

PROJECT VANI

STRATEGIC RECONNAISSANCE REPORT

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Subject: Vertical AI Go-To-Market Strategy

Target Sector: Indian FMCG & General Trade Distribution

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Thesis: FMCG distribution in India suffers from a massive "Coverage Gap." Brands like Asian Paints and Coca-Cola miss out on 80% of potential retail outlets because human sales visits are too expensive (₹300/visit) for small orders.

The Solution: Project Vani (Virtual Agent Network Interface). An Agentic AI Sales Platform developed by The AI Company that automates outbound ordering for the unserved "Long Tail" of retailers.

The Positioning: The AI Company is the full-stack platform provider. We are not just a software layer; we provide the "Digital Sales Workforce" as a service.

- **The Brain:** Our proprietary "Sales Ontology" (trained on millions of Indian trade conversations).
- **The Body:** Infrastructure-agnostic telecom integration (zero-latency voice) that replaces the need for human field agents.

2. THE MARKET OPPORTUNITY (THE "KILL SHOT")

The Problem: The Coverage Paradox

- **Total Universe:** ~12-13 million Retail Outlets (Kirana, Paan, Hardware, Medical) in India.
- **Direct Coverage:** Top brands only reach the top 20-30% (approx. 2-3M stores) directly.
- **The Void:** 8-10 million stores are left to wholesalers. The brand loses data, control, and revenue visibility.
- **Why Apps Failed:** Small retailers (the bottom 80%) are often time-starved or tech-averse. They do not download or use e-B2B apps (Shikhar, Bees, etc.) effectively. They prefer voice.

The Arbitrage: Human vs. Vani

Metric	Human Salesman	App Notification	Vani (The AI Company)
Cost	₹300 / Visit	₹0.10 / Msg	₹5 - ₹10 / Call
Reach	30 stores/day	Unlimited	Unlimited
Interaction	High Touch	Zero Touch	High Touch (Voice)
Literacy Req	None	High	None

3. COMMERCIAL MODELS (PRICING STRATEGY)

We have three commercial structures available. **Recommendation:** Use Option A for the Pilot ("The Trojan Horse") and migrate to Option C for the annual contract.

Option A: The "Lazarus" Model (Pure Outcome)

Best for: Winning the initial Pilot. Zero risk for the client.

- **Concept:** "We only get paid if we wake up a dead store."
- **Target Segment:** Inactive Retailers (No order in >90 days).
- **Pricing:**
 - **Setup Fee:** ₹0 (Waived for Pilot).
 - **Success Fee:** ₹100 - ₹150 per reactivated order.
- **Why it works:** The Sales Director has no budget for software, but he has unlimited budget for revenue. He will sign this tomorrow because it is "found money."
- **Our Economics:** Cost per call is ₹5. If we convert 1 in 10 calls (10%), our CAC is ₹50. Profit is ₹50 - 100 per order.

Option B: The "Digital Seat" Model (Pure SaaS)

Best for: Replacing Human Costs. Predictable ARR for us.

- **Concept:** "Hire Vani just like you hire a Salesman, but cheaper."
- **Target Segment:** Low-value active stores (ordering <₹2k/month).
- **Pricing:**
 - **Seat License:** ₹5,000 per month per Digital Agent.
 - **Capacity:** 1 Digital Agent handles ~5,000 unique stores/month (equivalent to 10 human salesmen).
- **Client Value:** They replace a ₹25,000 human (who covers 300 stores) with a ₹5,000 AI (who covers 5,000 stores).
- **Why it works:** Fits into standard IT/SaaS procurement budgets. High predictability for investors.

Option C: The Hybrid Scale Model (Base + Upside)

Best for: Long-term Enterprise Contracts (100k+ stores).

- **Concept:** "Cover costs, share the wins."
- **Target Segment:** The entire "Long Tail" distribution network.
- **Pricing:**
 - **Platform Fee:** ₹10 per successful call connected (Covers telecom/compute).
 - **Commission:** 1% - 2% of Order Value generated.
- **Why it works:** It aligns incentives. If Vani upsells a new SKU (e.g., selling Bingo chips to an Atta buyer), we share in that growth. This creates the massive "Hockey Stick" revenue potential.

4. THE PILOT STRATEGY: "THE LAZARUS PROJECT"

Objective: Do not try to replace the human fleet immediately. Prove value by targeting "Dead" or "Inactive" stores.

The Pitch to Customers:

"Give us 5,000 stores that haven't ordered in 90 days. We will deploy Vani to call them, negotiate in Hindi/Regional dialects, and reactivate them. You pay only for successful orders."

The Wedge:

Once we prove we can generate revenue from "dead" stores, we expand to "low value" stores, effectively taking over the bottom 80% of their distribution network using our platform.

