



Carpet Packaging: as a Tool For Branding and Enhancing Durability, Case Study: Jaipur Rugs Private limited, Jaipur

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Abstract: Packaging performs a central role as a medium in the marketing mix. It not only specifies the character of new products, but also acts as a tool to create shelf impact. Packaging showcases the level of creativity, innovation that has gone into manufacturing the product. This study is an attempt to explore and establish various options available for the packaging and branding of carpets/rugs.

A two stage research was conducted. First stage was the normative approach of conducting a focus group discussion, involving skilled and veteran artists along with participants from middle management. A structured survey, on the basis of the conclusion of the focus group discussion, was conducted among the workers doing the packaging of the end product.

The focus of the study was on identifying high quality packaging options to showcase the exclusivity of the product and enhance the durability for shipping and freight.

Keywords: Packaging, marketing mix, tufted carpets, hand woven carpets, flat weave, hand loom

I. INTRODUCTION

Carpets or rugs have been used as a decorative and functional design element and has a significant impact on the ergonomic design of the indoor environment. Man is known to be guided by the idea of “utility” in his purchases. This utility is manifested either in the form of comfort, essentials, esteem or any other appeal for him. To put it differently, man is known to invest his resources to possess anything that adds value in his life.

The carpet and rugs market is expected to grow significantly during the next five years period, as reported by Management Research Future, UK¹. The reasons have been identified as the increase in demand from the residential and non-residential sectors and the rise in the renovation activities in both the residential and non-residential infrastructures. In the regions with very cold temperatures, carpets and rugs have been known to help in maintaining the temperature of the floor and also in thermal conductivity. The marked increase in conspicuous consumption also tends to increase the use of carpets and rugs for bringing aesthetic improvements to home and office interior.

The regions expected to dominate the market is North America and Asia-Pacific. The Asia-Pacific region is projected to grow at high CAGR of 4%, due to the existence of developing nations such as India, China, Turkey, Iran where the number of unorganized manufacturers of carpets and rugs is high. The increase in purchasing power and

increase in construction and renovation activities are also driving the growth of the market.

The key players of global Carpet include Mohawk Industries, Inc. (U.S.), Taekett S.A. (France), Lowe's Companies, Inc. (U.S.), Shaw Industries Group (U.S.), Dixie Group, Inc. (U.S.), Home Depot, Inc. (U.S.), Tai Ping Carpets International Limited (China), Interface, Inc. (U.S.), Orientals Weavers Company for Carpets (Egypt), Victoria PLC (U.K.) and others.

II. CARPET INDUSTRY

Carpet Weaving is a traditional activity and has been flourishing in India since the 16th century. Carpets have been in vogue and still are considered as a prized possession. The Online etymology dictionary states that the term ‘Carpet’ comes from the old French *Carpite* or “heavy decorated cloth”.

At the peak of the Mughal period in India, the carpets got the patronage of emperors and the noblemen. The hand-knotted and weaving forms flourished and manifested themselves in varied forms. From the nobility to the homes of a common man, Rugs have made a long journey. Carpet industry is said to be the fastest growing segment in the global home textile market. According to a report by Lucintel², *the world carpet industry is expected to reach US\$ 39.1 billion by 2021 with a CAGR of 2.6 percent by value from 2016 to 2021.*

India is currently the world's largest producer and exporter of hand knotted (handmade) rugs, both in terms of value and volume. Pakistan is another major carpet exporter owing to its exquisite workmanship in its carpet manufacturing. Other prized carpets weaves come from Belgium, Iran, Turkmen, China, Afghanistan, Turkey, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Scandinavia, Spain, Serbia, Bulgaria, France and England.

III. PRODUCT PACKAGING

While making a firm's marketing plan, the most important element in consideration is the product offering. The firm offers a value proposition to the customer and this value proposition is communicated to the customer via a well structured marketing communication mix. It was Jerome McCarthy, a renowned American professor of marketing described the marketing mix in terms of four Ps. The sub-elements of marketing mix can be referred to from Table 1.³



PRODUCT	PLACE	PRICE	PROMOTION
Product design, Features, Brand Name, Models, Style, Appearance	Channels of Distribution-channel design, types of intermediaries, location of outlets, channel remuneration, dealer-principal relation, etc.	Pricing Policies, margins, discounts and rebates, terms of delivery, payments terms, credit terms and installment purchase facilities.	Personal Selling-selling expertise, size and quality of sales force.
Product Quality	Physical Distribution-Transportation, warehousing, inventory levels, order processing etc.		Advertising-Media mix, vehicles and programmes
Warranty			Sales Promotion
Package-design type, material, size, appearance, labelling			Publicity and Public Relations
Service-Pre service sale and after sale, service standard, service charge			

One of the foremost elements is offering of a product which is a means to desire satisfaction for the customer. It gains an identity, a persona of its own in the hands of the marketer and its features like the brand name, the packaging becomes the part of its personality.

