SUCCESS CALLS

FOCUS ON INDIA’S NORTHEAST

PRESENTED BY:

FOCUS NE
FOCUS Hi Fi
FOCUS 91.9 FM
EXCITING PROGRAMMES. EXTENSIVE VIEWERSHIP. EXPONENTIAL GROWTH.

THE FIRST GENERAL ENTERTAINMENT CHANNEL OF THE NORTH EAST STILL LEADS THE WAY!
FOREWORD

FIRST, THE GOOD NEWS.

A wareness of the North East states of India, and an increased sensitivity to their role and contribution to the national discourse is probably at an all time high according to surveys. Witness the visibility given to issues faced by communities from the region in the country’s key metros like Delhi, Mumbai or Bengaluru. This increased sensitivity is, in its own way an acknowledgement of the increasingly important role the people from the region are filling, ‘visible’ primarily in the hospitality and service industries to some as it might be.

Known for its tropical rain forests, tribal cultures, handicrafts, tea and cultural diversity, north-east India is quickly evolving with the changing times. Despite experiencing a slower pace of industrialization and socio-economic growth, the seven sisters are seamlessly emerging as a promising, new market for a lot of brands.

Comprising the states of Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland and Tripura, this region collectively accounts for about 8 per cent of the country’s geographical area and more than 4 per cent of its population.

Blessed with abundant natural resources for industrial and social development, this region has certain distinct advantages. It is strategically located with access to the traditional domestic markets of eastern India, along with proximity to the major states in the east and adjacent countries such as Bangladesh and Myanmar. The region is also a vantage entry point for the South-East Asian markets. The resource-rich north east with its expanses of fertile farmland and a young talent pool is poised to be among the country’s more prosperous regions soon.

Getting the region to meet its potential involves tackling the many challenges of growth and development like poor infrastructure and connectivity, unemployment, low economic development, law and order problems, etc. Hence, it is of paramount importance that the region, as a collective identity, embarks on a vibrant journey to realise the dreams of a better future.

This supplement hopes to build on this new interest and need to know more about the North East region among India’s media and advertising community. Starting from basic demographics to the untapped potential of this huge market, brand stories, role of media and a lot more.

AMIT TRIPATHI
National Sales Head, COO
Focus Bangla and Focus NE

SPECIAL SUPPLEMENT
## CONTENTS

### Introduction
- India Discovers its North East
- Demographics
  - North East
- Development
  - The Changing Face of North East
- What’s New - 1
  - North East India: A Brand-New Opportunity
- What’s New - 2
  - Brands Eying the North East: Amway Targets the North East
- What’s New - 3
  - A North Eastern startup: Sons of the Soil created a Pork Brand from India - Arohan Foods
- Market Composition
- North East
- Marketing
  - Upscale Brands Eying the North East Markets
- Interview
  - ARVIND R VOHRA
    - Country CEO & MD, Gionee India
  - AMIT TRIPATHI
    - National Sales Head and COO, Focus Bangla and Focus NE
- Commercial
  - North East: The Emerging Start-up Hub of India
- Conclusion
  - The Sisterhood of the North East

---

**Design:** Vinay Dominic

**Cover Design:** Arti Rohatgi

**Edited & Compiled By:** Diksha Seth & Arshita Bhardwaj
INTRODUCTION

INDIA DISCOVERS ITS NORTH EAST

Often described as the cultural mosaic of India, the northeastern region of the country consists of diverse tribal communities, linguistic and ethnic identities. The region, connected to the mainland India with the 22 k.m. long “ChickenNeck Corridor”, comprises of eight states and has international border with neighbouring countries, namely Bangladesh, Myanmar, Nepal, China, and Bhutan. The Northeast is a strategic location in the international scene, linked to South & South-East Asia. The politics of northeast India was marked by ethnicity and extremism for a long time. The strong assertion of various ethnic identities and the attitude of the state in containing ethnic extremism make the region distinct from the rest of India.

The long period of insurgencies had an obvious fallout on investments and growth in the region. However, that is set to change, with an end to many of the region’s disputes, and multiple peace agreements, the next decade could belong to the region. States like Sikkim have already blazed a successful trail, improving per capita income and other lead indicators drastically by riding on its abundant natural resources, Hydro power, in this case.

