

India Thought Leadership
Powered by BASES

Break Through to the Winners' Side

Learning from successful Indian
innovations in FMCG

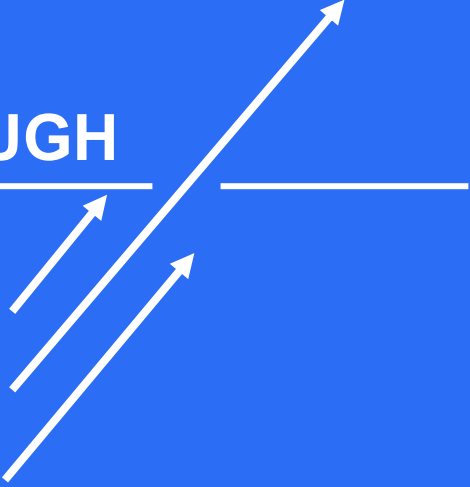
NielsenIQ

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Thought Leadership

BREAKTHROUGH
INNOVATIONS



01

Innovation strategies in today's world

Modern environment forces evolution. Today, eCommerce and other non-traditional channels are ascending very fast, compared to traditional retail. Private label and start-ups pose a bigger threat than ever before. And there are more ways to interact with the consumer, but less time to engage !

Today, consumers are forcing marketers to think differently. Hence innovation strategies do not focus solely on big bets anymore, and we see different strategies at play :

Innovation strategy



Launch a big bet



Replace an underperforming SKU



Capitalize on a trend



Grow my brand



Retailer request



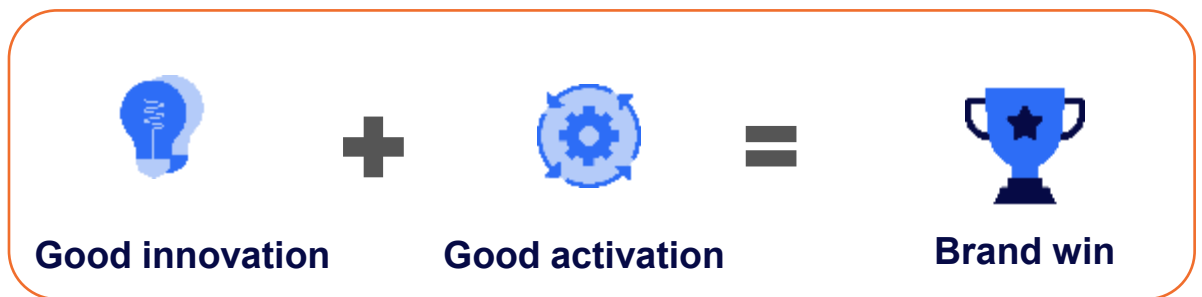
Experiment in-market

However, no matter the strategy, financials are the key.

01

Innovation strategies in today's world

Winners' success can be boiled down to a simple premise :



However, there are many elements that impact innovation performance. What is the consumer target? What is the impact of the parent brand and the category? What is the value proposition? Does the product drive great repeat purchasing rates and loyalty to the brand? What is the physical availability of the product? What is the mental availability of the product? Can they find it on the shelf? Is the innovation supported beyond year 1?

So, how easy or hard is it to launch successful innovations in market? Let us start by looking at the current state of innovation performance, as measured by NIQ's Innovation Vitality analysis of 70,000+ manufacturers across 130 categories in 15 countries.

First, the good news – innovation is a growth engine! Companies with growing innovation sales are **2X** more likely to grow overall sales than those with stagnant or declining innovation sales.

01

Innovation strategies in today's world

However, the tougher news is that, **only 9%** of companies managed to achieve growing their innovation sales in 2025. Further, sustaining strong innovation performance remains a challenge, and just 50% of innovations saw growth in their second year. That means half of innovations are losing momentum after launch, mainly due to lack of continuing support and/or lack of continued evolution of the offering.



***only 9%** of
companies
grew their
innovation
sales*

A donut chart with a dark blue center and a white outer ring. A small orange segment at the top represents 9% of the total.



