

Micro Enterprises Branding

The products of Kudumbashree members, especially food products, all across the state are always of high demand among the customers. They trust the quality of the products produced by them and when it comes to the food products like flours and other powders, the issue they face with the products of Kudumbashree members is the inconsistency of the taste. The taste differs from one micro enterprise unit to the other as they use raw materials of different qualities and follow different proportions in mixing the recipes. As the Kudumbashree micro enterprises does not follow same recipes in preparing these food products, the taste also would obviously be different. How nice it would be if the Kudumbashree members be able to produce food products with same taste. Kudumbashree Kannur District Mission had made an attempt to find a solution to this and they made interventions to brand the products and bring it to the market. Let us see what Kudumbashree Kannur District Mission had done to find a solution to this issue and how the idea worked out.

Marketing

Marketing refers to activities a company undertakes to promote the buying or selling of a product or service. Marketing includes advertising, selling, and delivering products to consumers or other businesses. Some marketing is done by affiliates on behalf of a company. Marketing is the study and management of exchange relationships. It is the business process of creating relationships with and satisfying customers through a value exchange. Because marketing is used to attract customers, it is one of the primary components of business management and commerce. Marketers can direct product to other businesses (B2B marketing) or directly to consumers (B2C marketing).

Regardless of who is being marketed to, several factors, including the perspective the marketers will use. These market orientations determine how marketers will approach the planning stage of marketing. This leads into the marketing mix, which outlines the specifics of

the product and how it will be sold. This can in turn, be affected by the environment surrounding the product, the results of marketing research and market research, and the characteristics of the product's target market.

Once these factors are determined, marketers must then decide what methods will be used to market the product. This decision is based on the factors analyzed in the planning stage as well as where the product is in the product life cycle.

Need for the branding of Kudumbashree products

The products of Kudumbashree are of high demand among the customers. The Kudumbashree entrepreneurs have gained the trust of the customers over these years with the quality of the products. The customers always seek to find the products of Kudumbashree units whenever possible. It is the trust that they have in the products of Kudumbashree micro entrepreneurs that keep the customers closer to them. The customers are aware of the quality of the products of Kudumbashree, especially when it comes to the case of food products prepared by the micro enterprise products of Kudumbashree, the customers are well sure that they are preservative free and has not been adulterated in any ways. It is that trust that keeps them go forward.

Even though, when it comes from the view point of the customers, the main issue they face is that, they would be getting the products produced by different micro enterprise units each time and so the taste of the food products differs from one unit to other and the only uniform factor that it would have would be the quality and it differ from one unit to the another. As they procure the raw materials differently, the taste of the food products would also differ from one unit to another, even from one time to the another.

But for maintaining regular customers, the need of maintaining consistency is very much important and thenaroused the need for branding the products of Kudumbashree products. Kudumbashree Kannur District Mission had taken this issue seriously and tried to find a solution for this. They had studied the case in detail and came up with the solution of branding of the few food products of the micro enterprises of Kudumbashree. This is how the branding of the products of Kudumbashree micro entrepreneur's products evolved.

Micro Enterprises Branding of Kannur

Kudumbashree Kannur District Mission thought about the issue and the need to solve these issues. The issue of inconsistency of the taste exist in the case of the food products, especially in the sector of curry powders and flours. There exist more than 100 micro enterprises in the curry powder in the district. As part of branding the selected food products of Kudumbashree, a consortium was selected by making a consortium of the best curry powder units in the district. There are around 50 units in the consortium which has 11 permanent board of members. Smt. Usha Narayanan (President), Smt. Kanchana T.V, Smt. Kuttiparu P.O, Smt. Sheema. M, Smt. Rajitha, Smt.Prasannakumari P.G, Smt. Lalitha, Smt. Saraswathi, Smt. Sumithra. K, Smt. Sheena N and Smt. Shamna T.V are the 11 membered board of members.

The board of members was selected during November 2018 and the branding was started as the project of District Panchayath. The project is worth Rs 50 lakhs, out of which Rs 30 lakhs is the fund of the Panchayath and the rest Rs 20 lakhs is the fund of Kudumbashree. Using the fund of Rs 30 lakhs the machineries were procured from Irinjalakuda of Thrissur district of Kerala and the same was installed successfully. The concept was to help increase the production of the existing micro enterprise units and help them find new markets of their own it was decided to do the branding exercise using the remaining amount.

