

Cadbury Bournvita: Tayyari Jeet Ki (Getting Ready to Win)

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This case study describes a campaign by Bournvita, the malted drink brand, to reverse decline and increase market share in India. Bournvita repositioned the brand as a 'parenting partner' for mothers who wanted their children to do well. The brand message focused on 'preparing to win' and drew attention to the role of mothers in helping and pushing their children to prepare to do well. Television ads showed different parts of preparation, including the role of motherly support, and the brand held an event where children could meet sporting celebrities. As a result of the campaign Bournvita's market share and trust in the brand increased.

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Campaign details

Brand owner: Mondelez

Agency: Ogilvy & Mather Mumbai, India

Brand: Cadbury Bournvita

Country: India

Channels used: Cinema, Online video, Outdoor, out-of-home, Print – general, unspecified, Radio, Television

Media budget: 5 – 10 million

Executive summary

This is the story of Bournvita, a 60-year-old milk additive brand for children, which salvaged its leadership through a new, empowering parenting style. But before that, despite following the category codes – functional claims, superlative health benefits, victorious children – Bournvita was floundering. It had been steadily losing market share for the previous few years.

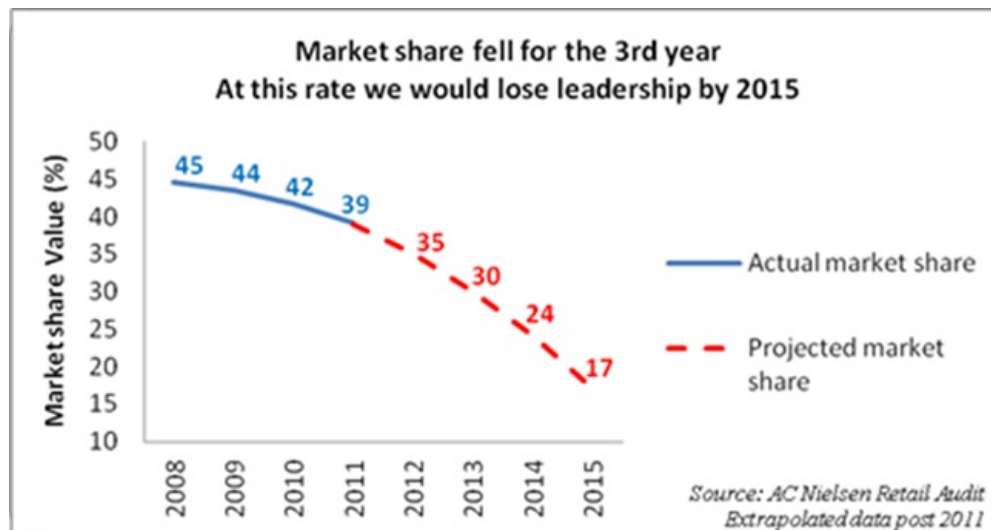
Bournvita approached mothers to understand the disconnect and in the process stumbled upon a new parenting nugget, and a new strain of mother: a new-age mum who was inspired neither by all the liberal parenting champions, nor by Amy Chua! With this new mother as the inspiration, Bournvita redefined its role and communication idea to inspire millions of Indian mums.

Not only did the strategy reverse the market share and all the ailing brand measures, it put the new-age Indian mother on the parenting map. She became an inspiring archetype in the landscape of Indian advertising and emerging popular culture. And in doing so, she made Bournvita enter the list of the 'most trusted' brands, as rated by India's top business daily through consumer surveys and also won the brand an Effie.

Market background and business objectives

The leaky Cup

After a 60-year-long reign in North-West India, Bournvita, a milk-additive health brand, was facing obliteration. We had lost 6% in three years and at the current accelerating rate our projections indicated a 17% market share by 2015 – *which meant 60 years leadership could be wiped out in the next four years.*



This was inexplicable. For the previous few years Bournvita had followed all the category codes – functional claims, superlative promises, hero ingredients, victorious children, beaming parents in the background, the works. And yet we were floundering. Mothers happily lapped up these promises when competition made them, but rapped us on the knuckles when we did.

Our sole objective now was to *retain leadership* and for that we set ourselves the following chain of tasks.

Build affinity for the brand.

- Reverse declining and stagnant scores by at least five points – 'differentiation', preference ('appeal') and advocacy ('will recommend').
- Strengthen 'bonding' scores – by at least 10 points.



