

Winning Strategy

Amit Sheth is the Managing Director and a key figure in Focus Lighting & Fixtures Limited, a company he has played a crucial role in since its inception. Mr. Sheth specializes in marketing and has been instrumental in market development, brand development, and product innovation. He has launched several new product concepts, including human-centric lighting and smart lighting controls. Under his leadership, Focus Lighting has expanded into various segments like home lighting and infrastructure lighting, focusing on innovative technologies like IoT.

We have been in this industry since 2000, and based on my experience, I would like to share my thoughts with this group. We Indians are hardworking and put immense effort into our businesses, working approximately 10 hours a day, six days a week. However, don't you feel that we do not receive the returns on our investment and hard work? If you agree, the question is—why?

Please don't take me wrong, but despite our efforts, why are we not recognized? Why do most Indian brands struggle to expand beyond regional markets, let alone establish a presence at a pan-India level or internationally? What makes European brands more successful than Indian brands when the effort is the same?

Let me share my perspective—some may agree, while others may not.



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One major reason is that traders import large volumes from China instead of supporting small Indian manufacturers. Their common justification is that China offers better pricing, quality, and design. While this might be true to some extent, it is not entirely accurate. For example, India manufactures the cheapest bulbs in the world, more cost-effective than China. This proves that with large volumes, costs can be reduced. Additionally, if manufacturers are pushed to improve quality, those who are serious about staying in business will meet the required standards. It's also important to note that today, labor costs in India are among the lowest globally.

Another concern is the lack of innovative design among Indian manufacturers and traders. Looking through various catalogs, I find that most products are similar, with no



differentiation. Are we short of ideas, or are we just looking for shortcuts? The market is flooded with cheap copies from OEMs and manufacturers. How can we stand out? The only way left is to compete on price, which eventually reduces margins and makes growth unsustainable. We have some of the best minds in the country, and we must think big—design our own unique products instead of copying European brands or importing cheap replicas from China.

Technology is another neglected area. No one is discussing innovations in lighting quality, glare reduction, and technological advancements. Without innovation, our industry risks stagnation. I may sound negative to some, but as industry members, we must elevate ourselves.

India is one of the fastest-growing economies in the world, and our purchasing power is increasing. We must develop smart, intelligent, and technically advanced products, uplift our quality to international standards, and think globally. However, this cannot happen overnight. First, we must be confident in what we are doing—differentiating ourselves in ways others cannot. It is a slow and challenging process, but it paves the way for sustainable growth, both locally and internationally.

I apologize if my views have offended anyone, but I strongly believe this is the way forward.

