



SHAPING PERCEPTION TO POWER PERFORMANCE

BS MARKETING INITIATIVE

'TRUST' GRABS THE SPOTLIGHT AT SIXTH EDITION OF MOST TRUSTED BRANDS OF INDIA

> Exclusive event by Team Marksmen Network recognizes elite brands that have built, nurtured, and protected trust through consistent action and authentic commitment

Trust remains the invisible thread that binds brands to their customers, and the 6th edition of Team Marksmen's Most Trusted Brands of India 2026 stood as a powerful testament to this enduring principle. The occasion brought together an impressive constellation of industry leaders, innovators, and brand architects who understand

that trust is not merely earned—it is built, nurtured, and protected through consistent action and authentic commitment.

The event unfolded as a celebration of excellence, creating a vibrant ecosystem for dialogue on the nuances of brand trust in an increasingly complex marketplace. Through dynamic panel conversations, visionary keynotes, and meaningful exchanges, attendees explored the multifaceted dimensions of trust: from building consumer confidence in digital ecosystems to fostering loyalty through purpose-driven initiatives. Industry luminaries examined critical themes including ethical business practices, stakeholder transparency, and

the profound impact of authentic brand storytelling in sustaining competitive advantage.

The evening's centerpiece was an elegant recognition ceremony honouring brands that have distinguished themselves through unwavering dedication to trustworthiness. These organisations, spanning diverse sectors, have transcended transactional relationships to forge deep, lasting connections with their stakeholders. Their recognition at Most Trusted Brands of India 2026 celebrated not just their market leadership, but their genuine commitment to integrity, reliability, and purposeful value creation.

Those honoured at an exclusive ceremony included:

- APAR Cable Solutions
- Appliances Business, Godrej Enterprises Group
- ArcelorMittal Nippon Steel
- Avaada
- BHARAT PETROLEUM CORPORATION LIMITED
- BirlaNu Leakproof Pipes
- Bisleri International Pvt Ltd
- Bright Outdoor
- Burger King
- CooperVision India
- DURASHINE® By Tata Steel Colors
- EaseMyTrip
- Everest Food Products Pvt Ltd
- Fenesta
- Google Cloud
- Greenpanel Industries Limited
- Haier Appliances India
- HDFC Bank
- HETTICH
- Independence
- Insolation Energy Limited (INA Solar)
- i-pill daily
- JAIRAJ GROUP
- Jio-bp
- Johnson's Baby
- KALLIYATH TMT
- Kissht
- Konica Minolta Business Solution India Pvt. Ltd.
- Lacto Calamine
- Laljee Godhoo & Co.
- Luminous Power Technologies
- Meenakshi Udyog (India) Pvt. Ltd
- Mold-Tek Packaging Limited
- Muthoot FinCorp Ltd
- Neelam Stainless steel
- Nova
- OMRON Healthcare India
- OneAssist Consumer Solutions
- OSEL Devices Limited
- Shalimar Paints Ltd
- Škoda India
- Tata CLiQ Luxury
- TenderCuts Farm Fresh Meats & Fresh Fish
- UltraTech Cement
- UNITED INDIA INSURANCE COMPANY LIMITED
- V.P. Bedekar & Sons Pvt Ltd
- Wagh Bakri Tea
- WONDERCHEF HOME APPLIANCES



Celebrating the brands setting the benchmark for trust, credibility, and excellence at the Most Trusted Brands of India 2026-27

FROM THE MANAGEMENT'S DESK



Trust is a sacred covenant between brand and consumer. The Most Trusted Brands of India 2026 exists to illuminate the organisations that have transformed this covenant into measurable, lived reality. In an era of noise and scepticism, we needed a platform that celebrates authenticity and holds it as the true currency of success. Most Trusted Brands of India is exactly that, and we are proud to have celebrated these tales across 6 incredible editions.

◀ Rajesh Khubchandani



The marketplace rewards speed, but it reveres trust. This event is a defiant stand against the culture of quick wins. We created Most Trusted Brands of India to amplify stories of brands that have chosen the harder path; the one built on consistency, integrity, and genuine commitment to stakeholder value. That distinction matters more than ever in today's age of disinformation.

