

## Oreo Cookies

For most of its 100-year existence, Oreo was consistently America's best loved cookie, but today it is a global brand. The "Oreo Biscuit" was first developed and produced by the National Biscuit Company (today known as Nabisco) in 1912 at its Chelsea, Manhattan factory located on Ninth Avenue between 15th and 16th Streets. Today, this same location of Ninth Avenue is known as "Oreo Way." The name Oreo was first trademarked on March 14, 1912. It was initially launched as an imitation of the Hydrox cookie manufactured by the Sunshine Company in 1908.

On March 6, 2012, the famous cookie brand, Oreo, celebrated its 100th birthday. From humble beginnings in a Nabisco bakery in New York City, Oreo has grown to become the bestselling cookie brand of the 21st century generating \$1.5 billion in global annual revenues. Currently owned by Kraft Foods Inc., Oreo is one of the company's billion dollar brands.

Until the mid-1990s, Oreo largely focused on the US market – as reflected in one of its popular advertising slogans from the 1980s, "America's Best Loved Cookie". However, the limited growth opportunities in U.S had spurred Kraft to turn to international markets. With China and India representing possibly the jewels in the crown of international target markets due to their sheer size, Oreo was launched in China in 1996.

However, oreos have not always been popular outside the U.S Kraft as it struggled for years in China since its launched, for instance, and considered exiting Chinese market several times. "The cookie was spectacularly underperforming once," said Sanjay Khosla, Kraft's president of developing markets. One problem: Kraft offered Chinese consumers the same type of Oreos that is sold in the U.S. Kraft believed that what was good for the U.S. was good for the world.

After surveys showed that Chinese consumers found Oreos too sweet, Kraft appointed Andrade, a psychopharmacologist and vice president of research and development in the Asia Pacific region to come up with a new formula to better suit local tastes. In India, Kraft encountered the opposite problem: The American-style cookie was too bitter, Indians told researchers. "Adjusting for local preferences is not a matter of just removing one ingredient," said Andrade, "It is about making sure you balance the flavors and before to reconstruct the product."

(Adapted from: <http://www.businesstoday.in>)