Strengthen saliency.

- Reverse declining 'top of mind' scores.
- Accelerate stagnating 'spontaneous brand consideration' scores – by at least five points.



Impact in market: grow the category.

- Increase our share of new-trier households *vis-à-vis* competition (Complan and Horlicks).



Reverse share loss.

Insight and strategic thinking

The Crack

For the first time we went looking for answers in our backyard and not competition's. We quickly realized following the category codes had been a grave mistake. Not only had we become 'just another brand', our communication archaeology threw up a clear pattern – our historical wins had never been on the back of functional claims, but always when we had depicted a strong emotion – through stories that stirred the heart and inspired the soul.

The big question was – what would evoke this emotion today? In our recent endeavour to create functional messaging, the role of the mother had diminished in Bournvita's advertising. Meanwhile, the autocratic Indian mother herself was being pulled in different directions – either towards hard-nosed, fiercely purposeful parenting as advertised by Amy Chua's *Battle Hymn of the Tiger Mother* or towards a modern, liberal style, as eulogized by 'Idle Parenting'.

So, could there be a role for Bournvita, a child brand, in evolving a parenting point of view that could inspire and guide the Indian mum? We thought so, and deep-dived into the world of contemporary parenting woes.

Parenting Woes

So why had the Indian mum been pulled towards autocratic parenting? Our scriptures prescribed parents to be revered as gods, giving them a sense of infinite power and control. Concepts like independence, freedom or treating children as mini-adults have been completely alien. Be it career, college *or even one's spouse*, parents have had the last word. Disobedience continued to be blasphemy, with potential to invite God's wrath.

This parenting style was compounded by the huge number of the youth chasing relatively fewer job opportunities. Hence, every examination – small or big, if the child was unwell or not – became a do-or-die situation. Nothing mattered beyond winning. Toppers in our board exams made front-page headlines, trumping any national crisis.

All this produced a deadly side effect. As the benchmarks of excellence kept soaring – today the minimum cut-off for some colleges is 100%! – children were cracking under the pressure. Many rebelled or even took their own lives, leaving parents shocked and flummoxed. Caught between outdated parenting styles, mounting performance pressure and terribly stressed out-children, their frustration was palpable.

The Insight

When we spoke to mums they all replayed the immense academic pressure plaguing them. But buried among the torrent of anxiety, doubts and laments, we found a smattering of mothers who seemed to have regained their sense of control.

- 'Apart from the homework the school gives, I create mathematical sums for him too.'
- 'When its homework time I am extremely strict. But after that I relax a bit – we watch some television together or I make him his favourite treat.'
- 'We try and be friends with them. It helps us get things done easily.'
- 'If you make practice fun for him, he will happily do it.'
- 'Push him to practise but don't impose your style on him; let him prepare his way.'

It was as if someone switched on the floodlights for us. Winning, something every player in the category had thought to be central to brand communications, was actually only a *natural outcome*. If the child prepared well, he was more likely to win. This simple *cause-and-effect relationship* had somehow never been identified by any brand in this category or, for that matter, in any child-focused category.

Focusing on preparation would not only would set us apart: it would significantly broaden the brand's role (as an aide to right preparation) and the mother's role too. While many mothers had started participating in the child's preparation, the sense of control we saw in these niche mums was rare. They had created their own indigenous style of parenting – a little encouragement, a little push, a little support and one more push. All towards a happy outcome – which wasn't defined by success alone, but by the children's happiness too.

Of course all parenting should be like this. So what was the big deal? The more we spoke to this type of mum, the more we realized how difficult this style of parenting was. When to hold and when to let go, we realized, is a fine art. Only a parent could understand that. We called her the 'tightrope mum' – as she daily walked the tightrope between a little love and a little drill – as she parented her children, as she prepared them. The balance had to be *just right*. It was this skilful pull-push parenting style from which we gleaned our insight: '*Parent right to prepare right.*'

Every parent we spoke to about this unique and empowering parenting style vehemently wanted to know how to get there. It was the Holy Grail they were all searching for.

Suddenly we saw Bournvita's role alleviate from a mere nutritional beverage to a *parenting partner*. It was the ally all mums could lean on as they struggled with pressures to *excel on one hand and protect their fragile children on the other*. We identified Bournvita's new role as 'partnering preparation journeys'.

