“These initials do represent my name,” says the man who has created 27 brands over the past 30 years. “But they are also a reminder of my business philosophy.”

Patel explains that the letters encode his mantra for triumph in business. “As for the ‘D’, your brand or product should have a ‘distinctive’ identity,” he says. “Second, the branding strategy should ‘differentiate’ a product from the rest of its kind. Third, it has to be ‘disruptive.’” Then he elucidates the “P”. “It stands for perseverance, prayer, and patience,” he says. “Living by the three Ps and ensuring that your product meets the triple-D criteria is the only way to success.”

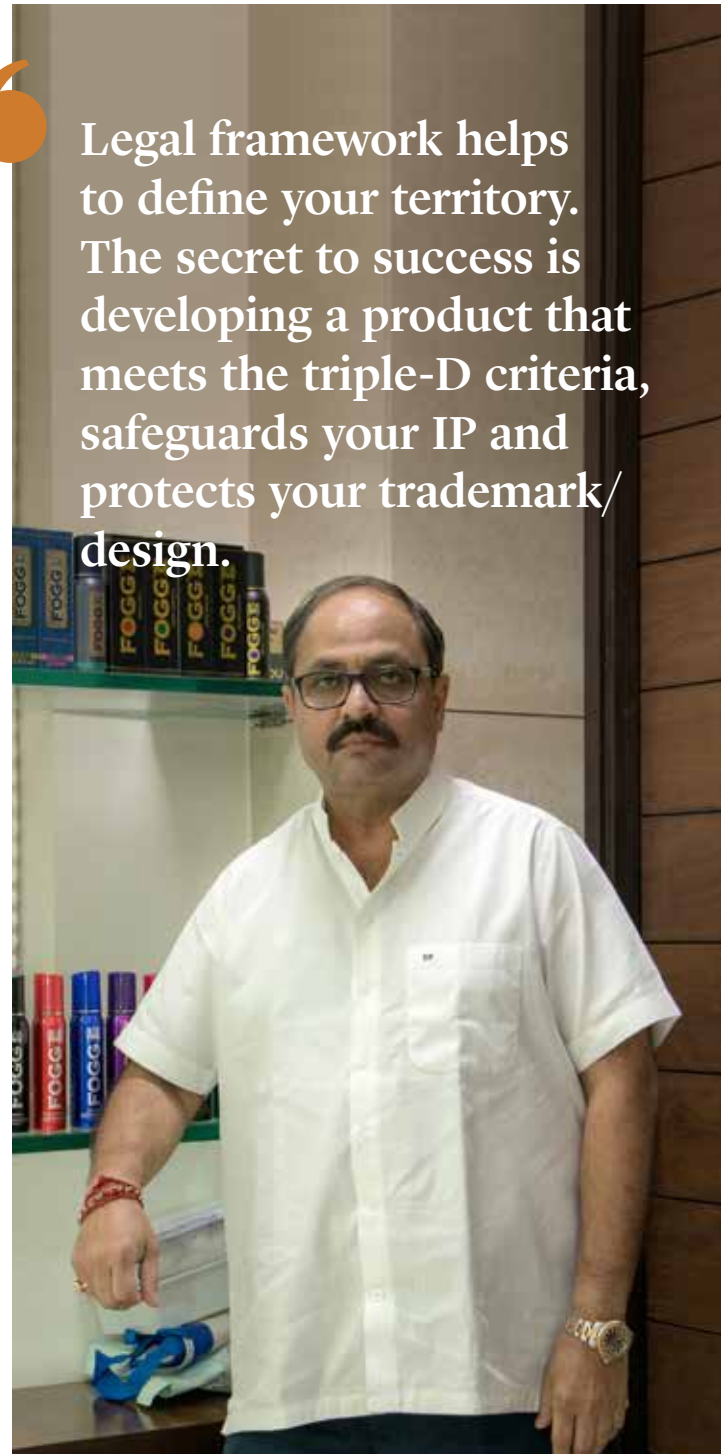
Of the 27 brands he has created, Patel says “20 have been super successful.” These include Moov, Itch-Guard, Krack, Dermicool, D’Cold, Livon, and SetWet hair gel.

To this chemistry graduate, branding and marketing is a science. His strategy is simple. He identifies consumers’ problem and develops a product to provide a solution.

STRONG START, CONSTANT LEARNING

Even at the very start of his career, Patel showed signs of brand wizardry that would become his hallmark. He turned Saturn Packaging, a loss-making packaging unit in Sanand, into a profitable venture. It is now known as Paras Webcoat Pvt. Ltd. Later, he was put in charge of marketing Paras Pharma’s OTC headache-relief pill, Stopache. Then, in 1987, came Moov.

Legal framework helps to define your territory. The secret to success is developing a product that meets the triple-D criteria, safeguards your IP and protects your trademark/design.



“When I was trying to make Moov one of the fastest-moving OTC products, I often adopted innovative and experimental strategies of branding,” Patel says. “This phase helped me understand that we could all perform phenomenally if we learn from our failures and from the challenges we face.”

The next few years saw Patel evolve into a formidable business leader. He repositioned Moov as a remedy for backache – a problem faced by younger clients – as opposed to focusing on the ankle pain of the elderly as the competitors did. The disruption worked. Moov began to record a consistent increase in its market share.

Next came Krack in 1994, another distinctive, disruptive product developed specially to address a problem of the consumers. Patel recalls another seminal event in his career. “I was at the Churchgate station in Mumbai when I noticed thousands of passers-by with cracked heels,” he says. This observation led him to in-depth market research, which confirmed that this common problem had no targeted solution. Taking a cue from this, Paras Pharmaceuticals developed and launched Krack, the-first-of-its-kind heel-repair cream.

Krack was followed by the flu remedy D’Cold, Borosoft cream in 1996 – again, products specifically curated to meet consumer needs. Next came Ring Guard and Itch Guard in 1998 and Dermicool prickly heat powder in 1999 – products created to address a set of problems that consumers were too shy to seek help for.

Patel’s “DP” mantra was once again visible in the creation and branding of the hair serum Livon Silky Potion in 2002 and Set Wet series (2005-06) that

includes hair styling gel, body perfume and deo – these were the last batch of products he was associated with at Paras Pharma. This was another set of products that were Number 1 in its category; you might even call it his “crowning glory”.

Patel recalls the precise moment at which inspiration for Livon struck: “I was relaxing on my balcony one Sunday morning, when I saw a few women in the apartment building opposite my house trying to dry and detangle their hair,” he says. “The exercise seemed strenuous and time-consuming. Once I noticed the problem, I did some research and found there was a space for a hair-detangling serum. Thus, Livon was born.”

A CAREER IN TWO INNINGS

When Patel began his career in 1985 at Paras Pharmaceuticals, a company owned by his family, it had an average annual turnover of Rs 50 lakh. By the time he left in 2006, it had reached an average annual turnover of Rs 300 crore.

When Patel moved on, he sold his 23% share in Paras to the investment company Actis Capital for Rs 170 crore. As Patel puts it, “My innings at Paras taught me that there are only two ways to be a market leader: differentiate or die – in other words, lead or bleed.”

After resigning from Paras, Patel spent five years at his 300-acre fruit orchard on the outskirts of Ahmedabad. Patel says, “That was a phase for meditation, self-realization, and new learning.”

Rejuvenated, he launched Vini Cosmetics, a company he named after the family’s pet turtle. Like the turtle in the familiar children’s fable, the company took a while





to take off. Vini's first two products – a deodorant, 18+, and a cooling talcum powder, Jinjola – didn't fare well. Patel says these products were not in keeping with his triple-D criteria.

Patel chose to lead, rather than bleed. Analyzing the failure of 18+, he found that consumers saw his brand as “just another” in a sea of the similar. This led to market research, which revealed that most consumers wanted their deodorants to last longer.

“I again decided to focus on users' problem and worked hard to offer them a solution,” Patel says.

“The problem was their deodorant was exhausted in 20 days. I wanted their can to last for a minimum of 40 days.” He says this was possible only if the gas was eliminated and more of the core product was offered. “This resulted in Vini's FOGG (Friend of Good Guys/Gals) – the only deo that lasted for more than 40 days,” he says.

IMPACTFUL COMMUNICATION

In addition to identifying challenges and finding solutions to problems, Patel relies heavily on emotive and informative ad campaigns. The communication

is insightful and catchy, and leaves a long-lasting impression on the consumers' psyche.

For FOGG, Patel employed a streaming strategy that announced it as product with a difference. The first round of television advertisements was knowledge-based, focusing on the fact that the lack of gas meant consumers would get value for money. Moreover, FOGG adverts were strategically devoid of the erotic undertones typically featured in deo commercials. This made consumers more comfortable with the product. The rewards were instant. Vini sold 1.50 lakh cans of FOGG in the first month; in the second, it sold 2.60 lakh cans; by the end of the fourth month, Vini had sold a million. Today, FOGG has dethroned Axe, Park Avenue, Charley and others, according to the 2019 report by the leading market researcher AC Nielsen. With sales of four million cans of FOGG per month, Vini has successfully captured more than 17% of the Rs 2,500-crore domestic deodorant market.

Devising impactful communication is hardly a new strategy. "Let's take the case of Krack cream," Patel says. "It was received well in the market, but sales began to slow down after a couple of years. We got in touch with Mudra." An emotive awareness campaign was launched. "We ran ads with a simple but catchy punch line – Chahere se maharani par peron se nokraani," Patel says. "This branding strategy differentiated the product and pulled the rug from under the competition. We had been selling around 20 lakh pieces annually. The campaign boosted annual sales to 1 crore pieces." he reveals.

Itch-Guard's communication scratched a powerful suggestion into people's mind. "With just one simple line, 'khujali karo ek baar karni pade baar baar,' we had a clear message that went straight to the consumer's mind," Patel says.

SECRET TO SUCCESS IS SAFEGUARDING IP

Today, Vini is the one of the fastest growing companies, with products such as the face powder WhiteTone, body spray Fogg, Fogg scent, deo mist Ossum, regenerating skin cream Prepair and light make-up cream Glam-Up. Patel is busy and is closely monitoring market response to his most recent line-up.

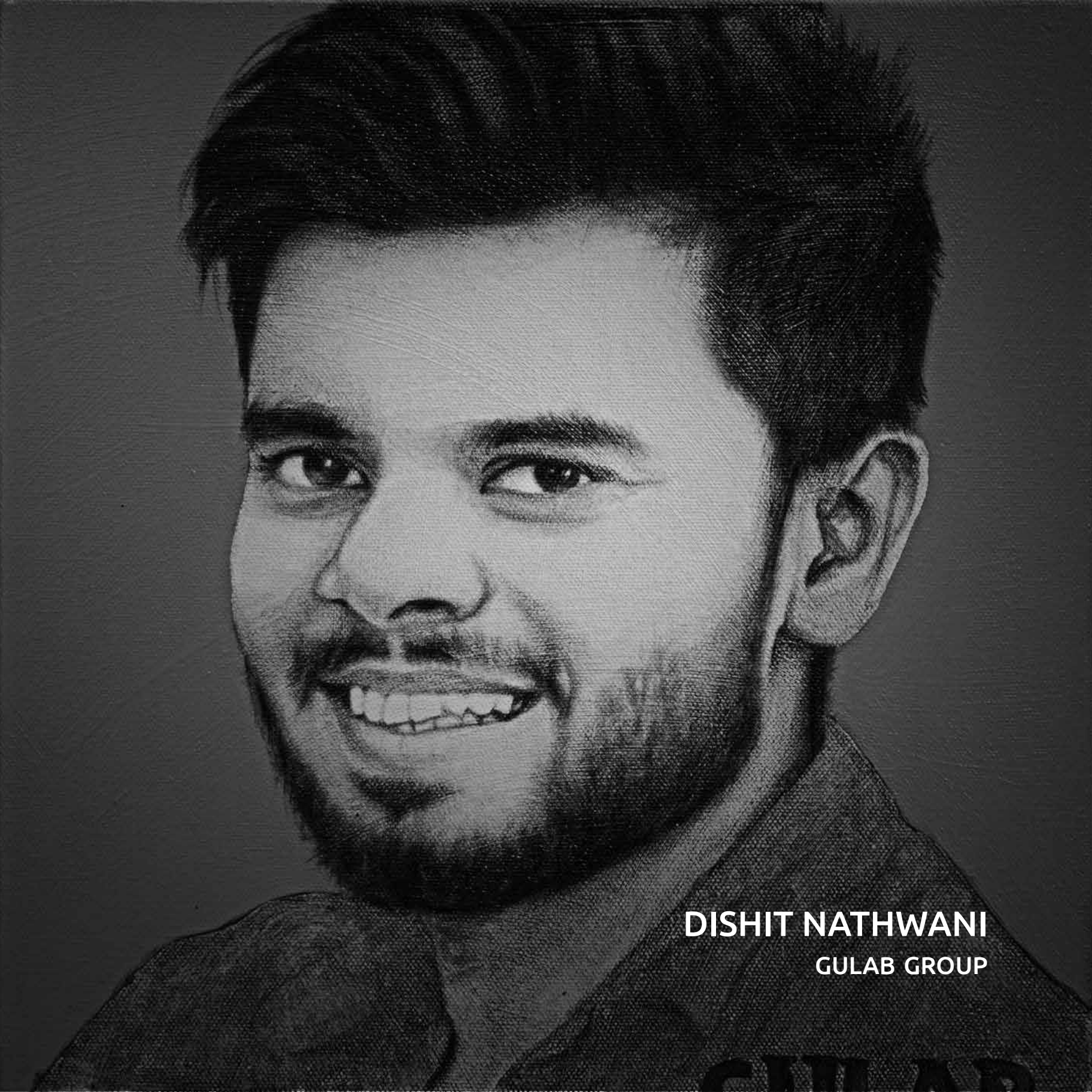
Expanding further on his business mantra, he says, "Success isn't guaranteed. We have to keep researching consumers' behaviour to identify their problems." He went on to say: "We have to bring them products that offer simple solutions. And in doing this, legal processes and procedures like the registration of your product and its trademark and the protection of your idea are vital."

Patel says unless a product is protected, they cannot be projected as being different. "This legal framework helps to define your territory," he says. "The secret to success is developing a product that meets the triple-D criteria, safeguards your IP, and protects your trademark/design. Then you can employ strategic branding techniques that lead you slowly and steadily towards big success." ■



GULAB GROUP

The group installed its first groundnut oil production unit in 1966 at Mangrol in Junagadh district and named it Shri Mangrol Oil Mill. Its operations widened and the group's growth was overflowing Mangrol; and then Gulab Oils was born. The Gulab Group crossed many glorious milestones due to hard work and determination coupled with the best business practices. People's trust in its products was the prime factor behind setting up of various production units in Ahmedabad, Rajkot, Mumbai, and Kadi. Today, Gulab Oils has created its own bouquet of high-quality edible oils that have attracted an unprecedented demand in the market across the country. The group's core strength lies in the emotional connect with its consumers.



DISHIT NATHWANI

GULAB GROUP

GULAB

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BLOSSOMING OF AN OIL EMPIRE

The perseverance of this oil maker from Mangrol in Junagadh may be the exemplar of burning the midnight oil.

“Pragjibhai, my grandfather, made groundnut oil in the early 1960s on a small grinding mill at home. The life’s grind actually began when he started his first commercial oil manufacturing unit in Mangrol in 1966. He named it Shri Mangrol Oil Mill,” recalled the young and passionate Dishit Nathwani, 26, a third-generation businessman and the owner of Gulab Group – one of the country’s most prominent oil manufacturers.

Pragjibhai’s hard work and grit lubricated his successful operations. His vision expanded and his determination deepened when his son Mukesh joined the small enterprise in 1984. Thinking big, Mukeshbhai ramped up the business and opened a selling unit in Kalupur in Ahmedabad in 1992. He named the product Gulab Oils and gave their generic trading business an identity. “Branding worked and the simple name ‘Gulab’ clicked. Initially, 25 Gulab tins were sold per day in 1992. The number soon started growing,” said Dishit. “He added two selling and packaging points in Kalupr and Santej in 1996. The demand rose and to cope with it, Gulab needed to manufacture more oil.”

In 2001, the group opened another manufacturing and packaging unit in Rajkot. The business kept growing due to pristine quality of the product, hard work of the company’s founders and their ethical practices. Gulab set up another selling point in Mumbai in 2011 and opened one more oil refinery and packaging unit in Kadi in 2013, Dishit said.

Dishit joined Gulab in 2011. “For the first three years, my focus was on understanding the minutiae of

Most importantly, our focus on building IP has become intense. When one wants to become bigger, one has to strengthen one’s IP.



manufacturing, packaging, distribution, and sales,” he said. “In that period, I also studied the demand, market dynamics, and the response to the brand.” Dishit, a fast learner, understood the company couldn’t match the expected range of sales due to the lack of effective branding and marketing strategies. Pragjibhai started oil business, Mukeshbhai branded and expanded it, while Dishit’s resolution is making Gulab a national giant.

SMOOTH SURGE

Dishit brought in innovative business practices to Gulab Oils and that helped the firm achieve the most daunting targets. “People’s trust and confidence in the brand was our biggest asset,” he said. “To capture buyers’ attention, we decided to expand the product line and added a new range of high-quality edible oils that have received unprecedented acceptance in the market. From 2011, we have added a variety of oils including Cottonseed oil sunflower oil, corn oil, soybean oil, and mustard oil. While maintaining traditional ties with retailers, we tied up with new giants such as DMart, Big Basket, and Big Bazaar.

Today, the group has reached annual turnover of Rs 1500 crores (2020) – a year before the youngest Nathwani joined the business. Currently, the company is sharpening its marketing and branding strategies. “We now directly deliver oil tins to 10,000-plus retailers and wholesalers in four states,” Dishit said. “Direct connection with retailers and consumers is our main virtue; I can say that it is our group’s unique selling proposition (USP). We started shopGulab.com to cater to the consumers wanting to buy Gulab online and we door deliver it to them across India.” He said that the company has home delivery services for consumers

across the country. “None of the oil manufacturers in the state have been able to establish such a direct link with their retailers or consumers,” he said.

Dishit meticulously oversees the operations and mentors the team. “My focus is on increasing the firm’s brand value,” he said. “And the strategy is to expand the team strength to be able to directly cater to the needs of the smallest of our consumers. I have a team of 350 to take care of the micro-management of receiving orders, delivering the goods, and receiving payments. When we efficiently deliver and take care of the smallest of our customers, goodwill is generated and our brand value is strengthened.”

NEW VISION – NEW DIRECTION

Unlike other oil manufacturers, the Gulab Group is mindful of the need to build and to cash in on its IP. “Our prime product is groundnut oil. And our specialty is selecting the best of the groundnut produce for making oil,” Dishit said. “Hence when I decided to add a new vertical, my first choice was offering items based on groundnut. In 2017, we developed a new product line including masala sing, sing chana, and sing bhujija – all these products were launched under the name of Gulab Foods.”

Gulab Foods is the second vertical of the Gulab Group and this offshoot is managed by Charmy Nathwani, 28, an IT engineer with an MBA degree in managing family business. “I joined the family business in 2010 when I was still pursuing my engineering course,” Charmy said. “I saw my father working hard to nurture the oil business. Ours is a big joint family and everyone is working hard together to take the oil business forward. However, I always wished to do something different.”





Charmy went on to say: “In 2017, we launched a small unit to start another vertical under the Gulab Group of companies. Banking on expertise in selecting the best quality groundnut, we launched snack varieties made with groundnut. They started becoming popular in Gujarat, Punjab, Haryana, and Delhi. We have recently launched another category of products based on flavoured dry fruits. The focus is on offering roasted and baked snacks for the health-conscious.”

BRINGING IN GOODNESS

In line with newer trends, the Gulab Group has rolled out its latest and healthiest products under the third vertical – Gulab Goodness. Dishit, the brain behind the Goodness endeavour, said: “The third vertical has trendiest products from cold-pressed oils to a new range of organic oils and with this natural honey, organic salt and pepper. Under this vertical, Gulab is offering a new range of special organic food items. All products that are a healthy substitute for products used routinely in the kitchen.” Dishit went on to say: “This endeavour concentrates on small lifestyle changes that consumers want to make. We are bringing cold-pressed oils which are richer with nutrients known to benefit health.”

For bringing in the goodness, Dishit is working harder than before. Early this year, Dishit and his team

stayed in South India for a few months. In southern India – oil makers know the secrets of ancient cold-press techniques for extracting pure, nutrient-rich oils.

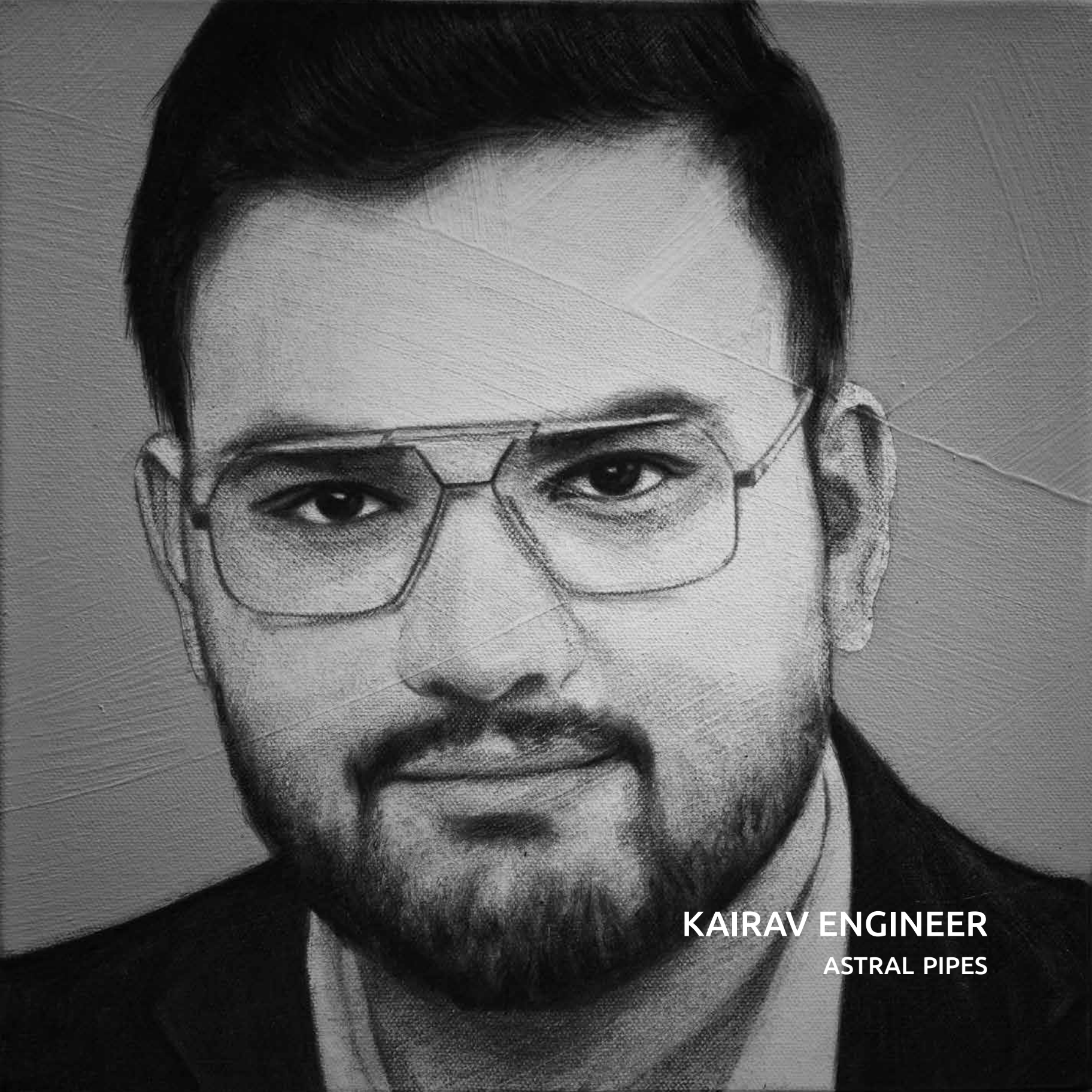
“I spent six months learning how to make cold-pressed oils. After sustained research and development, I could make the finest of cold pressed oils which is 100 percent pure and rich in natural vitamins and minerals. To appeal to the modern generation, I have offered sleeker and stylish packaging to introduce these healthier options,” Dishit said. “To raise awareness about these products, we have changed our branding and our marketing practices. Along with participating in food shows, festivals and fairs, and running ground activities to increase product sampling points, we are also focusing on our presence on the social media.”

