

Facelift for Navratna

Eager to ride the consumer wave in favour of ayurvedic products, Emami is revamping the Navratna portfolio valued at over ₹700 crore

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For the first time in nearly ten years, the Kolkata based Emami group, is overhauling its flagship brand Navratna. The facelift will include new packaging and communication through campaigns on television and other media. The first advertisement in the series will release over the weekend with Amitabh Bachchan extolling the virtues of the brand, as experienced by a Bengali consumer.

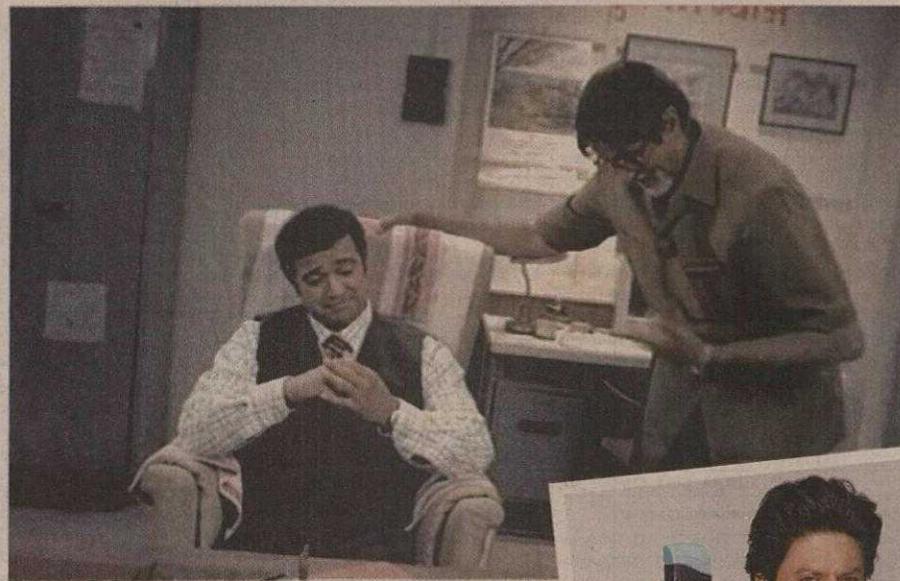
Industry estimates peg the size of cooling oils at nearly ₹900 crore and the market is growing at 15-20 per cent per annum. The Navratna portfolio, which includes cooling oils and talcs, is valued at over ₹700 crore in terms of sales revenue. While the company does not break down the revenues between the products under the brand, industry sources said that cooling oil constitutes the bulk of sales for Emami.

Given that Navratna is among its fast selling products, why is the company going in for a makeover? "The cooling oil category is fairly crowded with small regional players. To stand out of the clutter, there was need to revamp packaging and advertising," Harsh Agarwal, director, Emami, says.

The company's thrust towards Navratna is also driven by increasing consumer preference for ayurvedic formulations in personal care products. To push the brand, the company has Amitabh Bachchan as brand ambassador in a series of new television commercials.

Star struck

In the past, Emami has relied heavily on celebrity



Amitabh Bachchan is brand ambassador for the cooling oil while Shah Rukh Khan pitches for the talcum powder, both continue to be a part of the brand's revamp plan

endorsers. For Navratna too, it has used a bevy of stars including actors such as Govinda and Rambha in the 1990s, followed by Bachchan and Shahrukh Khan. Both Bachchan and Khan, says Agarwal, have ensured stickiness with their mass appeal. The ads with Bachchan playing the role of a personal assistant to a government official, for instance, created nine years ago continue to remain popular, he says.

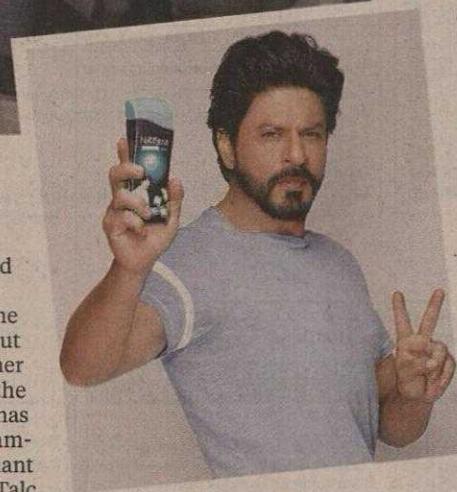
"People have liked Mr Bachchan in that avatar and the humorous manner in which the cooling oil acts as a stress buster. Elements of this will be visible in the new communication too," Agarwal says without getting into too many details. Navratna has managed to stay ahead on account of its high efficacy rate, according to industry sources and the new ads with

Bachchan are expected to leverage this.

In recent weeks, the company has rolled out advertisements for other products within the Navratna portfolio. It has Shah Rukh Khan as ambassador for a new variant called Navratna i-cool Talc meant to keep off the prickly summer rash that the season brings about. He plays himself in the ads (much like his latest movie, Fan) currently playing on television.

The new product is targeted at the premium consumer. "The value added market in general has been growing at a faster rate due to premiumisation and specificity of benefits offered," Agarwal says.

There are more variants in the pipeline. One is a brand extension in the cooling oil category, for women. It is called Navratna Almond Cool



Mumbai-based family of founder Jugatram Vaidya and the company has recently gone in for a new logo and tagline for the product. The objective in this case, as with Navratna, seems to be the same: bring over the young consumer interested in herbal-ayurvedic-organic products. The company is also extending the Zandu brand to two new products, adding to the 200-plus list that constitutes its portfolio.

The revamp is expected to recharge the ₹500-crore Zandu portfolio, the second-largest after Navratna, in the face of competition from Patanjali and Sri Sri brand of products. A revamp is seen as an answer to this trend and a means to prevent erosion of sales, experts tracking the market said.

Fair & Handsome, on other hand, was the creator of the men's fairness cream category in India a decade ago, ahead of companies such as Hindustan Unilever, Procter & Gamble and Nivea. It will see the launch of a new campaign under brand ambassador Shahrukh Khan. The endeavour is to consolidate its share in the men's fairness cream market, estimated at ₹500 crore. Fair & Handsome is estimated to have

Oil.

This will be endorsed by actress Shilpa Shetty. On the cool talc front, the company has actress Shruti Hasan as ambassador for a variant it launched last year called Orangi Blast.

On a revamp spree

Navratna is not the only brand being spruced up by Emami. Over the past one month, it has relaunched two other key brands — Zandu and Fair & Handsome fairness cream. Emami had acquired Zandu from the

a 66 per cent volume market share, company sources said.

In recent years, most personal care giants have upped the ante in the men's grooming space, coming up with different solutions for men. This has included everything from face wash to gels, creams and fairness creams. Fair & Handsome too has evolved from being a one-product brand to one that serves multiple purposes. At Emami, there seems to be a clear understanding that to stay ahead, one has to keep rolling with the times.