Communication Idea

We distilled all these lessons into our communication idea – '*Prepare to Win*' ('*Tayaari Jeet ki*'). We took the decision to not lean heavily on winning. We just made it a natural outcome. The focus would be preparation.

Implementation, including creative and media development

Executing Our Creative Idea 'Prepare to Win' ('Tayaari Jeet ki').

While academics were the pressure point, we stayed true to what the brand stood for historically and what we

could honestly promise today, which is why we portrayed physical (and mental) preparation in the world of sports.

Our three films – *Basketball*, *Vault* and *Race* – captured various facets of the mother–child preparation journey, their emotional state of mind and the new-age 'tightrope mum'.

- The mother was the epitome of support when her son couldn't get the vault flip right. But she was clear – 'Make as many mistakes as you want during practice' (not later).
- Rather than mollycoddle her dejected daughter, she smilingly egged her to 'practise hoops until the ball tires'.
- She rolled up her sleeves and practised alongside her son, but refused to treat him as a child and 'let him win' – which parents often do to indulge the child.

Our films broke new ground and made television history. Never before had a brand steered away from glorifying the 'victory shot'. Never before had mums accompanied their children to practice, let alone practised with them. And never before had a brand been brave enough to show how a mother manoeuvred delicate issues like frustration, failure and motivation in an unconventional manner.

Disseminating Our New Parenting Philosophy

Reach Strategy

Television was still the best bet to reach the masses in India. And to reach our core target, the housewives, the choice was general entertainment channels as 80% of female viewers watched those. (Source: Television Audience Measurement, 2013)

Saliency

We deployed two *modi operandi*:

- Ad-break behaviour showed the ad playing first enjoyed high saliency and the least chance of being missed. So apart from the normal duration films, we strategically aired *five-second 'stings'* in the first position for two weeks at a high frequency level.
- We skewed GRPs to *match the peak purchase period*, which is the first and last week of the month

Involving the Kids

We advocated the message of preparation in colouring books and popular comic strips.

Activated Our Philosophy

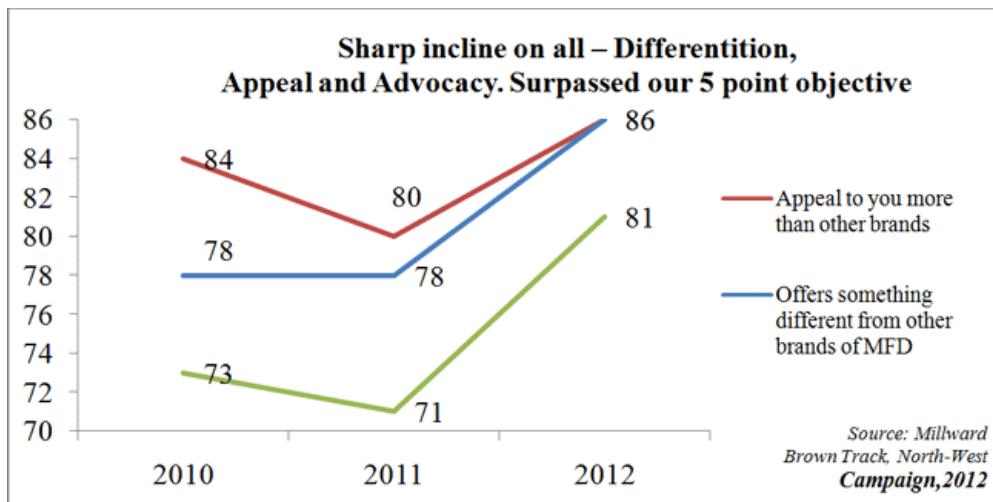
- *Through strong advocates*: We held a 'Prepare to Win' camp where children met Leander Paes (winner at the Olympics, Wimbledon four times and nine other Grand Slams), Abhinav Bindra (gold-medal winner at 2008 Olympics) and Sunidhi Chauhan (award-winning singer) and heard them espouse the significance of preparation and their personal preparation stories.
- *By enabling preparation*: We visited sports grounds where children were practising and replaced worn-out training shoes, thus bringing alive our philosophy that preparation is paramount and nothing should not come in its way.

