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MOREL Q

Purpose-Driven Functional Luxury in
Indian Handbags



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Indian Leather Industry

The Indian leather industry stands as a symbol of traditional craftsmanship and modern industrial prowess, deeply rooted in India's rich cultural heritage and strong economic framework. It is one of the oldest manufacturing sectors in India, and over the decades, it has evolved into a globally recognized player across the entire leather value chain — from raw material processing to finished products.

Global Standing and Contribution

- India accounts for approximately 12.9% of the world's leather production of hides and skins, making it one of the top leather-producing countries globally.
- Second largest producer of footwear in the world, following China.
- Second largest exporter of leather garments, and among the top five global exporters of leather goods, saddlery, and harness products.
- Third largest exporter of saddlery and harness and fifth largest exporter of leather goods globally.
- India's share in global leather trade is approximately 10%, with substantial presence in both value-added products and raw materials.

Raw Material Availability and Infrastructure Strength

India's strength lies in its abundant raw material base, which fuels both domestic manufacturing and exports:

- 20% of the world's cattle and buffalo population is in India.
- 11% of the world's goat and sheep population is also housed in India.
- There are more than 3,000 tanneries, and the country houses eight major leather clusters, including:
 - Chennai (Tamil Nadu)
 - Agra (Uttar Pradesh)
 - Kanpur (Uttar Pradesh)
 - Kolkata (West Bengal)
 - Jalandhar (Punjab)
 - Mumbai (Maharashtra)
 - Bengaluru (Karnataka)
 - Hyderabad (Telangana)

These clusters are supported by leather parks, testing laboratories, design studios, Common Effluent Treatment Plants (CETPs), and footwear component manufacturing zones.

Export Performance

Leather exports are a key contributor to India's foreign exchange earnings:

- India exported leather and leather products worth around USD 3.5 billion in FY 2022–23.
- The sector consistently features among the top 10 foreign exchange earners for India.

- Major export destinations include the United States, Germany, the United Kingdom, Italy, France, the Netherlands, Spain, China, UAE, and Belgium.
- The product-wise export share (approximate):
 - Footwear: 45%
 - Leather goods: 25%
 - Leather garments: 20%
 - Saddlery and harness: 5%
 - Finished leather: 5%

Employment and Socioeconomic Impact

- The Indian leather industry is highly labor-intensive, employing around 4.42 million people, a large number of whom belong to marginalized and economically weaker sections of society.
- Approximately 30% of the workforce comprises women, especially in the leather goods and footwear sectors.
- The industry has become a major source of livelihood in both urban and semi-urban areas, particularly in states like Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, Maharashtra, and Punjab.

Innovation, Design & Branding

- Indian manufacturers are increasingly focusing on value addition through design innovation, trend forecasting, and product diversification.
- There is a rise in premium and luxury Indian leather brands like:
 - Nappa Dori
 - Hidesign
 - Brune & Bareskin
 - The Tan Clan

Design studios and international collaborations are helping Indian brands tap into global fashion trends while retaining the uniqueness of Indian craftsmanship.

Future Outlook

The global leather market is expected to reach over USD 700 billion by 2030, and India is poised to expand its market share significantly. Key growth drivers include:

- Rising domestic demand from the growing middle class and youth population.
- Export demand recovery post-pandemic, especially from Europe and North America.
- Expansion into new markets in Asia, Latin America, and Africa.
- Digitization and e-commerce enabling D2C (Direct-to-Consumer) leather startups to scale globally.

Domestic Handbag Consumption in India

The handbag market in India is experiencing rapid growth, fueled by increasing urbanization, rising disposable incomes, and evolving fashion preferences among consumers, especially urban women. Once considered a niche luxury segment, handbags have now become an essential part of daily life for Indian consumers — combining utility, fashion, and social status.

Market Size and Growth

- The Indian handbag market was valued at USD 1.6–1.8 billion in 2023.
- It is projected to reach approximately USD 3.3–3.5 billion by 2030, growing at a CAGR of around 10–12%.
- Premium and mid-range handbags are growing faster than the low-cost segment, indicating aspirational buying behavior.

Key Drivers of Domestic Consumption

1. Rising Women Workforce Participation
 - More working women = higher demand for functional yet stylish bags.
 - Demand especially strong in metro cities and tier-1 towns.
2. Aspiration for Branded & Designer Bags
 - Growing brand consciousness, especially among millennials and Gen Z.
 - Rise of Indian premium brands and D2C labels (e.g., Zouk, Lavie, Baggit, Caprese).
3. Wedding & Gifting Market
 - Weddings, festivals, and corporate gifting fuel seasonal handbag sales.
 - Premium clutches and designer bags are popular as gifts.