Assam too, which produces 55 per cent of India’s tea, 60 per cent of its plywood and a substantial part of its crude oil, could see a huge amount of interest as its tribal conflicts subside gradually.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi courted the region by focusing on employment generation, and creation of world-class infrastructure in the IT, power and manufacturing sectors. For students and unemployed youths in the region, who are desperate for job opportunities, Modi has struck the right chord. The promise to create BPO jobs in the Northeast area and eventually make the region an IT hub at par with Bangalore and Hyderabad is quite appealing.

The Prime ministers’s vision to harness the potential of the herbal, horticulture and agro-processing industries has also appealed to the business classes in the region. Keeping his words, Narendra Modi flagged off the first train from Mendipathar in North Garo Hills of Meghalaya to Dudhnoi in Goalpara district of Assam through remote control from Guwahati.

A slew of airports, better train connectivity, and road network enhancements are expected to change the face of this region completely in the coming decade. A few of the changes are already visible, as people in the metros of India can confirm, where quality establishments in the services sector have discovered the positives. It is time you, dear reader, opened up your mind to the opportunities too.
SUCCESS CALLS:
FOCUS ON INDIA’S NORTHEAST

NORTH EAST
Comprising of the states of Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Tripura and Sikkim.

Demographics

Population

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arunachal Pradesh</td>
<td>1,382,611</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assam</td>
<td>31,169,272</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manipur</td>
<td>2,721,756</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meghalaya</td>
<td>2,964,007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mizoram</td>
<td>1,091,014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nagaland</td>
<td>1,980,602</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tripura</td>
<td>3,671,032</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sikkim</td>
<td>610,577</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Population Density Per Sq. Km.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Density</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arunachal Pradesh</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assam</td>
<td>397</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manipur</td>
<td>122</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meghalaya</td>
<td>132</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mizoram</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nagaland</td>
<td>119</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tripura</td>
<td>350</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sikkim</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Decadal Growth Rate in %**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Decadal Growth Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arunachal Pradesh</td>
<td>25.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assam</td>
<td>16.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manipur</td>
<td>18.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meghalaya</td>
<td>27.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mizoram</td>
<td>22.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nagaland</td>
<td>-0.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tripura</td>
<td>14.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sikkim</td>
<td>12.89</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Literacy Rate in %**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Literacy Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arunachal Pradesh</td>
<td>66.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assam</td>
<td>73.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manipur</td>
<td>79.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meghalaya</td>
<td>75.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mizoram</td>
<td>91.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nagaland</td>
<td>80.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tripura</td>
<td>87.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sikkim</td>
<td>81.42</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Sex Ratio (Females per 1000 Males)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Sex Ratio</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arunachal Pradesh</td>
<td>921</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assam</td>
<td>954</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manipur</td>
<td>987</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meghalaya</td>
<td>986</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mizoram</td>
<td>975</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nagaland</td>
<td>931</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tripura</td>
<td>961</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sikkim</td>
<td>890</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Per Capita Income of North East States 2009-10 [NSDP at 2004-05 Prices]**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Per Capita Income</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arunachal</td>
<td>51,644</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assam</td>
<td>27,197</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manipur</td>
<td>28,531</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meghalaya</td>
<td>42,601</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mizoram</td>
<td>45,982</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nagaland</td>
<td>22,418</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tripura</td>
<td>35,799</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sikkim</td>
<td>48,937</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source:
The data on population, population density per square kilometer, decadal growth rate of population, literacy and sex ratio (females per 1000 males) are taken from the Census of India 2011 (provisional figures). Percentage of total population growth in a particular decade = "Decadal Growth Rate".

**North Eastern States Official Languages**

- Arunachal Pradesh: Hindi, Deori, Assamese, English
- Assam: Assamese, Bengali, Bodo
- Manipur: Meitei
- Meghalaya: Khasi, Pnar, Garo, Hindi, English
- Mizoram: Mizo, English
- Nagaland: Nagamese, English
- Tripura: Bengali, Kokborok
- Sikkim: Sikkimese, Lepcha

Source: CSO, State Domestic Product (State Series), Ministry of Statistics & Programme Implementation CSO.
For decades now, the North East has been a black-hole for business and enterprise development. There are many reasons for this, the sustained conflict, geographical isolation, militarisation and migration have led to a drying up of investments. This is prevalent despite the richness of natural resources in the region, which presents a huge opportunity for investment, and the growth of enterprise in the region.

