

News monitored for: Frito Lay - Brands

THE HINDU Business Line

Frito Lay set to increase footprint of regional brands

Looks to distribute Uncle Chipps and Cheetos nationally

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Mumbai, Aug. 20

Frito Lay India is extending the distribution of its smaller brands such as Uncle Chipps and Cheetos to make them truly 'national' with their presence. Speaking to *BusinessLine*, Mr Vidur Vyas, Head of Marketing, Pepsi Foods, said, "Both the brands are supposed to have a national presence but are currently more regional with their presence restricted to certain States. While Uncle Chipps continues to have a presence in the northern States, Cheetos is visible

more in the southern States. We are now planning to make these brands truly national with a pan-India presence."

In fact, Frito Lay acquired the Uncle Chipps brand more than a decade ago but has yet to give it a pan-India distribution. "Excluding the northern and western markets, Uncle Chipps does not have much of a presence in the other markets. However, now we are trying to give this brand a pan-India presence," added Mr Vyas.

Reaching out to one million outlets across the country with its brands, Frito Lay

would ideally also like to enhance its rural distribution with additional outlets.

PORTFOLIO TRANSFORMATION

In fact, the MNC is going through a 'portfolio transformation' creating products to suit the Indian palate with healthier options. From creating the ethnic Kurkure brand and category nearly a decade back to the more recent Aliva brand of salted snacks, which is a bridge between 'a *namkeen* and a biscuit', Frito Lays believes in innovating with healthier op-

tions to cater to the local consumers.

"We are undergoing a portfolio transformation and want to have healthier snacking options which is in line with our global strategy," said Mr Vyas. Today it has ensured that its salty snacks portfolio is 'zero trans fat' and this includes its two flagship brands of Lays and Kurkure. "We are constantly seeking opportunities of having healthier and great tasting snacks in our portfolio," added Mr Vyas. Frito also added Quaker Oats from its international portfolio in 2006.

Estimating the macro snacks category at Rs 10,000 crore with growth rates hovering in the late teens, the company believes it is the leader in the crowded salty snacks category.

"We have a leadership position in the salty snacks category and would like to strengthen this position," added Mr Vyas.

For its Kurkure brand, it has recently unleashed a new consumer connect campaign under the theme of 'Spend Time with family' with actress Juhi Chawla as the brand ambassador.