

Bisleri aims for high water mark

Interview with Jayanti Chauhan, Director, Bisleri International

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The Goan: You have studied design and art. How did you incorporate this in the Bisleri brand?

Jayanti Chauhan: Design and fashion interested me as a kid. During my studies I studied merchandising and product development. You can see this in the way the Bisleri and Vedica bottles are designed. Their labels are much more attractive than before.

TG: How big is the packaged bottled water industry in India? At what rate is it growing?

JC: The packaged bottled water market in India is estimated to be between Rs 8,000 and Rs 10,000 crore. And it is growing at 20 per cent per annum.

TG: How different is the industry in India from the rest of the world

JC: Well to begin with the industry is getting more creative in its design. The unusual angles used for these bottles are improving. Many more players have entered the market including foreign brands. We are not what we used to be like in the 80's and 90's. The bottling industry in India has come a long way.

TG: With international products like Avian entering India, how is this going to change the market for Bisleri and other brands?

JC: First of all Avian coming into India is nothing that Bisleri or other brands should worry about. Avian's market is a very niche market. Even more niche than Vedica, Qua and Himalaya. Avian's shipping is all the way from France to India. The transportation costs itself increase the cost of the Avian three times higher. Especially if the water is bottled at source, Indian companies need not worry about foreign players entering the market.

TG: Bisleri is now entering into the luxury water market with Vedica. Why this move? Is it because sales have dropped?

JC: No, sales have not dropped. We found a spring in Utrakhand and got lucky. At Bisleri we are constantly innovating and trying new things, without looking at competition. We found the

PH level in the water was PH 7.9 which is excellent for drinking water and good for health. So why not enter the luxury drinking water market with the brand Vedica.

TG: What is Bisleri's market share?

JC: Bisleri is the leader with a 60 per cent market share

TG: Bisleri has become a generic term all across the world. Is this a problem for the brand?

JC: Bisleri has become a generic term for bottled water, which is great. But the downside of this is that when you walk into a store and ask for a Bisleri, stores offer any water that is bottled. How to get people to ask for the green Bisleri bottle is a challenge.

TG: Do you have any plans of entering other markets?

JC: We already are shipping Vedica to Singapore, Turkey and a few other places. But yes the ultimate goal is to take Bisleri overseas, into European markets. But presently we want to capture 100 per cent of the market share in India.

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