4. Tier 2 & 3 Market Penetration

- Increasing demand from non-metro cities due to:
 - Smartphone penetration
 - E-commerce access
 - Rising disposable income

5. E-commerce & Social Media Influence

- Platforms like Myntra, Nykaa Fashion, Amazon, Ajio, and Meesho have democratized fashion access.
- Influencer marketing and Instagram trends boost category awareness.

Emerging Trends

- Vegan Leather & Sustainable Bags gaining traction among eco-conscious buyers.
- Personalization & Customization services (monogramming, color choice, etc.) are in demand.
- Mini bags and multifunctional bags trending among Gen Z shoppers.
- Hybrid bags (convertible from office to party use) are becoming more popular.

Consumer Preferences in the Indian Handbag Market

Consumers in India purchase handbags throughout the year, with no single season dominating handbag sales. However, certain occasions—such as festive seasons, weddings, gifting occasions, and the beginning of academic or professional journeys—often see a noticeable spike in handbag purchases, especially among women entering college or new jobs.

A vast majority of Indian consumers—over 75 percent in both metro and non-metro urban areas—showed a strong preference for indigenous handbag brands. This reflects growing national pride, improved quality among Indian manufacturers, and an increasing focus on locally made, culturally relevant designs. Around 17 percent of consumers appeared neutral between Indian and international brands, indicating rising openness and brand agnosticism. Interestingly, imported handbags were more preferred in non-metro towns (about 10 percent) as compared to only 6 percent in metro cities. This trend could be attributed to aspirational value and the perception of imported goods as status-enhancing in smaller cities.

When it comes to material choices, the survey revealed that about 55 percent of consumers preferred leather or leather-look handbags, often citing their durability, premium appearance, and suitability for formal settings. In contrast, 45 percent of respondents favored non-leather materials such as canvas, synthetic, or jute—valuing affordability, lightness, and casual aesthetics. The leather preference was particularly dominant in non-metro areas, where over 70 percent of consumers opted for leather-based options, while less than 30 percent chose non-leather alternatives.

In terms of branding, just over 53 percent of consumers expressed a preference for branded handbags, indicating a shift toward quality assurance, after-sale support, and aspirational ownership. Around 27 percent preferred non-branded or local, unlabelled handbags, often based on price or convenience. Approximately 10 percent of the market was brand-neutral. Interestingly, branded handbags found more favor in non-metro towns, with 62 percent of consumers from these regions indicating a preference for known or established brands—highlighting how Tier-2 and Tier-3 consumers increasingly associate branding with quality and social prestige.

Contrary to the common belief that price drives Indian purchasing decisions, the survey revealed that quality is a more decisive factor. About 60 percent of respondents prioritized the quality—which includes stitching, material longevity, zipper performance, and ergonomic design—over price. This signals an emerging value-conscious buyer who seeks longer-lasting returns on their fashion investments.

As expected, comfort and functionality emerged as leading considerations, with 58 percent of consumers favoring practical and durable designs—such as tote bags with compartments, slings that allow mobility, and backpacks for everyday use. Meanwhile, a significant 42 percent of consumers made fashion and design a primary purchase driver, often selecting handbags based on aesthetics, trends, and brand influence—even if they occasionally compromised on utility.

The Indian handbag market is witnessing a steady evolution—where consumers are moving beyond impulse and affordability, and seeking bags that align with their values, aspirations, and usage lifestyle. From non-metros to major cities, there's a noticeable rise in preference for Indian brands, branded goods, and durable leather products.

While fashion and design continue to hold appeal, it is quality, comfort, and practical design that command stronger loyalty. With more women entering education and the workforce, and with increasing digital exposure, India's handbag consumer today is informed, brand-aware, and value-focused—making it essential for brands to craft products that resonate both emotionally and functionally.

Handbags – A Growing status symbol in India

India is witnessing a retail transformation, and handbags have emerged as more than just functional accessories—they are now powerful symbols of style, success, and self-expression. With rising urbanisation, increased disposable income, and the influence of social media, Indian consumers are shifting towards branded, stylish, and premium handbags that reflect their aspirations.

The surge in brand consciousness, especially among working women and urban youth, has driven demand for designer and luxury handbags. Online platforms and influencer culture have further elevated handbags to must-have fashion statements, often used to signal professional growth and social status.

