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Consumers Have Become Brand Agnostic To A Large Extent: Sunil Narula, Panasonic

Reema Bhaduri | Jan 27, 2025

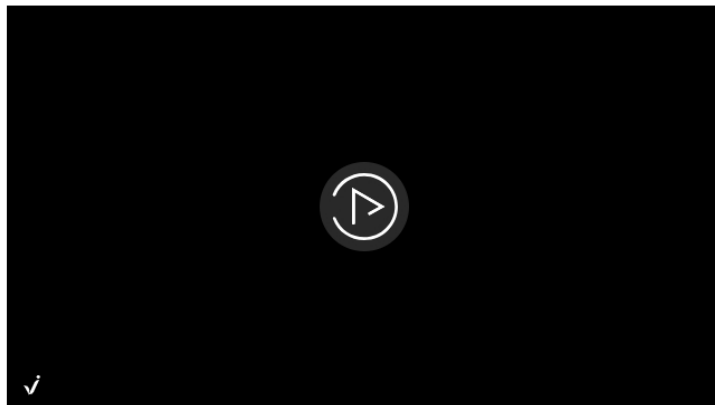
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In an exclusive conversation with BW Marketing World, Sunil Narula, Senior Vice President of Sales and Marketing at Panasonic Life Solutions India reflects on his career journey, the rising role of AI, the future of personalised messaging and more



Having spent over two decades navigating various facets of the industry, from customer support to his current role as Senior Vice President of Sales and Marketing at Panasonic Life Solutions India (PLSI), Sunil Narula offers a wealth of knowledge on the intersection of consumer behaviour, technology and strategic marketing.

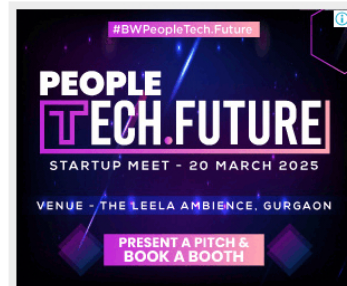
In an exclusive conversation with BW Marketing World, Narula reflected on his career journey, which has been marked by continuous learning and adaptation to market changes.



From Sales To Marketing

Narula's shift from a sales-centric role to a marketing position marked a crucial moment in his career. "I got an opportunity to go to marketing after spending about three and a half years in sales. I think that was the turning point," he recalled. He found himself drawn to the nuances of product management and consumer engagement, recognising that understanding consumer needs was vital in forming effective marketing strategies.

This foundational experience in sales continues to inform Narula's approach to marketing today. He noted, "It's very important to understand for any marketer to feel the pain of the people who are there in the field. If a marketer has really gone through that pain, he will be a much better marketer." He believes that ground-level experience is indispensable in crafting impactful



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marketer. He believes that ground-level experience is indispensable in crafting impactful marketing initiatives.

Understanding Consumer Psychology

As the marketplace continues to evolve, so does consumer psychology. Narula keenly observes these changes, particularly in purchasing behaviour during festive seasons. "Twenty years back, Diwali sales would be planned almost 45 days in advance. Now it's just the last four or five days before the festival arrives," he remarked, highlighting a significant shift in consumer buying habits.

The evolution is echoed by a decline in brand loyalty among consumers. "Consumers now are highly experimentative. They're looking at new-age brands and technology. They have become brand agnostic to a large extent," Narula explained. He warned that brands need to remain agile and responsive to this shift as the past cannot guarantee future success.

In a diverse country like India, understanding local preferences has become critical when we talk about marketing strategies. Narula elaborated on Panasonic's commitment to multilingual communication. "We deal with influencers like electricians for our brand. Our communication to them on WhatsApp is in South Indian languages," he stated. The level of localisation, including translating technical catalogues, exhibits the company's dedication to reaching consumers in meaningful, relatable ways.

Leveraging Data-driven Personalisation & AI

With digitisation, personalising marketing efforts using data has become key. Narula explained how Panasonic is harnessing this potential. "We have different tiers for our influencers. Imagine, in a single day, 200,000 messages going at a personalised level for each electrician." However, he also noted the challenges presented by the sheer volume of data mentioning, "It is increasingly getting difficult for us to mine this entire data because the numbers are going up."

To mitigate these challenges, Panasonic is investing in advanced IT solutions and systems to analyse data more effectively, thereby ensuring that their marketing strategies align with customer expectations.

As the discussion progressed, Narula emphasised Panasonic's proactive approach to incorporating advanced technologies such as AI and generative AI into their marketing toolkit. "One is that first of all we are open and we are adapting ourselves to this new technology," he affirmed. With AI's potential to streamline processes and improve customer insights, Panasonic is not merely a passive observer of this trend but an active participant in shaping its marketing future.

Prepping For The Future

Looking ahead, Narula acknowledges the challenge of connecting with younger audiences. "Their attention span is absolutely low," he stressed, highlighting the need to understand what resonates with this demographic. The cultural climate has shifted; where traditional brand loyalty once flourished, now consumers look towards trends and peer recommendations for guidance.

Narula envisions a media landscape increasingly dominated by digital channels. "It is all digital now. The lines have been blurred between digital and traditional media," he noted, implying that brands must pivot effectively to stay relevant.

Looking forward to 2025, Narula is optimistic about the Electrical and Construction Materials (ECM) industry, forecasting continued growth fuelled by investments in marketing strategies and technological innovations. "AI will play a pivotal role in improving marketing efficiencies, enabling better customer insights and personalised campaigns," he concluded, setting a clear path for brands aiming to succeed in an ever-evolving landscape.



Reema Bhaduri

BW Reporters

The author is the Editorial Lead at BW Businessworld. Majorly writes on marketing, advertising, experiential marketing and retail. She closely looks upon the vertical of BW Marketing World.

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