Performance against objectives

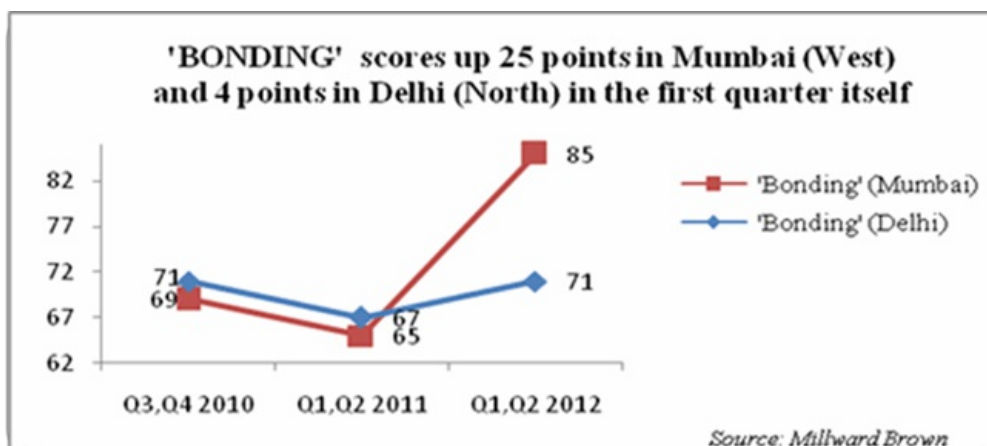
Apart from reversing all the ailing brand health measures, including the long-troubling market share, we put the new-age Indian mother on the map. The reams of articles she inspired were testimony of the cultural change and inspiration she personified.

Build Affinity

- Objective 1: Reverse declining and stagnant scores by *at least a five-point* increase.
- Reversed every score with a sharp incline – a *10-point jump* on 'would recommend'. 'Differentiation' scores *increased eight points* and 'appeal' by *six points*. This proved a nurturing, aspirational mother was way more effective than functional noise.

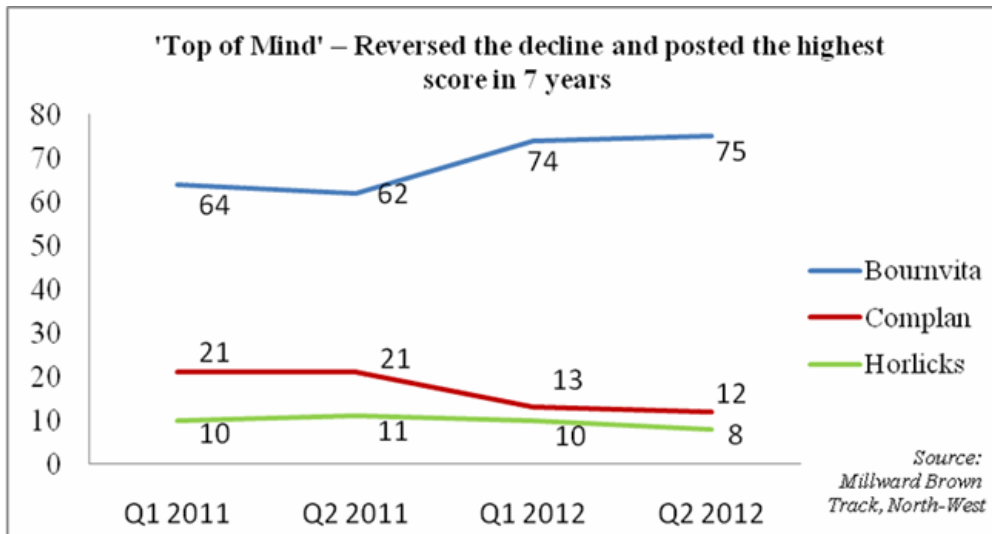


- Objective 2: Increase 'bonding' scores in our brand-health pyramid by at least 10 points.
- Immediately reversed our declining Bonding scores which *jumped 20 points* in just one year.



