

Bournville- Relaunch In India: A Case Study

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INTRODUCTION

The process of New Product Development carries a huge risk. Normally, most of the new product introductions fail at launch. Is the brand Bournville another such example? This case study tries to analyze the perception of Indian chocolate consumers with respect to the brand Bournville.

On October 2008, Cadbury re-launched Bournville. Although it's made from finest Ghana beans, it's a much defocused dark chocolate brand in India as compared to the other brands of Cadbury. Although the brand was launched in India in mid 70s, it gradually got lost into oblivion. The main objective of re-launching Bournville in India was to cater to a niche segment in the chocolate market, i.e. the segment preferring dark bitter chocolates. The Company thought that since Cadbury owned 70% of the market, Bournville was the right brand to develop the category.

the reason for its re-launch was that global brands like *Hershey*, *Ferrero Rocher*, Mars are planning to enter the Indian market. Hence, Cadbury took a proactive defense strategy by creating a new category of dark chocolates first time in India.

"Dark chocolate is a new category in India," Nikhil Rao, Associate Vice President, Marketing, Cadbury India, has said. *"With Bournville, Cadbury is trying to create that category. Instead of bombarding our target audience with banner ads, we want to engage them on a higher level so as to create the right imagery of the dark chocolate brand in India"*¹. In India, the brand is still in a nascent stage. There is less than 25% awareness amongst the SEC A segment [target group]. As per Sanjay Purohit, Executive Director- Marketing and International Business, Cadbury India, they are trying to focus on the category creation with the re-launch. Perhaps, the focus was to gain attention and interest from the potential customers and gradually shifting into desire and action (repeat selling).

The advertising focuses on generating impulse via its distinguished taste with the wacky catch line **"Earn Your Bournville"** ; while the packaging talks about the health benefits - natural source of anti oxidants - associated with dark chocolates. Its taste is completely new to the buds of most of the Indian chocolate lovers. *"The new variant of Bournville is bitter yet mellow. This comes as an effort to cater to one of the new consumer flavours that we have identified in our extensive consumer studies"* says Mr. Sanjay Purohit, General Manager, Marketing, Cadbury India Ltd.

The main reason as to why the brand is not succeeding in the Indian market is the fact that the brand could not target the right customer group through the right promotion tool and right message. Hence, the desired customer group is reluctant to buy the same for themselves or for their near and dear ones. The main factors that contributed to the de-focusing were the bitter taste, over-price and relatively small pack size [compared to its MRP].

A survey among 100 postgraduate management students with various demographic backgrounds in the age group of 20 to 25 years shows that although 90% of the respondents have tasted the brand Bournville at least once, hardly 2% have opted for re-purchase of the same more than thrice. The study done during September-October 2009 was purposely made biased on those consumers who have tasted Bournville at least once so that the authors could study the Bournville perception more precisely.

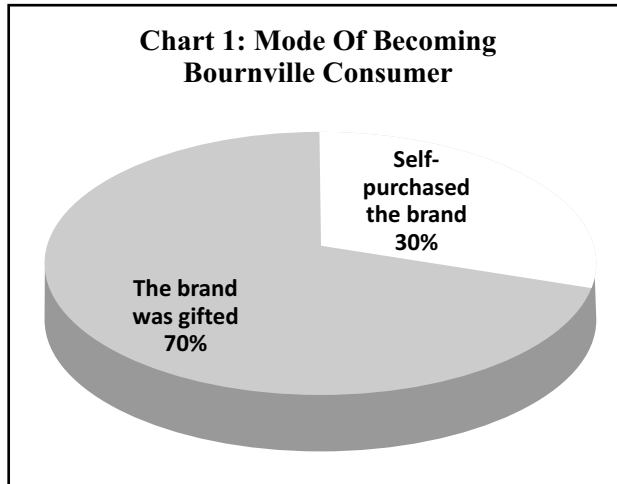
What Cadbury failed to understand is that the taste of Indian customers is a lot different from that of western consumers. In India, chocolate has been considered as a substitute of sweet products. People normally have a fascination for sweet milk chocolates. Cadbury's flagship brand - Cadbury Dairy Milk [CDM] with its tagline *'Kuch meetha ho jaye'* focuses on this aspect very clearly. In such a scenario, a bitter tasting chocolate does not necessarily fit to the Indian customer taste and preference. We have collected the sales figure of Bournville on a fortnightly basis from two major in-house retailers of South City Mall at Kolkata in the period September - October 2009. It was found that the average sale of Cadbury Bournville was 40 to 50 units per fortnight. This hike was perhaps due to the festive