The North East is situated in a geographically tough and vulnerable zone. Almost 98% of the North Eastern borders are international ones – connected to Bangladesh, Bhutan, China and Myanmar. Owing to this unique geo-political location a major risk associated is that of cross-border human trafficking. Moreover, in addition to this, other factors like unemployment, gender-based violence, armed conflicts, and oppressive social structures are also holding back the region from developing.

Also, places like Manipur, Assam, Nagaland and Tripura have been suffering from ethnic violence for decades. This sustained violence has led to a lack of opportunities for people residing in this area to exercise their entrepreneurial spirit.

The green verdant mountains of the North East conceal a rich culture of art and handicrafts passed on from generation to generation. All the eight states stand out individually, not only in terms of geographical distance, but also in cultural diversity. In addition, the markets in each state differ considerably - right from consumption patterns to the kinds of goods and services produced by a particular region. The seasonal variations and demand fluctuations also determine the activities people are engaged with. Depending on these different factors, people of NE work in areas of art and crafts, agriculture or tourism.

**Methods for Energising the ecosystem**

With the increasing intensity of emergency in the North East, there is a deep need to devise and strategise long-term, sustainable solutions for the region. A large part of this state of emergence arises from the economic need, and hence the solution also lies in the economic (and social)
The government will have to make a smooth way for an ecosystem where business practices can occur smoothly and without any hassle. Despite several attempts by the Government and Planning Commission to propel the local development, the current strategy has led to a politically-led distribution-oriented economic process and not the efficiency-led process as was envisioned. This has further resulted in natural resources and savings moving away from the region. Adding to the issue is the dependence on the Central Government for both funds and employment which has led to a passive attitude towards development. The onus of economic growth should be shifted to the local government agencies to develop a sense of ownership over economic activities.

Also, business and social entrepreneurs should be encouraged to take the lead in building enterprises, which involves the local community. For the self-sustained growth of the region, there needs to be a thriving entrepreneurial ecosystem which is able to take business strategies, contextualise them as per the local needs, and create systems of demand and supply for the area.

The North East market comes with its own set of challenges. With cheap Chinese imports having flooded the market, coupled with a lack of demand for local products, local artisans are slowly losing ground. For instance, a local woman would buy a shawl from an artisan only once and this will last her for a whole lifetime. Therefore, there is no steady need for local handicrafts in this region.

Thus, these products, emerging from a tradition of arts and crafts, have less value within the region vis-a-vis rest of the country and for that matter, the world. In order to allow local entrepreneurs to reach such emerging markets, there needs to be a significant drive towards the development of a relationship between the rest of the country and people from the North East region. Such a relationship will not only lead to the creation of a dependable marketplace for local artisans and entrepreneurs but will also help in creating employment opportunities among the masses of this region.

The Efforts are ongoing

With the emergence of such a healthy and self sustainable ecosystem, several things can be achieved – not only will it compel the migrating population to contribute their skills to the development of the region but also reduce instances of human trafficking. Several efforts are being made, which are already prepping the region for full scale development. One of them is the Impulse Social Enterprise. Founded by Hasina Kharbhih, its socially focused business practices help in developing rural livelihoods and the capacities of their partners, and strive to fulfill the socio-economic market needs of communities and stakeholders.
Following the same path the work of Pranjal Baruah and Rakhee Choudhary are other examples to look up to. Pranjal’s Mushroom Development Foundation works closely in Assam with mushroom farmers, putting them in control of their produce via his land-to-lab strategies, training and support, thereby creating ‘mushroom entrepreneurs.’ Pranjal is not only creating livelihood opportunities for thousands of unemployed youth and landless farmers in Assam, but is also developing a whole new market for mushroom consumption.

