

Mission youthful

A clutch of companies go in for a makeover to make themselves relevant to younger consumers.

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Change is here. Something you will see and experience in the days to come. Starting with our new logo, states Ceat Tyres' new print campaign. It may well be speaking for a number of companies that have gone in for a makeover. With competition hotting up, this summer has heralded a season of new logos and fresh campaigns. From India's first organised retailer Shoppers Stop to 50-year-old tyre major Ceat to heritage group Godrej, all three have decided to unveil new identities within a few days of each other as changing times and needs of consumers drives these companies to 'refresh' themselves.

According to Sujata Keshavan, Managing Director of the Bangalore-based Ray & Keshavan, "There is always a business reason and a future plan linked to a logo change. Whenever the current image of the company is not relevant companies go in for a logo change. The logo is like the signature of a company and the face of its brand."

In fact, a logo change is a long-drawn-out process and is usually announced when a certain mission has been accomplished by any corporate.

"We announced a radical change. Ceat's turnover in the last year crossed Rs 2,600 crore. We are likely to report the highest ever profit in the year that has gone by," declared Harsh V. Goenka, Chairman, RPG Group, unveiling Ceat's new colourful logo.

Getting rid of its 'Born Tough' rhino of 50 years, Ceat's new symbol represents change within the company, as well as the improved condition of Indian roads and vehicles. According to Paras K. Chowdhury, Managing Director, Ceat Tyres, "While there are huge changes within the company the logo is also symbolic of the changing road conditions." So while the rhino stood for tyres which would withstand the heavy and slow vehicles, today there are lighter and faster and

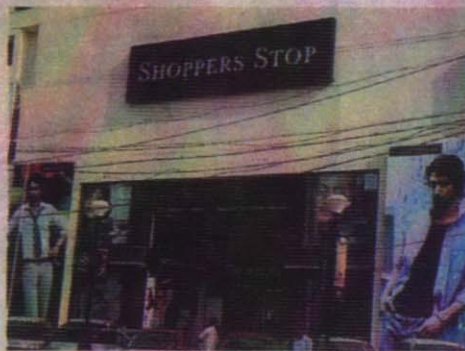
better roads which do not necessitate such tyres. Ceat is now focussing on radial tyres with an emphasis on the passenger car segment owned by young car owners. "It is a contemporary logo to address the younger generation," states Chowdhury.

Research done by Ray & Keshavan revealed that the younger generation did not even recall Ceat's rhino. The new logo is designed to reflect today's CEAT which aims to meet the demands of tomorrow's market. The overall design represents the company's vision of leading the industry in delivering better products, innovation and services to customers.

A top-notch agency, O&M, was also hired for the first time to create a new campaign for the tyre brand. Anup Chitnis, Executive Creative Director, O&M, said, "The whole creative idea behind Ceat's campaign was to convey the message of 'change' about everything within and outside the company. We also had the job of creating an internal campaign for the employees with the message."

India's oldest retailer Shoppers Stop has also been in a hurry to convey that it has undergone a major facelift. Ray & Keshavan was also responsible for creating a new identity for Shoppers Stop along with a new campaign, "Start Something New", created by Contract Advertising. The retailer wants to don a new image to address the youth. According to Ravi Deshpande, Chief Creative Officer, Contract Advertising, "The retailer needed its brand idea to change to connect to younger people. The purpose was also to cut the age of the brand as fresh ideas do help in people looking differently at the brand."

Elaborating on the new print campaign, Deshpande says, "In the print executions, we have demonstrated the need to care for the planet. Starting to care for the planet would be to start something new. The idea could lend itself to any number of executions from here on. It marks a new beginning



Season of
change!

in the lives of Shoppers Stop customers and today, for Shoppers Stop itself."

Encouraging its consumers to 'step out of the box' and do things that they have always wanted to do but never had the time for, the retailer is hastening to make things better for itself and its consumer. As B. S. Nagesh, Customer Care Associate and Managing Director, says, "The change in identity is just the beginning of a wave of strategic movements which is being made in people, practices, introduction of new ways of shopping, technology investment in CRM and analytics. We will now invest in taking our consumer towards the bridge to luxury retailing in India and meeting their newfound aspirations."

The visible form of the change at Shoppers Stop was highlighted through its new logo. The signage was to portray a more upmarket and premium brand for itself. As Keshavan says, "There was an equity in the black and white, and the colours are the same, except the form is different. The purpose was to make it appear upscale, especially when the retailer is bringing in new upmarket formats and associating itself with premium brands such as MAC."

Besides, the retailer is ensuring its new brand philosophy and logo change seep down to the shopping floor level. It has now introduced trial rooms with day and night lighting options as consumers wish to evaluate garments in different lights. Besides, it has also launched its own in-store radio format taking into account the customer's choice of music and its influence on their shopping behaviour. Shopping bags which are customer touch-points have been launched as a series of collectibles under the theme 'Fashion for the Ages'.

As for the more than 100-year-old group, Godrej, splashing itself with bright colours in a new logo is going to be the way forward. After undertaking extensive research with the help of its agency, Interbrand, the group

has charted a new marketing and branding strategy to keep up with the times. Along with its new identity comes a master brand strategy to drive greater synergies across its businesses and brand portfolio as the Godrej Group is targeting revenue growth between 25 and 30 per cent on an annual basis.

Unveiling its new strategy, Adi Godrej, Chairman of the Godrej Group, said, "The Indian consumer now has a more demanding and youthful mindset. At Godrej, we have always been at the helm of changing and redefining the marketplace, and this will now be reflected in a marketing and branding strategy that accelerates profitable growth." Its revitalised corporate identity is a result of a detailed analysis of its vast product, service and business portfolio.

Adds Tanya Dubhashi, Executive Director and President (Marketing), Godrej Group, "Using the Godrej brand as a unifier of our businesses and people made sense because it is our most valuable asset as it cannot be replicated and it spans all our businesses." Investing in the Godrej master brand, the group plans to create a brand franchise through strategies for product and brand development, retail, communication and talent management. The Godrej master brand strategy will be common to its businesses of personal grooming, furniture and property.

Jagdeep Kapoor, Managing Director, Samsika Marketing Consultants, observes, "While Ceat and Godrej have tried to be colourful and vibrant with their logos, Shoppers Stop has tried to keep it simple. All these efforts are being made because the behaviour of consumers is changing and companies and brands are moving from being dated to becoming updated."

Likening these companies' efforts to 'icing on the cake', Kapoor feels that the 'cake' has to be good enough to keep consumers happy. "Style is important but it is content that will drive the businesses of these companies," he says.