

Publication : DNA
 Edition : Mumbai
 Date : March 25, 2016

'We will enter water purification products segment by June-July'

Among India's leading sanitary ware manufacturers, HSIL - popularly known as 'Hindware' - has been gradually adding new business verticals to its portfolio. The company's main play has been in the bathroom segment. However, in 2015, it launched the consumer business vertical with water-heaters and air-purifiers. In a recent survey conducted by Nielsen, both got voted as 'Product of the Year' for 2016. **Rakesh Kaul**, president and chief - consumer business vertical, HSIL Ltd, speaks about the overall market scenario, company's new business vertical and product portfolio, in conversation with **Ashish K Tiwari**.

What led the company's decision to diversify product offerings?

Hindware has been a legacy brand for almost five decades now. While we have been a bathroom-related product company for a long time, we have over the past 6-7 years made endeavours to be more into Hindware homes. The extensions being planned were to become a part of the larger life-cycle of consumers / households. While we have consolidated our strengths in the bathroom segment, efforts have been put to look outside and expand into other product categories and that's the reason for launching the consumer business vertical.

What are the new additions?

The company now offers a complete range of kitchen appliances and last year in July we launched Hindware Atlantic water heaters in association with a 1.5 billion French company called Groupe Atlantic. This business has evolved significantly and we are now looking to take this relationship a step forward and explore manufacturing in India. Currently, the products are being imported from Atlantic's factory in Thailand. We are

evaluating the manufacturing opportunity and should be making an announcement on that front very soon. Another development is with Vents, which is a European company that is into high-end exhaust fans. So we launched a range of products under the banner Vents by Hindware in this category that sells through high-end electrical chains. An area that's of big interest to the company is purification segment and we have been working on this for the last two-odd years. We think this is one of the product categories that will give the company the next level of growth and inch closer to become a \$1 billion entity. We have been working on purification products for both water and air for a while now under a new brand called 'moon-

bow' that promises to offer consumers something different than what they have seen so far. The air-purification product has been launched already in December last year. We are looking to launch the water-purification product sometime in June-July this year.

The product categories you have ventured into are already populated

with a host of Indian and international brands. How do you plan to differentiate?

As you rightly pointed out that the market is already cluttered with players, but all the existing brands are targeting the consumers by instilling fear in their lives. That's something we want to stay away from doing. Product innovation is going to be the lead driver supported by varied differentiated communication. These will help the consumers identify the unique aspects of the product. A smarter and healthy way of living life is the approach being adopted and that is what will give us the desired growth in each of the product categories.

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 BRAND



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