

LET high flier

THE ECONOMIC TIMES MUMBAI

TUESDAY • 1 MAY 2007

for careers in the fast lane

marketing in its most classical form. It is regimented so it's like a drill and young people get to learn a lot once they work in this industry. Early on, when you work in sales, you learn a lot about the complexity of distribution in a country like India. Also you get to travel a lot - so you learn a lot about the marketing landscape. The most crucial learning from the FMCG sector is that since there is little or no product differentiation, the main role

grounds for almost every industry which needs competent business professionals with marketing acumen.

Telecom works for people...

...who excel in immediate execution! You get your tariffs agreed internally at 10.30 am in the morning, by 11 am, you are briefing the agency for the creative and by 2 pm, the agency reverts to you with opinions that you could go for and you have to pick the best and release the

ing competition employed emotional appeal by roping in a popular cricketer in East India to be their brand ambassador. I came up with a simple strategy - I stuck with the strong product proposition that we had a better network.

more intensive when you're marketing durables. I learnt a lot of personal selling at the dealer point when I was with BPL. In terms of brands, from a marketing point of view, the consumer benefit in

such a category is usually derived from a product feature, so you end up acquiring a certain



YOU MAKE 'EM, HE'LL SELL 'EM

He's your regular marketing maverick. The only difference is that he has marketed his way through an array of industries. While he tasted a mix of sales and marketing roles in FMCG by working for corporations like P&G, Reckitt Benckiser & Dabur, he learnt the art of immediate execution during his stints at Hutchison Essar, in the telecom space. He also proved himself in Durables, handling home appliances marketing for BPL. Presently driving Marketing & Consumer Experience at Reliance Retail, Peshwa Acharya shares his adventures and pearls of wisdom gained from each industry...

Working in the FMCG sector teaches one...

...a combination of sales and marketing functions. It is a very structured environment for learning the essence of

EVERY EXPERIENCE COUNTS

What is it about these people who get a kick out of venturing into the unknown and have the gumption to try out new things? Kunal Guha speaks to two such intrepid individuals

of marketing is to create brands and create the perceptual differentiation. And the skills acquired by working in this sector have always been in demand. HR managers across industries have always believed that professionals from the FMCG sector have a certain amount of rigour and basic management skills which are easily transferable across other industries. This is the reason FMCG companies have always been poaching

some instantly. So, it's all about taking quick action. When I joined Hutchison Essar in 2000, there was a common perception that a cell phone is an expensive gadget and not meant for everyone. Also, our competitor at that time was leading the pack, in terms of subscriber base. So, it was a big challenge for me to change conventional perceptions and re-brand the product offering. It became an even bigger challenge as the lead-

That seems to have worked as we became the market leader with a large margin. Personally for me, as I was handling a particular region (as opposed to being the national marketing head), I also learnt tricks of micro-marketing and Regional marketing, which were worth learning, especially as a retail marketer.

The distribution is less expensive...

...and the sales process is

amount of technical knowledge since you need to know the technical specifications that each product may have. Also, overall category profitability is always under pressure and it's a business challenge to manage profitability. Further there are products in your portfolio, whose demand is seasonal like air conditioners and refrigerators and the marketing team has to ensure de-seasonalising sales.