

Brands in the ascendant

By epitomising the gold standard for the industry, Brand of the Year 2022 has set a lofty benchmark for others to aspire to

Everywhere we look, the world around us has changed, with the manner in which we approach the everyday having evolved.

In this changing milieu, the nature of branding too has taken on a new life. Operating in a fragmented marketplace (virtual and physical) is now commonplace, with consumers greedily devouring every morsel that brands have on offer across channels and formats, often quicker than you recognise. Look in the

mirror, and you'll know it to be true; the modern consumer is a canny creature that wants it all, all the time, wherever, whenever.

And while all of this might have been in flux, the essence of brands remains timeless. Cast your mind to some of your favourite brands, and you might come to realise that many of them stand for values and espouse qualities that resonate with your own. And again, just as you have evolved and grown with the passage of time, so too have brands to keep step with the demands of a new breed of consumers and a new world order.

It goes without saying that this is a daunting challenge, but a handful of brands have best exemplified how to do this, and in the process ascended to the exclusive ranks of those counted among Brand of



the Year 2022. This band of elite brands have created and sustained emotional connections between themselves and consumers, and cemented their unique position as changemakers through their actions and purpose. The event was marked by a multitude of dialogues between industry experts and thought leaders, who deliberated on the way forward for all. As companies look to chart a course through an evolving landscape with soaring consumer



demands and expectations, strengthening the core strength of the brand will become an ever-more-important strategic pillar. And that marriage of purpose with authenticity is a large part of the lore of these brands powering their growth through this new normal and well into the next normal, whatever that may resemble.

TEAM MARKSMEN



Myriad brands were recognised by Team Marksmen at this gala function, including

- Astral Bondtitle
- Baramati Agro
- Beardo
- Bergner India
- Blue Dart
- Boddess.com
- Bosch Home Appliances
- C.H. Robinson
- Castrol India
- Colgate
- Continental Coffee
- Coworks India
- Creativity Mall
- DCM Shriram
- D'Decor
- Deoleo India (Figaro)
- EaseMyTrip
- Fidyapay
- Fortune
- Homelane
- House of Masaba
- HP
- IIFL Finance
- Indian Oil
- Indospace Development Management
- Innoviti Payment Solutions
- JK Lakshmi Cement
- Kay Beauty
- Kevensters
- LEAP India
- Linen Club
- Lyra
- MRF
- National Stock Exchange
- Nexus Malls
- Powerica
- Raj Petro - A Brenntag Group Company
- Reliance Digital
- Reliance Jewels (Reliance Retail)
- Rinac India
- Suny Heavy Industry India
- Shapoorji Pallonji Real Estate
- Shemaroo Entertainment
- Somany Ceramics
- Sugar Cosmetics
- Tag
- Tata Motors Passenger Vehicles
- Tata Salt By Tata Consumer Products
- upGrad
- Utkarsh Small Finance Bank
- Waman Hari Pethe Sons

Industry Perspectives

Brand of the Year 2022 encapsulated all that is great among brands old and new. These trailblazers have crafted their own unique identity in a competitive market space, leaving a lasting imprint on the consumer's mind beyond what is expected, and we look forward to seeing them scale new heights in the years to come, and inspire others to do likewise.

- Rajesh Khutchandani
Co-Founder and CEO,
Team Marksmen Network

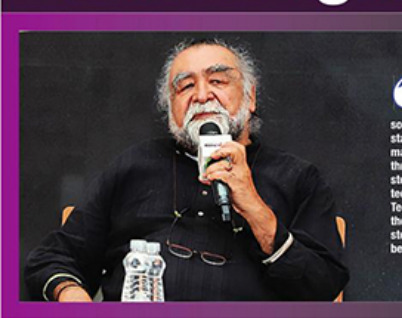
Building strong brands, creating compelling and relevant messages and offers, and augmenting marketing ROI is now more complex than it ever was. But some brands are embracing this change better than others, and changing the rules of the game. Brand of the Year 2022 salutes their never-say-die spirit.

- Sharad Gupta
Co-Founder and COO,
Team Marksmen Network

Marketing in today's dynamic scenario might be challenging, but it can also be incredibly rewarding. There is much complexity to manage and many new significant vectors that have emerged. Through it all, the brands counted among Brand of the Year 2022 balanced positivity with pragmatism. This landmark event recognised leaders across industries, and celebrates the latest and greatest of brand accomplishments across the spectrum.

- Akash Tiwari
Co-Founder and CMO,
Team Marksmen Network

Iconic Insights



The simple fact is that engagement matters. So how do you engage someone, and then ensure they stay engaged? Technology matters, but you guide them through storytelling. Because stories are content, and technology is the vehicle. Technology has simply changed the manner in which you tell your story, it is no longer as it used to be.

- Prahlad Kakkar
Founder
Genesis Film Productions



I feel like creating or running a brand in the past few years has been one of the hardest things to do. Just being able to keep up has been challenging, and a lot to take in. Staying relevant is something we've worked towards every day, so kudos to the brands that have stayed at the forefront in these times.