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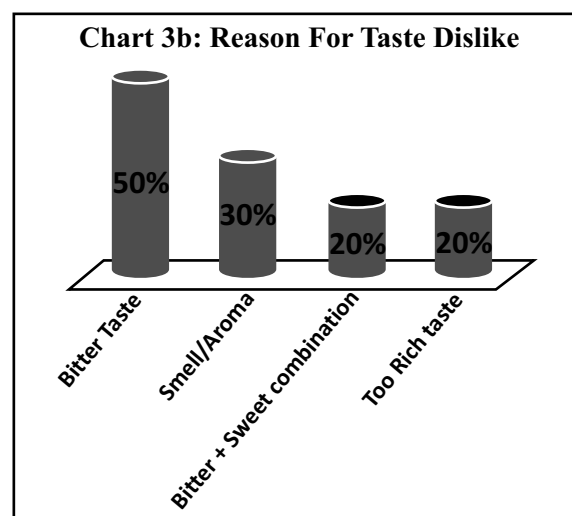
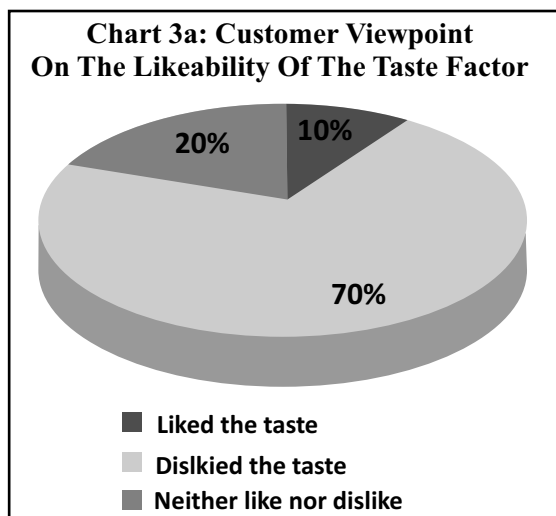
Table 1: Respondent Consumption Of Bournville Brand

Topic	Percentage
	At least once - 90 %
Consumed the brand	More than once - 10%
	More than twice - 5 %
	More than thrice - 2%

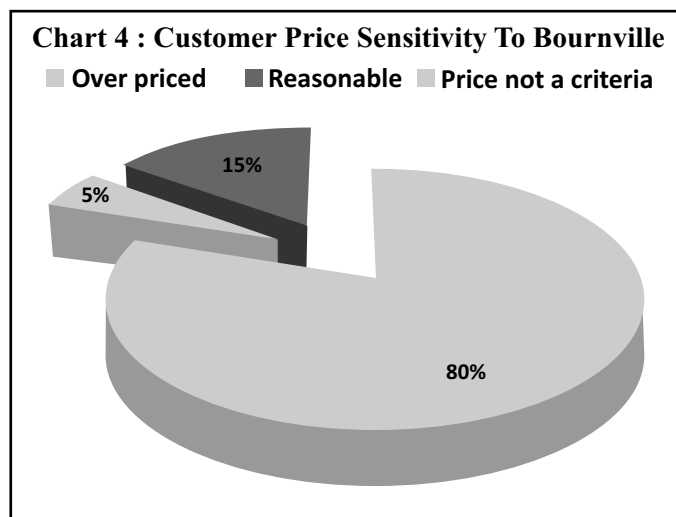


environment. The trend in case of Cadbury Celebration was different. Here, a Cadbury Celebration sale fortnightly was a whopping 200-220 units because of Diwali, Durgapuja and other festive occasions. But, according to those shops, the normal sales of Cadbury Bournville was 15-20 units fortnightly and in case of Cadbury Celebration, it was around 40-50 units fortnightly in non-festive occasions.

