

Mahou on a soccer high

As per a Moody's Investor Service report released earlier these years, beer volume growth is expected to be 8.8 per cent a year during 2015-18 though on a relatively small base, while spirits segment's volume growth is expected to be around 3.7 per cent a year.



It is the growth potential of the brewery business in the country that has seen the emergence of global players in the market. One amongst the major investors is Mahou San Miguel, a Spanish brewing major, which launched its first subsidiary Mahou India recently. The brand has a market share of more than a third of Spanish beer market and it entered the Indian market three years ago by picking up 50 per cent stake in Arian Breweries. Last year, it strengthened its position by acquiring the remaining stake to set up its first subsidiary and distillery outside Spain.

The company is looking to make a mark in Indian beer market by launching differentiated products. Ramita Chaudhuri, Chief Marketer, Mahou India says “At present, we have two products available in India – Mahou 5 Star and Dare Devil. **Mahou 5 Star** is a product in the premium category created to satisfy the most discerning palates and aims to offer 5 star experiences to consumers. **Dare Devil** is a product in the semi -premium category that has been small batch brewed with a 'Dare to Win attitude'.”

Mahou 5 Star and Dare Devil are currently available in nine territories – Haryana, Delhi, West Bengal, Himachal Pradesh, Rajasthan, Uttarakhand, Chandigarh, UP and Meghalaya. The brand aims at expanding its footprint in 13 states by the end of this year. Plan is to focus on needs of the consumer who is willing to pay for exceptional quality. Chaudhuri says, “Our main focus is to ensure consumer delight through the authenticity and great quality of our product – supported by attractive packaging and easy pull-off cap.”

The brand is relatively new in the Indian market and is following the philosophy of ‘launch, learn and scale’. Sharing her thoughts about what could be expected from the brand in the near future, Chaudhuri says, “Currently we are in the launch phase and are learning at each step of

doing business. We share accumulated experiences across our teams both within India and globally. This will allow us to focus on quality and getting it right by being as close to the Indian consumers as possible.”

She further adds, “We want to sustain an aggressive growth path for the next few years but by always putting quality over quantity. We do have plans, both to expand our product portfolio and for promotions of our brands and we will be implementing them soon.”

As a step in the direction of entrenching the brand well in people’s psyche it has taken the soccer route. Soccer being a popular sport in Spain, the brand has been actively involved with it back home. Following the same legacy, the brand recently concluded the first edition of 5-A-Side Football Corporate League in India. While India remains a cricket frenzy nation, they took a diversified approach towards football. Speaking on their inclination towards football, Chaudhury says, “Football is improving with India having jumped more than 20 places in the FIFA World Cup rankings. Globally, our organisation has a strong football legacy from our association with Football clubs Real Madrid & Atlético de Madrid, and we intend to use that expertise and knowledge here as well.”

With the participation from the major corporate houses like Deloitte, Aon, HDFC Bank, GENPACT, the League was a huge success and the brand aims to increase the scale and take it to other cities in the near future.

Mahou sure has intent to make beer and football a heady mix.