Similarly, Rakhee works closely with Assamese women and is trying to revitalising the weaving industry in the region. With weaving being the second largest economic activity in Assam, she organises women weavers into cooperatives and connects them directly to the market. Rakhee builds entrepreneurial skills in these women, and encourages them to deliver quality products into the market. The weaver entrepreneurs she has trained then in turn train others, thus creating groups of women entrepreneurs across the region. She also advances an industry that has great cultural significance for the people of the North East.

These are only some of the examples of several such market-oriented initiatives being carried out in this region. The current need is to weigh these business models and see how they can be made relevant for all the eight states of the North East. By bringing together all the stakeholders and evolving a comprehensive road map for the way ahead for development, the North East can become a new hub for social enterprise in the country.

We reach North East like no other
NORTH EAST INDIA: A Brand-New Opportunity

Each of our Prime Ministers has reiterated the country’s commitment to take the Look East Policy forward, but nothing major was achieved in view of strategic and logistical problems emanating insurgent groups operating on both sides of the border. Today, the situation on the insurgency has been eased but “caution” remains the mantra.

North East can be rejuvenated by making the region a focal point for growth. Amid numerous misgivings about the existing norms in the region, what is reassuring is the concern among regional and national authorities about the future of the region and the alienation of its people.

Japan to re-enter Northeast India 69 years post World War-II

Japan is probably the first foreign country to be allowed to invest in the NER (North East Region). The last time Japan was in India’s North East was during the World War II. Besides committing to strengthen the defence and strategic ties, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Japan’s PM Shinzo Abe have also agreed to cooperate in the development of North East in the field of connectivity and socio-economic needs. The fact-sheet on India-Japan projects highlighted Japan’s help for road connectivity, water supply projects in the sensitive areas and forest resources.
SUCCESS CALLS:
FOCUS ON INDIA’S NORTHEAST

NORTH-EAST

Market Composition

ANALOG  DTH  DIGITAL

60.3%  36.5%  3.2%

The high penetration of the DTH platform is a result of low density regions and a lack of infrastructure supporting analog and digital cable setups.

Source: Chrome Dii

DTH MARKET SHARE

Dish TV  Tata Sky  Others

Focus NE and Focus Hi Fi are the first C&S news and GEC of the North East.

Focus Ooh La La is the only FM Channel in Agartala (Tripura) and Itanagar (Arunachal).

Source: Chrome SES

There are 16 North-East-specific channels, including 3 channels broadcasting from neighbouring countries including Bhutan, Nepal and Bangladesh.

Source: Chrome NE

FOCUS’S OUTREACH

Focus Hi Fi  Focus NE

92%  97%

Based on availability of channels.

NORTH EAST REGIONAL CHANNELS ON DTH

- Dish TV carries 8 North-East regional channels.
- Tata Sky carries 9 North-East regional channels.
- Airtel TV carries 10 North-East regional channels.

Source: Chrome Track 2.0

Nepal One, News Live and Rang TV have an outreach of 65%.

Source: Chrome NE

Given a significant population of Bengali individuals residing in the North-East region, channels such as Zee Bangla and Star Jalsha have an outreach of 78% and 57% respectively.

Source: Chrome NE
# North-East at a Glance

## Households

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Rural</th>
<th>Urban</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arunachal Pradesh</td>
<td>261,614</td>
<td>107,624</td>
<td>154,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assam</td>
<td>6,367,295</td>
<td>1,751,229</td>
<td>4,616,066</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manipur</td>
<td>507,152</td>
<td>240,325</td>
<td>266,827</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meghalaya</td>
<td>538,299</td>
<td>181,191</td>
<td>357,108</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mizoram</td>
<td>221,077</td>
<td>121,725</td>
<td>99,352</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nagaland</td>
<td>399,965</td>
<td>151,670</td>
<td>248,295</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tripura</td>
<td>842,781</td>
<td>377,988</td>
<td>464,793</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sikkim</td>
<td>128,131</td>
<td>70,100</td>
<td>58,031</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Television

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Rural</th>
<th>Urban</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arunachal Pradesh</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assam</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manipur</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meghalaya</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mizoram</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nagaland</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tripura</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sikkim</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Stats based on Census 2011
SUCCESS CALLS: FOCUS ON INDIA’S NORTHEAST

MARKETING

UPSCALE BRANDS EYING THE NORTH EAST MARKETS

Apparel brands, jewellery chains and retailers are all sprinting towards the North East, some with the aim of opening their first stores, and some for expanding their presence.