◀ Akash Tiwari



Trust is the only finite resource in an infinite marketplace. As storytellers, we recognised the imperative to create a lens through which truly trustworthy brands could be seen, celebrated, and studied. Most Trusted Brands of India 2026 is that lens, offering a critical narrative platform for business leaders who understand that trust is the foundation of sustainable competitive advantage, and a critical differentiator.

◀ Sharad Gupta



In an economy drowning in misinformation and competing agendas, the role of custodians of business narrative has become existential. This event exists because we believed that there was a void: a lack of authoritative discourse on trust in Indian business. Most Trusted Brands of India 2026 fills that gap. It is a gathering place for the architects of authentic brands and the leaders who champion them.

◀ Rishi Kapoor

LIVING UP TO THE PROMISE OF QUALITY, HEALTH, AND TASTE

> Sanjeev Giri, Business Head, RCPL Staples, reveals the single biggest differentiator that drives consumer preference.



In staples, consumers are deeply habitual. They do not change brands casually, because staples are not impulse purchases. Legacy players have built their strength in each category over years by becoming familiar and dependable. So, for Independence to win against them, it cannot rely only on price or visibility. A lower price may drive trial, but it does not create lasting conversion. What creates conversion and a sustainable switch is when the consumer feels: this brand understands what my family needs, gives me the right quality, and improves my everyday food experience without making pay exorbitant prices.

That is where Independence has a sharp advantage.

As a brand, Independence is anchored in three core pillars: quality, health, and taste. These are not separate promises; they work together. For the Indian staples consumer, "good food" is never just about one dimension. It is not enough for atta to be affordable if rotis do not turn out well. It is not enough for a product to sound healthy if the family does not enjoy eating it. It is not enough for the taste to be good if the consumer doubts purity or consistency. The power of Independence lies in making these benefits coexist in an accessible, everyday format.

This is also why the brand philosophy of "Khaane Mein Samjhauta Nahi, Acha Khana Shuruat Sahi" is so important. It expresses something fundamental about Indian food culture: food is not treated as a mere functional input; it is linked with care, nourishment, and family wellbeing. From the Independence perspective, the strongest differentiation is therefore not communication-led alone, but product-led trust which comes from delivering consistent quality. The brand stands for right sourcing, stringent quality controls, and meaningful product superiority that consumers can actually experience in

daily consumption. In a legacy-heavy category, this matters more than advertising language. A consumer switches when the product proves the promise.

Equally important is the way Independence balances national scale with regional relevance. One reason consumers stay loyal to older staples brands is that food preferences are highly local. India does not eat the same way everywhere. Taste, texture, grain preference, cooking habits, and even the definition of "good quality" can shift dramatically across regions. Independence addresses this not through a one-size-fits-all portfolio, but by tailoring products to local needs, whether through region-specific rice and oil variants or offerings such as Sharbati-blend Atta for North Indian preferences. This makes the brand feel like a trusted modern brand that respects regional food realities. That is a powerful reason to switch because consumers feel seen, not generalized.

Another critical factor is that Independence is moving in a healthier and more premium direction with products such as Makhana, Jaggery, and Poha, yet it does so without abandoning its core language.

The brand does not suddenly become elitist when it speaks health, nor overly indulgent when it speaks taste. Its language remains rooted in the same promise: quality products at affordable prices that make everyday food better. This consistency matters because it reassures consumers that Independence is not chasing trends; it is upgrading the staples basket in a credible, family-relevant way.

So, if we had to define the single biggest differentiator in one line, it would be this:

Independence gives Indian families a better everyday food choice—one that feels trustworthy, tastes right, supports healthier living, respects regional preferences, and remains affordable.

That is what can make even a loyal consumer switch. Not disruption for the sake of disruption, but a product-led upgrade to everyday living. In staples, that is the most powerful differentiator of all.



"CREDIBILITY, INCREASINGLY, IS THE PRODUCT"

> Jyotsna Jawahar, Director & CFO, ÖSEL Devices Limited, paints a picture of how the brand sells intangible ideas and constructs as much as physical products

In a Hardware-Heavy Industry, Is "Peace of Mind" Becoming the Actual Core Product? The LED display industry has always been defined by specifications. Pixel pitch, brightness levels, refresh rates; these are the metrics buyers scrutinise. But what actually closes deals today is rarely found in a spec sheet. It is the confidence that the system will work when it matters, that someone will answer when something breaks, and that the company will still be there in five years.

