

CARE TO CONTRIBUTE TO A SUSTAINABLE WORLD BESIDES ENJOYING SOME CHOCOLATES, KOCOATRAIT COULD BE THE CHOICE!!

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ABSTRACT

It's a rare scenario in this highly competitive world for marketers to promote their products keeping sustainable economic wellbeing of the society. Many theories such as circular economy, extended producer responsibility etc have been evolved over the years but to embrace them in real life business operations has been a challenge. The author, here finds one such start-up run by a young couple and develops a case based on an interview with the founders of the start-up, Kocoatrait and examines the newspaper reports, their website and social media posts from time to time to deliberate how this company has made it big in business with the right use of social media during the pandemic. The author was impressed with the motto of the company and hence has used qualitative methodology to develop the case.

INTRODUCTION

My eye widened as I read a recent post about the sweet taste of success of TN's bean to bar chocolate brand Kocoatrait published in the TOI on Jan 24th, 2022 by Ms. Nandini Sen Gupta. Kocoatrait is the one of the world's & India's 1st Zero Waste, Sustainable Luxury, Single Origin, Organic and Planet Friendly Bean to Bar Chocolate contributing to the circular economy, by adopting zero waste lifestyle and minimalistic living, besides being an artisanal producer to new age customers who want more than a cookie cutter brand.

Background

“With the lockdown forcing people to look for both fresh and sustainable food brands this TN's bean-to-bar brigade has seen a significant increase in demand with online sales tripling conquering new customers, without having to spend merely a penny on advertising”, says Mr. Nitin Chordia, Founder of Kocoatrait. The vegan fruit, nut bars, sukku, lemon-grass, lavender, panner-rose, jasmine, jaggery, red rose, mor milagai, masala chai and such other offbeat flavours with the use of non-refined sweeteners like desi khaand (khandasari) sugar, palm sugar, jaggery or dates etc seems to have done all the magic, shared Ms. Poonam, Co-founder of Kocoatrait Barisic et al. (2022).

“We sleep well at night being assured that we have cut no tree in our pursuit of offering Fine flavoured Indian single origin bean to bar chocolates to planet conscious consumers like you,” says their website. Unlike the modern day commercially driven chocolate marketers, the website of this start-up Kocoatraits looks sober and states things differently, starting with a disclaimer stating the initiatives of sister companies with a focus to address 5 specific issues of use of large quantities of water, use of deforested lands, zero child labour in cocoa farming, use of natural ingredients to keep the richness and goodness of the product, sustainable practises in packaging of the chocolates Mehta (2022).

Being a certified chocolate taster Mr. Nitin Chordia and with his rich experience of being invited over by many manufacturers abroad. Their website has a link to *“The chocolate tasting guide”* which probably would make one more curious to read and taste / relish

chocolates in a better manner. This rightly goes to prove that customer engagement through social media has worked really well for the brand positioning even during the pandemic period Muda & Aslami (2022).

Problem Statement

Consumers are becoming far more discerning. If communicating with these consumers would be the main challenge in future, a challenge also lies in measuring the “impact” of such communication from those who are theoretically “reached”. There has virtually been no looking back by the advertisers constantly trying to convince about their new products and additions. But the TV spots / print ads are too brief to provide much product information. The growing costs of producing these advertisements varying with the sets, special effects, talent, equipment, and crew necessary to pull off a simple concept, frequently challenge the use of the medium by the advertisers. Social media advertising serves good at demonstrating products. Scope for concentrated reach and reaching out maximum number of targeted people, being the objective of multinational advertisers, unleashes their tight budget towards world wide networking and localisation of brand publicity offering optimized economical packages of advertising Olaza Salazar (2022). Given this, as a result Social media advertising works best for products such as automobiles, fashion clothes, jewellery, food and beverages De Jesus Silva et al. (2022).

