

DESIGN

Delivering key levers of food p

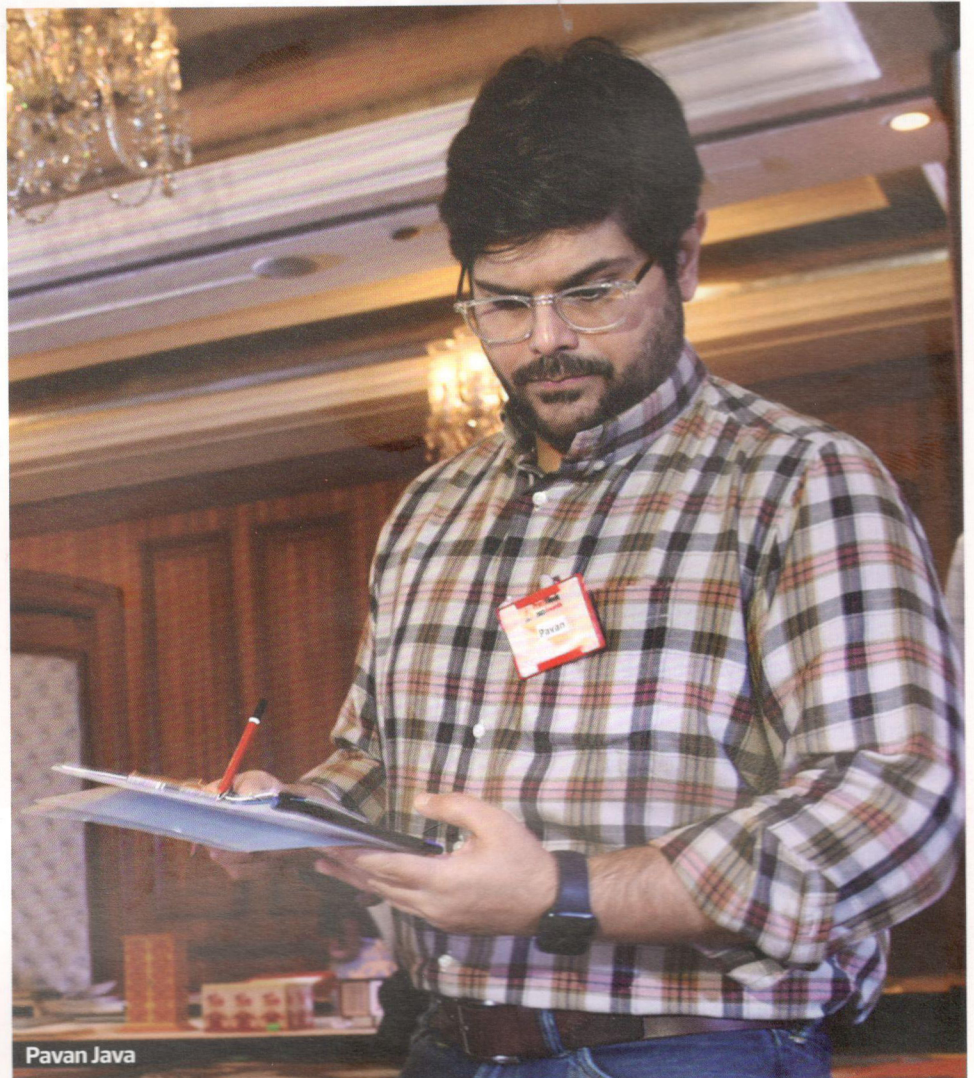
Packaging is a form of branding and knowing how to interact with the consumer on functionality, product communication and branding is significant says Pavan Java of Pavan Java Studio

Abhay Avadhani (AA): How do you think brands can achieve factors like sustainability, safety, better storage, guidelines to use the product and identification of product differentiation while sticking to the circular economy policy?

Pavan Java (PJ): For each brand or product category and product type, these benchmarks differ. If you consider food items; they are not only transported and stored but also stored in the same packaging after its consumption. The packaging influences the consumer to buy but marketing also plays a significant role.

The brands must make sure that the packaging is visual and communicates the sourcing and benefits; functions to make sure that the product is in its best form; indicates if the package can be upcycled or recycled in the consumer end; is beneficial for the consumers in safety and health throughout its lifecycle, by using hyper local material, recycled sourced materials, clean production technologies and effective closed loop cycles.

