

THE SILENT REVOLUTION

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Orient Electric that launched its Aeroquiet fans last year will be adding two more innovations to the range. Anshuman Chakravarty, Head - Branding and Corporate Communications, Orient Electric tells us how the brand is making fans smarter for the Indian audience.

Q] In the last two months, Orient Electric has launched two fans, Aerostorm and Aerocool. What is the difference between the two?

Aerostorm has better design, while Aerocool is relatively cheaper, being priced Rs 500 rupees lower. Performance-wise both are equal. We are now offering a complete range of Aeroseries fans, all of which have three defining aspects – sound reduction, increase in air delivery and aesthetics. We expect these super premium fans to contribute to 10% of our total fan sales in the next two years.

Q] You said you plan to increase Orient Electric's market share in fans from 26% to 50% - isn't that too ambitious?

We launched the first fan in the Aero series called Aeroquiet last year, and realized that people liked it very much. The amount of fanfare that it has generated online was unprecedented, which made us realize that we probably need to be much more aggressive online. We have a complete range of fans today which meet all requirements, right from a silent fan to one that saves energy by 50%, to an underlight fan, to one with the highest-ever air delivery in the category, to fans with remotes, and fans with various finishes – checkered, stone and wood finish. In this way, we are plugging all the need gaps and that is what gives us the confidence that we can actually grow the super-premium market, as well as take up a 50% share of it, this year itself. I am fairly certain that we will achieve those numbers by around June or July.

Q] What would be the price range for the new fans launched?

Roughly at the moment you can purchase an Aerostorm for around Rs 5,200 with a cashback offer. It is priced higher than Aeroquiet that we launched last year, which was priced at around Rs 4,800.

Q] Do you think that in a price-sensitive market like India, people would be prepared to pay so much for a fan?

Going by just the numbers, we have an Orient 'super cool' fan which sells the most, in the value segment priced around Rs 1,300. But, overall if you look at price premium segments, Aeroquiet is our most popular fan. We did think about whether people would pay Rs 4,800 while launching Aeroquiet, but we found that there are discerning customers who want more silence, more air, aesthetics, and they are ready to shell out more money to get a premium product. This makes us believe that the entire range we are launching this year will do fairly well.



Q] What is the marketing mix for the ad campaign?

We started the campaign for Aerostorm soon after it was launched, on the Digital medium especially, because we had a tie-up with Amazon. We wanted to guide the online wave to their 'Great Indian Sale' and highlight the product on their platform, as well. Our mass media campaign started on February 12. We have a couple of Television commercials, as well. Apart from this one for Aerostorm, we are also planning to launch a new television commercial on table fans or wall-mounted fans, a category which nobody has actually focused on earlier in the fan segment, despite the fact that it typically constitutes about 30% of the overall fan market. So, that is also one area we are working on. And Print will obviously be part of the entire mix.

Q] Your most famous campaign, Orient PSPO was a big hit, despite not having a brand ambassador. Why did you choose to get MS Dhoni on board and how has it helped the brand, a decade later?

We felt it was natural for 'Captain Cool' to promote a product like Aerostorm, which is actually a storm in itself and yet very silent, a description that also defines the demeanor of

MS Dhoni quite well. And we have chosen the 'Song of Silence' showing how a silent fan can deliver not just more air, but also comfort.

Q] What is the USP of Orient and how soon do you see yourself closing the gap with your nearest competitor, Crompton?

Our two key pillars are trust and performance. Innovation is the third one which we added in the 1990s with PSPO. We are at no. 2 in terms of market share. We are the leader in the online space. However, offline and online put together, Crompton is a couple of percentage points higher. We hope to close that gap in the coming year.

Q] What percentage of your overall sales comes from online sales?

Our online sales are comparable to any other category, making up between 1-1.5% of total sales, currently. However, within the online category itself, the growth has been exceptional – going from less than 0.5% last year, to 1.5% today. Thus, we believe the online selling medium will play a major role in the coming years.

Q] Which are the biggest markets for Orient in India?

We serve all of India, except Jammu & Kashmir and some parts of North East. Predominantly, North and South are the biggest markets, accounting for close to 25% and 26% of the total share of business, respectively, followed by West and East.

Q] Apart from fans, which are the biggest categories for Orient Electric?

The second biggest category is lighting. We were very small in the category about two years ago, but we bet fairly high on LED. Within an 18-month period, we have become the no. 2 player in LED bulbs, which is the biggest segment in LED lighting. For the last eight months, we have been working on the LED baton category, where we have witnessed around 600% growth in the last six months. So that is a segment which we are betting high on. These are the two most consumable lighting products utilized by any household - the lamp and the tube. And in both these segments we are doing very well.

Q] What about appliances, a category you entered rather late in?

In appliances, we are at the moment focusing majorly on two segments - water heaters and coolers.

Q] You are launching a new range of metal coolers by the end of this month, tell us more about it.

In India, more than 60% of the market is unorganised in the cooler category. A large part of India still prefers a metal cooler because of its cooling capacity. The evaporative cooling works better when it is kept outside the room. Therefore we thought of improvising on the outdoor cooler. One idea was to make it less bulky; which is why our cooler comes in two boxes which you can carry in your car boot. You can assemble the cooler in 90 seconds. It has a touch panel with a remote, and we are using the same Aero technology in the cooler which will give off an air thrust that can be felt fifty feet away. The noise level will also be

reduced considerably. Apart from that, the cooler has stunning looks. We haven't yet launched it, but it will come at a very attractive price point; somewhere in the range of Rs 12,000-15,000.