Media is a number driven industry and that is not likely to change in the near future. But, as the market matures, the focus will certainly change from “price” to “value”. There are sporadic attempts to educate clients and guide investment decisions on media, but those are not adequately supported with numbers. However, traditional television will still be evaluated based on numbers. Given that there is a universal agreement on “impact” versus “reach” – appropriate when half of consumer universe is not interested in watching the commercials / read the ads -- the numbers that correspond with the evaluation must also indicate such reality. Another way to measure advertising effectiveness is known as ad tracking. This advertising research methodology measures shifts in target market perceptions about the brand and product or service. These shifts in perception are plotted against the consumers’ levels of exposure to the company’s advertisements and promotions. The purpose of Ad Tracking is generally to provide a measure of the combined effect of the media weight or spending level, the effectiveness of the media buy or targeting, and the quality of the advertising executions or creative. The most common method for measuring the impact of mass media advertising is the use of the rating point (rp) or the more accurate target rating point (trp). These two measures refer to the percentage of the universe of the existing base of audience members that can be reached by the use of each media outlet in a particular moment in time. This becomes very useful when focusing advertising efforts on a particular group of people De Souza Silveira (2022).

With the vast majority of businesses spending money on ads, a lot of time and energy has been poured into their optimization to ensure one can outperform their competitors, without making a battle of who has the biggest ad-spend budget. This is where AI-tracking shines. With the ability to read data thousands of times faster than humans, AI-tracking can take the ad optimization to a whole new level. By optimizing the ads using AI, one can significantly reduce the cost per lead and ultimately, make more money.

Social media marketing can be a long-term process, and for it to show dividends, one need to follow a plan. It can help one develop a strong organic presence and gain a reputation for excellence in a field. It also allows one to work towards their overall business and marketing goals. One of the biggest mistakes that businesses do is to share excessive promotional material. social networks are designed to be social – they were never intended to

be a marketplace for one to sell your products. The content has to be a mixture of informative and entertaining items, with a small percentage of promotional material added in. One will also need to like and share other peoples' content Nyitrai et al. (2022) most influencers know their audience well and create the perfect content to interest their followers.

Visual content is more than 40 times more likely to be shared on social media than other types of content. Top brands on Instagram report a per-follower engagement rate of 4.21%. That is 58 times higher than on Facebook and 120 times higher than on Twitter. 64% of customers are more likely to buy a product online after watching a video about it.

Audience attention spans as a collective are getting shorter and shorter. Many people simply don't have the time or patience to watch a five- to 10-minute video without scrolling further down their feed. Becoming skilled in condensing the content down to 90 seconds or less is a great way to retain the audience's attention, keeping them interested enough to not scroll past.

This is a big reason why Instagram reels and Facebook Thumbstoppers are so powerful — they're short, entertaining and often an example of visual, short-form storytelling.

Problem Solution

On observation of the reports from the newspapers, magazines and the social media posts over a period of time, the author has arrived at the possible observations. Some of the important attributes of co-founders of Kocoatrait that has brought them business even during the difficult times such as the pandemic are Figure 1.



FIGURE 1
THE DIFFERENTIAL BRAND POSITIONING: THE CHOCOLATE IS FOR CONSCIOUS CONSUMERS



cocoatrait_india Given that travels and hence conversations on flights have been restricted due to covid, this was one of the things (my polo T!) that helped start conversations during a recent flight (even while waiting for boarding actually). Frequently asked questions were:

1. Which chocolate do you taste (My answer was: All!)
2. You have a dream Job (My Answer was: I second that!)
3. Is this a profession? (My answer was: Yes! I am the proof!)
4. How much chocolate do you eat everyday? (My answer was: Depends on how much I get paid!)
5. How do you maintain weight. (My answer was: I have accumulated 10 kgs in last 7 years! - Gosh time to do something about it !!)

#cocoashala #chocolatetaster
 #conversationstarters #kocoatrait #beantobar
 #beantobarchocolate #beantobarindia
 #beantobarchocolates #craftchocolate
 #madeinindia #makeinindia #vocalforlocal

FIGURE 2
STAYING CONNECTED WITH THE COMMUNITY

It is essential, and most great brands and marketers know the best way to build a brand is to create a community behind it. Human beings crave significance, and that significance often comes from being a part of online communities Figure 2.

Connection and community go hand-in-hand, so keep that at the forefront of your mind and marketing strategy Figure 3.