*and **only 50%** of
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A donut chart with a dark blue center and a white outer ring. A small orange segment at the top represents 50% of the total.

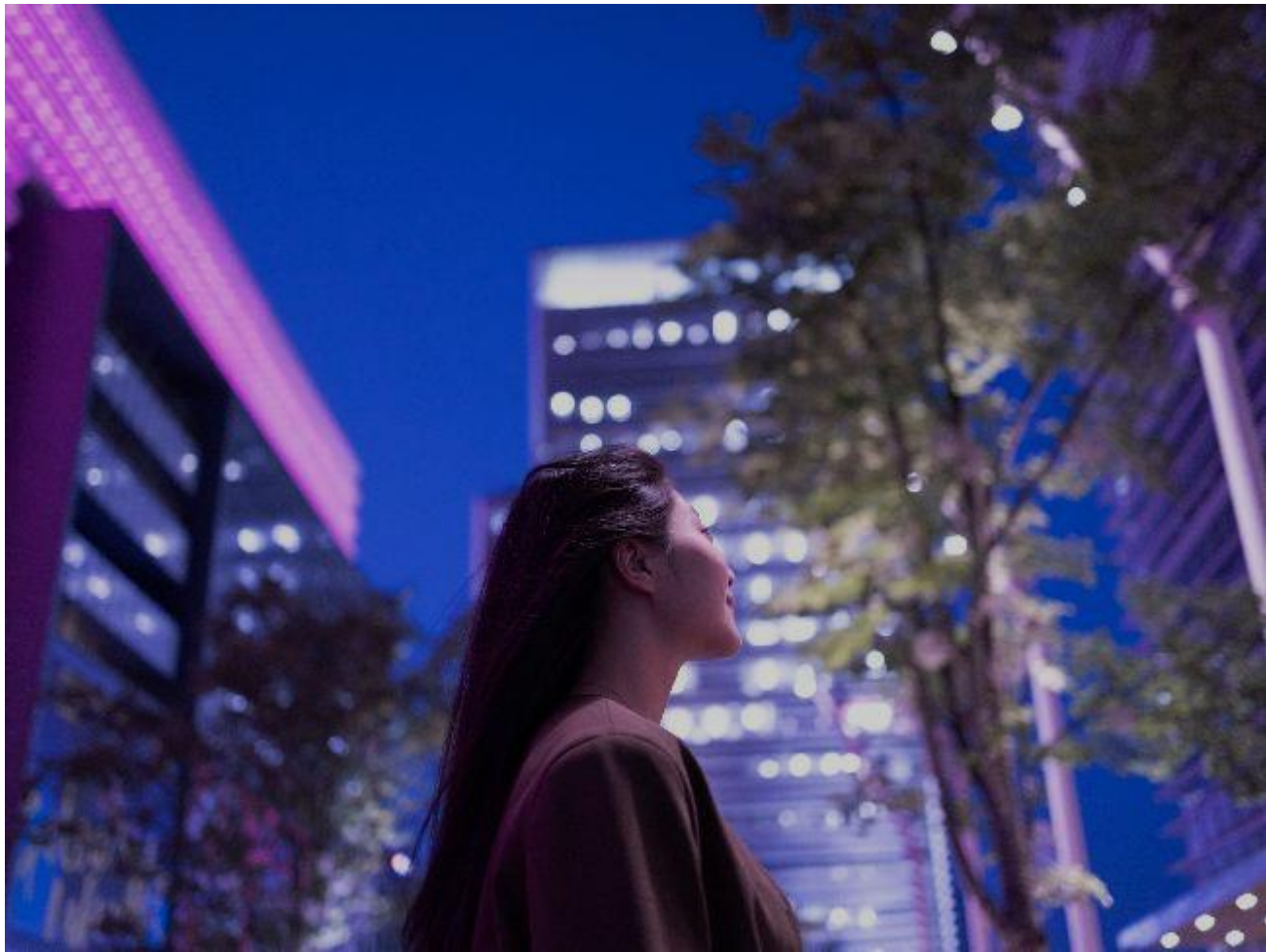
Source: NIQ Innovation Vitality Multi-year Meta-Analysis 2025
NIQ Innovation Measurement comparison of Total Sales \$ Innovation Sales growth across 70K+ manufacturers, 130 categories in 15 global markets comparing latest 52 weeks with previous 52 weeks.