While functionality remains important, today's buyers look for craftsmanship, design, and label value. From global luxury brands to emerging Indian designers, consumers see handbags as an extension of their identity and lifestyle.

In short, handbags in India have become aspirational lifestyle products, blending utility with prestige—and the market is only set to grow.

With the evolving dynamics of fashion retail, handbags in India are no longer mere accessories—they are emblems of lifestyle and stature. Fueled by digital exposure, urban aspirations, and financial empowerment, the Indian handbag industry is poised for exceptional growth.

As women continue to break boundaries in professional and personal spheres, their choices in fashion, especially handbags, will increasingly reflect confidence, individuality, and ambition. For brands, this offers a golden opportunity to design not just products, but personal narratives that connect emotionally and aspirationally with the Indian consumer.

MOREL Q – COMPANY OVERVIEW

Background

In an increasingly design-conscious and digitally connected India, the modern woman is seeking fashion that reflects her lifestyle, personality, and purpose. Against this backdrop, Morel Q, a homegrown high-end fashion brand, has carved a distinctive niche in the luxury leather handbag segment.

By championing functional luxury and purpose-driven design, Morel Q is not just selling handbags—it's addressing the unmet needs of urban women who demand more from their fashion accessories.

In the chaotic shuffle of urban life, the modern Indian woman juggles responsibilities—professional deadlines, college lectures, social commitments, and moments of personal care. Yet, the one accessory meant to support her daily hustle—the handbag—has often failed to keep up.

Recognizing this void, Morel Q was born, not out of a desire to follow fashion trends, but to solve problems. Its founders understood that the modern woman doesn't want to choose between fashion and functionality—she needs both. Morel Q's origin story lies in identifying and empathizing with women's daily struggles: cluttered bags, missing essentials, delicate materials, and fashionable pieces that fade with the next trend cycle.

Thus began the journey of a luxury handbag brand designed with purpose—one that blends elegance with engineered utility, and style with thoughtful design.

Brand Philosophy: Designed With Purpose

Morel Q is not just a product—it's a philosophy. At the heart of the brand lies a powerful belief:

“Every detail has a purpose.”

This belief manifests in each handbag they craft. From intuitive interior layouts to clever compartments, every design decision stems from a desire to empower women—not just aesthetically, but functionally.

The brand reflects the consciousness of modern Indian femininity—strong yet graceful, efficient yet expressive. It is grounded in the understanding that a bag is not merely an accessory, but a mobile companion for the woman who owns it.

Understanding the Indian Market: A Gap in Luxury Functionality

India's fashion ecosystem is evolving rapidly. With increasing urbanization, disposable income, and exposure to global aesthetics, the Indian consumer—especially women—has become more discerning. They seek products that are not just beautiful but smart, lasting, and adaptable to dynamic lifestyles.

However, the handbag market in India often divides into two extremes:

- Mass-market brands: Affordable but lacking style and quality.
- Global luxury brands: Stylish, expensive, but with little functional consideration for Indian routines.

Morel Q saw a whitespace: luxury handbags designed specifically for Indian women, rooted in functionality, built with longevity, and dressed in timeless elegance.

What Makes Morel Q Unique

Function Meets Fashion

Morel Q does not chase trends—it chases solutions. Each handbag is carefully curated to serve real needs. Instead of overwhelming consumers with new lines every season, the brand builds long-lasting designs that evolve slowly and intentionally.

User-Friendly Design Features

Morel Q's bags feature innovative, highly functional elements that solve everyday annoyances:

- Lipstick Slots – No more digging through the bag at red lights or in elevators.
- Brush Holders – Keep essentials upright, clean, and accessible.
- Makeup Pocket – An isolated zone for cosmetics to avoid spills.
- Retractable ID Lanyard – Perfect for office or college ID cards.
- Hidden Pad Pocket – Designed with discretion and sensitivity.
- Inbuilt Mirror Stand – Enables effortless touch-ups on the go.

Scientific Design Thinking

Interior architecture of each bag is developed with behavioral insights. The brand studied how women interact with their bags throughout the day and mapped out a system that would help them find, store, and carry with ease.

This scientific approach makes Morel Q's products not just aesthetic masterpieces, but functional tools of empowerment.

Brand Voice and Personality

Morel Q communicates with intention, clarity, and authenticity.

- Real – Grounded in everyday life.
- Mindful – Considerate of emotional and practical needs.
- Creative – Innovative without being gimmicky.
- Dedicated – Deep commitment to quality and purpose.