Known for its tribal cultures and handicrafts, North East India is the next big thing on the list of many marketers. The states of Assam, Tripura and Manipur have shown a significant increase in demand and thus have attracted a number of luxury labels. Apparel brands, jewellery chains and retailers are all sprinting towards the North East, some with the aim of opening their first stores, and some for expanding their presence.

Brands like Louis Philippe from Madura Garments test marketed their range in the north-east a few years ago. The results were so appealing that many brands have undertaken expansion in these pockets. Tanishq, the jewellery brand from the Tata-owned Titan Industries Ltd, has two stores in Guwahati and Agartala and is planning to open three more stores very soon.

Often referred to as the ‘fashion capitals’ of the country, North East states are turning out to be important markets for many marketers. A brand-conscious and fashion-forward market, North East India is the future growth market. Rising income levels and purchasing power in the urban areas of north-east are making consumers demand more and more premium and branded products.

Rapid economic growth in these regions in the past few years has increased the purchasing power of consumers. Many high end apparel brands have been receiving queries from cities such as Shillong, Guwahati and Siliguri. The north-east comprises of the states of Arunachal Prades, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Sikkim and Tripura. Rapid economic growth in these regions in the past few years has increased the purchasing power of consumers and hence led to sudden increase of demand for premium products from these regions.

As per the Planning Commission figures, while the average rate of growth in gross state domestic product (GSDP), a measure of state-wise economic output, was 6.88% in 2011-12, some north-eastern states grew faster. Assam’s economy grew by 8.42%, Tripura’s by 8.87% and Meghalaya’s by 9.54%.

The willingness to upgrade and experiment is another reason driving demand in these regions. Titan Industries clocked sales of Rs.100 crore in the region in 2012, up from Rs.12-13 crore five years ago. The management here describes a north-east consumer to be the one who likes to flaunt brands.

A phenomenon adopted by many brands recently is that of making inroads into
ITANAGAR AND AGARTALA
DANCE ONLY TO OUR TUNE!

THE ONLY RADIO CHANNEL IN THE REGION
REACHING LAKHS OF CONSUMERS EXCLUSIVELY.
the region to tap consumers. They are targeting the unsaturated markets, the new sources of revenue, after establishing themselves in the big cities.

One of the categories doing really well in these markets is personal care. According to a research conducted by Nielsen, north-east accounts for 3.8% of India’s personal care market, in terms of value, but is growing at a yearly pace of 22%, 3 percentage points higher than the national average. It is a big make-up market and some pockets reflect consumption patterns similar to that of high-income segments of the metros. Consumer behavior in these states and the level of awareness is at par to that of in the big cities. The North East consumer is highly evolved and her awareness levels on beauty care are particularly high.

Not only this, India’s North East is also quietly becoming one of the fastest-growing markets for online shopping with an increasing number of youngsters from the region logging on to buy mobiles, accessories and much more. Portals such as Myntra, Jabong, Flipkart and Snapdeal are witnessing good traction from the region. The new age north-east consumer is fashion conscious, tech savvy and online shopping gives her an option to access the best brands at affordable prices with the convenience of shopping from anywhere. The North Eastern states of Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland and Tripura, generate about 8 per cent of traffic and business for Myntra and the company expects further growth in the coming quarters.

For Snapdeal, the percentage of contribution from the region to the company’s overall business is in double digits and is one of the fastest-growing markets in the country. The eyewear shopping portal, Lenskart has witnessed good traction for its products from the region. With fashionable eyecare products in much demand, about 20 per cent of their overall business comes from the North East plus West Bengal. For Myntra, Guwahati and Aizawl in Mizoram are the two key markets, and there has been a steady increase in the number of online shoppers from Dibrugarh, Jorhat, Sibsagar and Tinsukia, in Assam.

Brands like Puma, Nike, Adidas, Wildcraft, Duke, Lee, Levis, Clarks are some of the preferred brands of shoppers in these regions. The north-east India has already emerged as one of the fastest growing markets in the country and is ready for the next phase of expansion for many brands.
BRANDS EYING THE NORTH EAST: Amway Targets the North East

North Eastern states, did not really feature in the expansion plans of many big retailers till some time ago. There could be many reasons for the same like lack of information, etc. making retailers hesitant and uncertain to make inroads into the NER.

