Battle Royale:
Harley vs. Triumph

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The case narrates a comparative study of Battle Royale: Harley-Davidson v/s Triumph. It is of their product launch and marketing strategies used by Harley-Davidson and Triumph, two leading brands in the Indian premium motorcycle segment. For the purpose of this study, data were gathered from both primary and secondary sources. This study used secondary sources dominantly for extracting related information of Harley-Davidson and Triumph brands. Secondary sources include company reports, their promotional events, social media, news reports, etc. The author of the case also interacted with users of these two brands. Feedback from these brand users was discussed in the case explicitly. This case was discussed with UG and PG students in a classroom. It helped them to understand branding strategies of these two brands specifically.

INTRODUCTION

The Indian automobile industry is the largest in the world. The two wheelers segment leads the automobile market of India with an 81% market share due to increasing number of middle class and a youth population in the country. Furthermore, companies are developing interest in rural markets and exploring it to establish their brands specifically. Exports of commercial vehicles and two-wheelers increased by 18.36% in 2016 compared to 2015. Furthermore, the Government of India's initiatives paving the way

for major players in the automobile segment in the Indian market are expected to propel India to the global leader in the Two-Wheeler and Four-Wheeler markets by 2020. Harley-Davidson, Triumph, and Ducati are among the major players in the premium motorcycle segment.

The premium bike segment is one of the fastest growing in the Indian market, with virtually every player worth their salt seizing the prospect to use this profitable category to increase margins and have an advantage. Rising income levels, easy financing, and increased access have prompted India's large bike market to surpass 10,000 units in fiscal year 2016. At present census, the Harley-Davidson has a slender lead over its rivals with a market share of 60% and a growth rate of 15.04% whereas its rival Triumph is holding a market share of 27.5% and a growth rate of 6.89% for the fiscal year 2016-2017 in the premium motorcycle segment. These leading brands have been using unique marketing strategies for their competitive advantages in the Indian market. Though Triumph entered Indian market 5 years later, it has been making its rival Harley-Davidson run for its money. There is a competitive struggle by two leading brands to build up their brand image in the Indian market.

The Battle Royale "Harley-Davidson v/s Triumph" is a comparative study of product launch and marketing strategies used by Harley-Davidson and Triumph, two leading brands in Indian premium motorcycle segment.

Harley Davidson

Harley-Davidson considered entering the Indian market in 2007, but the Indian government objected due to high import duties levied on its motorcycles. The high import duty was viewed as a "daunting trade barrier" by the company. According to company representatives, India currently has a 60% duty on heavyweight motorcycles. Due to high import duties with additional taxes of 30 percent on registration would double the price of Harley-Davidson. The Indian government has linked permission to allow the bikes with the export of Indian mangoes, because Indian mangoes were lacked concession with U.S Food and Drug Administration requirement. Indian government even tried to link the entry of Harley-Davidson for the progress on banking licenses for some of the Indian banks, such as ICICI bank, SBI and Bank of Baroda which needed fresh branch licenses for their expansion in the United States. Though the Indian government did not agree to reduce the taxes but allowed the Harley to enter the Indian market through third party distributors. Indian Government has lifted the emission norms on bikes for more than 800cc, this move has changed the face of the heavy motorcycle segment, giving more opportunities to the new entrants with variety of products lining for the Indian market.

The first dealership store was established in Hyderabad in 2010. In the same year Harley-Davidson started its 4 more Dealership outlets across the country in Delhi, Bangalore, Chandigarh, Mumbai. The company even brought its Harley Owners Group (H.O.G) to India during the same year. For each and every store the access has been given to H.O.G along with a manager to take care of the H.O.G Group. After entering the Indian market Harley-Davidson has faced the competition from BMW, Kawasaki and KTM. In the beginning of first two years the focus of Harley-Davidson was to create brand awareness among the consumers, where the company launched its famous model "Fat boy." The company confirmed its Indian strategy in line with the global strategy of introducing new models and beginning of complete Rock-bottom operations in the country. The company formed a strategic alliance with HDFC Bank. It is one of India's leading banks for a widespread range of financial services. Which help customers to realize their dream of owning a Harley brand. The company began its completely knocked-down (CKD) assembly operations at the Indian Factory in January 2011.The Strategies of Harley Davidson

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