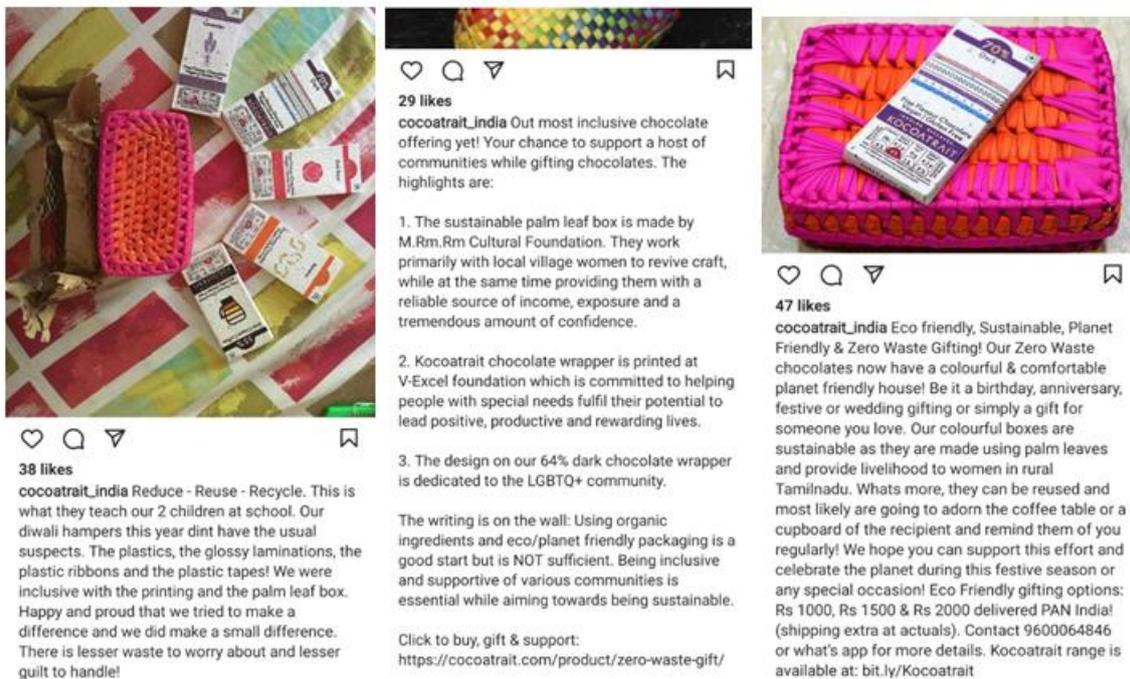


FIGURE 3
UPHOLDING THE CSR SPIRIT AND EMPHASISING THE SAME IN EVERY CREATIVE COPY

An effective brand helps the product to get noticed, liked and remembered. Brand implementation means the continuous and consistent application of the brand's image in all business units, communication channels and media.

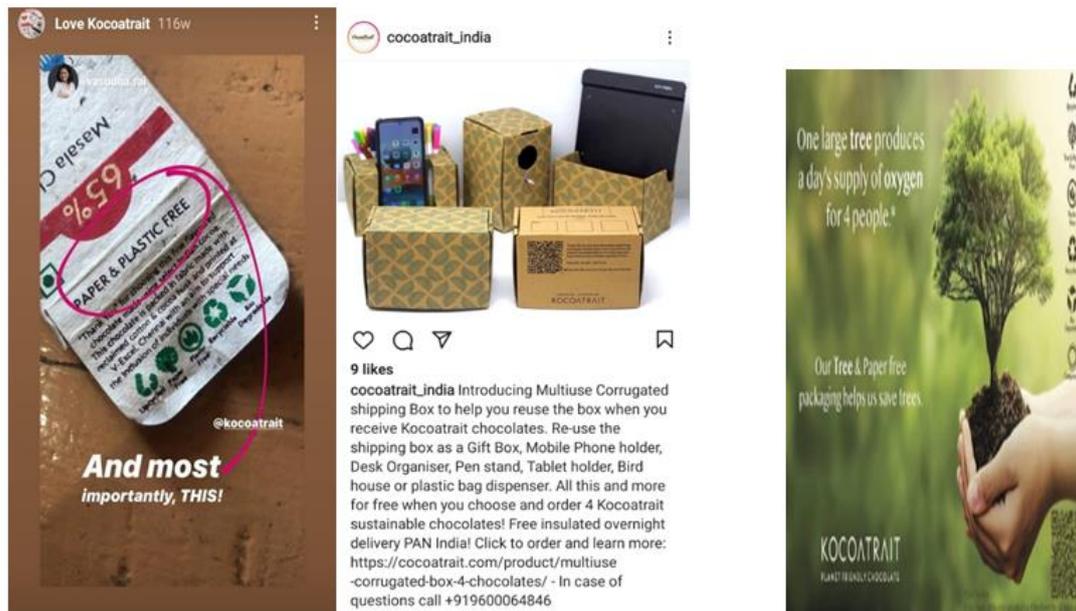
In an era where the consumers are driven by the attractive wrapper design, Kocoatrait opens its webpage with a line remarking: *“Planet conscious consumers like yourselves have helped Kocoatrait save 200+ kgs of single use plastic wrappers from entering landfills till today! Select Free Shipping on orders above Rs 1000 during checkout!”*. Kocoatrait chocolate wrapper is Upcycled using reclaimed cotton from garment factories and reclaimed cocoa shells (which is a byproduct of our roasting process) making it Biodegradable, Compostable and Recyclable. *“Currently, 16% of the material (corners mostly) are wasted when we die cut. We pride ourselves on using the same wrapper size as the chocolate bar. We do not enclose a smaller bar of chocolate in a large wrapper to make the chocolate look bigger than it actually is”*, as mentioned in their website Risso et al. (2022).