Dishit went on to say: “We have changed the face of the oil’s brand ambassadors from grandmotherly figures to younger and fitter people and nutrition-conscious personalities. The winds of change are blowing and in keeping with the demands we are also altering our marketing techniques, expanding the product line, and upgrading manufacturing technologies. Most importantly, our focus on building IP has become intense. When one wants to become bigger, one has to strengthen one’s IP.” ■



ASTRAL PIPES

Now a star manufacturer of plumbing and drainage systems, Astral Pipes was established in 1996 with the goal to become a leading global player. Today, the company covers the needs of millions of Indian households with products of supreme quality. The company is a high-performance organization committed to its customers, partners, shareholders, employees, and society.



KAIRAV ENGINEER
ASTRAL PIPES

*Shah | Kunal Patel | Mauli Teli | Maulik Mehta | Maulik M
Desai | Pathik Patwari | Priya Gandhi | Rohan Shah | Shambhar
Patel | Aditya Handa | Akshat Doshi | Ankit Chona | Arjun
s | Chandu Virani | Chitrak Shah | Darshan Patel | Dishit
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| Kairav Engineer | Kamlesh Patel | Kanha
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Shah | Shambhar Chauhan | Vashist Patel | Aditya Handa
Ankit Chona | Arjun Handa | Arpit Vyas | Chandu Virani*

MODERNIZER OF HOMES' ARTERIES

The unflagging determination to succeed sweeps away all odds: that is the moral of the life story of Engineers, the newest addition to the country's list of billionaires. And what – apart from their Astral-strong will – did the trick? Without doubt, it was the 20-second duel sequence from the 2012 Salman Khan-starrer 'Dabangg 2'. The thrilling fight scene brought the pipe-makers into the limelight. And till today, Engineers are known as the makers of Salman-wali pipes. Indeed, Astral pipes are today the arteries of millions of homes.

The journey from a small pharma business to the pipes' empire has not been easy. Sitting at his mansion-like office – Astral House – near Rajpath, Kairav, the second-generation tycoon and the brain behind the Salman magic, recalled: "My father had an unremarkable job at Cadila Laboratories in Maninagar, Ahmedabad." Kairav went on to say: "And then in the 1980s, he decided to create something of his own. He started distributing flavoured Isabgol. However, that venture had to be closed." Kairav said his father then he tried his hand at manufacturing active pharmaceutical ingredients. "In the end, those products didn't fare well," Kairav said. "However, his irrepressible desire to succeed led him forward. He opened Kairav Chemicals which recorded some success in the pharma sector. That is how our entrepreneurial journey took off."

Kairav said his father's experience in the pharma industry afforded an insight into the Indian market in general. "Knowledge was gained about the placement of products, approaching dealers, and other such basics for a business," Kairav said. "Foraying into the piping industry was never on his mind, it was a purely fortuitous step. We were making profits in the

Registering business with a trademark helped us win infringement cases. Industrial designs and patents, the trademark of goods and services has an important role in the growth of businesses.



pharma business but due to the non-clearance from the pollution control board, we decided to diversify into a business with no pollution-related factors.”

Kairav went on to say: “It was all about acceptance, dealing with bankruptcy and a will to rise again.”

REALIZING THE TRUE CALLING

“Realizing that our true calling is in the piping industry wasn’t easy either. In 1998 my father launched CPVC pipes through Astral Poly Technik,” Kairav said. “We were the first in India to invest in plastics, in association with a US-based company, for manufacturing CPVC pipes for the chemical industry. However, the market did not accept the product for the first couple of years.”

Kairav said the company was hardly processing 5 percent of its total capacity. Losses mounted. “We had begun with industrial piping but later had to shift to plumbing pipes,” he said.

After Astral moved into the plumbing pipes business in 2001, the demand for CPVC pipes increased. The galvanized iron (GI) pipes were falling out of favour. “The demand increased because Astral brought a paradigm shift in the piping category,” Kairav said. “The change of preference from GI to CPVC piping was brought about by Astral. This venture of introducing a new product to the market helped us realize that by virtue of bringing innovation, newer products and technologies, a strong foothold can be secured in the category.”

To raise awareness about the CPVC option, Astral started organizing plumber conferences, teaching delegates how to use the pipes correctly and to cut

down prices for sustaining growth in the local markets. And from 2003, the business started soaring. From Rs 15 crore, it grew to Rs 25 crore in a year. And in 2007, when Astral drew the annual revenue of Rs 60 crore, Sandeep Engineer, the founder, took the company public. After that the company kept growing at a 20 percent compound annual growth rate for 12 years

MAKING OF MILLIONAIRES

In 2011, the founder’s eldest son, Kairav, came on board and rebranded Astral Poly Technik as Astral Pipes. Cross-generational engagement and collaboration boosted Astral’s numbers. Kairav said that as a next-generation businessman, he had the advantage of observing the family business develop from scratch and that gave him deeper insights into business management.

Along with rebranding Astral, Kairav focused on safeguarding the identity, intellectual properties, and the trademark of Astral. “In India, the market environment keeps changing and small- and medium-scale industries face a major hurdle as they are not familiar with the best ways to manage their knowledge assets,” Kairav said. “Infringement of trademark has now become a growing problem across the world. And piping industry has a large chunk of unorganized trade in which the local players keep copying established brands.”

In such situations, Kairav said, trademark registration and legally protective protocols are vital. “We have seen several instances of products being sold under our brand name with minute changes such as ASTROL and AASTRAAL,” he said. “Registering our business with a trademark helped us fight and win such infringement





cases. Along with other intellectual properties, such as industrial designs and patents, the trademark of goods and services has an extremely important role in the growth of businesses.”

DABANGG DECISION

Kairav firmly believed in creating a brand identity and hence at a time when none of its competitors was thinking of brand image, Astral was pumping 1.5-2 percent of its annual profit into marketing.

However, besides the usual plumber meets and awareness workshops for consultants, dealers, and developers, Astral needed to do something unusual.

“The piping industry has not seen much of branding. It is a distribution-led business,” he said. “Even today, consumers at large are unaware of good piping products or the basic plumbing practices. The sales directly depended on margins.” Kairav went on to say: “With a small initial budget, we began with shop branding and promoting Astral on several modes of transportation like auto, buses, and trains.” To improve visibility, the company began hosting regular plumber meets, organizing exhibitions, devising in-film promotions, and roping in brand ambassadors. “We banked on continuous innovations in products as well as in communication, Astral now uses 360-degree marketing,” he said.

With sales rising, the budget for branding also rose. Slowly, Astral shifted to outdoor promotions and in-film branding.

Astral’s Latin root is “astrum”, meaning “star”.

So Kairav brought a star to magnify brand luminescence. First, he chose to promote the pipes through movies, the move was a hit; second, to capitalize on the hype that the 2012 “Dabangg” duel scene had created, Astral orchestrated the blockbuster tactic of bringing in Salman Khan as the brand ambassador in 2014.

Today, Astral is the clear market leader with a 25-plus percent market share in the plumbing and drainage sectors. As a de-risking strategy that can serve Astral well in the stock market, the Engineers have decided to promote ResiQuick, an instant adhesive brand that Astral acquired in 2014. Kairav added, “Taking over the adhesives business was a considered decision. Continually adding new product lines and harnessing innovations have been our priorities.”

Kairav said his company has about 5,200 employees, six manufacturing units across the country and three factories for adhesives, one each in the UK, the US, and Kenya. “This year, Astral is expected to earn Rs 2,600-2,700 crore as net revenue,” he said.

RESILIENCE LEADS TO SUCCESS

Kairav, 31, said, “Success has come after many setbacks because of sheer hard work. The secret is resilience, we never gave up. Things happen for a reason.” He went on to say: “My father always tells that a good leader keeps his workforce motivated and has faith in them. It is difficult yet crucial to sustain the manpower for growth. Investing in wonderful people who have contributed to our personal and professional growth is also a significant factor that led us to success.” ■



VADILAL

Vadilal is tirelessly working to make the world a happier place by building brands that nurture relationships and bring joy to families across the world. Their focus is on offering the best quality products and services at the most affordable price points. Vadilal started as a soda fountain outlet and later remarkably continued as a gruhudhyog with a small hand-cranked ice cream making machine. Today it has become a colossal business entity.



KALPIT GANDHI

VADILAL

FROM A
SODA FOUNTAIN
TO AN ICE CREAM
CONGLOMERATE

It is a sweet legacy dating back hundred and twelve years, when Vadilal Gandhi set up a soda fountain near Ahmedabad's Teen Darwaza. He bequeathed the business to his son, Ranchod Lal, who turned the soda fountain joint into a small restaurant in the 1920s. "Vadilal's ice cream was first served at this restaurant in 1935. It was made in a small room just above the restaurant," said Kalpit Gandhi, the 5th generation inheritor of the company, now an ice cream giant.

"While running the small restaurant, my great-grandfather also sold ice slabs. He passed on the business to his sons Ramchandra and Laxman," Kalpit said. "They joined the business in the 1940s and focused on selling ice creams. The duo set up the company's first ice cream manufacturing unit in Dudheshwar in the mid-1970s. The duo passed on the business to their sons. My father (Rajesh, the youngest son of Ramchandra) and my uncle (Shailesh) joined Vadilal in 1979. That their working together was the turning point."

SCALING UP: CONSOLIDATING BRAND IDENTITY

Kalpit went on to say, "My father and his elder brother (Shailesh) started scaling up the business. When my father joined the operations, he never had the room or the liberty to dream." Production and manufacturing were Rajeshbhai's responsibility. "My uncle's forte was sales and marketing. The business was growing," Kalpit said. "This was the period when the company became conscious of its brand value and woke up to the importance of registrations. The legal process of trademark registrations and consolidation of brand value began in the post-1980s period."

Today, we are more focused on sharpening our IP. We want to work hard only on the products for which the world remembers us. The plan is to use the company's resources towards building the IP.



Competition could not breach the Gujarat market, which was unambiguously Vadilal territory. After the 1980s, Vadilal expanded its operations and forayed into the markets of Maharashtra and Rajasthan. Back then, transporting ice cream to other states was challenging. “We had bought big vehicles and had converted them into temperature-controlled ice cream carriers,” Kalpit said. “This was the era of Doordarshan. If one advertised on the single medium of TV, the message reached every strata of society. Through TV jingles, intermission adverts in movie theatres, and due to the quality of its ice creams, Vadilal had become a part of every household in the 1990s.”

In the early 1990s, the brothers chose to spilt and divided the markets. “Maharashtra and South Indian region rights are owned by my uncle, while Gujarat, Jammu & Kashmir, and West Bengal are our territories,” Kalpit said. “In 1992, Devanshu Gandhi (the son of Laxmanbhai) joined hands with my father and started looking after manufacturing,” Kalpit said. “This gave my father the strength to take care of marketing and sales. They continued tackling the challenges and never looked back.”

The traditionalist Rajesh Gandhi, who kept fighting against all odds and solidified the home-based ice cream making business into a thriving global brand, was worried when he saw his young and restless son Kalpit veering off course. Kalpit had noted how his father toed the strict line drawn by the coherently structured family business. However, Kalpit was not chained to a set pattern. “I am the only one in the family who has done jobs at some other companies,” said Kalpit coyly. He had joined Financial Technologies Ltd and then worked at Godrej after completing his

graduation in the US in 2007. After working at these companies in Mumbai, Kalpit finished his MBA at a business school in Spain.

ICE CREAMS MELTED KALPIT’S RESOLVE

“In 2014, after completing my master’s programme, I decided to join our ice cream business,” Kalpit said. “When I joined our company, the annual turnover was Rs 500 crore. It was a business conglomerate with diverse interests: ice cream, exports of frozen vegetables, ready-to-use snacks, chemicals and forex. I wanted to focus on a niche segment. I maintained that we must stop all generic businesses and focus only on growing the brand – Vadilal. We were exporting mango products as a generic product and that business was consuming energy, investments, and time.” Kalpit went on to say: “I stopped that and instead, started exporting ice creams along with frozen vegetables. Today, we export to the US, South and East Africa, Middle East, and many countries targeting the overseas Indians. When I joined in 2014, the export business generated an annual revenue of about Rs 25 crore and export business to USA was less than Rs 3 crore. We have ended 20-21 with 225 crore of international business with US alone accounting for 180 crore. And moreover, the major benefit is that the brand is going global and will make its footprint noticeable. Generic business did not add to our brand value.”

THE ROAD AHEAD

Today, Vadilal’s annual turnover has reached Rs 900 crore. It has a strong distribution network of 65,000-plus retailers and 1250 distributors. Vadilal is also increasing its visibility by increasing the number of its company-owned Happinezz parlours.





Vadilal's cold wave is indeed blowing across the globe. "Today, we are more focused on sharpening our brand identity or IP," Kalpit said. "We want to work hard only on the products for which the world remembers us. The plan is to use the company's resources towards building the IP."

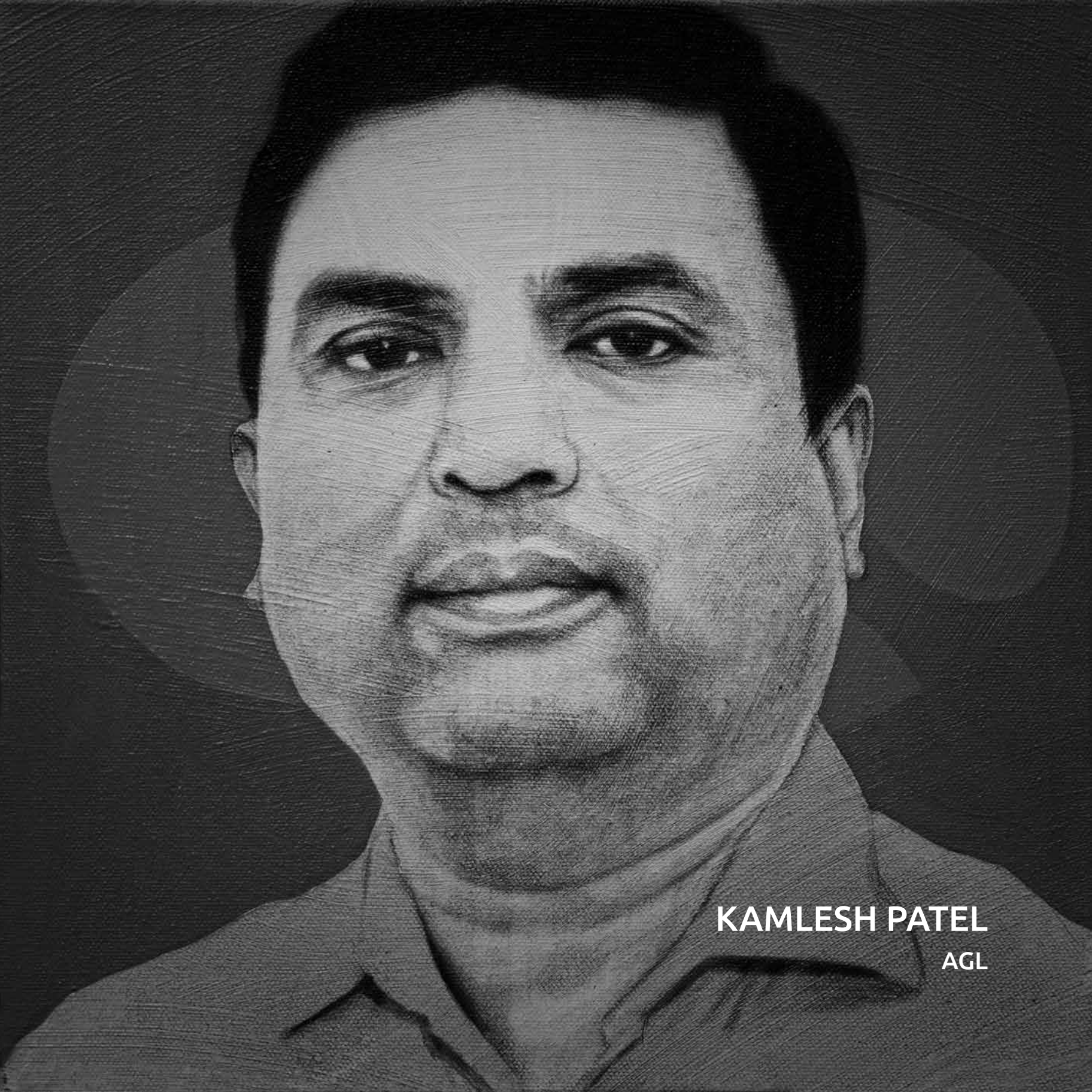
The plan is crystal clear. "Within a couple of years, we plan to maximize Vadilal's presence across the US," said Kalpit. The long-term plan is to tighten marketing strategies and streamline manufacturing methods to achieve the maximum output. "We are continuously upgrading the technological infrastructure at our three manufacturing units in Gujarat and UP," he said.

Vadilal's vision is to grow globally and become stronger locally. "We are up to speed with altering market trends. Vadilal is nurturing its close connections with consumers using many platforms," Kalpit said. "Gone are the days when brands could advertise on one platform and deliver its message to the masses. Today, we have to push the message via social media, hoardings, TV and FM radio adverts because these mediums are now an integral part of our lives. Along with the plan to make the brand more visible across the US, we are also focused on growing more in India. The new consciousness for using branded products is spreading in our villages and remote areas. We are targeting India's interiors too." ■



AGL

In just 20 years, the Asian Granito India Ltd has emerged as one of the largest ceramic companies of India. AGL's ascendancy has been marked by triumphs over many challenges. The company has become a celebrated national player due to its incessant pursuit of excellence.



KAMLESH PATEL
AGL

*Shah | Kunal Patel | Mauli Teli | Maulik Mehta | Maulik M
Desai | Pathik Patwari | Priya Gandhi | Rohan Shah | Shambhar
Patel | Aditya Handa | Akshat Doshi | Ankit Chona | Arjun
S | Chandu Virani | Chitrak Shah | Darshan Patel | Dishit
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THE TILES OF INDIA: BEAUTIFUL JOURNEY FROM TILES TO BATHWARE

He paved the way to his success with the tiles of diligence and brave dreams.

The country's leading ceramic tile maker, Asian Granito India Ltd (AGL), has blazed a trail that traces the arc of the archetypal story of triumph.

When Kamlesh Patel and Mukesh Patel decided to start a business, they had no experience or capital. Kamlesh Patel's father, Bhagubhai, was a family physician in Idar, at the southern end of the Aravalli range in Sabarkantha district of Gujarat.

"I kept wondering what I can do in a town where water is scarce and the terrain is hilly," Kamlesh Patel said. "No opportunity or idea was in sight. Suddenly, one fine day, I noticed the stones. Idar is known for its hard and bald red stones and grey granite rocks. Idar's natural resources were radiating an insight." After conducting in-depth market research, Patel learned that the national tiles industry was dominated by Johnson Tiles and Bell Ceramics and that there was no third viable option.

"Inspired by these giants, I decided to start a small tile manufacturing unit in Idar. Managing capital investment of Rs 6 crore was an ordeal," Patel said. "However, thanks to the company's promoters we could manage funds and bought second-hand machinery from Italy. A small company was incorporated and it commenced operations in 2000 in Idar. Referencing Idar's granite and aiming to make it one of the market leaders in Asia, I named the company Asian Granito.

JOURNEY BEGINS

The company's journey was not as smooth as the glossy, satin-finished tiles it is known for today. When

Design innovation, quality control, a competent team, and efficient systems are the major factors behind the progress. Perhaps the most important factor is the company's focus on building its brand value.



AGL started its ceramic floor tile manufacturing unit in 2003, its first products were 12X12 and 16X16 floor tiles and 8X12 wall tiles. “When my elder cousin Mukeshbhai and I launched our floor tiles in the market in 2000, they seemed to be the ultimate products in demand,” Patel said. “However, soon the market trend changed and the demand for vitrified tiles rose. We had to alter our focus. In 2006, we established a vitrified tiles facility in Himmatnagar. We raised the manufacturing capacity of the plant to 4,000 sq m per day from the Idar plant’s 2,500 sq m per day. In 2008, we aspired to go public and expand further.”

In 2008, AGL was listed on the stock exchange and it expanded its product range to include the largest wall tiles. It also increased its per day production capacity to 10,000 sq m. “The journey was not easy but challenging and exigent. We had to be alert and responsive to the market’s high and low tides,” Patel said. In 2010, AGL commenced production of marble slabs and introduced new digital printing technology for ceramic wall tiles. But marble & quartz became the flavour of the season and the company started marble & quartz production in 2012 and also launched digital glazed vitrified tiles anticipating a new trend. “This forward-looking move benefitted the company. In 2015, we launched double charged polished vitrified tiles and kept expanding the manufacturing capacity,” Patel said. “By then, AGL had eight manufacturing plants across the state.”

Passion for growth has fueled AGL’s progress. In 2017, the company expanded its product portfolio in marble and in 2018 it added multi-colour marble & quartz to its range. “The most innovative step we took in 2018 was setting up an 18,000 sq ft showroom in

Ahmedabad for architects, designers, and planners,” Patel said. “This has become a one-stop solution for trade experts.”