When we compared Bournville with Crackle, the researchers found that people were more inclined to eat Crackle with different versions made from crunchy crispier butterscotch inside. Consumers seem to like the crackling and sweet experience rather than the bitter taste of Bournville. Even the price of Crackle is much lower than that of Bournville. Out of 20 consumers in the age group of 20 to 30 years surveyed in a focus group in January 2010, it was found that 80 % of them had tried the brand Crackle before and 87% among them liked the taste of the brand and were ready to go for its repeat purchase. On the contrary, only 25% had tried the brand Bournville previously and none of them agreed to go for a repeat purchase of the same. These figures give us a good idea of the perception consumers have towards Bournville.



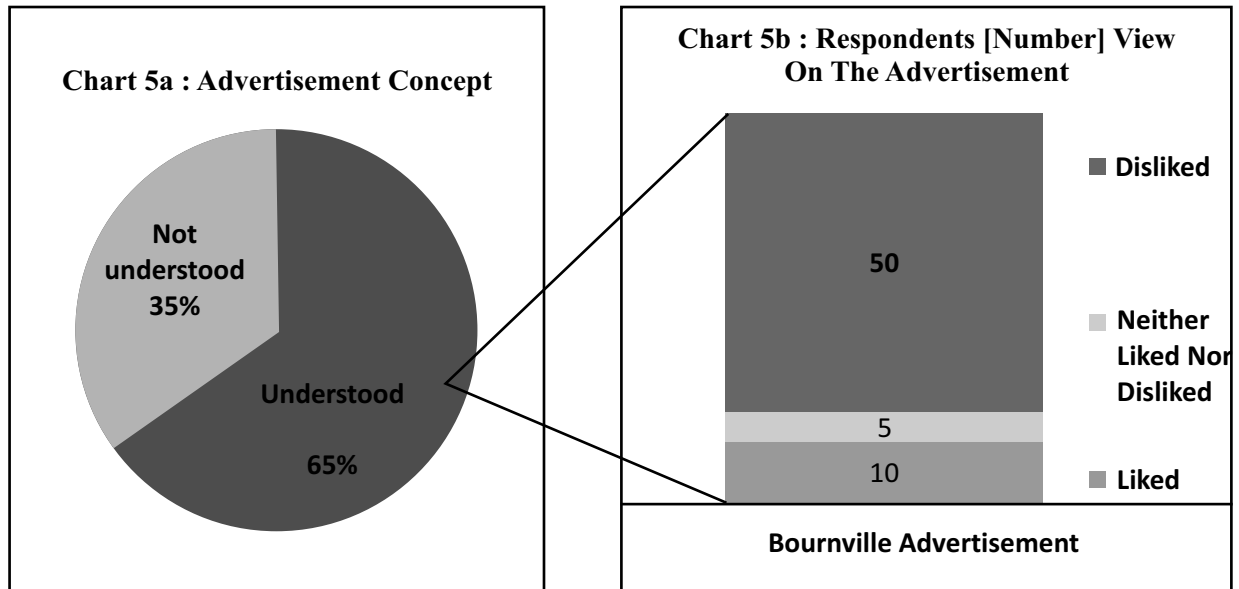
Bournville brand costs ₹ 75/- for 80 gms. The high price also is another factor for the low acceptance of the brand. Cadbury has better alternatives at the same price for the chocolate loving consumers. Cadbury Celebrations has successfully replaced traditional gifting options like 'Mithai' and dry- fruits during festive seasons. The packaging has been aptly designed to give it a festive feeling. For most of the consumers, the 'Celebration' packs available at almost the same price offers better variety, value for money and quantity compared to Bournville 80gm. The variety and pack size affects Indian consumers more. The respondents were questioned as whether they would prefer to gift a pack of Haldiram sweets or Celebration pack or a gift pack of Bournville to their relatives, friends and boss/colleagues on a festive occasion. 85% respondents preferred to gift sweets to their relatives, 92 % respondents preferred to give Celebration pack to their friends and colleagues. A small segment of only 5% opted for Bournville pack for gifting to their bosses.



As per Cadbury, the brand Bournville is for those who love dark chocolates with a bitter taste and not for all. But it does not specify what type of chocolate lovers' market it is trying to cater to with its communication strategies. Is it targeting the dark chocolate lovers or people in a specific income group? The Bournville tag line '**Earn this chocolate and not just buy it**' does not convey the proper picture of its positioning.