The material of the package, the color, the shape, and size of the package, its finish, the labeling on it, the possibilities of reuse etc. came to be used in building the total sales appeal of the product.

IV. JUSTIFICATION OF THE STUDY

Traditionally, packaging was intended to protect from deterioration and damage en route. Product package is also an important consideration to facilitate handling at various points of distribution. With competition increasing exponentially, packaging has emerged as a prominent strategic tool to gain competitive advantage in the market. Marketers are turning to innovative packaging to establish a distinct edge. With communication technologies, virtually shrinking the world, packaging has become a strategic tool in the hands of the marketer to promote and differentiate their product offering.

This study was undertaken to bring in the element of innovativeness in the packaging process of the company.

V. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- to establish commercially viable options available for effective and attractive packaging of the carpets manufactured by Jaipur Rugs

VI. JAIPUR RUGS

Jaipur rugs was founded by social activist, Nand Kishore Chaudhary in 1978, with two looms. From the dry lands of Rajasthan he expanded to the tribal region in Gujarat in 1989. Jaipur rugs as an independent firm were launched in Jaipur in 1999. It was later converted to a private limited firm in 2006. It has given sustainable livelihood to 40,000+ artisans across 600 villages in India.

It has been rated A+++ by ICRA, due to its established track record in carpet manufacturing, established weaver network and manufacturing infrastructure supported by the extensive experience of its promoters in the sector. The firm is also known for its social initiatives. It has resources committed to providing skill training and functional literacy to over 4000 women across India. Other plans include providing access to health care to over 12000 women and children across rural India.

The type of rug weaving techniques used at Jaipur Rugs⁴

- I. Hand knotted-it takes 5- 12 months to manufacture this rug. When taken care of the rug stays in a good condition for more than 20 years. It is the most labour-intensive weaving process, conducted by specially-trained artisans. The artisan works off a rug map, and ties individual knots to build up the rug's design one row at a time. The quality of a hand-knotted rug is determined by the number of knots per square inch (KPSI). A higher KPSI requires greater skill on the part of the weaver and results in a higher-quality rug
- II. Had tufted- it takes 4-6 months to manufacture these types of rugs. Individual tufts of yarn are punched into a pre-made backing fabric with a special tufting gun. This tool hooks and pulls yarn through the backing to form loops or piles. This process is less skill involved and labor intensive than hand-knotting, so rugs can be completed in a shorter amount of time.
- III. Flat weave- Flat weave carpets are created on a loom and are often reversible, with design on both sides. They do not have thickness of knotted and tufted rugs. Flat weave rugs are lightweight and often require rug pads to stay in place. They have a long life of 20 plus years.
- IV. Hand loom- these rugs can last for anywhere between 3 to 10 years. Weavers use a loom to create these rugs by hand; different looms are used to produce different type of rugs, including felted textures, shags, naturals or solid and border rugs.

Process of Rug Packing at Jaipur Rugs:

The process of Rug Packing at Jaipur Rugs is conducted in the following process,:

1. Four bamboos are taken as central core, for support (figure 1)
2. The manufactured carpet is rolled around the bamboos.(figure 2)
3. A white transparent plastic sheet is wrapped around the carpet.
4. An adhesive tape is tied around to secure the plastic over the carpet.



5. The brand identification mark on a silken tag, is sewn below the pile. The tag carries the logo and name of the company along with the care instructions.



Figure 1. Showing the unpacked and semi-packed rugs.

Packaging options Available (images of the same can be referred from Appendix A):

1. Cardboard patchwork
2. Cylinder roll
3. Transparent Prism
4. Rectangular Cardboard
5. Rectangular wood pack
6. Panel Flap Cardboard
7. Fabric Drawstring
8. Hexagon wood pack
9. Cylinder Timber

VII. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Primary Data:

The primary Data in this report was collected through the use of personal interviews, focus groups discussion, along with Experience survey and Telephonic interview. It's consists of the number of question interviewed to the employees and designers within the company.

Secondary data;

Secondary data was collected from magazines, old reports, or company literature. Some web based resources were also used.