FOCUSING ON IP

“Our specialty is our design,” Patel said. “The world has noticed the wide range of strong and beautiful products that AGL offers. A decade ago, the global tile market was dominated by Italy, Spain, Germany, China, and Brazil. However, the trend has drastically changed. Today, the leaders are India and China. The pace at which Indian tile manufactures are covering the global market suggests that within the next five years India will be the global leader in ceramics export. The technological advancement and aggressive marketing have strengthened the country’s foothold in the global market. AGL has registered a healthy growth over the past three years.”

AGL has offices across the country, 300+ showrooms, 9 manufacturing units, and 6,700 touch-points. Its team strength is 6,000 employees (including contract labours). AGL exports products to 100 countries and its annual turnover is Rs 1,224 crore in 2019-2020. Growing strong in all verticals, company plans to expand the exclusive stores’ network to 500 and its international presence in over 120 countries within next couple of years. Ranked among the Top 3 listed ceramic tiles companies in India, AGL has achieved 40-fold growth in its production capacity, from 2,500 sq m in 2000 to 1 lakh sq m. From small tiles to big slabs and bringing engineered marble, quartz; and now introducing bathware has led AGL to the new heights.

From ceramic tiles, nanotech, roto-drum to new digital technology, AGL leads the way in creating





Kamlesh Patel

Mukesh Patel

the most diverse array of designs across the entire tile, marble, and quartz segments. Design innovation, quality control, a competent team, and efficient systems are the major factors behind the progress. Perhaps the most important factor is the company's focus on building its brand value.

"The strategy is to intensify branding and visibility exercises," Patel said. "We have been investing a considerable amount annually into branding activities. We plan to make them more intensive and hold bigger road shows and events such as gatherings for architects, masons, and contractors. We will also set up a large

number of exclusive showrooms across the country. Moreover, we are foraying into the sanitary fittings segment. The idea is to increase the brand visibility and build our IP. We are known for design, quality, durability, strength, and beauty. However, our tiles are fixed in such a way that the brand name is buried. The innovative sanitary fittings will give visibility to AGL's label. And this visibility will help the company achieve the targeted turnover in near future."

Patel went on to say: "We aim to become bigger and make the world better and beautiful." His words rang with the confidence of an irrepressible achiever. ■



OMSHANTI ESTATES PVT. LTD.

Omshanti Estates has worked with the ambitious target of building homes catering to the 'sidelined' consumers. The past experience of 20+ projects has given Bakeris an edge over the others in this field.

Their company's focus is primarily on transparency, commitment, quality, and price. Their niche lies in affordable housing and smart utilization of space through well-researched designs.



KANHA BAKERI
OMSHANTI ESTATES PVT. LTD.

*Shah | Kunal Patel | Mauli Teli | Maulik Mehta | Maulik M
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BUILDING DREAMS

They build dreams. They never dreamed of success but success constructed itself under them while they were busy building people's dreams. Kanha Bakeri, 22, is committed to the mission of providing homes to millions. The national endeavour is her father Taral Bakeri's guiding principle.

"I was restless to contribute to the cause," she said. She completed her master's programme in entrepreneurship in London and left the city with an unfinished dissertation. "I couldn't wait even for a day after completing the master's programme," she said. "I brought my dissertation to Ahmedabad and completed it after joining my father's company, Omshanti Estates Pvt Ltd, early this year."

Before embarking on the mission, Bakeri had to undergo the usual tribulations of trial and error. "My father had tried his hand at the peanut butter business before he started a construction company from scratch in 1994," Kanha said. "The name of that company was Santosh Associates. He thoroughly researched the city's areas, localities, and demands. He decided to establish his first residential scheme in Vejalpur, an area where many residential schemes had failed."

CREATED A FRESH FORMULA FOR SUCCESS

Bakeri's first line up of schemes in Vejalpur was a huge success. "The scheme did well because of its innovative design and most competitive pricing," Kanha said. And these two factors – design and pricing – have become the USP of our company since then. The first scheme launched in 1994 was named Santosh Chhavni. Another of Bakeri's schemes launched in Vejalpur in

Omshanti Estates holds the copyright for its original and compact designs. It has become IP-driven starting from 2015. This has given leverage to our brand name.



1996 - Shantinath - created a fresh formula for success. "In that scheme, apartments had a unique design. We provided balconies which could be converted into small bedrooms. And the price we had quoted was of a 1 BHK apartment but we were offering a 2 BHK house. The buyers saw the benefits and the scheme was fully sold out within months."

The company repeated its success formula and offered more schemes in Vejalpur. In 2005, the company developed a luxury apartment scheme in Paldi but the price offered was the lowest in the area. "Then my father decided to come up with commercial projects and built a couple of them on Ashram Road in 2009," Kanha said. "The thumb rule of offering 'value-for-money apartments' was followed in every project. However, still he felt that something was lacking in his commercial projects. He decided to re-focus on building residential buildings in areas that most builders ignored."

In 2009, Bakeri took the most unusual turn. "He focused on Vatva – an industrial area. He launched the area's first residential scheme," Kanha said. "That decision had drawn flak from construction industry notables. Their verdict was that a residential scheme in an industrial area will fail. But he trusted his gut feelings and went ahead. He named his residential scheme Omshantinagar 2. The scheme was sold out within days. The success was so overwhelming that it became his identity. He rebranded his company as Omshanti Estates Pvt Ltd in 2009."

Later, Bakeri created Omshanti Bungalows in Vatva. The rationale was to cater to the need of Aspiring Amdavadis. "Those who desired to buy a bungalow at an affordable rate chose to move away from the areas

that represented the conventional choice of home buyers," said Kanha. The company reprised success with Omshanti Gold Plus in 2016 in Vatva, and sold 3 BHK apartments at the price of 2BHK apartments. And this signature trend still continues.

BAKERI'S IDENTITY: THE USP AND IP

Bakeri's ability to define the need of a locality helped him pick locations for his schemes. For instance, he launched a scheme in Narol – another industrial hub. "Most builders never risked building residential schemes in industrial areas but he did," Kanha said. "His expertise was understanding the need of the area and catering to that need."

Moreover, he filed for protection for his innovatively compact designs. "Omshanti Estates holds the copyright for its original and compact designs, and has become IP-driven starting from 2015. And this has given leverage to our brand name. Due to the compactness of our design, we can offer two-bedroom houses at rates at which other builders offer one-bedroom houses in the area," Kanha said. "And because we took timely legal action of protecting our designs, others cannot copy or clone our designs. This legal armour that protects our designs is helping us become bigger day by day. We are becoming more IP-driven because we have reaped its rewards." After ensuring design protection, the company has grown by 300%, since 2009.

FUTURE ENDEAVOURS

Currently, the company's focus is on bringing fulfillment to the common people.

The company is working on the mission to provide





affordable housing. “Over the past decade, we have been focusing on Vatva. The latest schemes offer 2BHK and 1BHK apartments. In this project, we are catering to the need of the neglected section of society,” she said. “We are striving to fulfill the wish of the segment which desires to buy the smallest studio (kitchen-and-hall) apartment. But we have designed that small space in such a way that people will also get a private corner. And hence these houses are selling the fastest. These homes are fulfilling the basic need for privacy of the lower-middle-class. The happiness we see in their eyes prods us to work harder.”

Bakeris have been sensitive about their words and taglines. “Our taglines and slogans are worded carefully to enhance the sense of pride of our buyers. We do not use words like ‘the cheapest home’ or ‘home at the lowest price,” Kanha said. “The tagline for our latest scheme is ‘Maru Bedroom Walu Ghar’ (My Home with My Bedroom). We word the message in such a way that it doesn’t rob the buyer of self-respect. We want them to feel proud that they have been able to buy a house for their family along with a

room for themselves. And moreover, this small house with a bedroom they have bought at the price of a studio adds to their happiness.”

Kanha has her own plans of taking the business ahead. She said, “I want to expand the business using the same strategies – selecting areas in the periphery of the city, protecting designs, and offering more to the buyers at a lesser price.” She also dreams of building a township using the IP of their designs and thus take the legacy forward.

“I want to partner with landowners and focus only on building the structures,” she said. “If we invest in land and then build on it, we can do only a limited number of projects at a time. However, if someone else invested in land and we devote our resources only to building new structures, we can increase the number of projects at hand manifold. With partnerships, the company’s financial resources could be well utilized in construction. Going forward this way, we can scale up the business and build bigger townships instead of small schemes.” ■



Meghmani Group

Meghmani Group is the country's leading producer of various chemicals such as pigments, dyes, agro chemicals, basic chemicals, and other specialty chemicals. These chemicals are used by various industries including pharma, printing ink, plastics, paint, textiles, leather, paper, and rubber. The company exports its products to over 80 countries globally.



KAUSHAL SOPARKAR

MEGHMANI GROUP

*Shah | Kunal Patel | Mauli Teli | Maulik Mehta | Maulik M
Desai | Pathik Patwari | Priya Gandhi | Rohan Shah | Shanbhar
Patel | Aditya Handa | Akshat Doshi | Ankit Chona | Arjun
s | Chandu Virani | Chitrak Shah | Darshan Patel | Dishit
Engineer | Kalpit Gandhi | Kamlesh Patel | Kanha Bakeri | Kaushal
Shah | Kunal Patel | Mauli Teli | Maulik Mehta | Maulik
Desai | Pathik Patwari | Priya Gandhi | Rohan Shah | S
| Vashist Patel | Aditya Handa | Akshat Doshi | Ankit Chona
Arpit Vyas | Chandu Virani | Darshan Patel
| Kairav Engineer | Kalpit Gandhi | Kamlesh Patel | Kanha
Sparakar | Kunal Shah | Mauli Teli | Maulik
Mokariya | Parag Desai | Pathik Patwari | Priya Gandhi | Rohan
Shah | Shanbhar Chauhan | Vashist Patel | Aditya Handa | Akshat Doshi
Arjun Handa | Arpit Vyas | Chandu Virani | Chitrak Shah |
Dishit Nathwani | Kairav Engineer | Kalpit Gandhi | Kamlesh Patel
Kaushal Sparakar | Kunal Shah | Kunal Patel | Mauli Teli |
Maulik Mokariya | Parag Desai | Pathik Patwari | Priya
Shah | Shanbhar Chauhan | Vashist Patel | Aditya Handa
Ankit Chona | Arjun Handa | Arpit Vyas | Chandu Virani*

THE CHEMISTRY OF VICTORY

Two like-minded friends - both committed, disciplined, humble, and open to learning – pursued higher education together at Vadodara in the early 1970s. At the time, the Ahmedabad city was the hub of India’s textile industry and dyes (colouring chemicals) are the basic raw material for the textile industry.

After earning a degree in chemical engineering from Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda, they parted ways. Both took up a job for a year, earning modest salaries. And pursuing their goals, they both saved money for their start-up.

Jayanti Meghijbhai Patel and Ashish Natwarlal Soparkar reunited in 1977 and started a small company, Ashish Chemicals. “My grandfather was a government employee. And Patel uncle’s parents were farmers,” said Kaushal Ashish Soparkar, a second-generation chemical industrialist in his late thirties and the managing director of Meghmani Finechem Ltd , one of the companies of the Meghmani Group. He holds a master’s degree in Engineering Management from Northeastern University, US. “Neither had a business background to bank on. They started a dyestuff manufacturing company with a meagre investment of Rs 15,000. That was the sum they could save after working hard for a year. When they started their business, they had no idea how to approach banks or how to record basic invoicing. They struggled, worked hard and harder. After two decades of efforts and patience, they reached a decent turnover of Rs 60 crore in 1995. This was the turning point. They decided to expand and added a few more verticals and products and re-named their company Meghmani Organics Ltd. The label combines the names of Patel

The team of ten combines strengths to deal with any crisis. It is a business run by a group of friends and families. And that is our organizational innovation and our team is our IP.



uncle's parents."

Today, Meghmani Group is a chemicals conglomerate which has four business verticals: manufacturing pigments & dyes, agro chemicals, basic chemicals & API. The group, which has 27 manufacturing sites across Gujarat and MP, touched the annual turnover of Rs 6,500 crore plus in 2020. The group's flagship company, Meghmani Organics Ltd, was first Indian company to be listed on the Singapore Stock Exchange in 2004 and subsequently the company got listed on Bombay Stock Exchange in 2007.

THE BUSINESS EVOLUTION

One of the group's employees barged into Kaushal's artfully decorated cabin at the humongous Meghmani Corporate House in Prahladnagar. He entered with a box of sweets that he had been passing around to celebrate his 25th year in the company. Kaushal warmly greeted him and respectfully relished the sweet while exchanging greetings. After he left, Kaushal continued gracefully: "These employees are our family. They are an asset. We don't have a formal hierarchical structure. So they don't need prior permission to enter my cabin. They know that they are welcome and are free to walk in." He smiled.

And that is the group's IP, he said. "I have seen many family businesses disintegrating after reaching a certain level. That is chiefly because the next generation is not given time to evolve. The transfer of power or hand-holding has been a simple and cheery process at Meghmani. The group's inner circle has a unique structure. We are a ten member team that runs the Meghmani Group of companies and looks after the group's segregated sections. Of these ten, five belong

to the senior generation and five members are from the second generation. Meghmani Group's core team senior members Natubhai Patel, Rameshbhai Patel and Anandbhai Patel joined the founders, Ashishbhai and Jayantibhai in 1980s. The team of ten combines strengths to deal with any crisis. It is not strictly a family business. It is a business run by a group of friends and families. And that is our organizational innovation and our team is our IP. Our team has the strength to come up with out-of-the-box solutions. If any of our companies faces a problem, ten minds come together to solve that one problem. Hence we have diverse ideas for any challenge. This strength differentiates us from many business groups. This unique structure gives room to each one of us to evolve and run the business smoothly. Micro-management and day-to-day administration have been taken care of by the second generation since the past decade. The seniors are at the helm of the group but they mentor us. It is the second generation that has been pushing the businesses forward." The second generation has been active in business from last 15 years.

BRAND AND ITS GOODWILL

Meghmani has a big business-to-business (B2B) portfolio and a smaller section that caters to consumers directly. "Branding is extremely important to us," said Kaushal. "The foundation of the company is strong. Today, we are a well-recognized name because of our quality products, commitment, good governance, vision, mission, and values. The group has survived many struggles. The second generation is aware that reversals are never grave or permanent. We have learned to listen to our mentors, teammates, and employees. Two lessons that my father taught are





Jayanti Patel, Natu Patel,
Ashish Soparkar, Ramesh Patel, Anand Patel,

Darshan Patel, Karna Patel,
Kaushal Soparkar, Ankit Patel, Maulik Patel

invaluable. One: a person who listens always learns. Two: the one who agrees with you never teaches you anything.”

The Meghmani’s second generation has assimilated the wisdom of the elders and is equipped with enterprising enthusiasm to turn the company into a global conglomerate. Today, the group has a strong

customer base in more than eighty countries. “We believe in our products and never compromise on business values,” Kaushal said. “Secondly, we are always careful not to repeat a mistake. Yet we always have the Plan B ready. For us doing business is staying closely connected with our products, people, suppliers and customers and consumers.”

Meghmani Group believes in giving back to society. “The group takes care of the development in villages surrounding the company’s manufacturing sites. We work with children with special needs to make their lives more comfortable. We do care for our surroundings, environment, planet and our people. We have also donated ventilators to various hospitals during the ongoing pandemic,” Kaushal said.

When asked about the future, he said: “We want to retain the familial working culture within the group. We chase numbers while maintaining balance our family values and professional culture. We just put in our best. And the growth you see on the group’s graph is just a by-product.” ■



JIVRAJ 9 TEA

Jivraj 9 Tea Ltd is one of the leading Indian tea companies known for its products' unique aroma and blends. Being hailed as "everyone's cup of tea" is a mammoth achievement. And Jivraj 9 Tea acquired this honour with people's thumping endorsement. In the pre-Independence era, the company was formed with a dream of becoming the country's leading tea brand. With the consistent endeavors of the group's successive generations of leaders, it has successfully retained its customary flavours by deploying the most modernized processes.



KOMAL SHAH

JIVRAJ 9 TEA

hah | Kunal Patel | Mauli Teli | Maulik Mehta | Maulik M
Desai | Pathik Patwari | Priya Gandhi | Rohan Shah | Shanbhar
Patel | Aditya Handa | Akshat Doshi | Ankit Chona | Arjun
s | Chandu Virani | Chitrak Shah | Darshan Patel | Dishit
Engineer | Kalpit Gandhi | Kamlesh Patel | Kanha Bakeri | Kaushal
Shah | Kunal Patel | Mauli Teli | Maulik Mehta | Maulik
Desai | Pathik Patwari | Priya Gandhi | Rohan Shah | S
| Vashist Patel | Aditya Handa | Akshat Doshi | Ankit Chona
Arpit Vyas | Chandu Virani | Darshan Patel
| Kairav Engineer | Kamlesh Patel | Kanha
Sparakar | Kunal Shah | Mauli Teli | Maulik
Mokariya | Parag Desai | Pathik Patwari | Priya Gandhi | Rohan
Shah Chauhan | Vashist Patel | Aditya Handa | Akshat Doshi
Arjun Handa | Arpit Vyas | Chandu Virani | Chitrak Shah |
Dishit Nathwani | Kairav Engineer | Kalpit Gandhi | Kamlesh Patel
Kaushal Sparakar | Kunal Shah | Kunal Patel | Mauli Teli |
Maulik Mokariya | Parag Desai | Pathik Patwari | Priya
Shah | Shanbhar Chauhan | Vashist Patel | Aditya Handa
Ankit Chona | Arjun Handa | Arpit Vyas | Chandu Virani

THE ULTIMATE BYSTANDER

The true companion stands with you through turbulences. And for the Shah family, that 'Sangharsh ka Saathi' has been their Jivraj 9 Tea Ltd for the past nine decades.

In the revolutionary swirl of the pre-Independence era, many smaller struggles were shaping up too. Some families found it hard to settle down, while some students were confronted with hurdles on the path to their dreams.

In the mix were young, enterprising minds that aspired to the freedom to follow their passions. One such budding entrepreneur set up a small tea shop in Surat. He named his tea business Jivraj and a fresh chronicle of another success story began. Each success catalogue has its own inevitable struggle and it is that struggle which makes success worthwhile.

He started with passion and believed in perseverance. He sold several types of loose teas. During that era, the concept of packaged tea was non-existent. His tenacity inspired his son, Sureshchandra, who carried forward the legacy. He joined the business in 1958 and by 1960 he had opened ten retail outlets – a small but significant leap.

“Continuing the legacy, he also sold blends at his shops. Each blend had a unique quality and each blend was given a specific number. The fastest selling blend was Number 9. And since then our tea business became Jivraj 9 Tea. The company’s brand name was registered in 1978. In this phase, the annual turnover was a meager Rs 20 lakh,” said Komal Shah, the Administrative President of the Jivraj 9 Tea Group and the daughter-in-law of Viren Shah, 54, a third-generation tea tycoon who is at the helm of the

According to a study, when a company’s patent application is approved, its employment growth increases by 36% and its sales growth increases by 51% on average over the next five years. Once a business group protects its IP, its goodwill shoots up. Consumers are positively attracted to the brand’s value and often switch to your brand.



company. Virenbhai joined the family business in 1986.

GROWING THE FOOTHOLD

Today the group's annual turnover is Rs 3500 million rupees. The group holds 70% market share in South Gujarat. The group has come a long way because it has consistently remained committed to offering superior quality tea. Its packaged tea – a trend that the group started in the early 1980s – is today processed in fully automatic manufacturing plant, maintaining the highest hygiene standards. “The group is also making waves across North Gujarat, Maharashtra, Goa, Rajasthan, West Bengal and Karnataka. It is spreading its aroma of rich taste and quality beyond Indian shores in countries like the US, the UK, Canada, South Africa, UAE, Italy, Saudi Arabia, Spain, Australia, New Zealand and many more,” said Komal, 30, who has an MBA in finance.

Jivraj 9 Group registered rapid growth after the third generation took over. After 1986, a new wave of awareness on branding strategies swept through the company. Komal added, “Brand consciousness was not a factor in the local markets early in the group's history. But today, the business environment has matured and all stakeholders appreciate that branding forms the connect with consumers. Branding is a way to update buyers on who we are and what have to offer. Branding is a communication strategy that quickly changes in response to volatile market trends.”

THEIR FLAVOURS THEIR IP

The group scaled up its business by gradually adding sub-brands. Today, the group sells seven different brands. “The group became proactive in protecting its trademarks, brands, and product designs over the past

few decades,” Komal said. While one strives to survive in today's highly competitive market, legally protecting the brand's IP is vital. It protects your innovative ideas or products. If you fail to protect your IP, you are letting others earn from your ideas.”

After 1990, Jivraj 9 Group started taking extensive and far-reaching steps to build its business identity. “The first step was conducting a series of in-depth market research studies. The studies gave rare insights into the minds of consumers. Focusing on consumers' feedback, the group worked harder to fulfill their expectations. We worked on two vital factors – quality and customer satisfaction. And these two factors have become our USP,” said Komal.

Building on the group's intellectual property (IP) enabled it to achieve new targets. Komal went on to say, “Legally protecting your innovative ideas eventually leads you to success. According to a study, when a company's patent application is approved, its employment growth increases by 36% and its sales growth increases by 51% on average over the next five years. Patent approval also has a strong causal effect on continuous ability to innovate and sustain in the fluctuating market. Once a business group protects its IP, its goodwill shoots up. Consumers are positively attracted to the brand's value and often switch to your brand.”

THE ENERGETIC BOOST

Senior Shah's sons Pathik, 32, and Rushabh, 30, joined the family business in 2012. Both the fourth-generation tea tycoons are advancing their strategies with a broader vision. The junior duo has digested the purpose of their brands.



Pathik Shah

Viren Shah

Rushabh Shah



Pathik said, “My father’s words have become my motto. Once he had told me that tea is not just a drink but an emotion. You cannot play with quality because that quality is loved by millions. I have digested these words. These words inspire me to work harder and help me take important decisions. I can contribute to running the business efficiently because I believe in the strength of these words.”

The group’s vision is to create and sustain Jivraj Tea 9 Ltd’s position as one of India’s most valuable tea brands. “Our tea is a cup that you would love to click a selfie with. That speaks of the quality bond with our consumers. Like every business, Jivraj 9 Group too has struggled to stay afloat during testing times. The struggles have taught us unforgettable lessons. There was a tough phase of about fifteen years when the company had to fight for its survival. However, we succeeded because we never gave up. The resilience has brought us rewards,” added Pathik.

