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PepsiCo adds fizz to growth plan

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Mumbai, Mar 26: To gain a competitive edge in the branded soft drinks sector, PepsiCo India is scripting a fresh growth strategy which includes extension of its distribution network, manufacturing capacity, new launches, television ads laced with gaming concepts and Web communications. For starters, the company has just rolled out a new marketing initiative called 'The Game' to connect with consumers through the electronic media. On the company's growth strategy, Punita Lal, executive director, marketing, PepsiCo India said, "We are extending our distribution routes, agents and sales persons to reach out to a wider target audience. Also, we are investing in infrastructure, manufacturing facility, brands and 'go-to-market' initiatives to pump up volumes."

To counter the rising input costs, PepsiCo has taken a price



Net gain: PepsiCo's ED (marketing) Punita Lal says there would be a sharp focus on the online medium

hike of around 14 to 16% across categories two months ago. As part of its communication strategy, the company is sharpening its focus on consumer engagement modules to interact with consumers across the country.

"Earlier, we were allocating 80% of ad spend on television advertising and 20% for other media such as print, web, outdoor and mobile communications. But now the ratio stands at 70:30," said Lal. On PepsiCo's new initia-

tive 'The Game', Lal said, "With the launch our new initiative, Pepsi has brought together gaming to TV advertising for the first time ever". 'The Game' will not only attract eyeballs owing to its entertainment value but also drive participation amongst youngsters. To announce its new launch, Pepsi has launched a 360-degree campaign. "In addition to the on-air campaign; there would be a sharp focus on the online medium including social networking sites," she added.

To gain high visibility for its brands during the IPL (3), PepsiCo has invested in ground activations, in-stadium advertising and aggressive television campaigns featuring its new ambassador Ranbir Kapoor. "To reinforce our commitment to the game and consumers, we have associated our brands such as Mountain Dew, 7up & Pepsi with Kings XI Punjab, Chennai Super Kings & Mumbai Indians team respectively," explained Lal.