Amway is focusing on Northeast

Latest to join the brand wagon in NE is the skincare brand Amway. The brand is planning to cash in on the evolving skincare market in the smaller towns of the Northeast.

In October 2014, the company launched an intensive skincare anti-wrinkle firming serum in Guwahati and Imphal. The company had opened a brand experience centre (in March 2014) at Imphal, the second in the Northeast. Artistry is among the leading brands in the super premium segment of skincare and has contributed almost 6 per cent of Amway India’s turnover (INR 2,169 crore) in the year 2013-14.

In Amway’s beauty market, Guwahati ranks among the top 10 cities in India. The NER 30 per cent to the direct selling FMCG major’s beauty business in the eastern zone.

Artistry from Amway is available in the non-metros of the country. About 40 per cent of the brand’s sales come from the tier-two and tier-three cities, which is an indicator of its acceptability.
“North East is a very important market and we expect it will contribute a major share to our business.”

ARVIND R VOHRA
COUNTRY CEO & MD
GIONEE INDIA

What is your view on India’s North East markets? Over the years, what is your view on the evolution of these markets. Have they kept pace with other markets in the country or lagged/outpaced them?

The North East market has evolved and developed over the years and it has gone on to become one of the most important regions for the smartphone market. North East is one of the fastest growing markets with an increasing number of youngsters adapting to the internet thereby increasing smartphone usage. The market has been growing at a steady pace and definitely holds a lot of potential in the near future. This is also known as the style capital of the country.

Does your marketing strategy differ when approaching markets in the region vis a vis other markets in the country?

India is a strategic market for us and we are working on building the brand Gionee after already achieving high recall. North East is a very important market and we expect it will contribute a major share to our business. Similarly the other regions like the South and North are also important and Gionee has been received well by the audience in every region. While our product offering and campaigns remain the same across major regions, various consumer engaging activations, PR and digital promotions are amplified region wise.
Is there a typical NE consumer (behaviors and preferences)?

The North East crowd is very simple yet very stylish. The youngsters are fashion conscious and tech savvy and they are well informed about all the nitty gritty’s of the smartphones available today. The taste of fashion is pretty refined and the consumer is experimental and ready to try fresh arrivals.

Media spends on promotions on different media. What works for you?

Digital has evolved to become one of the most sought after mediums in recent years. With more users adopting to the internet specially the urban crowd who like being connected on the go, the digital medium has become crucial for businesses. Gionee’s target audience is also the youth who is tech savvy and active on social networking sites. With this in mind, digital is of prime importance and we are trying to use the medium effectively by spending on the digital front to maximize brand exposure.

Which are the biggest product categories in the North East? What drives sales? Communication or the demand?

As I mentioned earlier, this market is different from any other geography wrt style. ASP & technology, music & camera as a category dominates in the gadgets category here. Brand awareness and communication is very important backed with strong technology and foam factor for you to dominate in the region.

What are your future plans for these markets?

Understanding the importance of the North East market, Gionee has been gradually building its presence in this region and is trying to build a resonance with the crowd. Following the passions of the youth in this region, Gionee recently partnered with North Eastern Football Club Shillong Lajong for the I League to promote the sport as well as make a connect with the north eastern people. Similarly, Gionee will also devise further strategies to build a relationship with the North Eastern market.

Do you follow a different distribution model for the region?

We follow a similar strategy for our distribution PAN India. Gionee has its distribution network well sorted and we only sell through our retail and channel partners. We have five main distributors located in North East, Punjab, Rajasthan, West Bengal, and the South (Hyderabad/ Bangalore/Chennai). They work with us as our partners and have the entire responsibility of leading their respective areas. This move is especially to make them feel as part of the team which would drive them to deliver the best results.
SUCCESS CALLS: FOCUS ON INDIA’S NORTHEAST

IN-CONVERSATION

“North East is one of the most interesting regions of the country.”