5. TARGET "HIT LIST" (DECISION MAKERS)

A. Hindustan Unilever (HUL)

- **The Pain:** Need to drive usage of "Shikhar" app in deep rural areas where literacy is a barrier.
- **The Target:** Arun Neelakantan (Executive Director, Customer Development).
- **Context:** Former Chief Digital Officer. He understands the intersection of Tech + Sales.
- **The Angle:** "Shikhar is great for the top tier. Let The AI Company's platform drive the bottom tier who can't type but can talk."

B. Britannia Industries

- **The Pain:** Losing market share to regional players (Parle, local brands) in rural belts due to lack of real - time reach.
- **The Target:** Shantanu Gupta (National Sales Development Manager).
- **Context:** Leads "Sales Transformation" and "Route - to - Market" (RTM). His KRA is finding cheaper ways to reach stores.

C. Marico (Saffola, Parachute)

- **The Pain:** Aggressive expansion into **Pharmacies** and **Cosmetic Stores** —new channels where their current human salesforce is weak.
- **The Target:** Vaibhav Bhanchawat (COO - India & Foods Business).
- **The Angle:** "Don't hire 1,000 new agents for Pharmacies. Deploy our Digital Agents to call every chemist in India tomorrow."

D. Asian Paints

- **The Pain:** Excellent data, but high "Cost to Serve" for small hardware stores (selling putty/primer) compared to big "Beautiful Homes" dealers.
- **The Target:** Yash Batra (Chief Sales Executive).
- **Alternate:** Manish Choksi (Vice Chairman) - The architect of their tech strategy.

E. ITC Limited (Foods)

- **The Pain:** Massive portfolio (Aashirvaad, Bingo, Sunfeast). Retailers forget to order half the SKUs because the human agent is in a rush.
- **The Target:** Hemant Malik (Divisional Chief Executive, Foods).
- **The Angle:** "Vani never forgets to upsell the new Bingo flavor."

6. NEXT STEPS FOR EXECUTION

1. Platform Validation (Internal):

- Ensure our "Hinglish" (e.g., "*Do peti bhejo*") sales model is demo-ready for the specific FMCG context.
- **Action:** Finalize the "Sales Ontology" demo script by \$\$Date\$\$

2. Outreach (Trojan Horse):

Send tailored LinkedIn messages to the "Hit List" targets.

Target 1: Arun Neelakantan (HUL)

- **Subject:** Shikhar adoption / Solving the "Coverage Gap"
- **Script:** *"Hi Arun, been following your work on HUL's digital transformation. We've built Vani, an Agentic AI Voice Sales Officer designed to capture orders from the bottom 50% of retailers who struggle with apps like Shikhar due to literacy or habit. Vani calls them, negotiates in native Hindi/Tamil, and punches orders directly. Would you be open to a pilot on 1,000 'inactive' rural stores to see if we can wake them up?"*

Target 2: Shantanu Gupta (Britannia)

- **Subject:** Route-to-Market automation / Rural Coverage
- **Script:** *"Hi Shantanu, I know RTM efficiency is a priority for Britannia. The cost of a human visit (₹300) often makes serving deep rural stores unviable. We solve this with Vani—an autonomous Voice AI agent that costs pennies per call. She can cover your 'dark' rural territories daily without adding headcount. Can we run a 30 -day reactivation pilot on your dead stockist list?"*

Target 3: Vaibhav Bhanchawat (Marico)

- **Subject:** Scaling Pharmacy Coverage without headcount
- **Script:** *"Hi Vaibhav, congrats on the Foods growth. I know expanding into Pharmacies/Cosmetic outlets is key. Instead of hiring a massive new field force, have you considered a Digital Sales Force? Vani (our AI Agent) can call 10,000 pharmacies in a day to stock Saffola/Parachute. Zero latency, full negotiation capability. Happy to demo the voice capability if you have 5 mins."*

Target 4: Yash Batra (Asian Paints)

- **Subject:** Servicing the "Long Tail" Hardware Stores
- **Script:** *"Hi Yash, Asian Paints owns the dealer network, but the smaller hardware stores remain expensive to serve manually. We built Vani to fix this arbitrage. She is a Voice AI agent that can autonomously manage order collection from your bottom 20k dealers who don't order frequently enough to justify a weekly visit. Would love to show you how she handles 'Hinglish' negotiation."*

Target 5: Hemant Malik (ITC)

- **Subject:** Upselling the full portfolio automatically
- **Script:** *"Hi Hemant, the biggest challenge in General Trade is retailers forgetting to order the full SKU range. Humans rush the visit; Vani (our AI agent) doesn't. She memorizes purchase history and upsells specific SKUs (like Bingo or new launches) on every call. We are already seeing high conversion on 'dead' store pilots. Open to a quick chat?"*