

Brand Saga: Tupperware India, the brand that humanized 'dabbas'

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This Thursday we walk down the memory lane with the Tupperware India advertising journey, understanding how this brand became an audience favorite and a part of the daily lingo to the point that Tupperware memes are till date a rage.

Forgot your Tupperware tiffin box somewhere? It's a tough situation ahead, as your mother gives you that deadly stare. 'Dabbas' have been our constant companion. Mothers probably adore these dabbas more than they adore us. There were days the empty boxes of premium butter cookies and Bournvita or Chyawanprash bottles were used for storage. Enter Tupperware. We take a look at the Tupperware India advertising journey for our love for the brand and for our mother's love for the dabbas.

Tupperware's India Debut

In 1946, Earl Silas Tupper laid the foundation of Tupperware in Leominster, Massachusetts. With his acumen, he identified a need gap and developed plastic containers used in households to contain food and keep it airtight, which featured a then-patented "burping seal".

In 1996, after creating waves in a few European countries, Tupperware kickstarted operations in India with their Fridge Range – Jugs, Tumbler, Cool N Fresh, and Bowled Over. Delhi being the first market, the company did its debut with a sales force of 30-40 women and an employee force of 10-15 people.

Tupperware is now sold in almost 100 countries. The company claims that in seven decades, their products have become more diverse, environmentally responsible, and durable.

Tupperware India Advertising Journey – The Woman's World

The success of Tupperware has been majorly credited to the brains of Brownie Wise, an American salesperson, who identified the need for product demos and introduced a party plan system, which ultimately created entrepreneurial opportunities for women. This system went on to break all records and made Tupperware a leading homeware brand across the globe.

Picking on the insight, online data suggests that Tupperware developed a direct marketing strategy to sell products known as the Tupperware Party. The Tupperware Party enabled women in the 1950s to earn while keeping their focus in the domestic domain (the 50s version of WFH). The party plan model relied on characteristics generally assumed of housewives (e.g., party planning, hosting a party, sociable relations with friends and neighbors) and featuring the brand products in those parties.



A similar strategy was adopted in India where every month the company hosted 'Tupperware Demo Parties' inviting housewives and mothers as the primary target audience. The demonstration sessions highlighted how the Tupperware product range has something for everyone and that they can be trusted with storing food or any goods that need to stay safe and fresh.

When Tupperware step foot in India, people weren't used to storing food and goods in plastic containers and preferred recycling cans.

The housewives were already struggling with a scarcity of storage cans. And they were also resistant to buying the new entrant – plastic cans and bottles – from the market.

Through live demonstrations and direct selling strategy, Tupperware made Indian families believe that with its products, the food is always safe and ready to eat. For instance, during the Tupperware Demo Party, they showed how idli batter would sour in no time unless stored in a Tupperware container in the refrigerator.

Likewise, with every food item and essential goods, Tupperware each month targeted key markets and initiated demo parties. Eventually, Tupperware expanded its product range as the demands soared and invested in manufacturing fruit-vegetable containers and its first variant, Aquesafe water bottles.

Overcoming Challenges With Multi-level Marketing

The initial challenge that Tupperware faced while selling its product was to convince the woman of the house that the plastic containers could actually work and that they can be the first selling point acting as direct sellers for the brand.

The early hesitation from the target audience did not earn many bucks for the company but later as women stepped out of their houses and donned a more liberated look they became consultants for the brand worked consistently into making Tupperware the new big thing.

To tackle some setbacks, Tupperware India adopted a multilevel marketing approach building a network of distributors and brand representatives for sales to drive brand growth. A chain of communicators was formed for word-of-mouth promotion while Tupperware demo parties were in full swing. There were recruiters set up by the company to onboard more people who then acted as distributors and promoters for a large set of audiences at various touchpoints.

On visual mediums, the company curated different content formats like Chain of Confidence and The Right Start featuring Tupperware India's women representatives and how they made the right decision by picking the brand.

In 2012, Tupperware rolled out 'She Can You Can', a campaign conceptualized by IBD Brands and directed by Sheelji Srivastava. It focused on empowering the new age consumers and bring out the hidden achievers while helping the womenfolk lead a self-reliant lifestyle. It aimed to highlight Tupperware's vision to Enlighten, Educate and Empower women with exposure to make them more confident in themselves.

The brand launched this campaign as an endeavor to celebrate the power of a woman and inspire her to touch the zenith of success. Through 'She Can, You Can', women were encouraged to share their experiences and show the world what kind of role model they can become for fellow women.

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Apart from showcasing its product range including FridgeSmart container, One-Touch Bowl, Graters, Tupperware Ultimo, the company also roped in many kitchen and food experts to conduct various workshops and cooking sessions using Tupperware products.

Tupperware's marketing mix primarily consisted of BTL activities and on-ground events, being a retailer brand the company focused on delivering the first-hand experience of their products to their consumers. From demonstrating the products on-ground to engaging the participants in fun activities in real-time, the brand played with many things.

The 'She Can, You Can' initiative was promoted on a large scale with a series of TVCs online and print advertisements in national and regional dailies, workshops complemented by on-ground activations and BTL initiatives.

Over time, the company forewent into various new categories, for instance, it launched a super-premium range of imported kitchenware, called Ultimo – debuting into the steel cookware. The roll outs are supported by short videos and tutorials on how to use more products from the company and make the most out of it.

The TVCs and online videos sharply focus on the features, sustainability, and use cases of Tupperware highlighting the latest product design, durability, high quality, offer lifetime warranties, and how they are made to keep food fresher, longer, and to be reused for years to come.

The 'More Time Living' campaign was created with an aim to communicate an honest brand narrative rooted in believable product philosophy. It was inspired by the nature of Tupperware products and how they not only save time but fill each moment with delight.

In the midst of the COVID-19 outbreak in 2020, Tupperware introduced various new products and new sales channels like physical stores, social selling, e-commerce, and kiosk models. The company also increased focus on in-house dining via its range of cookware & serve-ware products.

In February 2021, Tupperware celebrated its 25 years in India and 75 years globally with the launch of Chosee Good Every Day' campaign.

The campaign entailed Tupperware's brand manifesto which is a reinforcement of qualities of trust and goodness and aims to nurture a better future for families, communities, and the planet every day.

Since its inception in India, the brand has turned millions of Indian women into financially independent entrepreneurs. According to the company, over the last 25 years, the brand invested in igniting global communities, especially women, to realize their best selves through opportunity, enrichment, celebration, and above all else, uplifting relationships.