AA: What is your take on intelligent or



Pavan Java

smart packaging that can be used for foods?

PJ: Food packaging is imperative for protecting contents from contamination, tampering and damage. It also determines portion sizes and displays product information. The packaging needs for various types of food differ from aseptic processing for milk, to processed food, to wrappers for candy

and bags for fruits.

The new pour-over milk cartons have become a great convenience, as you open and use as much as you need and then put it back in the fridge with its brand and the message on the pack that creates a recall value.

Such simple changes in format, size and shape make the packaging more functional and increase its life.

Packaging design for brands

AA: What are your views on marketing of the product through packaging?

PJ: Today's consumers have ways to side-step your marketing messages from opting for a paid media subscription model that allows them to go ad-free, to missing your content due to changes in social media algorithms, to enabling them to see the recommended posts.

The consumers have to go through the packaging to get to your product. In this digitally enabled world, packaging is the only thing that can't be deleted, fast-forwarded, or skipped. As long as the packaging delivers your product safely, communicates relevance, engages, intrigues and capitalises on trends with a clear representation of the brand, there is nothing else that can create such value-adds to sales.

AA: Brands should consider which metrics to increase sales, market share or penetration, when they look at packaging?

PJ: There are methods to determine how one is going to read the metrics. The first one being an online sentiment analysis such as social listening platforms. The second one being survey-based brand trackers approach which allows you to monitor and track key brand metrics on an ongoing basis and analyse trends over time.

The packaging provides an opportunity to interact with the consumer on functionality, product communication and branding thus, creating experience and brand recall. A good brand experience generates loyalty that is better than marketing campaigns.

AA: Return on ad spend (ROAS) has become very prominent with every single campaign. In that sense why is

awareness about Return on packaging spend (ROPS) not as dominant as it should be?

PJ: The home-grown brands which don't have the big ad spends, are detouring the industry through digital ad channels, e-commerce reach and through packaging innovations such as Paper Boat. There are many such new players cannibalising the monopoly of a few brands. All the efforts in innovation add up to the sales numbers.

AA: Covid caused a surge in short-runs and virtual approvals. Has the balance been restored in 2022?

PJ: Covid turned the impossible to possible. Having a virtual meeting, taking a decision and expecting everyone to do what was necessary from their homes to achieve the common goal. All automation tools are in full use now and people are making the most of it. All experiments were tried and tested during Covid, they seem confident and everything is happening at great speeds.

AA: We attended a food seminar organised by FICCI. One interesting discussion was about how Adland has painted itself into a corner because it has allowed creativity to be associated primarily with "verbal or visual artistry" rather than a tool to solve business problems.

PJ: Creative application allows us to see a complex problem simply. As agencies, we are disconnected from the day to day process of brand owners, targets and processes. Our job is to understand the brand, draw a personality that we want our patrons to believe that the brand is all about, and we do just that, whilst giving us a birds eye view to advise, consult and provide solutions

on most principal issues. Much more than designs in ads but more like providing creative solutions. But, how is this relevant to our discussion here??

AA: If you look at ad spend now, packaged goods in India are less than 10% of overall spend. Is getting associated with marcoms the main problem for the low importance of what packaging can do?

PJ: For the ones who are not doing any mainstream ad spends are focused on packaging and distribution to set them apart, achieve penetrations and market share. Once those brands see some revenue they start to be relevant on mainstream media. Otherwise the digital channels, packaging and distribution, helps them reach their customers. Until a threshold level is achieved for them to go out into the main media for brand recall and reach. ■

"The market for packaging design services, estimated to be worth USD 21.9 billion in 2020, is anticipated to increase to USD 31.9 billion by 2030. It is forecasted to grow at a CAGR of 3.7%. Pavan Java Studio responds to this demand for packaging design by viewing it as a visual language for communicating with consumers.

Commenting on their approach to package designing, Pavan Java says, "We believe that package designing is a blend of design and human psychology as its ultimate goal is to grab attention. But we also believe that this goal of package designing must extend further and should also intrigue the consumer to pick and check out the product. Therefore, while designing for a product, our team comprehends the brand's persona, complements it with market knowledge related to customer expectations while buying such products, and ultimately culminates these two into designing."