

# OPERATION DESSERT STORM

Cadbury's new Dairy Milk campaign wants the chocolate to replace traditional sweets at home

Campaign logic • Preeti Khicha

Cadbury India is constantly striving to give Indians new reasons to eat its Dairy Milk chocolate. The latest campaign by the brand '*meethe pe kuch meetha ho jaye*' (something sweet for dessert) aims to bite into a territory dominated by Indian sweetmeats. To take this thought forward, the television commercial showcases a family setting where chocolate is served as a dessert.

Experts reckon this is the flagship Dairy Milk's ongoing attempt to move away from being a special occasion product to one that is consumed every day. In the past, campaigns like '*Shubh arambh*' and '*Kuch meetha ho jaye*' displayed Cadbury's endeavour to own the '*meetha*' category — much like Coca-Cola did some years ago with its *thanda matlab...* campaign. From moments of celebration in everyday life to festive occasions, Cadbury offered new packaging and products to win over Indian consumers. The new campaign builds on that initiative while trying to place the product in homes and make it part of a household's daily consumption habit.

This television commercial is the first in a series of four TVCs that depict the joys of eating chocolate at home. "We suggested alternate options like a film showing chocolate being stored in the refrigerator at home. However, the idea of using family dinner table moments was approved as these are cherished

times everyone can identify with," notes Abhijit Avasthi, national creative director, Ogilvy India, which has conceptualised the campaign. The TVC directed by Vinil Matthews is part of a larger campaign and will see an extension into print, radio and outdoor.

The need for the brand to sink its teeth into the home consumption market is not without reason. "Chocolate

in India is still an impulse purchase and is not a part of our everyday culture," explains Lubna Khan, assistant vice-president (strategic planning), J Walter Thompson. Cadbury's attempt to convince housewives to stock chocolates at home will help gain more mainstream acceptance of chocolate, especially among adults.

## Room to grow

In India, the chocolate market is polarised between Cadbury and Nestlé, with Cadbury clearly emerging as the leader — 70 per cent market share with flagship Dairy Milk dominating 30 per cent of the market. Yet chocolate penetration is as low as 6-7 per cent, with a huge potential for growth. In contrast, penetration in Brazil, an emerging economy with similar weather conditions, is as high as 75 per cent. This is because chocolate is acceptable as a snacking option in other countries, which is not the case in India. "Rather than using competitive tactics, it is wise for the category leader to increase the pie as a

whole," notes Anand Ramanathan, analyst (consumer) KPMG.

Over the years, Cadbury has had to look for innovative ways to expand the overall market for chocolates in India. Way back in 1994, when the chocolate category was stagnating and market expansion was the only way to grow, Cadbury launched its Real Taste of Life (RTOL) campaign (remember '*Kya swaad hai zindagi mein?*'). As the girl in the ad danced her way into the cricket field, Cadbury managed to get young adults shed their inhibitions about eating chocolates in public, opening a new market for chocolates.

Again in 1998, when Cadbury India realised that many adults still sought a rational justification for indulging in chocolates, it flagged off the '*Khaane ka bahaana*' campaign, with television personality Cyrus Broacha as protagonist, who got 'real' people to say why they ate chocolates. But now Cadbury India seems to have a bigger challenge on hand — increase both depth and frequency of consumption.

## Sweet substitute

But can chocolates replace the Indian weakness for traditional sweets?

"In India, sweetmeats prepared with milk, sugar and *ghee* are seen as filled with goodness. Also, there is a certain drama that goes into preparing and serving sweets, which is an inherent part of our culture," notes Khan. Khan refers to the '*ghee* and oil' advertising where the lady of the house takes out the lid of the dish to create a sense of what has been created. In the new TVC, Cadbury tries to capture that sense of drama. "They are not just serving a bar of chocolate but small pieces of it served in a plate," adds Khan. "Typically a box of Indian sweets is usually shared by the family; thus by dividing the chocolate into pieces the brand is building on those codes that we are familiar with and introducing it into chocolate," notes Khan.

While the older generation may not readily switch to chocolate consumption, the acceptance among young adults — the future generation of chocolate consumers — will happen. It is clearly a strategy for the long haul, says Khan.

According to Cadbury South Asia and Indo China Director (snacking) V Chandramouli, "The new communication primarily targets homemakers, who look forward to spending time with the family." Leo Burnett National Creative Director KV Sridhar believes the advertising will appeal to middle-class households where families are increasingly becoming nuclear and do not find time to prepare traditional sweets at home.

However, beyond strategic communication, the brand needs to consider other ways to increase consumption. Affordability is still a concern. "You can get a box of *mithai* (Indian sweet) at a comparable price and the whole family can share it. How many people can share a bar of chocolate?" questions Khan.

Dentsu Communications Head (strategic planning) Anirban Chaudhuri argues the campaign meant for such a large behavioural shift does not deliver. "In the campaign, chocolates appear as a one-off choice, and not a true alternative for the obvious desserts. It could also be interpreted as a kid who is very possessive about her chocolate." Chaudhuri adds the brand could perhaps use a character like Jim, who helped position After Eight chocolates (Nestlé Worldwide's mint covered chocolate) as the perfect after dinner chocolate. "Jim of After Eight knew the real tricks of making dinner more enjoyable. Cadbury could take a similar approach and have an 'Indian Jim' who can lead this change in the desserts we choose," says Chaudhuri.

Product innovation is another challenge, believe experts. In the past, Cadbury launched Dairy Milk Desserts in unusual flavours like Tiramisu and Kalakand which did not hit the consumers' sweet spot. "Perhaps, going ahead, the brand could launch chocolate bars meant for diabetics or weight watches," notes Khan. Ramanathan of KPMG feels the Cadbury Dairy Milk could be made available in *mithai*-shaped pieces to appeal to Indians familiar with Indian sweets.

So, with a keen eye set on market growth, Cadbury can be expected to find new ways of introducing something *meetha* in our lives. ♣