When asked to Rushabh about how does he feel to be one of the Directors of such an esteemed Brand,

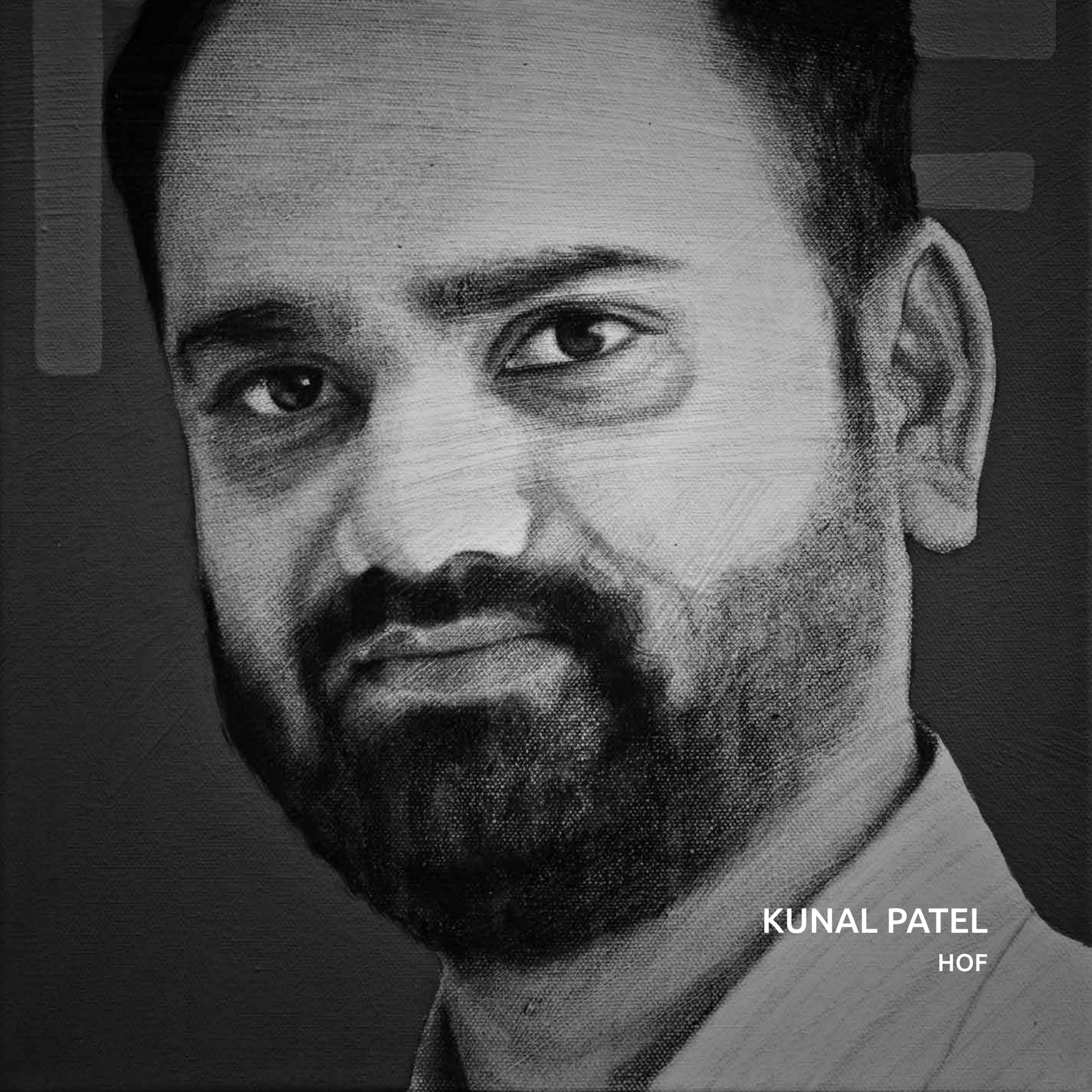
he said “I consider myself very fortunate to be have born in the family of brilliant businessmen, at the same time I have deeply experienced & understood what it takes to be where we are today. My father never let us feel privileged, in-fact he made us earn every single thing we take benefit of. When I joined the business, following the legacy, I was not a Director, I was also an employee like every other in the office. So when your start working from the ground level, that’s when you understand the business from point of view of the employees at each level, that’s when you understand the sensitivity of every single decision taken at Management level, that’s when you actually understand the difference of efforts put into building a Company & building a Brand.”

And future goals? “Striving to grow with smart work, faith, dedication, clean practices and the right people. Our IP is our quality and consistency due to which we have been winning the market wars. We will stick to our principles. We will be as strong as our tea,” concluded Komal. ■



HOF

One of the country's leading furniture brands, HOF specializes in premium high-end chairs, luxury sofas, executive desks, and imported furniture. Ultra-modern manufacturing facility and design innovation have made HOF a frontrunner in the global furniture industry.



KUNAL PATEL
HOF

hah | Kunal Patel | Mauli Teli | Maulik Mehta | Maulik M
esai | Pathik Patwari | Priya Gandhi | Rohan Shah | Shambhar
Patel | Aditya Handa | Akshat Doshi | Ankit Chona | Arjun
s | Chandu Virani | Chitrak Shah | Darshan Patel | Dishit
Engineer | Kalpit Gandhi | Kamlesh Patel | Kanha Bakeri | Kaushal
Shah | Kunal Patel | Mauli Teli | Maulik Mehta | Maulik
Desai | Pathik Patwari | Rohan Shah | S
| Vashist Patel | Ad | Doshi | Ankit Chona
Arpit Vyas | Darshan Patel
| Kairav Engineer | Patel | Kanha
Sparakar | Kunal Shah | Mauli Teli | Maulik
Mokariya | Parag Desai | Priya Gandhi | Roh
Shah | Shambhar Chauhan | Vashist Patel | Aditya Handa | Akshat Doshi
Arjun Handa | Arpit Vyas | Chandu Virani | Chitrak Shah |
Dishit Nathwani | Kairav Engineer | Kalpit Gandhi | Kamlesh Patel
Kaushal Sparakar | Kunal Shah | Kunal Patel | Mauli Teli |
Maulik Mokariya | Parag Desai | Pathik Patwari | Priya
Shah | Shambhar Chauhan | Vashist Patel | Aditya Handa
Ankit Chona | Arjun Handa | Arpit Vyas | Chandu Virani

DESIGNING A NEW EPIC AROUND POWER-PACKED THRONES

In ancient times, when a maternal uncle and his nephews joined hands, they created a majestic Indian epic. And in modern times, when two nephews – Hasmukh Patel and Rajesh Patel – collaborated with their maternal uncles, Bharat Patel and Pravin Patel, they created another epic success story.

In the first case, all parties had fought battles for one throne. In the modern-day alliance, the result is the production of upholstered urban thrones – chairs and sofas – that have sparked off an intense battle in the global furniture market.

In 1986, the two pairs of Patels combined their strengths and opened a furniture gallery in a modest space. The idea was to supply quality furniture at reasonable prices. “They bought furniture and continually expanded the product line. To grow bigger, in 2000, they decided to create a niche identity with a specific brand name and scale up their business under that name,” said Kunal Patel, the son of Pravinbhai. Kunal holds an MBA degree from Australia. “The HOF founders had the hunger for growth. Within a couple of years, their team strength shot up from 30 to 100 people,” Kunal said. “They mulled a foray into manufacturing new designs and also planned to add to their distribution channels. They dreamed big. Their vision was to reach every home and office, and hence they named their business entity as HOF, an acronym for Home and Office Furniture.”

Since its inception in 1986, the group’s USP has been its quality and design. “We don’t merely manufacture a chair or a table or a sofa. We create value. We give concepts concretely comfortable shapes,” Kunal said. “Today, HOF is a name that evokes trust, gives assurance of uniqueness, and offers ultimate comfort



Building on the IP is the only target. We are passionate and give our 100% to our business. This year, we will also add a hundred more selling points across India.



at competitive prices. This trust has not come out of an instant miracle. We have worked hard to earn the trust. Our office chairs are preferred and retained for aspirational, emotional, and auspicious reasons.”

EXITED COMFORT ZONE FOR GIVING COMFORT

The senior Patels had started with the single goal of delivering quality furniture for every home and office. They bought loose furniture of good quality and began their generic furniture business in 1986. Experience of four years expanded their vision and they created their exclusive brand, HOF, in 2000. “After creating the brand, we became completely design-centric,” said Sanket Patel, the son of co-founder Bharatbhai. Sanket and Kunal joined the family business in 2009. “Being design-centric means we are focused on a cycle of testing, learning and improving our furniture products. We developed our in-house research & design library and a durability testing laboratory. The business kept growing slowly,” Sanket said.

With the entry of the junior Patel duo in 2009, the group launched a new trend that became a whopping success. “In 2009, the two generations combined their strengths and engaged in brainstorming for ideas to scale up the business. Till then we used to make things which were available in the market. After a series of ideating sessions, we decided to make things that consumers actually want and to stop making things that consumers had to settle for. We started customization and that clicked. We focused on the personal needs of consumers and catered to those needs. We also upgraded our designs and specialized in creating designs that are a treat to the eyes, maintenance-free, and easy to assemble. We

expanded the product line and our vision. We did not limit our reach to office and homes but expanded our footprint to encompass hospitals, institutions, and public and private sector projects. We redesigned our logo and tagline accordingly: HOF – Furniture & more,” explained Kunal.

Another co-founder Rajubhai’s son Dhruvin, 29, who entered the business in 2013 armed with a civil engineering degree illuminated how HOF has now turned into a globally renowned name owing to its innovative designs. “We became the first Indian company to design the world’s lowest carbon footprint sofa, Doab, which was launched at the Milan Design Week, Italy, in 2016,” Dhruvin said. “Doab is not just a sofa. It is a holistic concept created using natural materials. Doab is made of bamboo. Its cushioning is from natural fibers like coir, and it is upholstered in handwoven khadi. It is ultralight and eco-friendly. HOF has been nationally awarded twice (by Hon’ble President of India Dr A P J Abdul Kalam in 2005, and by Hon’ble President of India Shri Pranab Mukherjee in 2013) for designing quality products. We have the best talent of international repute like Mann Singh, from NID, and Italian designer Miki Astor on board.”

EXPANDING HORIZONS

Today, HOF brand is registered in 16 countries and has 27 flagship stores. HOF furniture and artefacts are available at 300-plus locations across India. HOF delivers products to 19,000 pin codes around the country. HOF also has its online store (www.shop.hofindia.com) and its products are available on giant online marketplaces such as Amazon, Flipkart and GeM (Government-E-Marketplace). HOF team strength has risen to 300 members and HOF Group has become





Dhruvin Patel

Kunal Patel

Sanket Patel

a global entity with a total asset base of Rs 150 crore. Kunal said, “In 1986, we began with a small furniture gallery where the seniors manufactured and showcased products. By 2009, we had a 1 lakh sq ft manufacturing area. Our production unit now is spread across 3,50,000 sq ft.”

HOF recently completed big public sector projects including the office of Hon’ble Finance Minister, Government of India; Chief Minister’s Office, Gujarat; Parliament House, Delhi; office of Bharat Sanchar Nigam Ltd (BSNL); office of Health and Family Welfare Department; Gujarat State Petroleum Corporation; Gujarat Narmada Valley Fertilizers and Chemicals Ltd (GNFC); and Gujarat State Fertilizers and Chemicals Ltd (GSFC). HOF has also supplied furniture for banks and financial institutions such as the Reserve Bank of India, State Bank of India, United Bank of India, Bank of Baroda, Corporation Bank, Dena Bank, Central Bank of India, and Bank of India. HOF pieces are also set up at

institutes of national repute including Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad, National Institute of Design (NID), CEPT University, and Ahmedabad Management Association (AMA).

WHAT NEXT

Building on the IP is the only target, said Kunal the eldest of the junior trio. “We are passionate and give our 100% to our business. We plan to expand our network via dealerships. This year, we will also add a hundred more selling points across India. The market is behaving totally differently from the way it did a decade ago, but we had anticipated the changes.”

The trio aims to make HOF an ultimate lifestyle icon. “We have grown to a level that people aspire to own a HOF piece. And still be aware that HOF is affordable. We aim to create each piece with the elegance and aura of a power-packed throne,” concluded Kunal. ■



IBA

Iba is India's first Halal-certified as well as PETA-certified vegan and cruelty-free cosmetic brand. All Iba products are free of alcohol, pig fat, and other animal-derived ingredients and harsh chemicals such as sulfates, parabens, ammonia, and bleaching agents. Iba's vision is to offer ethical beauty solutions and to enable ethical lifestyle choices.



MAULI TELI

IBA



*Shah | Kunal Patel | Mauli Teli | Maulik Mehta | Maulik M
Desai | Pathik Patwari | Priya Gandhi | Rohan Shah | Shanbhar
Patel | Aditya Handa | Akshat Doshi | Ankit Chona | Arjun
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| Vashist Patel | Ankit Chona
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Kaushal Sparakar | Kunal Shah | Kunal Patel | Mauli Teli |
Maulik Mokariya | Parag Desai | Pathik Patwari | Priya
Shah | Shanbhar Chauhan | Vashist Patel | Aditya Handa
Ankit Chona | Arjun Handa | Arpit Uas | Chandu Virani*

TORCHBEARERS OF IDEAL BEAUTY

They sell a beautiful way of life. The Teli sisters, Mauli and Grishma, are giving the country's cosmetics industry a stunning makeover. Look Good, Do Good is their credo.

The duo has pioneered Halal cosmetics, a latest global trend in India. And what does 'Halal' mean? Halal may trigger associations with food. However, Halal is an Arabic word which means 'permitted' or 'lawful'. "Halal is a way of life," explained Mauli, 37, a pharma engineer. "If a product is Halal-certified, it neither contains ingredients derived from animals nor is it tested on animals. Halal products don't contain alcohol and harsh chemicals such as sulfates and parabens. The products are pure and natural. These are ethical products free from impurities like pork fat, gelatin, keratin and other ingredients derived from animals."

Mauli said that Iba – India's first Halal cosmetics brand – offers the complete range: from cosmetics to skincare and hair care products. Iba comes from the Arabic word 'Ibadat' which means 'respect'. "When one lives by the idea of non-violence and respects animals, the environment, and one's own self, one spontaneously chooses the purest beauty solutions," she said. "These will be solutions or products that don't bring any harm to one's own self, the environment, or animals."

Mauli is the managing director of Ecotrail Personal Care. "In 2014, we introduced an entirely fresh category of Halal cosmetic products in India under the brand name Iba," she said. "These products are hygienic, ethically manufactured, and are meant for everyone, and are not targeted at one community or sect. However, 90% of our consumers are from the minority community. That is because they are able

Iba has unique solutions to problems. Nail polish is proscribed for Muslim women because the polish prevents water from cleaning nails. We offered them breathable nail colours so that water can completely clean their nails. The beauty solutions are unique and this uniqueness is our ultimate selling point (USP). We have loyal consumers who repeatedly come back to buy our products. They don't pick up our products randomly for trials. They first understand and believe in our brand's philosophy. When a woman buys an Iba product, she is buying a way of life, thoughtfully.

to understand and value what Halal stands for. Many from the Jain community and those who are against animal cruelty and those who are vegans choose Halal products. We don't merely sell cosmetics or skincare products, we offer beauty solutions that are consistent with one's ideology, belief, or the chosen way of life."

MAKING OF IBA

Mauli completed her pharmaceutical engineering in the US in 2004 and started working as a management consultant with a big firm in the US. "I worked from 2005 to 2011 and then decided to come back to India. I wanted to start something new," she said. "I initially joined my father's business. My father has a manufacturing unit that makes equipment for pharma and cosmetics industries. Simultaneously, my younger sister Grishma, 33, completed her master's in biotechnology in the US. Before returning to India in 2011, she took a short course in personal care products in the UK. We both resolved to do something extraordinary. Grishma wanted to foray into the cosmetics market. We carried out in-depth market research and found that the cosmetics industry was crowded. And we didn't want to become an also-ran company."

Deep reflection led to an untrodden path. "While analyzing the global cosmetics industry, we stumbled upon a nascent trend: Halal cosmetics," Mauli said. "Knowing what it stands for gave us a new insight. We examined the Indian market and learned that Halal cosmetic products have not taken hold here. And our mission was defined."

CREATING IBA'S IDENTITY: IP WEALTH

The idea sparked the sisters' zeal and they began

work. "In 2013, we completed the legal registration processes and launched Iba in 2014," Mauli said. "We explained that Iba stands for pure beauty and kindness. We explained that Iba products are beautiful in themselves. We demonstrated Iba products' high standards, efficacy, and purity. We lined up the products in a complete range. We offered solutions to people who couldn't use nail polish or hair colour because of religious norms." Mauli went on to say: "We explained that Iba has unique solutions to their problems. Nail polish is proscribed for Muslim women because the polish prevents water from cleaning nails. We offered them breathable nail colours so that water can completely clean their nails. Similarly, we offered henna-based natural hair colours. The beauty solutions are unique and this uniqueness is our ultimate selling point (USP). Our highest selling products are hair colours, nail paints, and lipsticks. We have loyal consumers who repeatedly come back to buy our products. They don't pick up our products randomly for trials. They first understand and believe in our brand's philosophy. When a woman buys an Iba product, she is buying a way of life, thoughtfully."

IBA'S EXPANSIVE EMBRACE

To expand its reach, the company has created experience centres in Ahmedabad, Surat, and Vadodara. Iba products are available at 8,000 points through the primary store channel. "Our digital presence is getting stronger by the day. We are visible on social media, available on web platforms like Amazon and Flipkart, and have an online store on our website," Mauli said. "We have been doubling in size every year from 2014. When we began, our team was a ten-member army. The number swelled to 200 in 2019."

iba ®

PURE BEAUTY.
ZERO IMPURITY.

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PURE BEA
ZERO IMPU

iba

IRE BEA
RO IMPU





Grishma Teli

Mauli Teli

DAZZLING DAYS AHEAD

The future is promising. “We are planning to expand across the country. We are keenly focusing on exporting to Southeast Asia and the Middle East. While 65 percent of our consumers are of the Muslim community, 35 percent are vegans or those who believe in using natural and herbal products,” Mauli

said. “The trend of using herbal and natural products is strengthening rapidly across the globe. And hence we are expecting a big leap within a couple of years. Iba’s positioning is strong enough to differentiate it as a brand that wins on moral and ethical grounds. We are becoming bigger each day as the only Indian entity that offers compassionate beauty solutions.” ■



DEEPAK – NITRITE

The Deepak Group, with around 50 years of rich heritage and legacy, has been one of the earliest adapters of the 'Make in India' philosophy. Over the years, it has made laudable efforts to diversify the group's offerings. Refining its processes, fostering stronger relationships, and adopting sustainable practices, the group has relentlessly been working for its shareholders, investors, partners, customers, employees, and the planet.



MAULIK MEHTA
DEEPAK NITRITE

*Shah | Kunal Patel | Mauli Teli | Maulik Mehta | Maulik M
Desai | Pathik Patwari | Priya Gandhi | Rohan Shah | Shanbhar
Patel | Aditya Handa | Akshat Doshi | Ankit Chona | Arjun
s | Chandu Virani | Chitrak Shah | Darshan Patel | Dishit
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Mokariya | Parag Desai | Priya Gandhi | Rohan
Shah | Shanbhar Chauhan | Vashist Patel | Aditya Handa | Akshat Doshi
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Maulik Mokariya | Parag Desai | Pathik Patwari | Priya
Shah | Shanbhar Chauhan | Vashist Patel | Aditya Handa
Ankit Chona | Arjun Handa | Arpit Vyas | Chandu Virani*

THE CHEMISTRY OF SUCCESS

Tough times don't always last but tough people do – this adage delineates the story of Maulik Deepak Chimanlal Mehta of Deepak Nitrite Ltd. (DNL).

“The firm’s founder, Chimanlal Mehta, my grandfather, spent his childhood taking up any and all odd jobs, from working as a pump attendant at a petrol station, to a bus driver. He took up every opportunity to put his ferocious willpower to use, said Maulik Mehta, who has a Masters from Columbia University and now serves as the full-time director of DNL. Mehta went on to say about his grandfather: “He experimented with selling trading intermediate chemicals during the Licence Raj, and realized the tremendous potential of a Made in India project. He worked with unstinting commitment and started a sodium nitrite manufacturing plant which IPOed as Deepak Nitrite Ltd in 1972.”

Mehta said his father joined the family business in 1983 after earning a bachelor’s degree in science. “Following an amicable settlement within the family, my father took sole charge of the company with the aim of growing it into a globally known chemical major,” Mehta said. “The company’s market value has grown from a couple of hundred crore in 2009 to exceeding Rs 4,500 crore in 2019,” he said.

REALIZATION THAT REAPED REWARDS

Mehta’s thoughts are as crisp as his white shirt. “Our growth has not happened overnight – it was built year after year,” he said. “One of the major factors behind the growth is our strong brand equity. Initially, we had not thought much of certifications, design registrations, patenting, accreditations, brand

We decided to take concrete steps to protect our IP. We began to realize that registrations, certifications, and patenting allow us to retain and boost our brand equity and inspire constant improvement.



value, branding, or the value of brand equity.” He said the concepts sounded like jargon in the initial days since the company never sold products directly to consumers but to other manufacturers.

“At that point, we were solely focused on technological advancement and expansion of our product portfolio in areas of expertise such as basic chemicals, fine and specialty chemicals, and performance products,” he said. “We were growing, but the annual revenue growth remained muted. However, a small change gave us a big push towards progress. We started waking up to the value addition that registrations, certifications, and patenting brought in.”

The company decided to take concrete steps to protect its Intellectual Property (IP). “We began to realize that registrations, certifications, and patenting allow us not only to retain but also boost our brand equity and inspire constant improvement,” he said.

Elucidating the steps to success, Mehta said: “Most of our patents are filed with the aim to improve our processes, standardize them, and keep making the products better qualitatively.” He said certification, patents, and design registrations helped the company establish its products among the best in the world. “Our patents prove that we try to improve our products’ quality at every given opportunity,” he said. “Even when big companies like Clariant and BASF failed, DNL managed to improve some mature products used in paper applications, detergent, and personal care and patented perhaps the purest form available in the market.”

That recognition helped create a strong positive

perception of the brand value, he said. “Today, top agrochemical or pharma companies trust our basic and fine specialty chemicals,” he said. “They do not want to take the risk of ruining their end-product by using low-quality ingredients. We have established our brand equity by successfully improving our product quality and benchmarking quality against the global best in class.”

Today, DNL has filed seven patents and more are in the pipeline. Mehta credits the legal framework for protecting the IP and trademark and giving DNL a sustainable long-term advantage. DNL benefitted from these protections because it is a bulk manufacturer. “We have about 50 products that we manufacture in excess of 1,000 tonnes annually” he said. “Phenol and acetone are our highest volume products. We make two lakh tonnes of phenol and one and a half lakh tonnes of acetone annually. And because we manufacture and sell in such large volumes, building brand equity is crucial.”