01

Innovation strategies in today's world

Hence when an innovation truly breaks through, it leaves all of us super excited!

NIQ BASES has been celebrating Breakthrough Innovation success in India annually, from 2019. We are sharing insights, data and stories from winners, and we hope you feel inspired and equipped with ideas to fuel your own innovation journey.



02

Celebrating breakthrough innovations in India

*BASES has been celebrating **Breakthrough Innovation Winners** in India annually since 2019, in keeping with it's tradition of helping marketers discover, develop and deploy successful innovations.*

We use a combination of 4 different criteria to select winners. The winning cut offs vary as per the innovation objectives.



Year 1 Sales (or market share)



Year 2 Growth



Incrementality to Parent Brand



Category Disruption

02

Celebrating breakthrough innovations in India

7

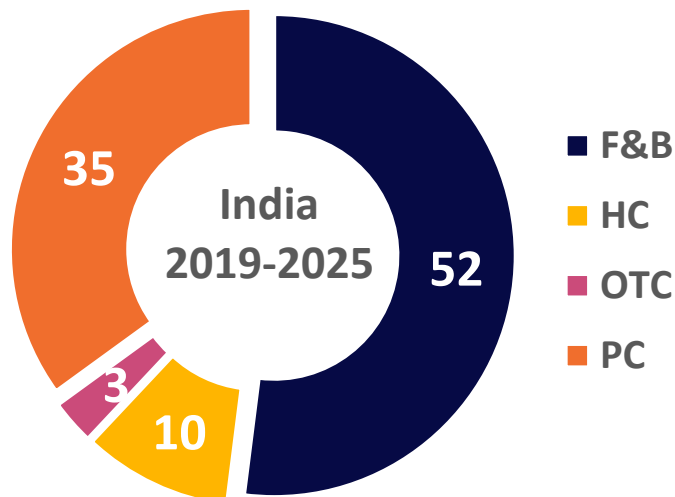
years of celebrating innovation excellence

146

winners in India; last 7 years

3000+

Average innovations scanned each year, to arrive at winners



% winner by category

03

Break through to the winners' side

Winners are the ones who adapted to the fast pace of evolution with their differentiated offerings as well as well-strategized activation. In this context, we found some interesting common themes running across winners for the **past 7 years, from 2019-2025**.*

1. Unlock “non-consumption”

Instead of focusing on current consumption patterns, winners find occasions where no direct competition is currently at play and create a new product in that space.



When we asked consumers if Epigamia is not available, what else will you buy? A whopping **61%** said, they will replace this with snacks, while only 30% said, dairy products – implying that the brand was tapping into spaces outside of core dairy.

2. Spark a Need

Winners tap into a whitespace, and spark a hidden need.



“If you didn’t watch Netflix last night, what did you do? ... We actually compete with sleep. And we are winning! ”

Reed Hastings, Cofounder, Netflix

03

Break through to the winners' side

3. Expand boundaries

Winners successfully create new consumption occasions.



Breakfast to snacks ...
Kids to teens ...

Breakfast isle to snacking isle ...



Taking the category
out of home

4. Up-age the brand

Build relevance with a wider age cohort



Entering into Lollypops &
Tubes to drive appeal
among teens



New consumption occasions & “up-ageing” –
extending Kinder from kids specific to shared
snacking occasions with friends / family

“Confectionery thrives on innovation. For Chupa Chups, we have always endeavored to explore novel, never-tried-before formats to maintain the brand’s growth while up-aging and premiumizing the category.”
Rajesh Ramakrishnan – ex Managing Director, Perfetti Van Melle India.

03

Break through to the winners' side

5. Be the Expert

Specialized products backed by rigorous scientific research and crafted with expertise, that have a sharp focus on delivering to specific consumer needs have seen consistent success.



