

# Havells — all wired up

The electrical player says it is plugged in, thanks to aggressive brand building and distribution

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Whether it is getting Rajesh Khanna back in the spotlight to endorse its fans or highlight respect for women through its punchy campaign titled *Hawa Badelegee* (winds of change), trust Havells India to come up with quirky campaigns.

It's no surprise the company, in recent times, has got together three veteran Bollywood baddies Shakti Kapoor, Prem Chopra and Ranjeet to feature in its campaign for something as commoditised as wires.

Responding to an email query, Qimat Rai Gupta, CMD, Havells India, says, "The company's key strategy in terms of brand building has been continued investments in advertisement coupled with deepening of distribution and marketing network... we have always focused on innovative designing and manufacturing excellence and these twin factors have contributed immensely to building our brand image. In the past few years, Havells has been continuously investing around 3-3.5 per cent of its sales revenues in marketing and advertising."

"Our penchant for clutter-breaking and out-of-the-box ad campaigns definitely benefits our brand since they have extensive recall val-



**Livewire** Havells says its out-of-the-box ad campaigns add to the brand's recall value

ue compared with traditional ad campaigns. Our ads not only create the desired impact amongst the audience but also enhance brand familiarity," he adds.

## Beyond the electrician

Over the last five years, the company has been aggressively focusing on brand building as it forayed into business-to-consumer (B2C) categories such as domestic appliances.

It has also put its efforts into turning some of its business-to-business (B2B) products more B2C-focused.

According to the company, this strategy was backed by market intelligence that suggested behavioural changes in consumer mindset.

Consumers are now beginning to go out and buy some of these electrical products on their own.

This was one of the key reasons why the company decided to focus on building a brand for product categories such as wires.

Gupta said, "Wires are a fairly low involvement category where the consumers largely rely on the advice of the electrician since they are not well-versed in the technicalities of the product.

Therefore, it became imperative for us to create a communication message - which emphasises how Havells wires are qualitatively better at preventing fire - in a convincing manner to generate

top-of-the-mind recall among customers."

## Game for growth

The brand has been one of the big spenders on cricket, especially the Indian Premier League.

But that strategy is also now changing. From nearly 90 per cent of its ad spends on cricket earlier, it now spends 30-35 per cent on cricket while the larger chunk is spent on other genres and even other sports. For instance, the company decided to spend on the Indian Badminton League last year.

Aggressive brand building, besides the focus on innovation and distribution strategy, has worked in

its favour. The company has been growing 13-18 per cent per annum in the last few years and has emerged as one of the top four brands in the Indian electrical industry.

The company's portfolio includes miniature circuit boards (MCBs), compact fluorescent lamps (CFLs), motors, fans, switches and domestic appliances.

In recent times, Havells has also been looking to grow its brand "Standard, which it acquired in 2010. Originally a switchgear brand, it has now been expanded to modular switches and fans. "This strategy has paid off as the Standard brand has more than doubled from ₹10 crore per month a year ago to ₹25 crore per month now," says Gupta.

The company is pushing "Standard" in the retail segment and looking at strengthening its reach in the urban market. That's not all. Havells will launch a separate branding campaign promoting Standard as an independent brand. Moreover it is being sold through different channels and no retailer stocks both the brands.

"This is to ensure that Havells' premium image does not get impacted or diluted by Standard's value tag," explains Gupta.

Meanwhile, the company has tied up with e-commerce platforms to sell its electrical and electronic products and has even launched a mobile app for its dealers and stakeholders to make buying and selling easy.