INITIATIVES AND INNOVATION

For building brand recognition and goodwill, DNL has embedded research into its DNA. “We invest significantly for research and development, and constantly strive to excel in developing a diversified basket of products using innovative technologies,” Mehta said. “Because we invested wisely in building our brand equity, today we are the leaders in the domestic market for sodium nitrite, sodium nitrate, and nitro toluene. We are among the top in the global market for xylydines, cumidines, colour intermediates, oximes and stilbenic brighteners.”

Mehta said since the company has a qualitative





edge over others, global focus is shifting from Chinese partners to Indian partners. “Countries such as the US, Japan, and South Korea and the countries of Europe prefer DNL’s (Indian) products,” he said. “Industries such as agrochemicals, rubber, pharmaceuticals, paper, textiles, detergent, colourants, petrochemicals, pigments and dyes, and explosives use DNL products.”

The rising demand is contributing to DNL’s growth, Mehta said. “We are increasing the DNL footprint at a swift pace and currently have five big plants at

Nandesari, Roha, Taloja, Hyderabad, and Dahej with more coming up,” he said.

Because the protections of IP, design, and patenting have contributed handsomely to DNL’s rapid growth, it has special respect for earning and giving recognition. DNL runs regular events at plants for idea and initiative generation at every level.

“The events are called IPL – Idea Premier League – and are aimed to democratize the ideation process,” Mehta said. “Any employee, be it a senior assistant or

a supervisor or a trainee or a floor worker, can directly share ideas with the company's top management. These ideas can range from waste management and water conservation to product planning and boosting profit."

Mehta said the company takes each suggestion or idea seriously and acts upon the most valuable ones. "We generously reward those who share valuable ideas and applaud them for bringing in change," Mehta said. "DNL has upped its annual profits by INR 6–7 crore by incorporating ideas and suggestions generated during such events. This not only sparks a healthy competition among employees but also improves our bond with them. They become aware of the value of their ideas or IP, and understand that their suggestions and ideas matter to the company."

DNL has a Whistle-blower Programme as well. "Any employee can alert the management about a problem on our premises," Mehta said. Such initiatives help to build brand equity and make internal ties stronger, he said.

RESPONSIBLE CHEMISTRY

Having realized the significance of brand building and brand equity, DNL has started taking the vital

step of dealing with public misconceptions about the chemical industry. It is thought that chemical industries cause pollution and leave behind hazardous waste that degrades the environment. "As a chemical company, we conform to each and every anti-pollution norm," Mehta said. "We ensure that all our hazardous waste is recycled or neutralized before it is released into the sanctioned effluent channels. We strive to create an environment that is better for having us, than it would be if DNL did not exist there. As such, we are also accredited with Responsible Care- the industry's highest standards, worldwide."

Deepak Foundation takes care of villages in the vicinity of the company's plants. "We fund programmes that offer food and neonatal care and we pay for schooling and meals for children in the surrounding villages," Mehta said. "We have funded mobile ambulances that cater to these villages and help the sick and needy. We believe that by contributing to social welfare, we are working to change the public perception of the chemical industry. DNL wants to demonstrate that even the chemical industry cares for the environment and its surroundings. We want to reach out, help, and give back something positive to the world." ■



SHREE MARUTI COURIER SERVICES PVT. LTD.

Maruti has significantly contributed to developing national logistics industry. Its forte is technological advancement and multiplying employment opportunities.

Maruti has fueled anew spirit in the country's entrepreneurial eco-system.



MAULIK MOKARIYA
SHREE MARUTI COURIER SERVICES PVT. LTD.

**DESTINED
TO DELIVER,
VICTORY COMES
HOME**

Rambhai Mokariya ran a small photocopying shop in Porbandar in the 1980s.

Today, his story could be photocopied by millions of aspiring entrepreneurs across the world as a template for staggering success. His Shree Maruti Courier Service Pvt Ltd is a leader of the sector in the country with fifty-plus regional offices and a nationwide network of 2,000+ outlets and 9,000+ committed workforce.

The enterprising Mokariya saw a business opportunity. He started delivering important documents to nearby locations in and around Porbandar and Saurashtra. With no help at his disposal, His hard work started paying off and he gained the reputation of being the safest and swiftest courier for all important consignments.

MARUTI IS BORN

Mokariya named his enterprise Shree Maruti, which began operations in 1985 on a small scale. Within few years, his firm grew into a private limited courier company that delivered consignments to five locations: Porbandar, Junagadh, Rajkot, Jamnagar, and Veraval. His business began to grow rapidly and methodically. Increasing its reach in a couple of years, Mokariya opened new branches in Gujarat, Maharashtra, Rajasthan, UP, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, West Bengal, Haryana, Goa, and Assam.

“In 1987, my father envisioned Maruti growing into a known courier company and far-sighted registered it under The Company Registration Act,” said Maulik, 30, The next milestone we achieved in safeguarding Maruti’s identity was applying for the registration of trademark – Shree Maruti Courier Service Pvt Ltd – in 2000.”

The rise in our popularity was attracting attention and hence some companies started using identical and deceptive names to lure clients. We promptly acted for protecting our identity and intellectual property rights (IPR).



Maulik said that his father's capacity to forecast trends was the key to Maruti's evolution into one of the country's top five courier companies. "We have tied up with international brands to expand our reach to more than 150 countries across the globe," he said. "In the previous financial year (2018-2019), we delivered more than 30 million shipments with an estimated volume of 10,000 tonnes."

MARUTI IN MARKET WAR

Virtues such as punctuality and reliability as well as strengths such as the ability to reach the remotest locations with its extensive network helped Maruti earn loyal customers and essential clientele. The clients include nationalized and scheduled banks, government and semi-government bodies, and prominent corporates and multinationals. "Over the past few decades Maruti has become synonymous with efficiency," Mokariya said. "The rise in our popularity was attracting attention and hence some companies started using identical and deceptive names to lure clients. We promptly acted for protecting our identity and intellectual property rights (IPR). We went to court to protect our business and filed a suit against those who tried to mislead our loyal customers. Trademark registration laws helped and in 2006, Gujarat's top court barred other couriers from using the name 'Maruti' for their business."

Armed with legal protection, Maruti became stronger and focused on dealing with the changing market trends. In 2009, Maruti launched its Fast Track Service offering express delivery of the consignment to any remote location across India. Maruti's punctual delivery and competitive rates had by then made it the top couriering partner for big banks and leading corporates.

THE STRONGEST REPUTATION

The past decade has ignited a blaze of competition. In the era of the internet and mobile telephony, pressures on courier companies have drastically increased. Competing with start-ups, which often have disruptive modus operandi, is a challenge. Unable to bear the onslaught of net-based start-ups with their cut-throat price slashes, some couriering giants have collapsed.

However, Maruti has emerged as the strongest force even in the face of such challenges. "Primarily, our strength is our CP (channel partners) which is our service model," Mokariya said. "We have traditionally remained a franchise model. We are able to develop a flexed structure for our channel partners which allows them to grow as an entrepreneur." He went on to say: "Secondly, our couriering accountability and transparency give us an edge over others. Customers can track shipments in transit. We have the most attractive rates and have the best customer response ratio."

Maruti has also expanded the scope of its services. "We are in the process of introducing more channel partners who are our pillars of support," Mokariya said. "These efforts are expected to take Maruti to another level. The target is to grow double in size in the next three years by implementing new policies, deploying new technologies.

Mokariya said the focus is on bettering the IT infrastructure because, in today's market, there is no room for delays or errors. "We are working on sharpening the service in the last mile. Because when you perform effectively in covering the last mile, the



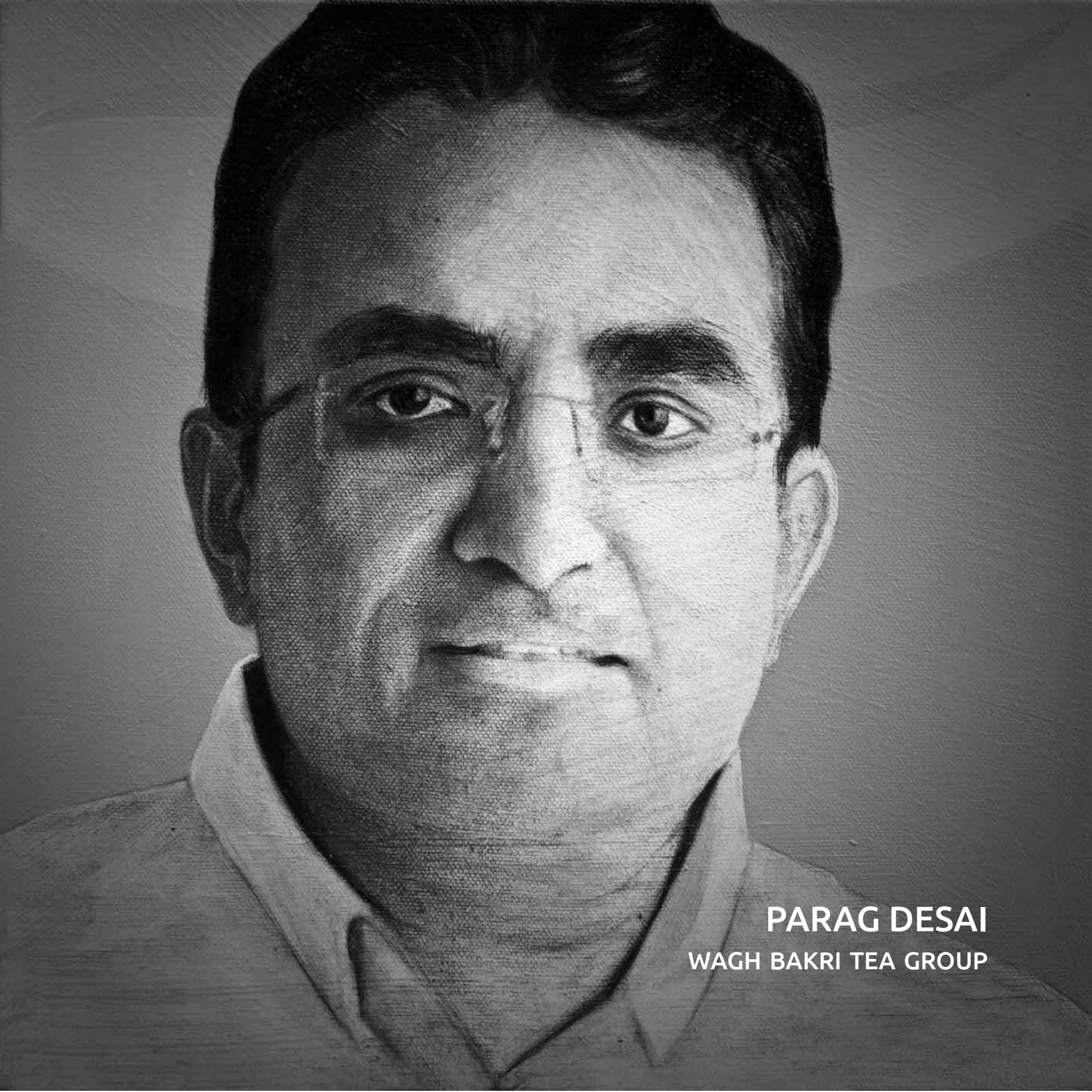


chances of retaining customer shoots up,” he said. “We are aiming to scale up the business globally by tying up with other international service providers. We are developing new ways of overcoming challenges while strengthening our traditional business structure.” ■



WAGH BAKRI TEA GROUP

Wagh Bakri Tea Group, renowned for its premium tea, has been in the business since 1892. Today, Wagh Bakri is one of the leading packaged tea companies in the world. The company annually records 40 million kg of tea distribution. The group leads in tea exports. With the number of Wagh Bakri tea lovers growing around the world, it has become a truly global player.



PARAG DESAI
WAGH BAKRI TEA GROUP

*Shah | Kunal Patel | Mauli Teli | Maulik Mehta | Maulik M
Desai | Pathik Patwari | Priya Gandhi | Rohan Shah | Shambhar
Patel | Aditya Handa | Akshat Doshi | Ankit Chona | Arjun
s | Chandu Virani | Chitrak Shah | Darshan Patel | Dishit
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| Vashist Patel | Ankit Chona
Arpit Vyas | Darshan Patel | Kaushal
| Kairav Engineer | Kamlesh Patel | Kanha
Sparakar | Kunal Shah | Mauli Teli | Maulik
Mokariya | Parag Desai | Priya Gandhi | Rohan
Shah | Shambhar Chauhan | Vashist Patel | Aditya Handa | Akshat Doshi
Arjun Handa | Arpit Vyas | Chandu Virani | Chitrak Shah |
Dishit Nathwani | Kairav Engineer | Kalpit Gandhi | Kamlesh Patel
Kaushal Sparakar | Kunal Shah | Kunal Patel | Mauli Teli |
Maulik Mokariya | Parag Desai | Pathik Patwari | Priya
Shah | Shambhar Chauhan | Vashist Patel | Aditya Handa
Ankit Chona | Arjun Handa | Arpit Vyas | Chandu Virani*

THE TEA STORY: BLEND OF TRADITION & CUTTING-EDGE DEVELOPMENT

Wagh Bakri Tea Group's Great India Tea March was brewed by Gandhiji's praise.

The story of India's hottest cuppa begins in South Africa in 1892, when Narandas Desai – an entrepreneur infused with Gandhian idealism – bought a 500-acre tea estate in Durban.

Passion, perseverance, and persistence taught Desai the techniques and nuances of growing, cultivating, and harvesting tea. However, intensifying discrimination against Indians in Durban forced Desai to leave behind his flourishing tea estate in 1918.

Yet Desai was an optimist to a T, or – more fittingly in his case – an optimist to a Tea.

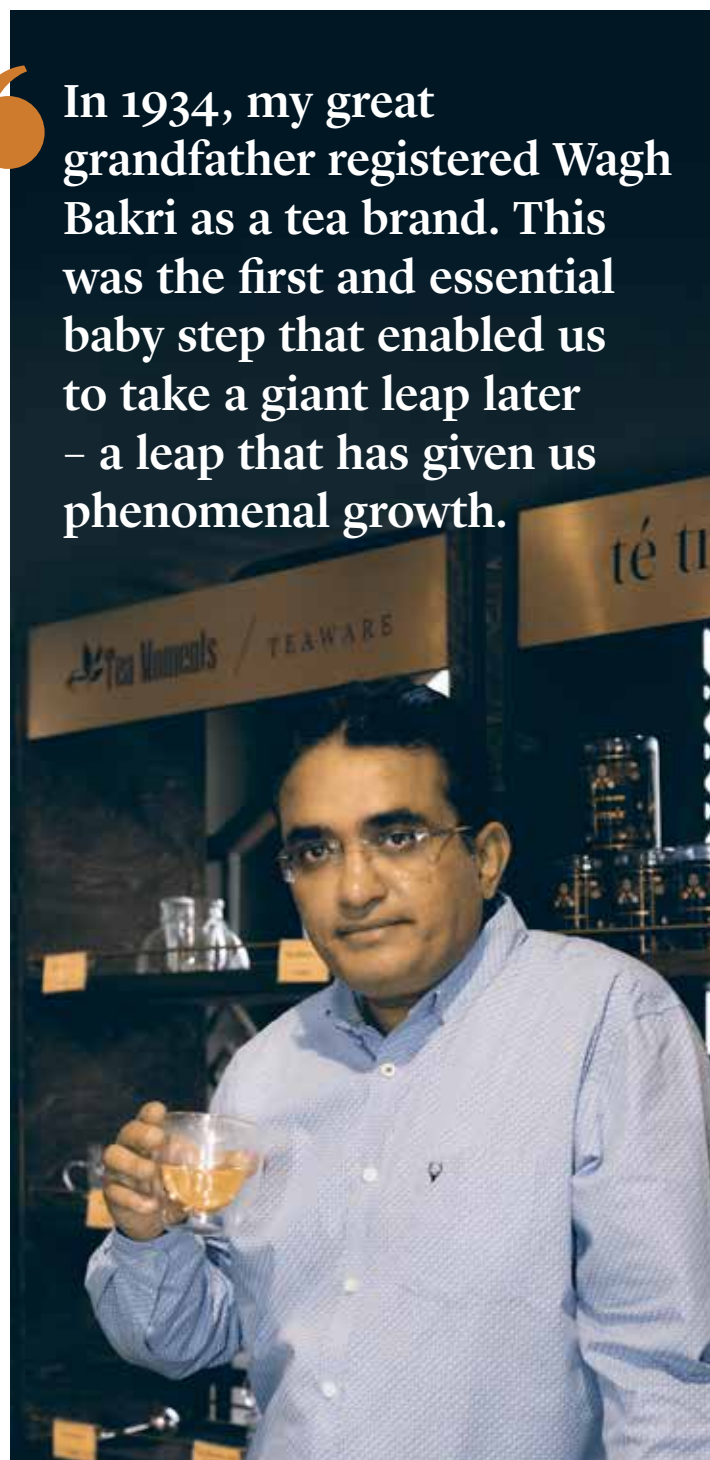
Desai returned to India with a prized possession, a certificate from Gandhiji. A few words of praise from the Mahatma became Desai's inspiration for re-starting the enterprise in Gujarat. In 1919, he set up a tea company called Gujarat Tea Depot. He introduced a special blend of tea and named it Wagh Bakri Tea Group.

SCION OF TIMES

Sitting on a cozy sofa at Wagh Bakri Tea Group's premium exotic tea lounge at Parimal Garden, the fourth-generation tea tycoon, Parag Desai, slips – sip by sip – into nostalgia. As he talks, his words flow smoothly, full of kadak and mithi 'positivi-tea'.

The practice of registering brand names was not prevalent in India in the pre-Independence era. However, Narandas Desai was a visionary and anticipated the need to protect intellectual property. So, he added trademark safeguards into the blend of his business strategies.

In 1934, my great grandfather registered Wagh Bakri as a tea brand. This was the first and essential baby step that enabled us to take a giant leap later – a leap that has given us phenomenal growth.



“In 1934, my great grandfather registered Wagh Bakri Tea Group as a tea brand,” says Parag, an MBA graduate who handles marketing, sales, and exports in his role as the executive director of the group. “This was the first and essential baby step that enabled us to take a giant leap later – a leap that has given us phenomenal growth and extraordinary achievements.”

By 1944, the Wagh Bakri Tea Group had evolved into an independent entity as a business house and had even launched its premium tea brand, registered as Good Morning Tea.

“Following the right legal process to register a brand or a trademark is as essential as laying a fence or building an outer wall to protect your home,” Parag explains. “It gives you the confidence to run the business and future generations reap the real benefits.”

Having launched three types of products including tea dust, tea leaves, and premium tea, the company was well on its way to expansion in 1950. It had started building the base for wholesale and retail selling points. The first ones were at Pankornaka, Manekchowk, and Khokhara in Ahmedabad.

Narandas Desai’s three sons, Ramdas, Ochchavlal, and Kantilal, led the growth initiative. In a span of three decades, Gujarat Tea Depot launched seven retail outlets across the state. In 1980, to introduce packaged tea, the trio launched another arm of their group: Gujarat Tea Processors and Packers Ltd. The group established an office in Kolkata to monitor transactions at tea auction centres there.

While the second-generation trio had expanded the group’s presence outside Gujarat, the next -generation

trio – Piyushbhai, Pankajbhai, and Raseshbhai – began exporting tea internationally in the 1990s. They are still at the helm of the company.

EVER ONWARDS

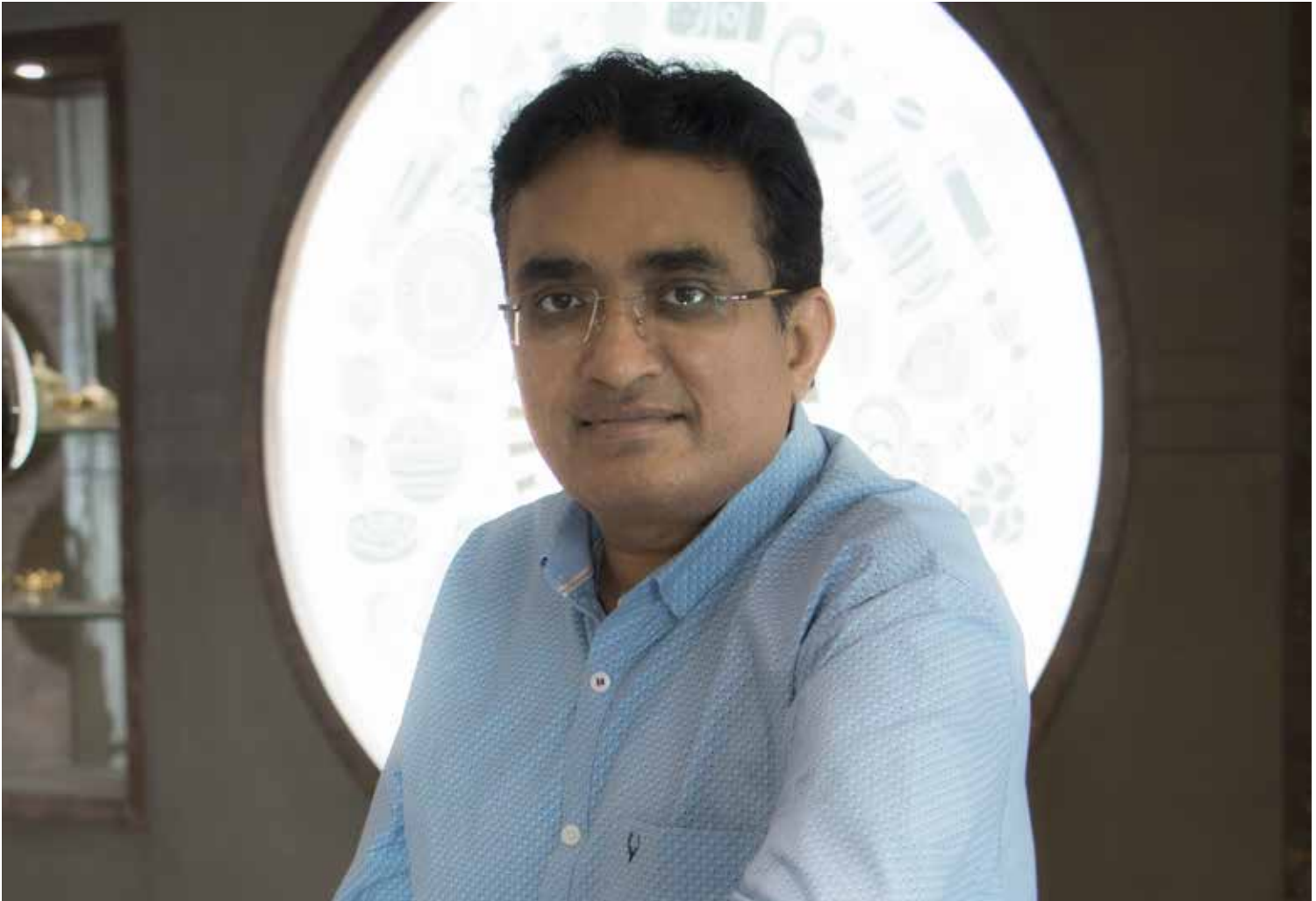
Parag muses that the group’s success seems as smooth as one of their steaming cups. However, in truth, the spectacular accomplishments are a culmination of the passionate effort, hard labour, and targeted and timely actions of four generations working towards a single goal.