AMIT TRIPATHI

NATIONAL SALES HEAD, COO
FOCUS BANGLA AND FOCUS NE

Amit Tripathi, is the COO for Focus NE and Focus Bangla. Besides, he is also the national sales head of the overall network. Focus TV Group broadcasts six television channels across India - Focus News (Hindi), Focus Haryana and regional channels that broadcast in Oriya, Bangla, Assamese and an entertainment channel in the North East called Focus Hi Fi. Focus Ooh La La is the only FM Channel in Agartala (Tripura) and Itanagar (Arunachal).

Why North East?

North East is one of the most interesting regions of the country comprising of eight states. These regions have decent purchasing power despite accessibility issues. We have a huge presence in the region with our two channel Focus NE and Focus Hi Fi, two radio stations in Agartala and Itanagar with the name of OOH La La. The size of the TV market in North East is sizeable and growing every year with more and more advertisers showing interest.

Over the years, what has made NE an attractive market for you?

Over the years North East market is gaining importance in the eyes of many clients. This region is slowly becoming an important experimental market for new product launches. This region offers a very interesting mix of customers who are always ready to experiment making North East attractive for many marketers.

How does your marketing strategies differ when approaching NE versus any other city, especially in terms of content?

North East consist of Seven Sister States of Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Tripura and the Himalayan state of Sikkim! The common mistake which many make is to consider them as one homogenous unit,
which is totally wrong as all these states differ in terms of socio-economic aspects and language.

We are the only broadcaster in the region who has a decent presence in all these states and hence the challenge is to maintain the interest of all of them. This largely affects our choice of content that goes out to all these eight states.

How do you map your reach in the region, given the limitations/constrains in the NER?

The biggest problem in North East market is that Guwahati is the only TAM town. With limited representation of the market, we map out our reach on the basis of connectivity in the region and since we are the only broadcasters who are available in all the states, we have maximum reach in the region. As per the initial reports, BARC is taking 5 markets of the North East which will help us in mapping reach.

What are your spends on promotions on different media to promote your channel?

Though we are the biggest player in market in terms of presence but sometimes we use radio and print for tactical campaigns and activations.

How would you describe your channel’s journey till now?

So far, in a very short period of time we have established ourselves very well in the North East region. With our GEC ‘Focus Hi Fi’ amongst the top 2 GECs in the region and ‘Focus NE’ as the only news channel present across North East market, we are the most significant player in the market. Focus Ooh La La is the only FM Channel in Agartala (Tripura) and Itanagar (Arunachal).

This region offers a very interesting mix of customers who are always ready to experiment making North East attractive for many marketers.

We reach North East like no other

FOCUS NE  FOCUS Hi Fi  FOCUS 91.9 FM Ooh La La
BOOK YOUR ADS IN GOAFEAST SHOW-DAILY

April 9-11, 2015
Grand Hyatt, Bambolim
NORTHEAST: THE EMERGING START-UP HUB OF INDIA

Endowed with a plethora of untapped natural resources, NER has got the potential to transform itself into a ‘commercial hub of India’.

Home to more than 45 million people (3.76 per cent of India’s total population) with a high literacy level, India’s North East Region (NER) has been acknowledged as the ‘Eastern Gateway’ for the Government’s ‘Look East Policy’. The region has recorded an annual economic growth rate in excess of 8 per cent during the last decade. But the big question still looms - Where does NER stand in the entrepreneurial activity? However, the bitter reality is that the region still lacks entrepreneurism and provides a weak start-up ecosystem for small businesses to flourish.

As per the recent reports by International Finance Corporation report ‘The Seven Sisters’ of North East (Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland and Tripura) and one brother state Sikkim, collectively have nearly 2 lakh MSMEs, which account for less than 2 per cent of the country’s total MSMEs.

Albeit, these industrial units face many constraints such as land acquisition, less availability of power, logistics, transport, skilled labour, adequate marketing initiatives and issues in taxation. Unless the government address these structural issues, North East may not be able to sustain the robust growth in future.

On the brighter side, economic growth in North East region in the recent times has been quiet impressive with a total of 2.39 per cent contribution towards India’s total GDP in 2011-12. A significant expansion in the services sector has helped in the sustenance of such a high growth in the GDP. Manufacturing in the North East is currently being dominated by SMEs owing to the absence of large-scale industries in the area.