When the concept of branding arouses, there stirred up the need of changing the package of the food products including curry powders and flour. A team from KSIDC designed some of the packets but the Kudumbashree Kannur District Mission did not like the design and rejected the and later an advertising firm from Thalassery of Kannur District came up with the new design. 13 designs of various products were designed by them for Rs 1 lakhs and the packages were printed at the Arunodayam Printing unit. Using the remaining amount, a coding machine was also bought the amount. The details including GST, FSSI, barcode, Gmail id, Facebook profile details, phone number etc were printed in every packages using the coding machine. A staff was also appointed for managing the functioning of the consortium.

The members of the consortium were given training under the leadership of International Labour Organization (ILO), the United Nations agency dealing with labour problems, particularly international labour standards, social protection, and work opportunities. One member each from every unit were called for the training and they explained the same to their fellow unit members on completion of the training. The topics dealt during the training includes sanitation, details of production process etc.

13 branded items including Chilly powder, coriander powder, turmeric powder, rice powders (puttupodi and appam podi), sambar powder, vegetable masala, fish masala, meat masala, chicken masala, atta etc. The consortium procures the raw materials together and the food products are produced. They are given a document on Standard Operating Procedures(SOP), which would help the units maintain the uniformity in production. The SOP included 13 chapters, including the DO's and DON'Ts of the micro enterprise units and also the recipes for preparing various curry powders and flours.

The food grains were first procured from Raidco, but when they would they were not worth the quality, they stopped procuring from them and started buying from PMK Traders located at Thaliparamba of Kannur. The Nutritional information printed in the packages was prepared by an enterprise named Core valley.

As a first step, Kudumbashree Kannur District Mission has launched the first set of Kudumbashree branded curry powders from Kannur. The official launch of branded curry powders was done by Shri. T.P Ramakrishnan, Minister for Labour and Excise, Government of Kerala at the venue of Saras Mela at Kannur on 23 December 2019.

Evolution of Branding of Micro Enterprises

Kudumbashree had decided to take up curry powders and other food items for our 'branding challenge'. And Kudumbashree Kannur District Mission took up the task. There are around 50 micro enterprises in Kannur district which are engaged in production of curry powders. They all joined hands together to form a consortium to start the branding process. As mentioned above, Kannur district panchayat had given them needed support and sanctioned Rs 30 lakhs as a fund

for these units. As a first step, a detailed study of all these 30 micro enterprises were conducted and their gaps were identified. Thereafter, Kudumbashree listed the requirements for producing same quality product in a decentralized manner.

A standard operating protocol has been introduced to all these units to ensure uniform production and quality. With the help of funds received from Kannur district panchayath various equipment's were purchased. Equipment like blender, mixer machine etc were purchased and were installed in those units where it was necessary. After completion of all the steps in bringing out a product, Kudumbashree had introduced branded Kudumbashree curry powders and flours to the market!

The branded products were for sale at the stalls of the Saras Fair held at Kannur and people received the same wholeheartedly. It is also being sold through the Home Shop programme as well. The packages have the quality that would go in par with the other branded curry powders and flours existing in the market. Other than Saras Fair held at Kannur, new branded curry powders were for sale at other trade fairs held in Kannur viz. trade fairs held at Karankaavu, Kannapuram, Kadalayi Temple, Gaddhika Mela, trade fair held at Andallurkavu, Kattilepalli etc. An average sale of Rs 2 lakhs was recorded altogether.

The sales recorded during those trade fairs are as follows:

Name of the Trade Fair	Sales recorded /Expected Sales
Saraas Fair, Kannur	Rs 1,34,000
Karankaavu, Kannapuram (4 Days)	Rs 3200
Kadalayi Temple (3 Days)	Rs 300
Gaddhika Mela (2 Days)	Rs 1500
Andallurkavu (4 Days)	Rs 15000
Kattilepalli, Pappinissery CDS	Rs 25000

Scope

'Kudumbashree' branded curry powders would be available in the local markets very soon. As Kudumbashree's micro enterprises are small scale units with decentralized mode of production and because of its spread and scale of units, it was difficult to develop a single brand of product by maintaining same quality and taste consistently. However, Kudumbashree took up the challenge of producing branded Kudumbashree product.

Kudumbashree would find more markets for all these branded items. It is hoped that these products would be soon available in Supplyco outlets and even in Lulu Hypermarket as well. Also, Kudumbashree is planning to introduce more branded items to the markets by forming consortiums in other districts as well. Hopefully, 'Kudumbashree' branded products would reach your homes very soon. The other districts may replicate this model for launching the branded food products with uniform taste and quality. Kudumbashree Kannur District Mission had set a good model in successfully branding these curry powders and flours and bring in to the market.