“I was in my teens when I first learnt the art of tasting and buying tea,” Parag recalls. “In the late 1990s, I learnt marketing techniques and got a sense of the channels of distribution and sales. Our elders gave us rigorous and thorough training before we could run routine business operations for the group.” By “us”, Parag means himself and his younger brother Paras, the executive director who handles the group’s evaluation, purchase, finance, operations, and HR departments.

“We went deeper into national markets and captured a large share in Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, and Uttar Pradesh within a decade,” Parag says. “To expand the offshore distribution network, we had to understand the demands of the global market as well as the legal system, so that our trademark is protected internationally.”

Parag says the legal process for protecting trademark differs from country to country, but is a lengthy and complicated process everywhere. “We had to understand the demands and challenges of every new market to meet legal requirements,” he says. “The process of registration of trademark took about





seven years then. Other companies may have been discouraged by the long wait, but we at Wagh Bakri Tea Group have never looked for short-cuts.”

This fastidious reflects in the ascent of the group. Its annual turnover has risen from INR 70 –80 crore in the 2000-2005 period to INR 1,500 crore in 2019.

“Today, we export tea to more than 40 countries and sales are rising every day. We have been able to achieve what most people only dream of,” says Parag.

Today, the company sells tea online too. “From last decade we have come up with 360-degree solution in sales,” he says. “The company globally delivers packaged tea within days. And online sales are faster than offline sales.”

NOT “JUST” CHAI

Parag attributes this phenomenal success to a combination of factors: research and innovation backed by an unwavering commitment to quality.

“Tea drinking habits change with changing lifestyles. So, we had to keep evolving in sync with consumer behavior,” Parag says. “We began to offer new products including green tea, exotic tea, iced tea and white tea. This meant we had to gradually define and redefine the group’s desi (traditional or conservative) kadak-mithi (strong and sweet) chai along the way.”

Wagh Bakri Tea Group was the first tea company to launch an NABL-certified laboratory (2011). Here, researchers develop new tea-flavoured beverages and test the quality of their products. In addition to ensuring that Wagh Bakri Tea Group’s products are pesticide-free, the lab has also helped develop products such as premix instant tea. That became an instant hit with the globetrotting Gujaratis who couldn’t bear to forsake the cup that cheers. To cater to younger and more health-conscious consumers, the company came up with variants such as low-sugar, natural-sugar, and sugar-free instant teas.

“The laboratory helped us introduce a large range of options. Moreover, set norms were scrupulously followed and products were constantly checked to ensure that we were delivering products of the highest quality,” Parag affirms, adding, “The volume of sales increased and the number of products grew. But the products’ taste, quality, flavour, and fragrance remained purely original and intact.”

STORM IN A CUPPA

Circa 2005, coffee café cultur was poured into India. It was getting tougher to attract youth to tea. The Wagh Bakri Tea Group saw this coffee onslaught as a catalyst for change. “Every competition offers a new opportunity,” observes Parag, “The mushrooming of

coffee joints inspired us to come up with elite tea lounges. We opened our first premium tea lounge in Mumbai in 2009.” He says while it generated interest in newer tea-flavoured beverages and cheered tea lovers, it wasn’t a grand success. “We ignored the market response and opened another tea lounge,” he says. “This was in New Delhi in 2010. Even we were surprised by its success. It caught the fancy of youth and fetched us many new tea drinkers who fell in love with the new specialty teas like instant tea, iced tea, organic tea, and exotic tea. Drinking specialty tea soon became a style statement.”

Taking advantage of this trend, the group launched two premium tea lounges in Ahmedabad first in 2012 and second in 2018. Today, it has four tea lounges in Delhi, one each in Mumbai, Goa and Pune, moreover three smaller lounges in select Mumbai metro stations. “The target is to make Wagh Bakri Tea Group Tea Lounges the Starbucks of India,” Parag quips.

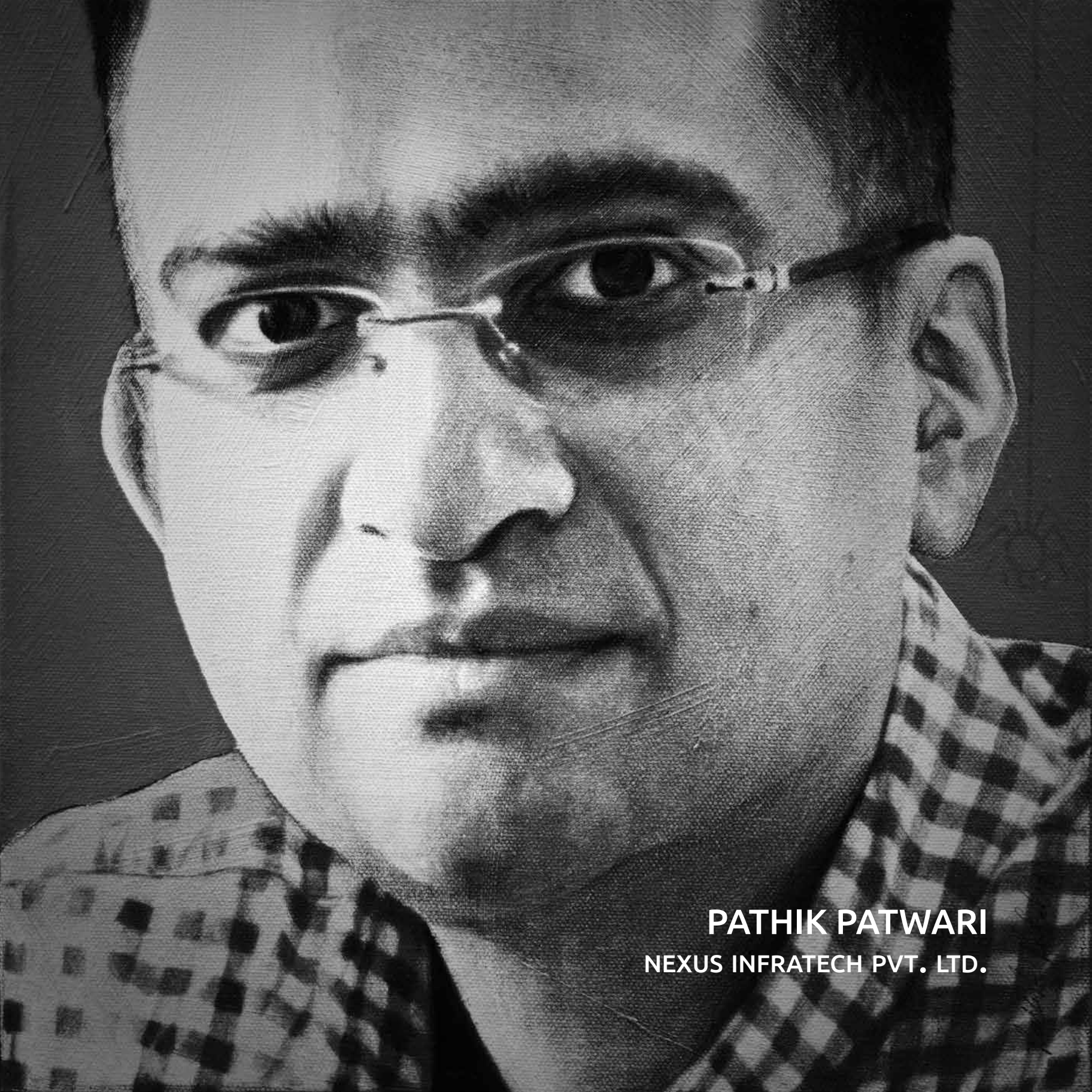
The group’s market is growing at a steady 10–15% annually, far exceeding the sector’s average growth rate of 2–3%.

“Pivotal factors behind this rise are the group’s quality consciousness, delivery of customer satisfaction, the ability to evolve with changing lifestyles, and the capacity to introduce new products,” Parag says. “In addition, we are vigilant about protecting our trademark. We assimilate all our products into the group’s well-structured and iconic identity; Wagh (kadak, powerful and king-like) and Bakri (mithi, soft, yet a champion of survival techniques).” The products include tea dust, tea leaves, premium teas, ever-widening range of specialty teas, and premium tea lounges. ■



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Today, pre-engineered building systems are widely accepted over the traditional options. Nexus has brought to us energy-efficient, cost-effective, sturdy, and promptly delivered pre-engineered building technology. Spider is its flagship brand. Spider is synonymous with Self-Supported Roofing System. The company's superior technology, time commitment, robust quality, and strong branding have made it the most preferred provider for many corporate houses, MNCs, MSMEs, consultants, and government institutions.



PATHIK PATWARI
NEXUS INFRATECH PVT. LTD.

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Patel | Aditya Handa | Akshat Doshi | Ankit Chona | Arjun
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Shah | Shanbhar Chauhan | Vashist Patel | Aditya Handa
Ankit Chona | Arjun Handa | Arpit Vyas | Chandu Virani*

STRAIGHT TO THE TOP

He could well be the legendary Skywalker from Star Wars. One of the country's leading roof manufacturers, Pathik Patwari, 39, has the force with him.

"In 2002, when I joined my family business, it was a small-scale chemical manufacturing unit. My father, Shailesh Patwari, founded the company in the early 1980s. The unit manufactured chemicals used by the textile and paint industry," Pathik said. "I decided to redirect manufacturing to making low-volume high-valued refined steroidal action performing ingredients (APIs) used by pharmaceuticals. The business was growing; however, I felt the need to diversify."

POWER FROM DIVERSIFICATION

Pathik went on to say: "To ride the infrastructure boom, I started transitioning the business towards infrastructural development. After in-depth market research, I saw potential in building roofing systems." This was the turning point.

"Nexus name was coined when I ventured into Pharmaceuticals in 2002 as Nexus Pharmachem Pvt. Ltd. Later I named the infrastructure business vertical also as Nexus Infratech Pvt. Ltd. in 2007. In 2008, I decided to make major changes and forayed into the market as a roofing system manufacturer.

In our first assignment, we got the opportunity to work with a major transformer manufacturing company, Transformers & Rectifiers (I) Ltd, and the construction giant Shapoorji Pallonji Group. We worked meticulously, efficiently, and honestly. We successfully delivered and then other big orders started flowing in."

While mentoring entrepreneurs, I always say that there are no magic mantras for success and there is no alternative to hard work. The secret lies in team work and in building and protecting the IP.



Today, Nexus is known as one of the most dependable manufacturers of a broad range of self-supported roofing system, pre-engineered building sheds, and more. “When we entered the market, we had no exposure,” admitted Pathik, “Our only focus was on justifying our role. We offered the most competitive rates and bagged big orders. Our aim was to provide solutions for diverse specifications to the complete satisfaction of clients. We attended to even the smallest of orders with sincere attention to details.”

THEIR STRENGTH IS THEIR IP

“Spider is our IP,” said Pathik. Nexus is today known for its flagship brand, Spider. “Nexus could create Spider because the team worked as tirelessly as a spider does. I chose Spider because I have always been awed by that tiny insect’s creativity and hard work,” said Pathik. “Whenever its web breaks, it tirelessly creates a new one. Spider never gives up. Taking lessons from the insect, we kept creating and re-creating our route to success. My family always stood by me and gave me the liberty to make mistakes. Freedom to take decisions for diversification, re-directing business, and liberty to fail led to our victory.”

Spider roofs are made from the latest roofing material, Galvalume. It is non-corrosive and heat-resistant and has good forming quality. “Nexus Infratech’s Spider unfolded the new era in roofing technology. Our robust roofing is notably safe, remarkably durable, and easy to install,” Pathik said. “Now, the roofing of industrial sheds, factories, warehouses, airport hangers, processing units, and defense and agriculture buildings has become quick

and hassle-free.”

Creating Spider demanded technical expertise, time commitment, qualitative supremacy, strict professional approach, and strong sales network across the country. Spider has made Nexus the most preferred choice for many corporates, MSMEs, consultants, and government institutions.

Today, Nexus is a mid-scale company with a team strength of 150. “Currently, we have a 40% share of the self-supported roofing industry market in the country. In fact, Spider is to roofs what Colgate is to toothpastes,” he said.

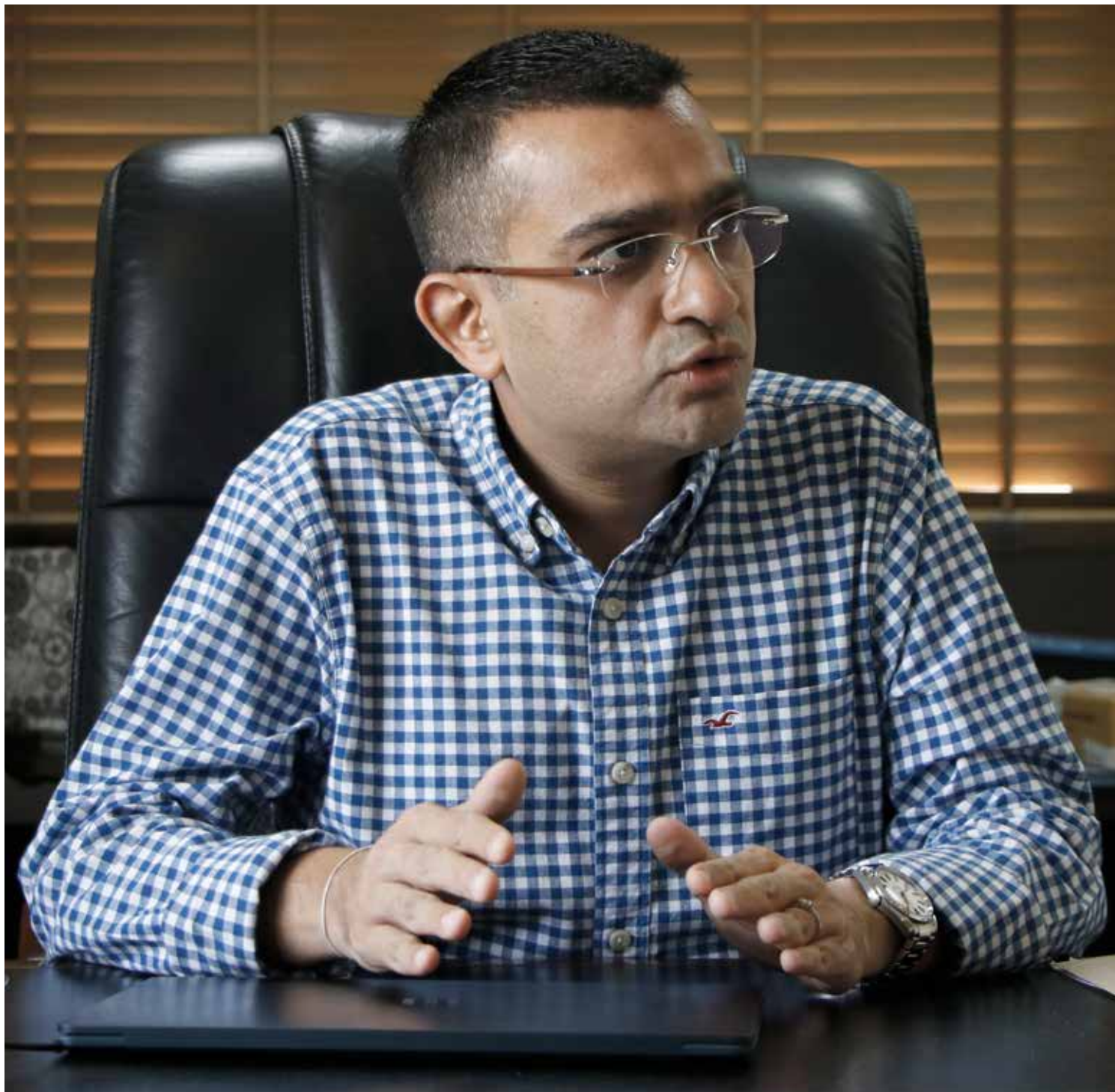
“Building your IP gives you an edge over your competitors. We never stooped to de-construct competitors’ brand or products. We added strength to our brand and that helped to build the IP and goodwill. Besides, quality products, team work, client-centric approach, and a positive record are the factors behind our growth.”

GOING GLOBAL

In keeping with the company’s futuristic goals, Nexus sold off its pharmaceutical business in 2018 and exited from chemical-pharmaceutical operations. “The focus is on growing Spider bigger. The target is tapping international markets, starting with Africa,” Pathik said.

He continued, “We are planning to expand and add a new vertical. We are in final stages of taking over a company which manufactures Air Exchange products. This does not complement our current business but has tremendous growth prospects considering the rising concerns on climate change and awareness of





environment, health and safety (EHS).”

Pathik, who serves as a treasurer of the Gujarat Chamber of Commerce and Industry (GCCCI), derives satisfaction from social activities. “Business is my passion. And hence guiding entrepreneurs and

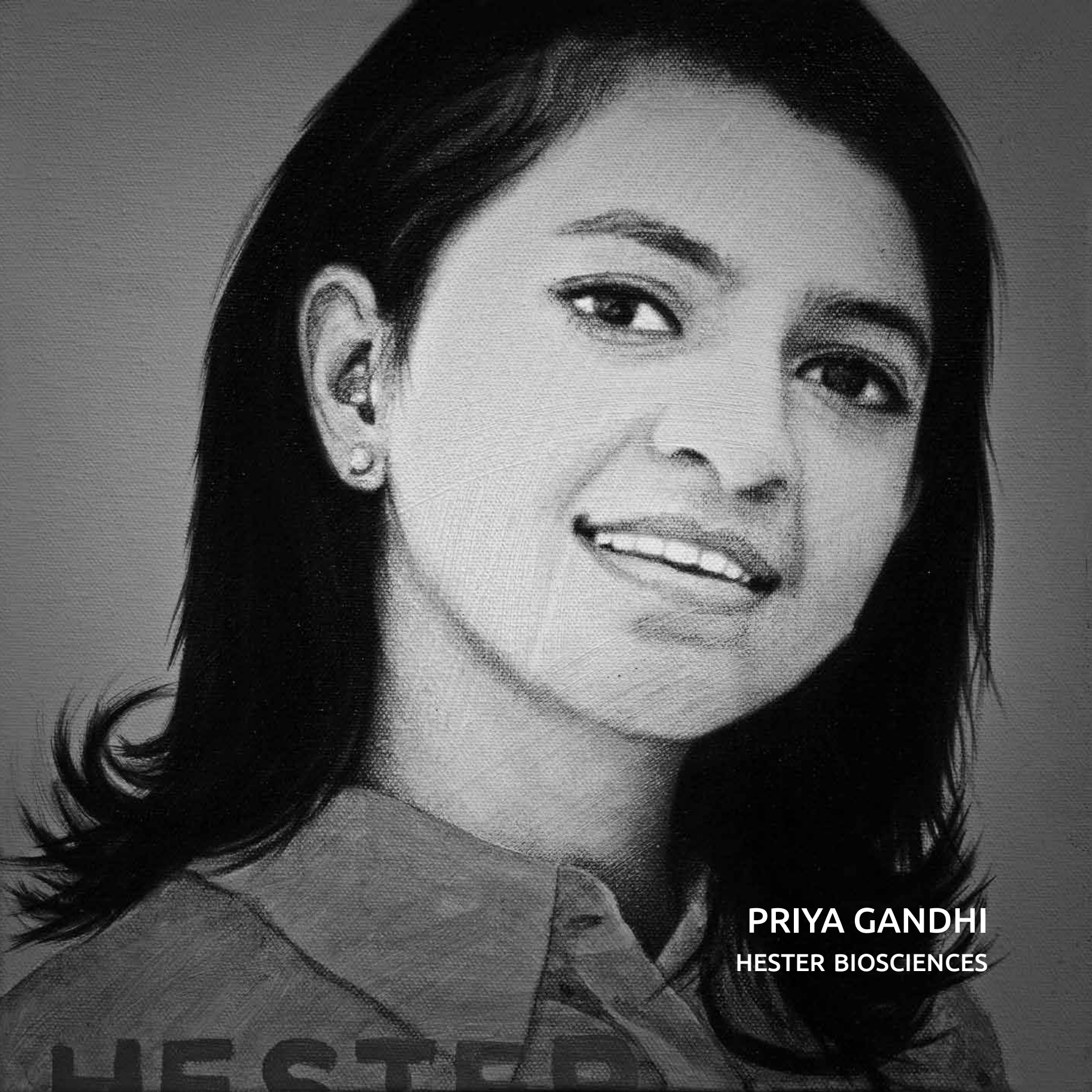
nurturing startups has always interested me,” he said. “While mentoring entrepreneurs, I always say that there are no magic mantras for success and there is no alternative to hard work. The secret lies in team work and in building and protecting the IP.” ■



HESTER

HESTER BIOSCIENCES

Hester Biosciences is one of the leading animal healthcare companies and is the country's second largest poultry vaccine manufacturer. Hester started its journey in 1987. Over the years, it has transformed from a small proprietary trading business into Asia's largest animal vaccine manufacturing facility. Today, it has a strategic presence in over 30 countries.



PRIYA GANDHI
HESTER BIOSCIENCES

HESTER

hah | Kunal Patel | Mauli Teli | Maulik Mehta | Maulik M
Desai | Pathik Patwari | Priya Gandhi | Rohan Shah | Shanbhar
Patel | Aditya Handa | Akshat Doshi | Ankit Chona | Arjun
s | Chandu Virani | Chitrak Shah | Darshan Patel | Dishit
Engineer | Kalpit Gandhi | Kamlesh Patel | Kanha Bakeri | Kaushal
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| Kairav Engineer | Kalpit Gandhi | Kamlesh Patel | Kanha
Sparakar | Kunal Shah | Mauli Teli | Maulik
Mokariya | Parag Desai | Pathik Patwari | Priya Gandhi | Rohan
Shah Chauhan | Vashist Patel | Aditya Handa | Akshat Doshi
Arjun Handa | Arpit Vyas | Chandu Virani | Chitrak Shah |
Dishit Nathwani | Kairav Engineer | Kalpit Gandhi | Kamlesh Patel
Kaushal Sparakar | Kunal Shah | Kunal Patel | Mauli Teli |
Maulik Mokariya | Parag Desai | Pathik Patwari | Priya
Shah | Shanbhar Chauhan | Vashist Patel | Aditya Handa
Ankit Chona | Arjun Handa | Arpit Vyas | Chandu Virani

PILOTING SOARING SUCCESS

When Priya discussed her blueprint for the future with her father, Rajiv Gandhi, she sounded more like a seasoned navigator of life rather than a 24-year-old woman. “I want to spend my life flying high and I want to fly chartered planes myself and also want to train others to do that,” Priya told Gandhi.