The ad is moreover a little too overboard for the general Indian consumers. It appears to us that the advertisement for Bournville is not at all suitable for the Indian psyche. They should rather come up with a new series of advertisements [with proper research] which will communicate properly and efficiently to its target consumers. The ad focuses on the '*making-a-tradition-out-of-eating-the-chocolate*'. It reminds us of the old '*breaking ritual*' spots of the Kit-Kat advertisement. The British-looking actor and British-sounding script gives a confusing message to the Indian audience. Another irony is that the brand is not even listed on Cadbury's India website! They have a dedicated website [<http://www.bournville.in/html/index.html>] for Bournville, but information about the same is not much visible on the Cadbury website. Awareness level of the dedicated website is very less. The website appears in the advertisement but is hardly visible. Only 10% respondents could trace the website details mentioned in the advertisement. Again, there exists a little connection between the TV ad, website version and print version [http://advertisemeant.files.wordpress.com/2009/01/bournville_print_ad.jpg]. While the impressive website is an interactive journey of the chocolate-making-process; the print ad talks about how this chocolate is "*the food of the Gods and other top management*", the TV ad has a different story altogether. They could have used the TV anchor as their brand ambassador in all the media mix. This would have eased the recall for consumers.

In a broader sense, it appears that the marketing communication has been really ineffective. The brand could not connect with the target consumers. The ad says that you don't buy a Bournville; you have to earn it, which is totally unclear as to what it means by that. Is it that one has to slog a lot to earn it or is it trying to bully the consumers? or the advertisement implies that you have to have a great occasion to buy or consume this chocolate? If that be the case, it seems that it isn't meant for Indian consumers who find happiness in every small achievement; where we people do have a reason to celebrate for almost all rhymes and reasons.



The respondents were given qualitative input on the performance of Bournville brand in India over the years. They were shown the 'mumbo-jumbo' advertisement of Bournville, which is being telecast to Indian customers on the major national channels. With reference to the same, the respondents were asked to assign weightage to the following advertisement criteria and evaluate the advertisement on these criteria. The respondents were asked to assign weightage on the basis of what factors (and how much) they thought was important for focusing in the Bournville promotion. The advertisement's performance was next reviewed on those parameters.

The respondents had to assign weightage to each parameter, such that the sum total of the weightage of all parameters was equal to 100. Each parameter had to be rated on a scale of 1 to 10 . Average of the weightage and ratings were then

Table 2: Criteria To Evaluate Bournville Advertisement

S. No.	Criteria	Weight	Rating	Weight * Rating
		[W]	[R]	[W*R]
1	Ad Creativity	5	8	40
2	Execution	10	6	60
	Storyline/Screenplay	3	6	18
	Music/Jingle	1	5	5
	Cinematography	3	6	18
	Acting	2	8	16
	Impact	1	3	3
3	Recall	7	7	49
	Brand Recall	4	7	28
	Ad Memorability	3	7	21
4	Tagline	10	7	70
5	Product Association	20	4	80
6	Target Audience Connect	20	3	60
7	Entertainment	3	6	18
8	Claim	20	5	100
9	Emotional Appeal	5	2	10
	Total	100		487

computed for each parameter. The assigned weight and rating of each parameter was then multiplied. The aggregate sum total of $[W \times R]$ was finally divided by $100 \sum W$ to get the Weighted Average Score. The weighted average scores of the 100 respondents were found to be 4.87.

CONCLUSION

From the data, it is clear that at this position, Bournville needs to focus on its ads -on aspects like product association, claim, proper target audience connect. Although the tagline has a good recall level and the creativity is noteworthy, but the ad has failed to imbibe the claim it is making (about the quality) in the heart and mind of the target audience. It appears that the communication effect is not substantial and without much classy impact. To the respondents, on the storyline screen play, music jingle has a very little impact. The brand recall, target audience connect and emotional appeal did not have any significant impact. They would rather accept an ad of Bournville with Indian participants and environment harping on the emotional and aristocracy / premium aspect.

QUESTIONS TO BE PONDERED UPON

1. What according to you will be the suitable IMC for Bournville by Cadbury India?
2. Do you think any change in the pack size and/or price will help to boost sales?
3. Should Cadbury India Ltd. go for more sales promotional schemes for enhancing sale of Bournville clubbed with its other products or should they promote this brand among Corporates only? Justify your answer with proper marketing strategy.
4. After evaluating the criteria and results of the Bournville advertisement [Table 2], what should be the best possible advertisement strategy of Bournville in India?

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