Hardware, in other words, is commoditising. The real product is assurance.

At ÖSEL, this shift has fundamentally shaped how we operate. In LED displays, we do not sell screens. We sell a 360-degree commitment: the display, the installation, the service response,

and the content management system that works without a manual. Leading MNCs have chosen to partner with us, and that trust is built on the quality, the processes, and the people we have developed here.

The same principle governs our hearing aids business. Our acquisition of Sound For Life deepened our commitment to this space, bringing together clinical expertise and technology to deliver care that is personalised and relationships that last. Trust here is built in the clinic, not the brochure. And with our Philips mobile phones partnership, we are extending that same discipline into consumer electronics, pairing our manufacturing foundation with professionals who understand how trust is built with a mass audience.

The companies building durable global positions today are not



competing on price alone. They are competing on something harder to replicate: the certainty that they will be there when you need them.

That credibility, increasingly, is the product. And that's what ÖSEL is committed to.

in Focus

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SHAPING PERCEPTION TO POWER PERFORMANCE

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DRIVING INDIA'S MOBILITY TRANSFORMATION THROUGH LOCALISATION, SAFETY, AND INNOVATION

> **Ashish Gupta, Brand Director, Skoda Auto India**, outlines the central pillars of the philosophy driving the brand to greater heights



India's mobility transformation is no longer being driven only by the shift from conventional to electric powertrains. It is increasingly being shaped by localisation, safety, sustainability, digitalisation, and evolving customer expectations. For automakers operating in India, the challenge today is about introducing global products into the market, while also developing solutions specifically engineered for Indian consumers and Indian conditions. At Skoda Auto India, this philosophy has become central to the company's long-term growth strategy in the country.

One of the strongest examples of this commitment is the development of the MQB-A0-IN platform. This marked the first time in the company's global history that a vehicle platform was developed outside Europe for a specific international market. Designed with a deep understanding of Indian requirements and customer expectations, the platform represents a significant milestone not only for Skoda Auto India but also for India's growing importance within the global automotive value chain.

The MQB-A0-IN platform underpins products such as the Skoda Kylaq, Skoda Kushaq and Skoda Slavia, which were developed with a focus on delivering global engineering standards while ensuring strong localisation levels. Through these products, Skoda Auto India has worked towards making advanced technologies, European engineering, and high safety standards more accessible to Indian customers, while strengthening domestic manufacturing and supplier ecosystems.

The introduction of the Kylaq further reflects the company's focus on expanding access to premium mobility solutions for a wider set of

Indian consumers. Positioned in one of India's most competitive segments, the Kylaq has been developed with the same emphasis on safety, driving dynamics, quality, and localisation that defines the brand's India strategy.

Safety has emerged as a key pillar in India's evolving mobility landscape, and this is an area where Skoda Auto India has maintained a clear and consistent focus. The company has prioritised robust structural engineering, active and passive safety systems, and rigorous testing processes across its portfolio. The success of vehicles built on the MQB-A0-IN platform in global safety assessments has reinforced the importance of integrating safety into product development from the very beginning.

Beyond products, Skoda Auto India's approach to innovation also extends into manufacturing and sustainability. Increasing localisation not only strengthens supply-chain resilience but also contributes meaningfully to India's vision of becoming a global manufacturing hub. By working closely with local suppliers and partners, the company continues to support the development of advanced automotive capabilities within the country.



Digitalisation is another key factor shaping India's mobility transformation. Customers today expect connected experiences, seamless ownership journeys, and greater transparency across every stage of the buying and maintenance journey. Recognising this shift, Skoda Auto India continues to invest in digital customer interfaces and technology-enabled ownership solutions aimed at improving convenience and engagement.

Today, India represents one of the most dynamic automotive markets globally, with immense opportunities for innovation and growth. Through initiatives such as the MQB-A0-IN platform, a strong emphasis on safety and localisation, and continuous investments in future-ready technologies, Skoda Auto India aims to contribute meaningfully to India's journey towards building a smarter, safer, and globally competitive mobility ecosystem.