ENTREPRENEURIAL URGE

“Aviation is my passion. My father and I were taking flying lessons together at a flying school in Gujarat,” said Priya, an art and design graduate, now 27. “When we were half way through our training, the school was shutting down,” she said. “This happened in 2016. I could sense business potential in the aviation school. I discussed the feasibility of the business opportunity with my father. And then along with a bunch of like-minded people, my father and I acquired an existing school, Blue Ray Aviation School in Osmanabad, Maharashtra.”

Priya went on to say: “We took over the operations in 2017. We then pumped in an investment and created infrastructure in Mehsana for restarting the school.”

Priya recently completed her post-graduation in Management for Family Business at the Indian School of Business (ISB) and holds the position of Deputy Director - Business Operations at Hester Biosciences, overseeing communication and branding.

Blue Ray Aviation offers flying lessons and maintenance services for small aircraft as well as for chartered planes. “The prime objective is to train pilots, maintain aircraft, and connect small cities through a chartered service. Later, we plan to focus on civil aviation,” revealed Priya. “There were many

“The stronger the brand image, the bigger a company’s market share. And better you manage your IP and human resources, the stronger the company becomes.”



hurdles on the path to acquire the flying school, but the passion for flying kept us going. The aim was to do something that we loved. And to serve many like us who are passionate about flying and aspire to take lessons in flying professionally.” She went on to say: “When we took flying lessons we had to face many administrative problems and there were no user-friendly procedures.” She said that though there was a rising demand for flying lessons, the school was shutting down. “Therefore, to solve the problem of aspirants we acquired the school and restarted it in Mehsana,” she said, adding that she and her father are currently busy devising future plans for expanding the aviation venture.

Meanwhile, Priya is honing her business skills at Hester Biosciences which she joined in 2016.

Hester Biosciences Ltd (HBL) is a publicly traded animal and poultry vaccine manufacturing giant formed by her father in 1983. HBL scaled up its distribution channels across the country in 1986 for poultry health products. And in 1987, HBL became the Number 1 distributor for poultry vaccines across India. The company has a 30% share of the country’s poultry vaccines market. HBL’s product line includes 45-plus vaccines, drugs, feed supplements, and disinfectants. HBL has manufacturing plants in Ahmedabad and in Kathmandu, Nepal. HBL achieved a turnover of Rs 171.19 crore in 2018-19 with a profit of Rs 43.85 crore. “After starting the business in the early 1980s, my father realized that the market is huge and business is good,” Priya said. “He took the first step to success by quickly forming his own proprietary company and business has been growing since then.”

Timely registration of patents for vaccines is another

milestone that HBL has crossed; that has been pivotal to its growth. Another strength of the company is its advanced research and development drive. HBL came up with the first homogenous goat pox vaccine in the country powered by its active R&D orientation and effective push in getting the vaccine patented

Priya handles the Business Operations at Hester. She is responsible for the direction setting and coordination across all the functions of the organisation which also includes the oversight of the Hester subsidiaries. Her role includes formation and implementation of policies, ensuring accomplishment of the business objectives by each function and filling the inter-departmental gaps.

CURATED BRAND IP

After joining HBL, Priya immersed herself in studying the product line, profile of target buyers, packaging, and the company’s philosophy. She felt that requisite synchronization of efforts was missing. “I felt that the products, their packaging, fonts and colours did not project HBL as a company devoted to animal health,” she said. “Only when the company’s internal working style, its meticulous production processes, and its philosophy were communicated would the world understand that for HBL animal health is as precious as human health.”

Priya went on to say: “And that’s what our IP is about – it shows that we take animal health as seriously as human health because they are interlinked. And ultimately if we improved animal health, it will have a direct impact on the end-user and vice versa.” She said that HBL worked with complete dedication and responsibility but the product designing did not reveal the ethos. “This was because the colour coding, fonts





and design were not created to reflect the culture, the philosophy, and the IP of HBL,” she said. To correct this, the major challenge for Priya was to reposition products and curate re-branding techniques.

Gujarat is the hub of manufacturing units. However, sometimes the manufacturers are not directly in touch with their consumers and thus sometimes the understanding of consumers’ mindset emerges after a delay, Priya believes. Taking the onus of transformation on herself, she started the exercise of revamping the company’s identity. She altered the products’ commercial literature and its fonts and colours to deliver cogent messages about products’ functionality and Hester’s brand identity. She successfully redesigned products enabling the company to co-relate its branding with its philosophy.

Hester firmly believes that poultry health management has to be effective for preventing the onset of many diseases but consumers learned about HBL’s belief only when Priya highlighted this fact in vaccine literature or commercials. “The stronger the brand image, the bigger a company’s market share. And better you manage your IP and human resources, the stronger the company becomes,” Priya said.

FUTURE GOALS

Over the past decade, HBL has earned renown as one of the best animal vaccine companies, winning

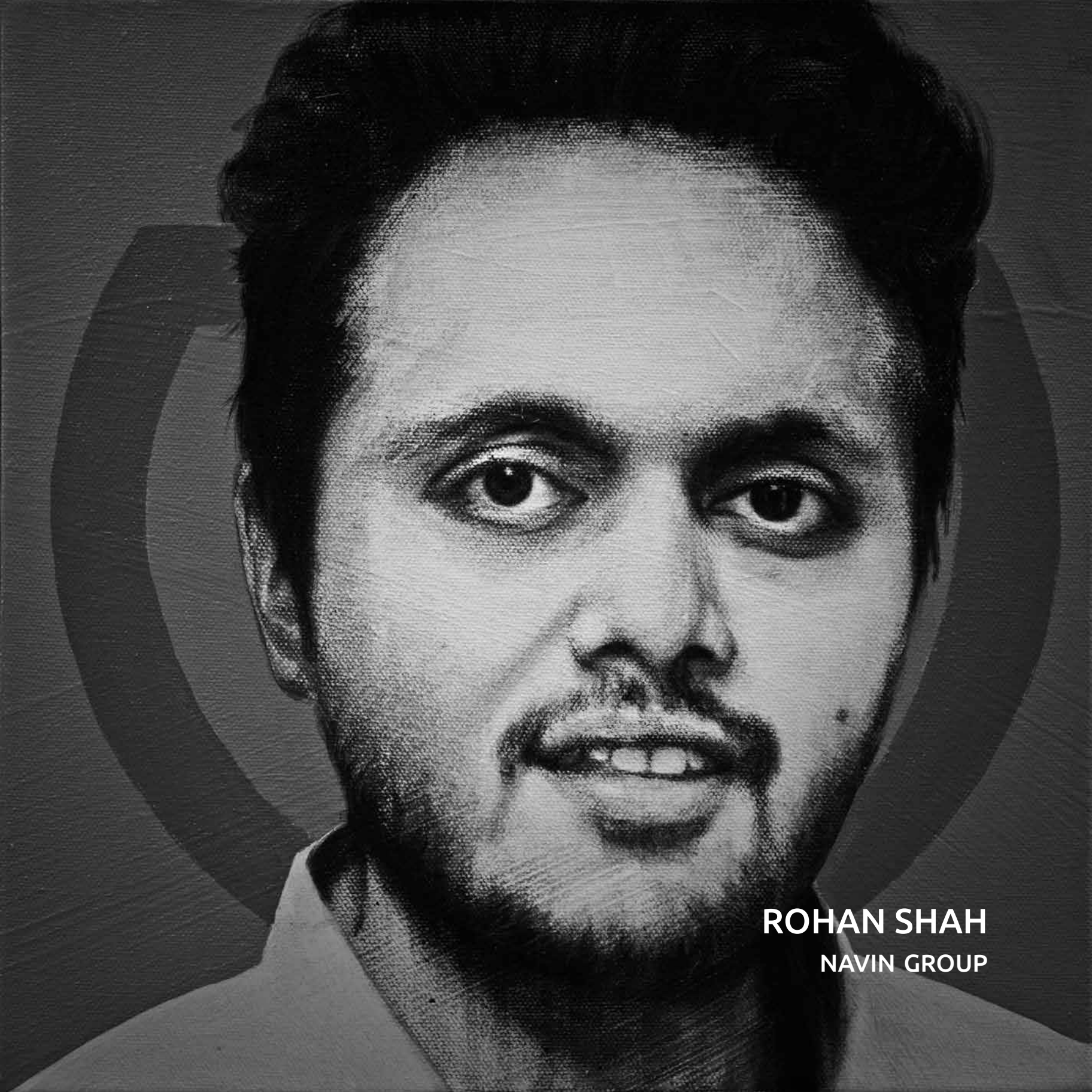
this recognition from The New Economy, the UK. The company’s presence in the Indian market is growing rapidly and the annual turnover touched Rs 170 crores in 2020. It is expected to cross 200 crores in financial year 2020-2021. “We are planning to sharpen focus on exports to the African region. The goal is to increase HBL’s export revenues from Africa from existing 40% to 70%,” she said. “And this rise will be achieved by expanding the product line. The newly repositioned products are strongly conveying the company’s ideology and are doing well in domestic and international markets.”

Along with vaccines for poultry, cattle, sheep and goats HBL is also working on vaccines for dogs. “Our vision is our IP. We think big,” Priya said. “While investing in the niche poultry vaccination business, my father gave a thought to a certain number of eggs being consumed in India daily. And that number is growing rapidly each day. Today, India is the fastest growing egg producer in the world and the country’s poultry sector is estimated to be worth 1 lakh crore. Poultry is becoming an organized sector. Therefore, awareness about vaccinating poultry is rapidly increasing. And this is only the domestic scene in the poultry sector. HBL not only sells vaccines in domestic market but also exports them. We will be soon launch vaccines and supplements for pets too.” ■



NAVIN GROUP

Navin Group has diversified business interests in logistics, manpower management, and garments. Employing more than 3,500 people, it is one of the premier business houses in western India. Honesty and accountability are the key values of the group and these are reflected in every business it runs.



ROHAN SHAH
NAVIN GROUP

hah | Kunal Patel | Mauli Teli | Maulik Mehta | Maulik M
esai | Pathik Patwari | Priya Gandhi | Rohan Shah | Shambhar
Patel | Aditya Handa | Akshat Doshi | Ankit Chona | Arjun
s | Chandu Virani | Chitrak Shah | Darshan Patel | Dishit
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Kaushal Sparakar | Kunal Shah | Kunal Patel | Mauli Teli |
Maulik Mokariya | Parag Desai | Pathik Patwari | Priya
Shah | Shambhar Chauhan | Vashist Patel | Aditya Handa
Ankit Chona | Arjun Handa | Arpit Vyas | Chandu Virani

TRULY REVOLUTIONARY

Rewind to the 1950s. After Independence, India was the site of a new industrial revolution. The government focused on the rapid growth of heavy industry. The National Coal Development Corporation – a government undertaking formed in 1956 – promoted indigenous coal sector. Many small and big players were getting involved in coal mining. The country's coal sector then had fueled the dreams of Gujaratis too. Ahmedabad's enterprising entrepreneurs Rasiklal Shah and Kanti Shah were among the dream-chasers who bet on coal in the early 1960s. They had begun with high hopes. But coal mines were later nationalized. And the Shahs had to move on. The link between jeans and coal miners is world famous. Similarly, yet differently, Rasiklal's enterprising son Navin formed a new link between coal miners and innerwear. The Shahs diversified into garment manufacturing in the 1970s and launched the brand Nitex – which became a household name by the mid-1980s. Besides making innerwear and retailing them, the Shah family was also involved in railway transshipment work and real estate development. Nitex became one of the largest brands in the early 1990s. However, due to the crisis in the textile sector and changes in governmental policies, the family decided to close that offshoot.

Navinbhai's son Hemant restarted garment manufacturing again in the late 1990s. "When my father started Nitlon, the employee strength was 50. Along with garment manufacturing, he also had business interests in logistics and manpower management," said Rohan, a fourth-generation businessman who is currently at the helm of the Navin Group. Employing more than 3,500 people, it is today a business conglomerate based in Ahmedabad.

“Our group’s IP was manufacturing garments. I built on that strength and created an entire range of functional sports apparel under the brand TRUEREVO. The mission of the brand is to bring a TRUE REVOLUTION.”



It has diversified into the fields of in-plant logistics, manpower management, and garment manufacturing. “Our IP is rich experience of about five decades in business of garment manufacturing,” said Rohan, 33, who joined the business in 2009 after completing a course in electronics engineering in the United Kingdom.

Today Navin Group offers solutions that enable companies to save time and money by outsourcing services including transportation, manpower management, freight forwarding, operation maintenance, in-plant logistics, dry cargo handling, and warehousing. However, the group never lost focus on its core business of garment manufacturing. The junior Shah went on to say, “We have two brands now: Nitlon and TRUEREVO. Nitlon has a wide range of men’s innerwear while TRUEREVO, which is my undertaking, offers the best sportswear with the trendiest designs at competitive rates. The aim is to eliminate the gap between fashion and performance. We create innovative designs with ultra-modern materials and technology. We offer high-performance shorts, tracks and tights with smart pockets, reflective details, and moisture-wicking lightweight fabric.”

TRUEREVO GENESIS

It all began with a crash. Rohan said, “On a cold January evening, I was out for a run and tucked my phone into my shorts. Five hundred metres into the run, I had to stop. My phone had slipped out of the shorts, bounced onto the pavement, and cracked. Walking home with the broken phone, I wondered if this was a common problem and if I could do something to solve it.”

After joining the Navin Group of businesses in 2009, Rohan was focusing on Nitlon. Along with the other businesses, Nitlon too was growing. He was spending his days at the factory and offices trying to understand the group’s businesses, manufacturing, and marketing channels. However, the desire to do something different was making him restless. “Along with my passion for business and the desire to do something new, I never gave up on sports – especially cricket and golf,” Rohan said. “Physical training has been an integral part of my morning routine for a decade or more. And often the problem of storing the mobile while working out troubled me. I tried wearing shorts with deep pockets, tried storing the mobile on armbands and waist belts, but nothing worked.”

Then one day Rohan focused on his desire to do something different, and fused it with his musings on the problem of storing the mobile while working out. “After much brainstorming for concept ideations, and many attempts to create prototypes and multiple field tests, finally I along with my team designed The SPS (Smart Phone Shorts),” he said.

At last, shorts specially designed to carry a phone while running was created. The two-layered shorts solved the problem. It also had special spaces to store keys and energy bars and also prevented chaffing while running long distances and marathons. The SPS became the first product of TRUEREVO – a new brand that he launched in 2016 after working in Navin Group’s Nitlon for eight years.

So Rohan created another asset for the group.

“Our group’s specialty or IP was manufacturing garments. I built on that strength and created an entire





range of functional sports apparel under the brand TRUEREVO,” Rohan said. “And as the name suggests, the mission of the brand is to bring a TRUE REVOLUTION in sports clothing trends. We provide practically usable active wear with value-added features that no other brands offer.”

And Rohan is working hard to put the brand on the global stage. “Our Swiss-India collaboration, REVO International LLP, has run two kick-starter campaigns and has won international recognition at ISPO Munich, the world’s largest multi-segment trade fair,” he said. “At the fair, we have been featured amongst the top innovative sports start-ups of the world and our design found mention in hundreds of fashion publications across the world.”

The brand is just four years young but it is used by runners and fitness enthusiasts in more than 57 countries.

TOWARDS EXPANSION

Building further on the SPS model, the company came up with another brilliantly functional design: ultralight running T-shirt. “To deal with foul odour and excessive sweating, we created a super light polyester T-shirt using special anti-bacterial and anti-stink fabric,” Rohan said. “Then came the all-terrain jacket made out

of light fabrics. Within four years of the launch, we have come up with a full range of sports apparel for men and women. The range includes T-shirts, shorts, leggings, jackets, track pants, capris, singlets, tank tops, and compression tights. And all these designs fuse fashion with functionality.”

Today, TRUEREVO is available online and at company stores in Ahmedabad and Bangalore. Within the next two years, the company plans to set up 100-plus stores across the country. “The way forward is clear,” Rohan said. “The brand is committed to offering unique designs that solve users’ problems. All of our designs have tiny features and our consumers remember our brand due to those tiny unique features. These tiny features are our identity and intellectual property. Without our IP, we are nothing but just another worthless option in the heaps of ‘me-too’ products.”

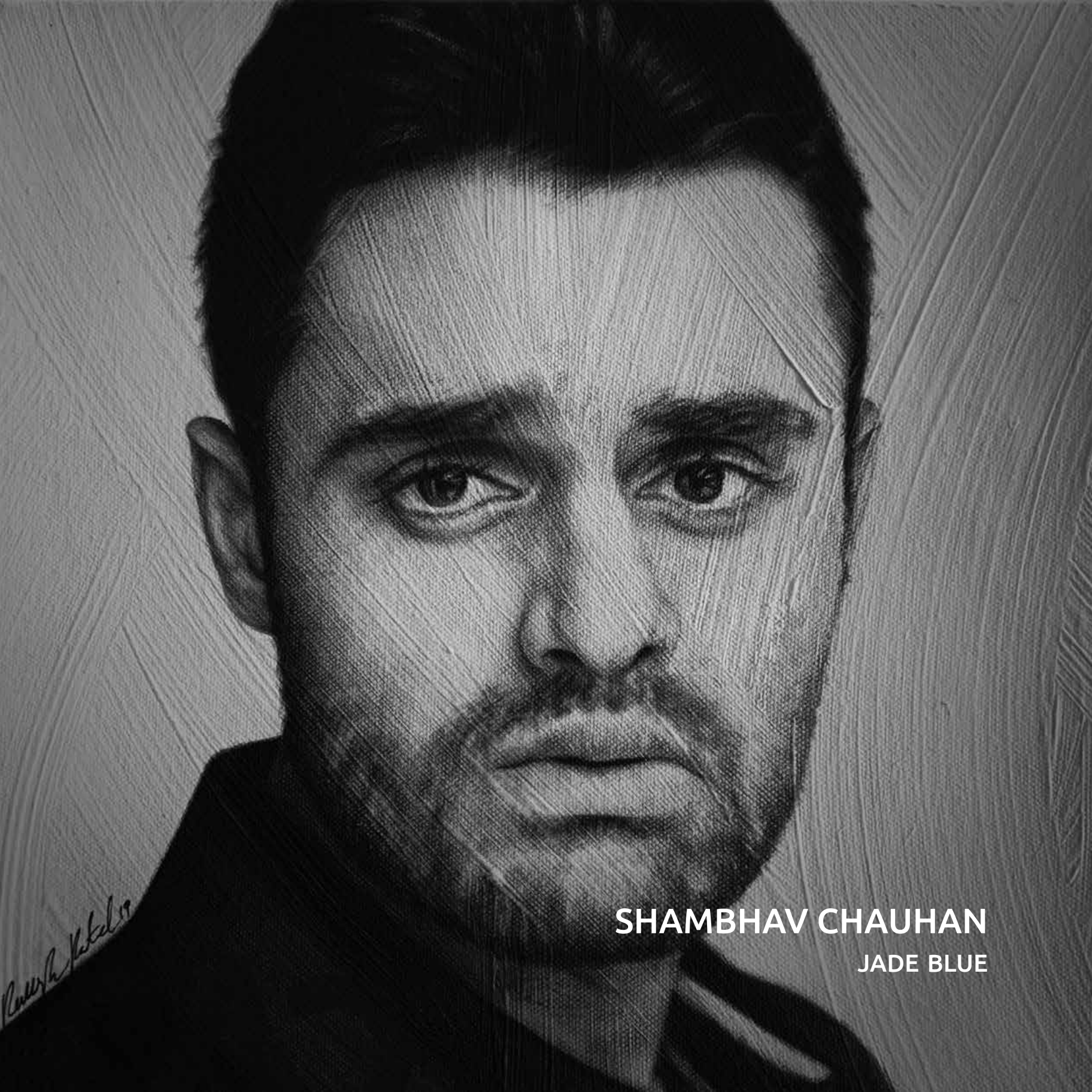
Rohan’s vision is bigger. “My aim is to make TRUEREVO the one of the topmost sports brands. And to achieve this goal, I have set up a research & design team that studies sportspersons’ needs, habits, and behaviours,” he said. “We understand their problems and then develop products that solve their problems.” Rohan used to play cricket professionally in the UK and with Gujarat’s state-level teams. He knows what he is talking about. ■

The logo for Jade Blue, featuring the words "JADE BLUE" in a white, sans-serif font. "JADE" is in a lighter weight, while "BLUE" is in a bold weight. A small "TM" trademark symbol is positioned to the upper right of "BLUE". The text is centered within a solid blue rectangular background.

JADE BLUE™

JADE BLUE

One of the country's feted pioneers of business, Jade Blue rose from modest beginnings in Ahmedabad in 1995. Today, it has twenty-two men's clothing stores which draw abiding loyalty from 1,00,000 customers. Jade Blue Lifestyle India Ltd has established itself as one of the country's prominent enterprises. Over the past few decades, India's entrepreneurial spirit has been phenomenal and that spirit reflects in Jade Blue's journey.



SHAMBHAV CHAUHAN

JADE BLUE

Ramesh Patel 19

*Shah | Kunal Patel | Mauli Teli | Maulik Mehta | Maulik M
Desai | Pathik Patwari | Priya Gandhi | Rohan Shah | Shambhar
Patel | Aditya Handa | Akshat Doshi | Ankit Chona | Arjun
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Maulik Mokariya | Parag Desai | Pathik Patwari | Priya
Shah | Shambhar Chauhan | Vashist Patel | Aditya Handa
Ankit Chona | Arjun Handa | Arpit Vyas | Chandu Virani*

COLOUR OF POWER DRESSING

Colours have concrete associations: green stands for prosperity, red for passion and purple for flamboyance. In that palette of meanings, Jade Blue has come to signify ebullience, elegance, and swag with sophistication.

The Chauhan Brothers – Shambhav and Siddhesh – who own Jade Blue, say that their colour is the hue of a sartorial revolution. “For us, blue is everything,” said Shambhav Chauhan, the co-owner of the company. “Our primary strength is styling men and our sole aim is to fulfill all their wardrobe needs.”

We met Shambhav and his younger cousin Siddhesh at the brand’s oldest store – an expanse of more than 15,000 sq ft on CG Road, one of Ahmedabad’s busiest and poshest areas. It was a busy Sunday evening and Shambhav, just into the second day of his marriage, was back “in office”. This example of dedication is just one stitch in the lovingly tailored endeavour that in July, 2019, had generated a gross annual revenue of Rs 265 crore. Today, the company behind Modi Kurta is giving Indians premium choices to cut a dashing figure.

“We spend Sundays interacting with customers at the CG Road store,” Shambhav said. “This helps us stay up to speed with current market trends. My father and my uncle began this tradition.”

