

CASE STUDY · INDIAN SWEETS BRAND

A century-old brand, flat for thirty years.

Rebuilt, repositioned, and scaled across formats and continents.

A 100-year-old Indian sweets and savouries brand had **thirty years of flat growth**, distribution confined to its own counter-service shops, and a heritage name that several family groups traded under — so a century of trust identified no one in particular. We secured the brand's provenance, refreshed its identity, repositioned it from a local sweet shop into a packaged heritage food brand, and scaled it across retail formats and into export markets on three continents. What follows is the situation before, what we did, and the result.

A NOTE ON DISCLOSURE AND ON NUMBERS

This client is under confidentiality and is described by category rather than by name; the identity can be shared under NDA. On figures, one rule applies throughout: **a number appears here only where we can stand behind it**. The two growth figures stated on the final page describe the same trajectory measured two ways, and the note beneath them shows how they reconcile. We would rather be short a number than give you one we cannot defend in a room.

A hundred years of trust, thirty years of flat growth, and a shared name.

CATEGORY	HERITAGE	MANDATE	WINDOW
Traditional Indian sweets & savouries — artisan food	100+ years old, family-owned	Restart growth; own the legacy	Multi-year retainer engagement

THE SITUATION BEFORE

Enormous brand equity, accruing to a name rather than to a business.

- **A hundred years of accumulated consumer trust — and roughly thirty years of flat growth.** Revenue had been essentially static across a full generation. The equity was real; it simply was not being converted.
- **Several family groups from the same lineage traded under the same heritage name.** This is ordinary for a century-old family business, and nothing improper had occurred. But it meant consumers had no way of telling which business was the original — so a hundred years of trust benefited every user of the name more or less equally.
- **Distribution was confined to the brand's own shops.** No modern trade, no organised retail, no exports — a local business with a national-grade reputation.
- **The customer base was ageing with the brand.** The next generation had inherited no particular reason to choose it.
- **The category was crowded and fiercely competitive** — regional heritage players, national packaged-foods brands, and an enormous unorganised local trade, all at once.
- **Marketing was founder-led, with no team behind it.** What marketing the business did sat with the founder personally — no in-house marketing team, no agency structure, no plan beyond his own judgement. For a hundred years growth had come from the counter and from word of mouth.

THE REAL EXPOSURE

There was no dispute to win here, and none was ever pursued. The exposure was subtler: every rupee the brand spent building the name was building it for everyone who shared it. Marketing investment could not fix that, because the problem was not awareness — it was that the brand had no way of showing which business the hundred years actually belonged to.

WHAT WE DID

Secured the provenance, then repositioned and scaled the brand.

1. **Embedded the founding year into the logo lockup, alongside subtle visual changes to the identity.** A founding year is a matter of record. This brand could evidence its own; no one else could adopt it without adopting a false date. That single move converted a shared name into a specific claim — and because the claim was simply true, there was nothing for anyone to object to and no conflict to enter.
2. **Made the city part of the brand's communication.** A second provenance marker, anchoring the brand to where it actually began. Year and city together are precise, verifiable and impossible to share — they identify one business rather than a lineage.
3. **Built a deliberate channel ladder** — own shops, to branded retail outlets, to modern trade, to exports — sequenced so that each stage financed and credentialised the next rather than cannibalising it.
4. **Repositioned the brand from a sweet shop into a packaged food brand.** Entering modern trade required packaging, shelf-ready formats and a category proposition that a counter-service mithai business had never needed — and that shift changed what the brand was, not merely where it was sold.

5. **Opened diaspora exports to the US, Australia and other markets**, taking a local brand global on the strength of an authenticity the identity now made legible at a glance.
6. **Built the next generation online**, recruiting a younger customer base digitally rather than waiting for them to inherit the habit.
7. **Became the marketing function, alongside the founder**. Marketing had always been founder-led with no team behind it. We took on the function itself — strategy, planning and execution — appointing and directing the external agency partners, and working throughout directly with the founder.

THE RESULT — SUSTAINED OVER THE ENGAGEMENT

~40% YoY

Average year-on-year growth sustained, in an extremely crowded and competitive category — against roughly thirty years of flat growth immediately prior.

~5x

Revenue growth over the course of the engagement.

Local → global

From own shops only, to branded retail, to modern trade, to exports in the US, Australia and other markets.

Legacy claimed

Founding year and city of origin established as the brand's provenance, so a century of trust now identifies one business rather than a shared name — achieved without conflict with any other family group.

ON THE CONSISTENCY OF THOSE TWO FIGURES

Sustained growth of approximately 40% year-on-year compounds to roughly 5x over five years. The two numbers above describe the same trajectory measured two ways — the annual rate, and the total over the engagement — rather than two separate claims.