

Wipro Consumer to Beef up Local Distribution

India contributes 50% to firm's total revenues and it's pushing brands that it acquired globally: CEO

Ratna.Bhushan@timesgroup.com

New Delhi: Wipro Consumer Care and Lighting, which crossed a billion dollars in revenue in FY 2017-18, will step up India-specific distribution of its globally acquired personal care brands Enchanteur and Yardley to compete head-on with Hindustan Unilever and Procter & Gamble. So far, the company has relied mainly on its Santoor soap and Safewash detergent brands in India. "India now contributes 50% to our total revenues — which is the country's highest contribution in four years. We are pushing brands we acquired globally," company chief executive Vineet Agrawal said.

Santoor, which has crossed ₹1,900 crore in sales, has a 9.4% share within soaps and is among the country's top three soap brands with HUL's Lifebuoy and Lux.

"We are looking at bigger play in lotions, home-care, fabric conditioner and dishwash liquid — these will be categories of investment. Under Enchanteur, we are looking at bigger outreach



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within deodorants, lotions, shower gels; in Santoor there will be newer categories," Agrawal said.

Wipro Consumer, with five India acquisitions and an equal number overseas over the past decade, has been more aggressive on acquisitions outside of India in the past five years.

Its buy-outs include Unza Holdings of Singapore, UK's Yardley, Singapore-based skin-care company LD Waxson and China's Zhongshan among others. The company also bought a minority stake in do-

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VINEET AGRAWAL

Chief Executive, Wipro Consumer Care & Lighting

mestic online consumer products firm Happily Unmarried Marketing for its Ustraa personal care products range.

"Fewer brands are available here, valuations are over the top and you have to look at cashflows for strategic investments. You have to be careful because you've invested so much money and can't come back and say it's not working. Acquisitions can always be questioned by the board. However, we are in talks with domestic players in the personal care space," Agrawal said. The company is now building an e-commerce team to work separately on supply chain and bringing in an international product assortment. In India, e-commerce contributes less than 1% to its sales, in comparison to 17% in China.