Case study analysis was an empirical enquiry carried out to gather the input from the workforce about the appropriateness of various packaging options available. A two stage research design adopted.

Stage 1: Focus Group discussion

Qualitative approach was chosen where informal but well planned discussion among a group of veteran artisans, craftsmen, supervisors, middle managers and designers to identify the desired features of the packaging option.

No. of participants =12.

Stage 2: Opinion survey of the workmen carrying out the packaging was conducted. The responses were sought on the conclusions drawn out of the focus group discussion.

Sample size: 30

Sampling: Non-probability, Judgmental sampling

Criteria for judgment: employees engaged in packaging and dispatch of consignments.

VIII. ANALYSIS

Stage 1:

Conclusion- following desirable factors were identified during the discussion Durability, Attractive design, environmental friendliness, weather resistance, assists in brand recall.

Stage 2: Following were the points of interpretation

IX. HEXAGON WOOD PACK WAS CONSIDERED MORE DURABLE THAN OTHER PACKAGE OPTIONS.

- I. Fabric draw strings were found to be suitable for hand woven carpets, especially if they are being sold in the local markets.
- II. Fabric Drawstrings were also considered most environmental friendly.
- III. Panel flap cardboard packing was found to be the most suitable for branding, by majority of the respondents
- IV. Rectangular wood-pack was found to be most suitable for protective storage of the product
- V. Transparent prism was found to be the most cost effective
- VI. Other suggestions include;
 - i. Setting up a bigger area to dedicate only to packaging activity so that the designing team and the packaging team could assemble together to carry the work accordingly in a fast and efficient matter.
 - ii. Jaipur rugs want to remain unique in term of products differentiation in the market since most rugs company like to keep their packaging style simple.

X. CONCLUSION

There is a strong need to innovate the process of packaging at Jaipur Rugs. Increased competition has made it mandatory that the packaging process also adds value and results in enhanced customer satisfaction. Another important issue that needs to be a constant consideration is that consumers are more concerned about environmental changes and their purchasing behavior is increasingly being affected by environmental consideration. Concern for the environment in buying patterns of consumers who prefer products that support the environment with a growing trend are visible.





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Appendix A
Carpet Packaging types

Type of packaging	
Cardboard patchwork	
Cylinder roll	
Rectangular Cardboard	
Transparent prism	
Rectangular Wood-pack	
Fabric Drawstring	
Hexagon Wood-pack	

Cylinder Timber	
Panel flap cardboard	



Appendix B

Guidelines for Focus Group Discussion Facilitator's welcome, introduction and instructions to participants

Welcome and thank you for volunteering to take part in this focus group. You have been asked to participate as your point of view is important. I realize you are busy and I appreciate your time.

Introduction: This focus group discussion is designed to assess your current thoughts and feelings about the value addition via the packaging options for packaging of rugs

Anonymity: I would like to assure you that the discussion will be anonymous. You should try to answer and comment as accurately and truthfully as possible. I and the other focus group participants would appreciate it if you would refrain from discussing the comments of other group members outside the focus group. If there are any questions or discussions that you do not wish to answer or participate in, you do not have to do so; however please try to answer and be as involved as possible.

Ground rules

- The most important rule is that only one person speaks at a time. There may be a temptation to jump in when someone is talking but please wait until they have finished.
- There are no right or wrong answers
- You do not have to speak in any particular order
- When you do have something to say, please do so. There are many of you in the group and it is important that I obtain the views of each of you
- You do not have to agree with the views of other people in the group
- Does anyone have any questions? (answers).
- OK, let's begin

Warm up

- First, I'd like everyone to introduce themselves. Can you tell us your name ?

Introductory question

I am just going to give you a couple of minutes to think about your experience of providing care to women during childbirth since the introduction of the Safe Childbirth Checklist. Is anyone happy to share his or her experience?

Guiding questions

- Do you think about the current packaging of the carpet
- What features according to your opinion is desirable in the packaging of the product?

Concluding question

- Of all the things we've discussed today, what would you say are the most important issues you would like to express about this checklist?

Conclusion

- Thank you for participating. This has been a very successful discussion
- Your opinions will be a valuable asset to the study
- We hope you have found the discussion interesting

- If there is anything you are unhappy with or wish to complain about, please contact the local PI or speak to me later
- I would like to remind you that any comments featuring in this report will be anonymous
- Before you leave, please hand in your completed personal details questionnaire

Please, write your report based on the results of the focus group. Please remember to maintain confidentiality of the participating individuals by not disclosing their names.