Bare Anatomy Ultra Smoothing Hair Care Range



Colgate Visible White O2 Range – Active Oxygen Technology

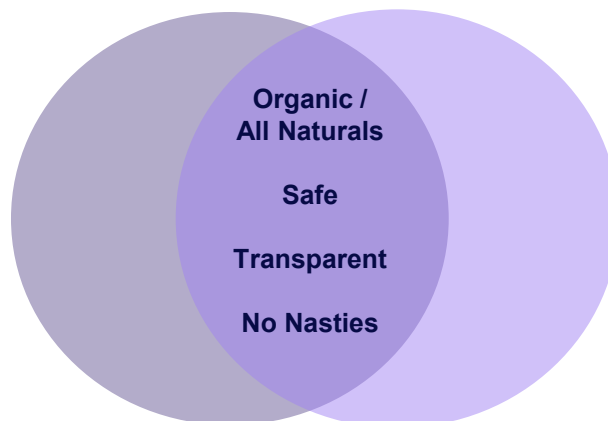


CeraVe – includes actives like hyaluronic acid, ceramides

6. Find the sweetspot between “Healthy for ME” and “Healthy for WE”

Healthy for “ME”
NATURALS

Healthy for “WE”
SUSTAINABILITY



“Goodness Inside”



Goodness of
naturals

Goodness -
plastic positive

03

Break through to the winners' side

7. Flavours with a Twist!

Consumers are increasingly seeking flavours with a twist.



Multi-sensorial experience



Red Bull Orange and Red Bull Coconut Twist



“Too hot to stop”



Nostalgia

8. High Protein and the “Good Bite”

Increasingly, consumers are reading labels to make an informed choice.



Protein is a growing trend in India & globally



No trans fat / artificial flavours. Baked/ air fried.



7 super grains

03

Break through to the winners' side

9. Make it Easy

Convenience through pack or format innovation works well.



“Remove tough stains in machine in 3 steps”
Making Laundry simpler by removing / reducing pre-treatment.

Laundry detergent Pods, which are compact, easy to use and offer 3 benefits of cleaning, stain removal & fragrance have grown by **taking the CONVENIENCE benefit across countries.**



03

Break through to the winners' side

10. Packs that Pop

Clutter breaking packaging that enables the brand to land key messages via visual imagery or colors that drive brand identity is a key success lever.

Say it with Silk



Packaging is the only marketing asset to reach **100%** consumers.

65% consumers report that they've tried a new product based only on its packaging form or visual design. *

03

Break through to the winners' side

11. Winners Persevere

WINNERS VS. THE REST

Distribution of Winners (vs rest)	Year 1	Year 2
	1.8x	2.4x

India 2019-'22

12. Winners tailor marketing support



Personalization at scale – created 96,000 creatives



Activate during Big Days



Break the mould



Category adjacencies in MT to unlock incrementality



Effectively leveraging e-comm / influencer marketing

"We are the 1st Indian company to talk openly about periods with #LetstalkPeriods campaign and also enrol men in its mainstream advertising campaigns, #surakhshabandan and father-daughter campaign."
Amar Tulsiyan, Founder & CEO, Niine® Hygiene & Personal Care

03

Break through to the winners' side

In sum,

1. Unlock “Non-Consumption”
2. Spark a Need
3. Expand Boundaries
4. Up-age the brand
5. Be the Expert
6. Find sweetspot between “Healthy for ME” and “Healthy for WE”
7. Flavours with a Twist !
8. High Protein and the “Good Bite”
9. Make it Easy
10. Packs that Pop
11. Winners Persevere
12. Winners tailor Marketing Support



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About NIQ

NielsenIQ (NIQ) is a leading consumer intelligence company, delivering the most complete understanding of consumer buying behavior and revealing new pathways to growth. Our global reach spans over 90 countries covering approximately 85% of the world's population and more than \$7.2 trillion in global consumer spend. With a holistic retail read and the most comprehensive consumer insights—delivered with advanced analytics through state-of-the-art platforms—NIQ delivers the Full View™.

For more information, please visit www.niq.com.