The brand rejects fashion for fashion's sake. Instead, it champions conscious fashion—where function, comfort, and design meet at a thoughtful intersection.

Pricing and Accessibility

Morel Q operates in the affordable luxury segment, with prices ranging from INR 2,500 to INR 6,500. This price point is deliberate—it aligns with the spending capacity of upwardly mobile women who seek value-driven investment pieces over disposable fashion.

This approach opens doors to young professionals, college students, early-career women, and entrepreneurs who desire high-quality products that reflect their ambitions and taste.

Who Is the Morel Q Woman?

The Morel Q woman is:

- Age group: 18–45
- Demographics: Urban, semi-urban, Tier 1 and Tier 2 cities
- Profession: Students, corporate professionals, creatives, entrepreneurs
- Aspirations: Organized, stylish, expressive, ambitious
- Values: Mindful consumption, design with purpose, individuality, convenience

She chooses Morel Q because she sees herself in it—complex, curated, and purposeful.

Market Challenges and Pain Points Addressed

Traditional handbags in the Indian market have long failed to cater to the multifaceted demands of modern consumers. Morel Q addresses several long-standing concerns:

- Lack of multipurpose use: Many handbags lack organizational structure.
- Fast fashion fatigue: Styles fade quickly and feel disposable.
- Non-durable construction: Flimsy materials and hardware are common.
- Delicate design: Luxury often means fragile—not ideal for daily use.

Morel Q combats this with long-term usability, timeless design, and resilient materials, resulting in products that last and age gracefully.

The Indian Handbag Landscape: Opportunity in Motion

India's handbag market is currently undergoing significant transformation. Factors contributing to growth include:

- Rising income levels among urban women
- Increased brand awareness and willingness to invest in premium products
- Digital influence on fashion trends
- A shift from unbranded local bags to curated branded pieces

Consumers no longer treat handbags as mere carry-ons—they're fashion statements, lifestyle tools, and personal expressions. The bag a woman carries today reflects who she is and what she values. Morel Q taps into this with precision and purpose.

Morel Q as a Cultural Statement

Morel Q represents more than leather and design—it's a manifesto of modern Indian womanhood. It understands her need to be both structured and spontaneous, elegant and efficient.

In a market flooded with fleeting fashion, Morel Q is a quiet revolution—reminding women that they can carry the world on their shoulders, provided they have the right bag.

“With every stitch, pocket, and zipper, Morel Q isn't just designing handbags. It's designing lives that are beautiful, practical, and deeply personal.”

CASE STATEMENT

MorelQ's Chief Executive Officer has approached a consultant i.e You to address these challenges and develop strategies to achieve the company's objectives. Here are the problems that needs to be addressed:

- Build innovative strategies on marketing and branding aspects for the MORELQ brand, without altering their vision and values**
- You have to come up with the marketing strategy for the next one year (Go To Market strategy) The execution plan should be feasible and scalable considering the early stage of the business.**
- Curate the Business value proposition for the brand. What unique value propositions can the brand offer in terms of design to stand out in the competitive market of luxury shopping?**
- Morel Q positions itself at the intersection of functionality and fashion. How can the brand effectively communicate this dual positioning in a cluttered fashion market where either style or utility typically dominates?**
- How will you list your product attractively in the e-commerce site? You can also include creative elements that can be used in listing of photos and videos.**

CASE STATEMENT

- In an increasingly digital retail space, what digital storytelling or influencer strategies could help Morel Q stand out without diluting its premium positioning?
- Given that handbags are prone to becoming outdated quickly due to changing fashion trends, how should Morel Q balance timeless design with the need for innovation and freshness?
- How can MorelQ further elevate its USP of functionality? Should Morel Q explore customizable design elements (e.g., detachable compartments, monogramming, modular interiors) or what can be done to further elevate its UVP and USP
- Keeping the values and philosophy behind the brand, design a logo MORELQ

Submission Guidelines:

1. The assumptions if any should be called out clearly
2. The business case solution must be submitted as a slide deck with a maximum of 10 slides including appendix but excluding references, cover, and closing slide.
3. Mention your name, team member name, college/ organization name, E-mail address, and phone number in your first slide.
4. The file name should be < team name > _Learnous_2025
5. The file has to be mailed on or before 6th July 2025, 11:59 PM IST by any one of your team members.
6. The solution submitted must represent the team's own words, ideas, and work. Any references/sources should be listed separately at the end.
7. Only the submissions made before the deadline will be considered.

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