

PeeBuddy: Using Social Media Buddies to Break Barriers

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ABSTRACT

Changes in Indian business environment have created several opportunities for entrepreneurs to target specific emerging needs of the customers. One such change is the active engagement of women in urban workforce and their consequential acknowledgment as a significant consumer group with purchasing power and specific needs. Understanding the critical need of urban women for a product facilitating safe usage of public washrooms during work/ travel, Mr. Deepak Bajaj launched PeeBuddy in 2014 as the first disposable Female Urination device (FUD) in Indian market. It is a disposable funnel-inspired contraption that helps women to stand while urinating to minimize any infection. PeeBuddy is among the many social innovations, making prominent appearances in emerging economies battling resource constraints. The purpose of this research case is to understand the ideation and execution of this social innovation in the traditional socio-cultural context of India. This case explores the innovative social media marketing approaches used to circumvent cultural barriers hindering its launch and adoption.

Qualitative research methodology is adopted wherein semi-structured interviews are conducted with founders, channel members, and customers to generate primary data. Secondary research is used to supplement the findings through data accumulated from social media and news agglomeration sites. PeeBuddy's adoption has been a result of consumer education and intrepid proclivity of urban Indian women to actively discuss relevant issues on social platforms through use of ICT and social media, which have them the necessary tools and platforms. The phenomenon has been aided by Governmental initiatives such as Digital India, promoting digital connectivity and literacy, and Swacch Bharat Abhiyaan promoting clean India as well as personal hygiene. The case aims to educate the reader on the concept, and need for Social innovations in India where issues surrounding women's personal hygiene issues are considered taboo for public communiqué. It helps the reader to understand how marketers can use creativity to counter such taboos and retail products to aid social development.

Keywords: Channel, Hygiene Products, Retailers, Social Innovation, Social Media Marketing

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Disclaimer: This case has been developed for classroom discussion and is not intended to illustrate either effective or ineffective handling of an administrative situation or to represent successful or unsuccessful managerial decision making or endorse the views of the management.