“With Kocoatrait, what you see is that you get! We make the chocolate zero waste by printing various consumer engagement ideas (like greeting cards, Bookmarks, mandala art templates and health trackers) on the inside of our wrappers. We first wrap our chocolate in a virgin and recyclable pharmaceutical grade aluminium foil and encourage reuse. It helps us save the chocolate from the temperature and humidity fluctuations better than most other materials laced with plastic. It does not have any lamination and hence is 100% recyclable. In fact, aluminium is the most recycled material in the world. We use only water based inks making it compostable, biodegradable and recyclable. Most of our printing is done at V-Excel Educational Trust, Chennai which trains differently abled Indian citizens. While we do not want to over burden them with our work but they are our 1st go” writes Mr.Nitin. Further, Santos et al. (2022). *“We have now made all our small sized e-commerce boxes as reusable and made with recycled and forest friendly paper! Our small boxes can be re-used for 5 different applications including Gift box, Desk Organiser & Mobile holder, Tablet Holder, Bird house and Plastic bag dispenser”*, he adds. With no tree been cut to make use of any paper, thermocole boxes or plastic tapes, the company takes pride in marketing its bars Figure 4.



**FIGURE 4
PLSATIC BAG DISPERSER**

This is in contrast to a finding done from a recent study done by the author, among 1000 respondents which included brand conscious consumers and active media users - 500 female and 500 male students between the age groups of 18-23, characterized by their occupation, pattern of purchase/ consumption of chocolates and media usage, study reveals that 81.2% and 82.8% of the female and male respondents were able to recognize their chocolate with its wrapper design and color. About 78% of female respondents and 81.2% of male respondents said that they would be able to recognize the Sub brands with the wrapper design Figure 5-8. About 70% of female respondents and 61.4 % of male respondents said that they are familiar with all the celebrities/ad models who endorse the respective brands Schluter (2022).



**FIGURE 5
STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION OF THE USP**



**FIGURE 6
STRIKING AT EVERY OPPORTUNITY AND SHOUTING OUT ALOUD**



FIGURE 7
SNOWBALLING PUBLICITY: REPOSTS OF HARD EARNED PUBLICITY!!

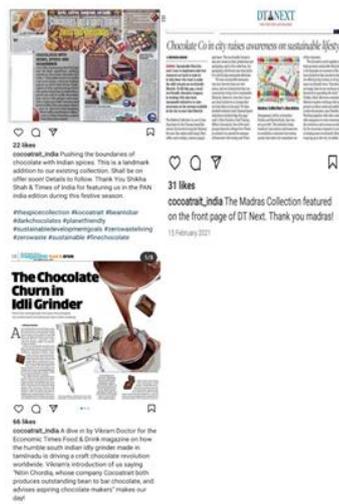


FIGURE 8
CHOCLOLATE CHURN

CONCLUSION

A brand that captures your mind gains behaviour. A brand that captures your heart gains commitment. - *Scott Falgo*

Kocoatrait is a clear example of how Social media strategies together with right business objectives help to achieve the Increasing brand awareness; Achieving a set higher quantity of sales; Improving your ROI; Driving people to increase in-store sales and Grow the fan base.

“It’s one small step for man, one giant leap for mankind.” - Neil Armstrong
One needs to wait and watch the strides that the company would make in the days to come.

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