- Neha Dhupia,
Actor

Moving the World

Ketan Kulkarni, Chief Commercial Officer, Blue Dart, succinctly describes what makes the brand tick

Reliability, responsiveness, and resilience - three words that define our strategy came to the fore during the pandemic. From supporting the Government of India's 'Lifeline Udan' initiative, leveraging the power of technology to enhance customer experience, providing safety measures during the pandemic with our Contact Less Delivery etc., our strategy of being the Employer of Choice, Provider of Choice & Investment of Choice has allowed the business to sustain with engaged & motivated employees, and customer centricity and thereby generate stakeholder value; so, irrespective of a crisis, our strategy brings out the best in us. All that we have worked out through the years was stress tested during the pandemic and we performed proudly well.

The partnership with the Ministry of Civil Aviation, Government of Telangana, World Economic Forum, NITI Aayog and Healthnet Global and the opportunity to do the first BVLOS trials was also only because of our reliability, resilience and responsiveness. As we progress into the future, as the nation's Trade Facilitator, immersion in digitization, automation, and future technologies will be our vision.

Blue Dart's USP is our quick delivery, fast turnaround time and assurance that our consignee's shipment will be safely delivered. When the pandemic hit, we committed to deliver the extra 100% required to maintain supply chain continuity, operated across the country & across borders and supported our nation's fight against the virus that caused havoc globally. We completely understand that a shipment, something as small as a key chain gift, something as valuable as bank documents, or something as crucial as a vaccine or a testing kit matters to our customer, and therefore, it matters to us. Therefore, the phrase,

"We Move So Your World Can Move" and "If It's Important, #BlueDartIt"

launched our TVC Ad campaign with a multimedia approach across traditional and digital mediums with the goal to highlight Blue Dart as the preferred logistics brand for critical shipments, e-commerce & Temperature Controlled Logistics.

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-Ketan Kulkarni, Chief Commercial Officer, Blue Dart

BLUE DART

Creating a Better Tomorrow

Neeraj Bahl, MD & CEO, BSH Home Appliances (India & SAARC), outlines the role a brand plays as a corporate citizen

As brands, we are directly or indirectly influencing the lives of people - either through our products or through our communication. When we envision a better society or a better tomorrow, it must be a holistic view from the point of view of the planet as well as the wellbeing and safety of our consumers. One way in which we can do this is by adopting a 'Consumer Centric' mindset. As a brand, when we truly Consumer Centric, i.e., focused on delivering the best for your consumers, you will ensure best quality of material used in production, high-end technology, safety, and convenience of use. Each of these add to the longevity of products which in turn helps create a sustainable world as products can be used for many years at a stretch. On communication front, we as brands, need to be more conscious and selective about the portrayals, the language



and the lifestyles we showcase through our ad films and other promotional material as these may indirectly influence behaviors. Today, the recognition for Bosch Home Appliances as the 'Brand of the Year' is a testimony of our consumer centricity which is focused on a better tomorrow.

The Many Hues of Excellence

Nikita Desai, Vice President - Strategy & Business Excellence, D'Decor, paints a picture of what lies ahead

Every year is in a way fresh for D'Decor, since the brand introduces new collections across multiple categories like curtains, upholstery, bedding, rugs, blinds and wallpapers. These, together with made to measure services for curtains and blinds, our home styling service, Style Expert, a new range of bed and bath products and rugs, make the festive season every year something to look forward to. "D'Decor will also be launching new advertising campaigns with our brand ambassadors, Shahrukh and Gauri Khan, so there's a lot that's exciting on the brand front," said Nikita Desai.



"We are also quite excited about the fact that we will be launching a new brand of high performance furnishing fabrics this year. D'Decor's high performance fabrics go beyond the promise of aesthetic excellence and score high on various functional parameters like stain resistance, durability, colour fastness, mildew and odour resistance among others. This makes the fabrics easy to clean and maintain and they stay fresh and new for long. It also makes them perfect for use outdoors or in adverse or humid climates. D'Decor is already successfully delivering these fabrics overseas and we are very excited to bring these feature-laden products to our Indian consumers," said Nikita Desai.

A Tale of Tech Transformation

Sunil Nayak, CEO, Reliance Jewels (Reliance Retail Limited), puts forth the manner in which the brand strode into a new era

The Jewellery industry is one of the most traditional industries in India. The most important criteria for the buyers is the need to touch, feel and wear the products, while selecting the jewellery pieces so that they can actually see how the jewellery can glorify their look. Which in turn is the main reason why the offline sales have always dominated the online channel. This has not only led to the slow growth in the Ecom space, but has also resulted in being one of the slow adopters of technology. "Keeping this chal-



lenge in mind, when the pandemic struck the world during the early 2020s, we expected a big slump in sales and lost all the opportunities to convert customers. This led us to re-evaluate the business model by implementing an omni-channel approach with an enhanced digital strategy to boost sales, this in turn became our first major step to tech transformation. We also added value services like 1 day dispatch, 5-day delivery and augmented reality. This enabled customers to try virtually and make a decision to purchase. We will continue to infuse technology in our business keeping in mind the rapidly changing dynamics of Indian consumer behaviour," shared Sunil Nayak.