Shambhav’s father Jitendrabhai and Siddhesh’s father Bipinbhai are the founders of Jade Blue. They opened their first store on CG Road in 1995, and are still at the helm of the company. Shambhav and Siddhesh nurture the legacy by balancing their creative flourishes with measured approach to the business. They continually refine office operations, develop personalized target-oriented sales methods to offer prompt services, and procure trendy and classic

To protect our designs and painstakingly earned goodwill, we fought a long and arduous legal battle. The legal victory gave Jade Blue an edge over its competitors. Soon, business was booming more than ever.



designs for the 22 Jade Blue stores across the country.

Shambhav, a management graduate, handles the business side of the brand, while the younger cousin Siddhesh handles the design thinking and execution part.

Siddhesh trained at the National Institute of Fashion and Technology (NIFT), Gandhinagar and at the London School of Fashion. At Jade Blue, he anticipates fashion trends, sources fabrics for collections, and crafts techniques to ensure a perfectly tailored fit every single time. In his career, he has styled grooms, young entrepreneurs, professionals and business patriarchs.

EARLY START, CONSTANT GROWTH

“Our father and uncle meticulously analyzed our caliber and talent and accordingly encouraged us to sharpen our skills,” Siddhesh said.

“Tailoring fired my imagination when I was 14. Constructing something special for each physique meant simple mathematics put into fine composition. I used to watch my father (Bipinbhai) stitching shirts and trousers – sometimes, late into the night,” Siddhesh said. “On other occasions, work went through the night. When I was 14, I went through rigorous training for learning the basics of fine tailoring and making handmade buttonholes to crafting a handmade suit. Shambhav channelized his skills at micro and macro operations,” he added.

Shambhav said he and his cousin complement each other’s capacities. “That seamless synergy enhances the core strength of the company,” Shambhav said. “When we joined the company over a decade ago, the annual turnover was around Rs 75 crore. Today,

the family’s hard work, the right legal framework – including the agility in protecting our designs – and consistent yet silent branding has taken our annual turnover to Rs 265 crore.”

LIFE AS A BRAND

Even as young boys, Shambhav and Siddhesh were aware that clothes matter. As Shakespeare says in Hamlet: “For the apparel oft proclaims the man”, meaning what one wears determines the judgment of other people.

The brothers recognized as kids that everyone was gauging their dress sense. “Rather than trying to escape from onlookers’ curious gaze, we learned to utilize that curiosity to establish our brand value,” Shambhav said. “We knew that these two seemingly simple words Jade Blue – put together by renowned designer and professor Subrata Bhowmick – had a far greater meaning in our lives.” He said Jade is a precious stone and Blue is considered to be a manly colour. “Moreover, the J in “jade” is for Jitendrabhai and the B in “blue” is for Bipinbhai,” Shambhav said. “As soon as we became conscious of this, we realized that these words would form the sole basis of our identity.”

AGILE TRANSFORMATION

Jade Blue soon learnt that the bigger its identity, the greater the need for protection. The growing popularity of the brand and its designs increased the risk of cheap knock-offs.

A few shops in the vicinity had started outfitting dulhas by imitating Jade Blue’s signature designs. Other operations copied Jade Blue’s most popular kurta and jacket designs – including the one created





especially for Narendra Modi, who at the time had taken over as the chief minister of Gujarat.

To protect their designs and painstakingly earned goodwill, the brothers fought a long and arduous legal battle, made even more complex by the fact that these designs included the word 'Modi' in their name.

Eventually, in 2008, they managed to obtain legal protection for a few popular designs including the Modi Kurta. The legal victory gave Jade Blue an edge over its competitors. Soon, business was booming more than ever.

As Shambhav put it, "These challenges helped us realize the importance of legally protecting our designs and goodwill." The process, he said, sharpened his and his cousin's appreciation of the power of branding.

"To us, branding is a fine art that captures the public attention and maximizes gains," he said. "Protecting your product or design is key to leveraging public interest to scale up your market share, turnover, and brand value."

Shambhav said zealous protection of designs, astute branding, bespoke clothing solutions, and expansion and innovations are among the measures that spurred the growth of the company. "However, we constantly alter these measures to be in sync with market trends and consumer behaviour which change with time and place," he said.

"We have always been known as the ones who dress up and make men look great," Siddesh said. "However, after we legally protected our famous designs including – the Modi Kurta – they became our

niche identity. Even today, if someone introduces us as designers for men, they first say, 'Prime Minister Narendra Modi ji ke kapde yeh Jade Blue family banata hai.' That identity is a colossal boost for our brand value."

Men's fashion has always been Jade Blue's niche, Siddhesh said. "And we have no plans of diluting our brand value," he said. "But we thrive because we experiment."

This experimentation has resulted in Jade Blue firmly establishing itself as a one-stop haute couture solution for men. Clients now peruse shoes and accessories alongside clothing. Moreover, the launch of an ethnic collection, the Siddhesh Chauhan line, has signaled the company's further redefinition of the premium segment.

"Our clients take home a cherished shopping experience along with prized possessions," Siddhesh said. "Today, when a buyer enters any of our 22 stores, he or she is accompanied by a personal shopper of a similar age who introduces him/her to wider options and complete clothing solutions from head to toe, whatever the occasion or demand."

Online shoppers have not been forgotten. "We have improved our interface and services for those who prefer to shop online," Siddhesh said. "This has significantly increased the number of orders for festive and occasion wear from Indians living abroad."

Thus, in the international market, Jade Blue is cashing in on the goodwill it has earned nationally. It is simultaneously working to protect its intellectual property in the global market too.

THE WAY FORWARD

Jade Blue clearly has a large customer base abroad, but is the company planning to launch international operations?

Shambhav and Siddhesh are emphatic in their answer. It is an unequivocal "No!"

The plan for the next five years is to take the company to an annual turnover of more than Rs 500 crore on a strategy that focuses on going deeper, locally.

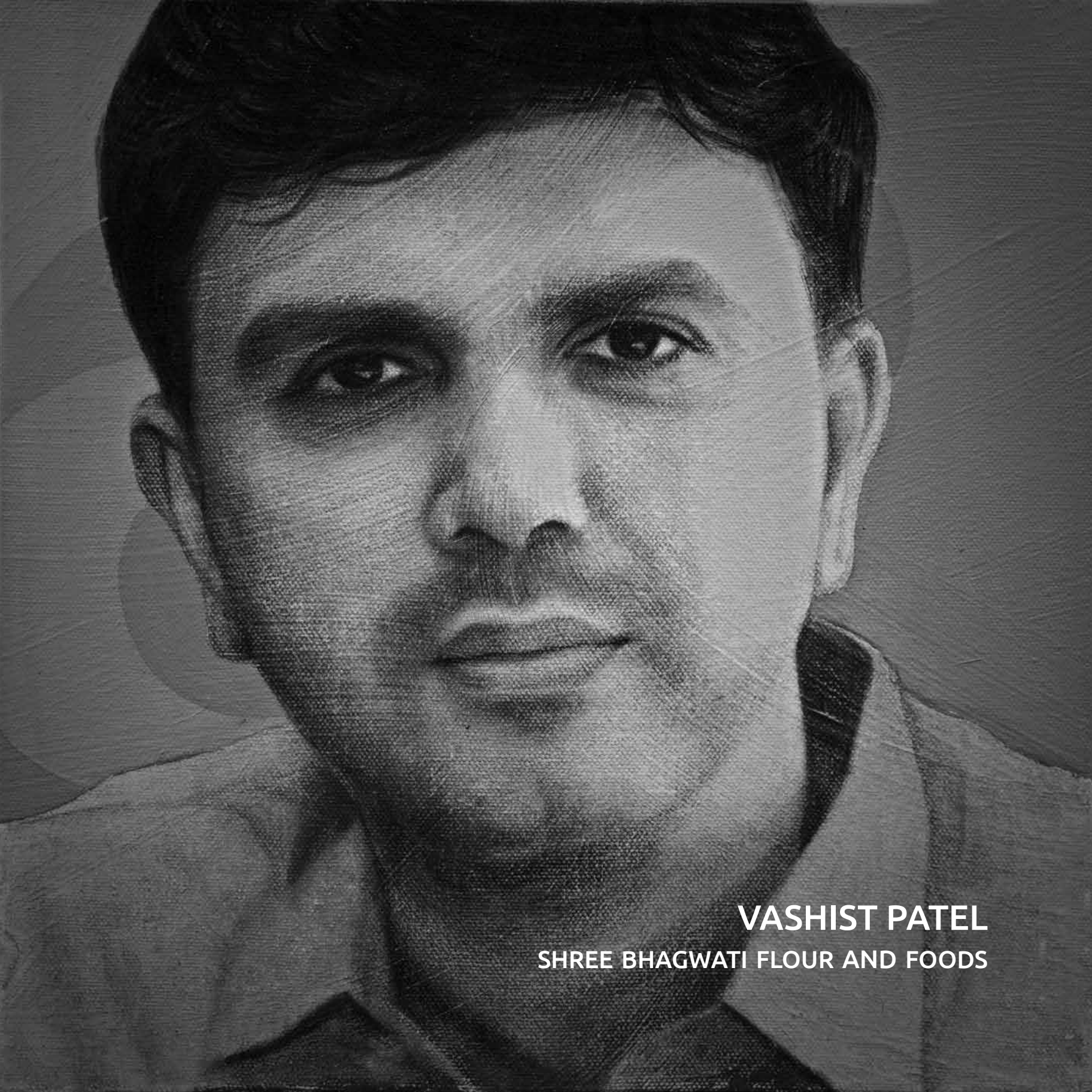
"We aim to tap the vacuum in the country's smaller cities, and maximize our presence there," Shambhav said. "My father and uncle launched the first store in 1995, to stem the flow of local buyers to other cities for quality clothing. We plan to take this forward by probing deeper into smaller markets. For sustaining Jade Blue's trend of offering unmatched quality and price, along with an elite shopping experience, we are giving utmost importance to staff training. We are building a new team which is constantly nurtured along with the old experienced ones."

Sharing his own happy shopping highpoint Shambhav said, "I was once deeply engrossed in the items on display at a Louis Vuitton store in London when a store attendant came up to me with a small shot of coffee." He went on to say: "I still remember the taste of the shot and the warmth of that welcome. It made me feel happier and energetic. When I finished the shot, I saw the initials LV at the bottom of the glass – that name remains etched in my subconscious. This is the kind of unforgettable shopping experiences and exclusivity that I aim to bring to my own clients." ■



SHREE BHAGWATI FLOUR AND FOODS

Shree Bhagwati Flour and Foods is a leading Indian food products manufacturer offering an extensive range of food items with irresistible flavours. Its flagship brands, such as Gaay Chhap and Uttam, are among the world's most preferred and loved kitchen brands. Their classy products showcase Indian agricultural excellence, the food industry's expertise, and also popularize Indian cuisine's authentic taste across the globe.



VASHIST PATEL
SHREE BHAGWATI FLOUR AND FOODS

*Shah | Kunal Patel | Mauli Teli | Maulik Mehta | Maulik M
Desai | Pathik Patwari | Priya Gandhi | Rohan Shah | Shambhar
Patel | Aditya Handa | Akshat Doshi | Ankit Chona | Arjun
s | Chandu Virani | Chitrak Shah | Darshan Patel | Dishit
Engineer | Kalpit Gandhi | Kamlesh Patel | Kanha Bakeri | Kaushal
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Desai | Pathik Patwari | Rohan Shah | S
| Vashist Patel | Aditya Handa | Ankit Chona
Arpit Vyas | Chandu Virani | Darshan Patel
| Kairav Engineer | Kamlesh Patel | Kanha
Sparakar | Kunal Shah | Mauli Teli | Maulik
Mokariya | Parag Desai | Priya Gandhi | Rohan
Shah | Shambhar Chauhan | Vashist Patel | Aditya Handa | Akshat Doshi
Arjun Handa | Arpit Vyas | Chandu Virani | Chitrak Shah |
Dishit Nathwani | Kairav Engineer | Kalpit Gandhi | Kamlesh Patel
Kaushal Sparakar | Kunal Shah | Kunal Patel | Mauli Teli |
Maulik Mokariya | Parag Desai | Pathik Patwari | Priya
Shah | Shambhar Chauhan | Vashist Patel | Aditya Handa
Ankit Chona | Arjun Handa | Arpit Vyas | Chandu Virani*

MAKING OF A MILLIONAIRE: FROM GRISTMILL TO MODERN MILL

Success comes slowly. There is no fast track to success,” said Vashist Patel, quadragenarian, a third-generation businessman. He transformed a small-scale family operation into a mammoth milling empire. When Vashist joined the Bhagwati Group after completing his master’s programme in business administration in 2001, the company’s annual turnover was Rs 60 crore. Today, the figure has reached Rs 1,100 crore.

Patel fondly recalled, “When my grandfather (Ramchandrabhai) started a small gristmill, it seemed like an adventure to his father (Trikambhai), an English teacher. Coming from a non-business family, starting a small business was a struggle for my grandfather. He had first tried his hands at trading coal at rented premises. But it didn’t succeed.”

At his small gristmill, Ramchandrabhai used to grind what the local residents got. He worked hard and honestly. His business grew slowly. “Later, my father (Nitinbhai) set up a small plant in Naroda. Then the plant’s capacity was grinding 8,000kg daily. He began the trend of selling packaged flour. He founded the company Shree Bhagwati Flour and Foods Pvt Ltd in 1962 and introduced branded flour and named it Gaay Chaap,” Vashist said. “The concept of buying packaged flour had not caught on in the local market. He focused on customization and bulk grinding for caterers and restaurants. Later, he introduced another brand, Uttam, in the 1990s which was an addition of a new vertical to his slowly growing business. But growth was still slow. Every household continued the practice of carrying wholegrain to a nearby flourmill to get it ground. Many hesitated in using readily available flours. Hence the business wasn’t growing at the

Once consumers accept a brand as representing a standard, they will become repeat customers. Buying your product then becomes a matter of choice. Our IP marks the consistency of our products’ quality.



desired pace. The phase of 1994 to 1999 was difficult. Such low phases have taught me that rise and fall are a part of a business. But we have to keep going and never give up.”

EYEING GLOBAL MARKETS

When Vashist entered the family business in 2001, he wished to start something new. He dreamed of taking the business to newer heights. He wanted to export. “My father encouraged me to focus on exports. After researching the demands of the US market, I sent consignments to three buyers,” he said. “I was expecting good returns. However, the buyers didn’t send any payments and other orders lapsed. This was quite a blow. However, my father stood by me. He told me that we have to learn from failures and surge ahead. Notwithstanding the demotivating start, I persisted. Within a couple of years, I started getting orders for exporting flour. In 2004, the volume of exports started growing rapidly. Currently, we are the largest packaged food and flour exporter in India. And we are growing at a steady rate of 12-14% annually.”

Constantly upgrading the product line, Bhagwati Group introduced spices and instant mixes after becoming the dominant player in the flour category. “Adding the product line was a way of expanding our presence in the domestic and global markets,” Vashist said.

In 2015, Bhagwati Group launched two premium products under the brand names Kemchho and Uphaar targeting overseas Indians. “Under the label of Uphaar, we offer instant mixes or re-mixed food products,” Vashist said. “Under Kemchho, we offer Indian snacks. These brands are only for the overseas market. These products are taking Brand India to 24 countries.”

Today, Bhagwati Group operates from a 2,50,000 sq ft factory at three locations in the city. From being a small milling plant in Naroda, the company has transformed itself into being the leading manufacturer and exporter of flours, spices, lentils, pulses, instant mixes, and snacks. The company offers a large range of 300-plus flours, spices, pulses and mixes. “The capacity has been upped to manufacture 5 lakh kg flour a day from 8,000kg a day in 1962,” Vashist said.

DOES BUILDING ON IP HELP?

Intellectual Property (IP) and flours – the two may seem totally unrelated. “Only if one reflects rationally does the connection between food, flour, and IP become evident,” Vashist said. “Food is as important as medicine. When consumers buy food items, they want the best quality. The quality is perceived not only by the purity of contents but also by the way you introduce, feature, or brand your products. Once consumers accept a brand as representing a standard, they will become repeat customers. Buying your product then becomes a matter of choice or habit. Hence for us, our IP marks our branding methods as well as the consistency of our products’ quality.”

Bhagwati Group has been agile in building and establishing its IP from the time of its inception. “When the trend of buying loose, unpackaged flour was prevalent in the local market, we pioneered the trend of selling packaged flour and offered pristine quality,” Vashist said. “We have consistently maintained that quality in all our products. That is why our products are trusted. We have been protecting our product designs and have been registering trademarks for all brands for the past six decades. Often, we have had to deal with the malaise of counterfeits which create consumer





confusion. We have recruited special supervisors to take care of our 110 trademarks. The team keeps a vigil on the market and takes legal action if it spots an infringement. The team keeps renewing design and trademark registrations. These 110 trademarks are our assets. Three generations' labour has gone into creating them. If we buy land, we do proper paper work. Similarly, when one begins a business or launches a brand, one needs to methodically work on registering and protecting it."

Vashist went on to say: "Our IP is our quality. And for quality control, we have a dedicated department that undertakes internal audits. The department reaches out to our clients and records consumers' reviews. The team evaluates the feedback which governs our quality assurance system."

KEEP SERVING BEYOND MANDATE

Bhagwati Group's target is to develop a premium range of products. "The market demands healthier food products," Vashist said. "The new consumer is health

conscious. To cater to that segment, we are coming up with two more temperature-controlled manufacturing units. One setup will have fully automatic cryogenic milling technology for spices which will be churned at a low temperature to preserve essential oils, nutrients, and aroma. In another plant, we have set up ultra-fine-dry-cold-grinding facility to save grains from thermal damage. That will add a new level of freshness to the flours. Cold water is run around the milling equipment while grinding is on. This enhances the taste and helps retain more nutrients."

Catering to the health-conscious consumers, Bhagwati Group plans to introduce pearl millet, finger millet, broom corn, and barley flours in the country. "We export these flours but since the demand has upped in India too, we will soon introduce these new flours here," Vashist said. Bhagwati Group has increased its presence on social media and on giant grocery platforms such as Amazon, Big Basket, and Flipkart. "The idea is to reach across the globe and offer the world more care and confidence," Vashist said. ■

Acknowledgements



Tracing its origin to 1970, Y J Trivedi & Co. (YJT) has today grown into a premier IP law firm with its strategic independent offices at Mumbai, Delhi and Jaipur. The firm has a strong base of well-credentialed legal and technical professionals offering quality services in all areas of Intellectual Property Rights. The firm understands that pragmatic and effective legal advice requires an appreciation and understanding of the ever-changing business environment in which the client has to sustain and perform. It has garnered excellent relationship with its clients by offering them personalised and prompt professional assistance. Whether working on a precedent-setting case or preparing opinions, the firm endeavour to be innovative in its approach and adopt pragmatic strategies to meet the client's interest. Through interdisciplinary collaboration and specialised experience in its clients' industries, the firm provides effective solutions that align with clients' short-term and long-term business objectives. The firm is in a continuous pursuit to build a reputation for its legal work, while staying true to its core values.



The Indus Entrepreneurs (TiE) founded in 1992 in Silicon Valley, is one of the largest non-profit organizations fostering entrepreneurship. It connects the entire entrepreneurship ecosystem from early-stage start-ups, serial entrepreneurs, professionals at leading corporations, venture capital, angel investors, thought leaders among others. With a global reach and a local focus, the crux of TiE's effort lies in its five foundational functions – Mentoring, Networking, Education, Funding and Incubation.

As of year 2020, 15,000+ members in 61+ chapters across 14 countries lead TiE's mission to nurture entrepreneurship globally and dedicate to the virtuous cycle of wealth creation and giving back to the community. TiE's focus remains on developing and promoting the next generation of entrepreneurs. The most widely known flagship event that TiE chapter hosts is TiEcon-The TiE Annual Conference, which is one of the largest professional and networking conferences for entrepreneurs (besides Global Summit which is also organised every year in collaboration with all the chapters).

Besides TiEcon, TiE has a broad range of programs and events catering to various industry verticals, hosted by Special Interest Groups (SIGs like, Healthcare, Manufacturing, Pharma, IT etc), TiE India Angels Network (TIA), TiE Young Entrepreneurs (TYE) and most recently, TiE Women's Forum for empowering women entrepreneurs. TiE University is a comprehensive program of stakeholders from the entrepreneurial ecosystem which works on enabling campus ideas to transform into viable businesses.

Author – Priya Adhyaru-Majithia

Priya Adhyaru-Majithia, author and art activist, has contributed over a thousand articles to various news-papers including The Times of India, Ahmedabad Mirror and DNA in last two decades. She has eight publications to her credit. Currently, she works as a freelance contributor for The Times of India. She has conceptualised and curated art shows for Ahmedabad Mirror and The Times of India. She served as a conceptualiser and curator for debutant edition of The Times Art Fest (2020) and Ahmedabad Art Fair (2015).

Priya, born and brought up in city of Ahmedabad has been discovering nascent, novel and noteworthy trends surfacing in and around areas of art, ethics, culture, entrepreneurship, relationships and lifestyle. She focuses on macro and micro trends that are at work beneath the phenomena called change and documents delicate nuances that surface and re-surface upon the society's altering chemistry.

From the year of 2000, Priya has been active in field of writing. During the first decade in journalism she reported over a wide gamut of subjects including health, climate-change, overseas education, immigration, law, entrepreneurship, relationships, culture, celebrations, lifestyle and art. The next decade saw her grow from a journalist, into an author, influencer and art activist. After curating unusual art shows titled Art-o-Nama for Ahmedabad Mirror in 2015 and 2016, she has been committedly writing and curating art.

Member of St. Xavier Alumni, Priya did Masters in English Literature from Gujarat University and studied Mass Communications at Xavier's Institute of Communications, Mumbai.

Portraiture : Rakesh Patel

Photography : Ronak Sopariwala and Gauravee Adhyaru

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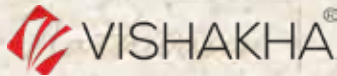
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PATENT & TRADEMARK ATTORNEYS & ADVOCATES



The book celebrates the torchbearers. **Jatin Trivedi**, the intellectual property rights (IPR) champion; author and art activist **Priya Adhyaru-Majithia**; and The Indus Entrepreneurs (TIE), an entrepreneurial community's Ahmedabad chapter; have come together to celebrate the torchbearers in the business pantheon of Gujarat.

The book acclaims the power of innovative ideas. The book is a catalogue of ideas that produced concrete success. The raison d'être is to raise awareness about intellectual property rights (IPR). This book collects stories of strength. The book illuminates a truth; patenting or filing for copyright and the registration of trademark or design help businesses grow.

The book ***Secret to Success: Intellectual Property – Building Legacy*** testifies to the fact that protecting intellectual property is a catalyst for rapid growth across all enterprises. These accounts will inspire a generation of aspiring entrepreneurs to dream bigger. The book does not focus on the numbers — market caps or top lines or bottom lines. The focus is on learnings and the journey.



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