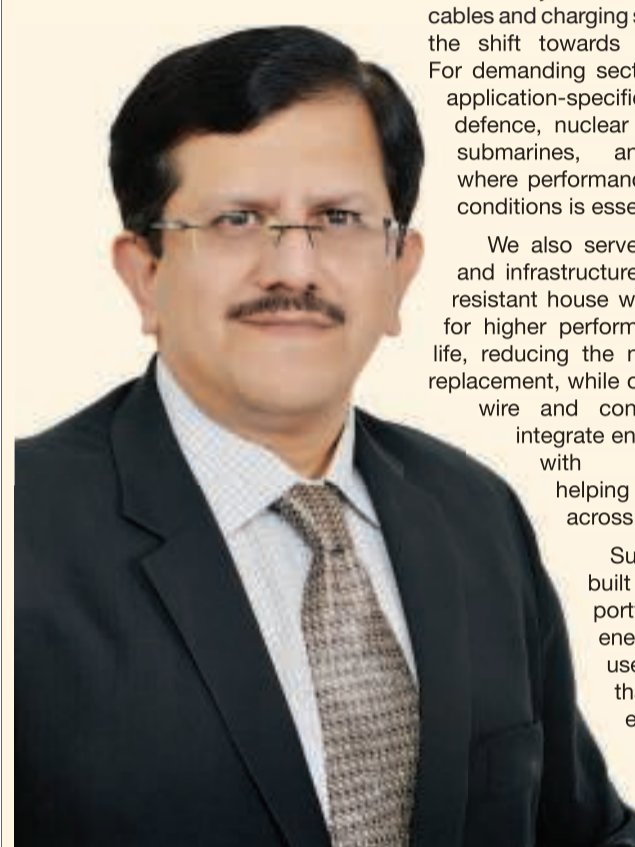
APAR CABLE SOLUTIONS: ENGINEERING A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE

> **CS Shrotri, CEO (APAR Cable Solutions)**, speaks of the manner in which trust can be engineered by carefully balancing performance with responsibility.

At APAR, cables are at the heart of what we do. Decades of manufacturing expertise have made us a trusted partner for utilities, EPC firms, telecom companies, and manufacturers worldwide. Our cable portfolio is built on one principle: in applications where failure is not an option, reliability must be engineered into every metre.

Our manufacturing facilities in Gujarat use advanced production technologies, including electron-beam irradiation cross-linking, which enhances the durability, safety, and long-term performance of our cables. Our plants meet globally recognised standards for quality, environmental management, and occupational safety, while accredited testing facilities and international certifications across key markets reflect continuous validation by respected global bodies.

The breadth of our portfolio sets



us apart. In renewable energy, our solar cables are built for long-term performance in harsh environments, resisting heat, UV exposure, and environmental stress. Our wind energy cables support complete turbine connectivity, and our electric vehicle cables and charging solutions advance the shift towards cleaner mobility. For demanding sectors, we engineer application-specific cables for defence, nuclear energy, railways, submarines, and locomotives, where performance under extreme conditions is essential.

We also serve everyday safety and infrastructure needs. Our fire-resistant house wires are designed for higher performance and longer life, reducing the need for frequent replacement, while our optical ground wire and conductor solutions integrate energy transmission with communication, helping modernise grids across regions.

Sustainability is built into our cable portfolio. Renewable energy cables use materials that minimise environmental impact, and we are developing bio-based compounds

to further reduce the carbon footprint of our products without compromising performance. Even our packaging is designed to cut material use. Environmental Product Declarations give customers a clear view of lifecycle emissions, and our climate strategy prioritises real operational improvements over offsets.

Our partnerships are built on local understanding. In Europe, we work with utilities and manufacturers that demand precision and compliance. In the United States, we meet strict standards backed by local presence and service. In the United Kingdom, we deliver products designed for specific regulatory and industrial requirements. Across every market, our approach stays consistent: understand deeply, deliver reliably, and exceed expectations.

As countries invest in renewable energy and grid upgrades, APAR continues to deliver dependable cable solutions backed by decades of experience, designing the essential components that make energy, transport, and communication systems safer and more sustainable.



CUSTOMER CENTRICITY: THE CORNERSTONE OF DIFFERENTIATION IN A COMPETITIVE MARKET

> **Saket Jain, Business Head and Executive Director, Fenesta**, details how their end-to-end ownership translates into better reliability for the customer



In today's marketplace, product superiority alone is rarely enough to create lasting differentiation. Customers increasingly seek brands that understand their latent need and aspirations, simplify complex decisions, and deliver a seamless experience throughout their journey with the brand.

