



Rakesh Khanna, MD & CEO, Orient Electric

“Irrespective of the challenges there are ways to win”

Team ET Edge

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In today's challenging milieu, brand names are omnipresent. But amid this glut, a few brands stand above and shine through the white noise of modern marketing. Admired and packed with meaning, inspiring passion and loyalty among their customers, these are The Economic Times Best Brands, the gold standard of branding.



Pandemics have had a great influence in shaping human society throughout history. Most recently, COVID-19 has disrupted our lives and business globally in an unprecedented manner and the situation continues to remain unpredictable. During this period, “Customer centricity” and “Employees first approach” remained as the bedrock for all our change decisions. It was our proactive approach in identifying risks, building efficiencies and breeding resilience through the organization, both in our operations as well as in our working, whether it was adoption of work-from-home or the way our sales teams reached out to the trade, or the way service team ensured uninterrupted online support,



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it was all about finding new ways to ensure business continuity and customer delight.

As for challenges, employee safety was our biggest concern. Ensuring safety of our workmen even when factories started running at full capacity was important and I am happy that our team did a wonderful job of re-laying the assembly lines with partitions to isolate every worker.

I believe it is important to routinely simulate how such crises could disrupt the business and use those insights to reimagine and design products and services. Interestingly one such insight led us to develop UV-Sanitech, a sanitization appliance

capable of destroying viruses and bacteria. Our teams worked round the clock to launch this product in 90 days from conceptualization to commercialization. UV Sanitech has been well received by the Indian consumers and it has given us the confidence that irrespective of the challenges there are ways to win.

Peering into the future

Consumer behaviour and sales distribution structure are likely to undergo a permanent shift. The pandemic has accelerated the digital transformation journey and the Ecommerce channel will gain more preference. Work from home will be an acceptable norm and the Gig economy will gain pace.

As more and more people become home bound to mitigate health risks, demand for better consumer appliances is likely to increase. Moreover, due to related geopolitical impact, indigenisation will gain momentum and Indian manufacturing base will gain scale thereby making us globally competitive.