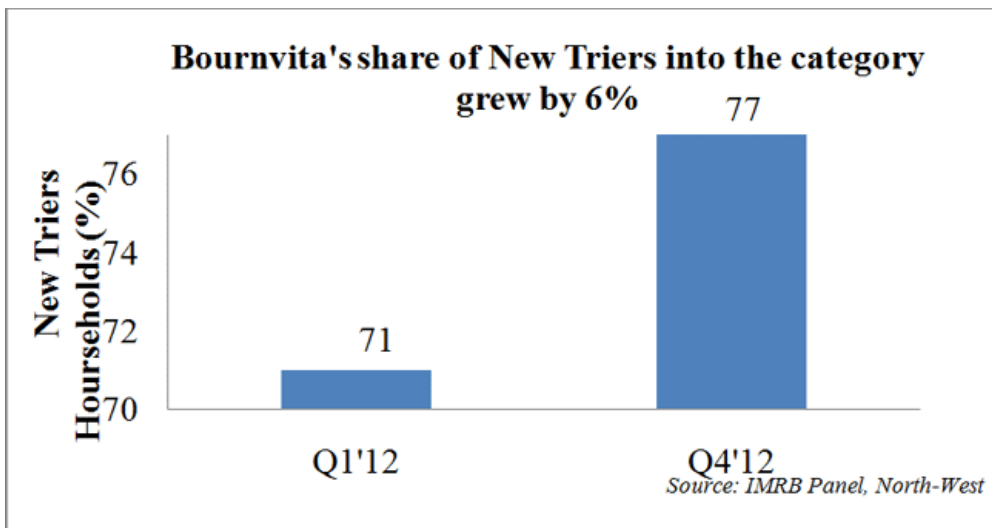
Strengthen Saliency

- Objective 3: Reverse declining 'top of mind' scores.
- Reversed our declining mind measures to register the *highest 'top of mind' and 'spontaneous brand consideration' scores in the last seven years*.



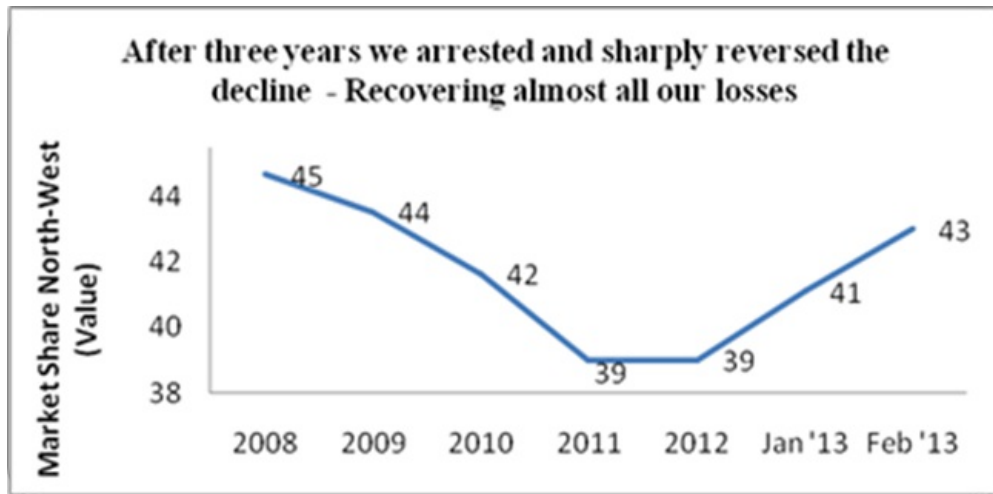
Impact in Market: Grow the Category

- Objective 4: Increase Bournvita's share of new category triers *vis-à-vis* competition (Complan and Horlicks).
- Our new-trier households *went up by 6%* by year end, while they *fell 6% for competition*.



Reverse Share Loss

- After a three-year decline, in little over a year we *reversed our declining share to stand at a 43% share* in February 2013



- Our all-India share, which had been stagnant for the last three years, *jumped two points to 17%* in two months – the *highest in six years*.

Other Delights

- Won the Silver Effie 2012 in the Beverages, Drink, Confectionery and Food category.
- And the most gratifying news for any marketer: in the first year of the campaign consumers rated us as one of the 'most trusted' brands in India (*Economic Times*, 2012).

Lessons learned

As we penned down various aspects it all seemed to boil down to just one key thought – *be brave*. Bournvita managed to turn the tide in its favour *only* when...

- It stopped following the crowd and making functional promises and instead chose to rediscover its unique emotional voice.
- It behaved like a leader and broke new ground. While the world of advertising put a spotlight on victory, it went behind the scenes into the gritty world of preparation.
- It placed its bets on niche consumer behaviour, rather than the reassurance of the masses.
- It redefined its role far above the category, taking on a loftier stance of a parenting ally.

It, despite the growing noise on pester power, went back to focusing on the mother, the key health-in-charge.

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