At Fenesta, customer centricity has been the foundation of our growth journey and a defining factor behind our leadership in India's windows and doors industry.

For us, customer centricity begins with understanding that windows and doors are not merely building components; they are integral to how people experience their homes and spaces. Homeowners today are looking for solutions that enhance comfort, aesthetics, security, energy efficiency, and wellness. Architects and designers seek greater creative freedom, while builders and developers require reliability, scalability, and execution excellence. Keeping these diverse stakeholder needs at the center of our decision-making has enabled us to continuously evolve our offerings and create meaningful value.

One of the strongest manifestations of our customer-first philosophy is our end-to-end service model. Unlike a fragmented ecosystem that often requires customers to coordinate between multiple vendors, Fenesta provides a seamless journey—from consultation and design selection to site survey, manufacturing, installation, and after-sales support. This integrated approach simplifies decision-making, ensures

accountability, and delivers a superior customer experience. Our extensive service network, supported by sales offices, Signature Studios, channel partners, and dedicated customer support teams across the country, allows us to remain accessible wherever our customers are. With 365-day customer support and robust after-sales service, we view our relationship with customers as a long-term partnership rather than a transaction.

Customer centricity has also been a powerful catalyst for innovation. Some of our most successful solutions have emerged from listening closely to customers and understanding the realities of Indian homes and climatic conditions. Whether it is products designed to withstand extreme weather, solutions that improve acoustic and thermal insulation, or services such as same-day window replacement that minimise disruption to daily life, innovation at Fenesta is driven by a simple question: how can we improve the lives and homes of our customers?

Equally important is the role of experience. As homeowners become more design-conscious, the purchase journey itself must inspire confidence and aspiration. Our Signature Studios as well as Dealer showrooms are created to allow



customers, architects, and designers to interact with products firsthand, explore possibilities, and make informed choices. This experiential approach helps bridge the gap between imagination and execution, enabling customers to visualise how Fenesta solutions can elevate their spaces.

The future of customer centricity will be defined not only by how well brands respond to needs, but by how effectively they anticipate them. At Fenesta, we believe that sustained leadership comes from continuously listening, observing, learning, and innovating. In a category where trust is earned over decades, customer centricity remains our most enduring differentiator—guiding every product we design, every service we deliver, and every experience we create.



The Voice of a Nation, A Call for Progress

India's star is on the ascendance, with the nation recently being anointed the fourth largest economy in the world and being on track to become a potentially \$9trillion economy by 2030. This is being driven by a multitude of factors, such as a rich demographic dividend, technological innovation, and sectoral transformation.

The nation stands at an inflection point, with a unique opportunity to drive high-value job creation and unlock significant economic potential.

But key challenges remain. How do we find productive employment for a growing working age population? How can our growth trajectory be a sustainable and inclusive one? And what impact will Gen AI have? Understanding these strategic growth levers is vital to aligning with global trends, and addressing India's unique challenges and advantages.

India's leaders have a key role in mapping out that future, and we engage them in dialogue in an exclusive video series, **Baat Bharat Ki**.

Be it academicians, policymakers, bureaucrats, civil society icons, or thought leaders, we leverage their expertise and showcase their insights. Through discourse, we capture the voice of progress and chart the many facets of India's development journey.

SOME OF THE NOTABLE NAMES WE HAVE SAT DOWN WITH INCLUDE:

 Shri Sudhir Mungotiwar Former Cabinet Minister for Forests, Cultural Affairs and Fisheries, Government of Maharashtra, and current MLA from Chandrapur	 Shri Ramdas Athavale Minister of State for Social Justice and Empowerment	 Shri Suresh Prabhu Former Union Minister & Chancellor, Maharashtra University
 Shri Manjinder Singh Sirsa Minister of Industries, Food & Supplies and Environment, Forest & Wild Life	 Shri Ashish Shelar Cabinet Minister of Electronics, IT, AI & Cultural Affairs, Government of Maharashtra	 Smt. Nita Tawde Mayor of Mumbai

...and many more. For more information visit our website www.marksmendaily.com