Endowed with a plethora of untapped natural resources (crude oil, tea gardens, natural gas, bamboo, silk, etc.) NER has got the potential to transform itself into a ‘commercial hub of India’ and a tourist paradise. Therefore, it is important for the government to mobilise the SMEs in North East to channelise their resources for economic development of the region.
What Holds the North East Back?

**Infrastructure:** Despite the immense potential for SMEs/MSMEs in the North East, the region has somehow remained underdeveloped. One of the main deterrents in the growth has been the poor infrastructure and limited connectivity of the region with the rest of the country.

**Lack of awareness:** There is lack of awareness among the people in NER about the various government schemes. The availability of funds and motivation are some of the main constrains in the growth of MSMEs. While dealing with these issues, lack of power continues to be a major bottleneck.

**Unemployment and real estate:** Lack of skilled labor, land prices and high unemployment rate are other major hurdles in the region. Being the largest state in NER, Assam alone has 2.2 million unemployed youth.

**Financial aid to SMEs:** Despite many financial schemes, access to adequate credit is a major problem faced by SMEs in NER. Owing to weak capital base, SMEs have to majorly rely on the borrowed funds.

However, the trend, seems to be changing now. The Private Equity firms are opening up to the SMSs in NER gradually but they have a long way to go as compared to other cities of India. Also, in order to encourage private investors the government should offer more rebates, plan schemes and build better infrastructure. Institutions like Assam Gramin Vikash Bank and North Eastern Development Finance Corporation (NEDFi) help MSMEs by offering financial assistance, loan facilities and special schemes for Women Enterprise Development (WEDS) in the region.

Future Prospects & Government Initiatives

In the last decade, SME’s have scaled up successfully in their business activities and demonstrated impressive growth. Many young people are setting up their businesses in the regions. New growth opportunities along with the increased purchasing power and consumerism is now driving the growth story in this area.

The government of Assam has identified the state’s resources and is planning to set up SMEs matching to the skills, resources and opportunities available in the area.

In addition, it is equally important to create opportunities for promoting women entrepreneurship. Government is trying to encourage bankers and other institutes to be gender sensitive so that women are encouraged to set up SMEs in the region.

To sum up, MSMs/SMEs will play a critical role in the development of the region and can also help in generating employment for the educated youth residing in the region.
There is no denying that North East India is a beautiful place. Anyone who has visited the seven sisters, will swear by its beauty. Although the long history of unrest in the region has always stymied the growth in the area. Till now even big brands which are usually looking for opportunities to expand, have shied away from North East.

**Sons of the soil**

Adaman to make a difference, Arohan Foods was founded by Arindom Hazarika, Anabil Goswami and Ranapratap Brahma. These three were amongst the lucky lot of the population from North East who had good jobs, unlike a majority who still struggle to get enough employment opportunities in the region. However, these three decided to leave it all behind and comeback to the region and make a difference to their place of birth.

Arohan Foods is one of the few well-known startups from Northeast India. It is India’s first pork integrator and claims to be pioneers of organized pork production in India. It currently produces 10 SKUs of the product in different flavours of sausages and salami.

**What keeps the Arohan team going**

What keeps the team going, is the simple motivation that they are making a difference and help in generating employment for people in the region.
The year 2014 marked a remarkable change in the perception among the people of northeast India. The residents of the region unanimously urged for peace and developments from the concerned authorities. They even extended their wholehearted support to the initiatives that looked promising. In the first half of the year, we witnessed how Mr. Narendra Modi’s campaign helped the Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) in the Lok Sabha polls to make its position better in the region.

In order to be economically and socially sustainable, India’s growth story should be inclusive. However, the country’s north east region has been experiencing a comparatively slower pace of socio-economic growth. Albeit, the region is blessed with abundant natural resources which can provide enough impetus to industrial and social development, they have not yet been utilised to their full potential.

This region has certain distinct advantages over other areas. It is strategically located with access to the domestic market of eastern India, along with proximity to adjacent neighboring countries such as Bangladesh and Myanmar. It is also a vantage point of entry for the South-East Asian markets. This resource-rich land with expanses of fertile farmland and a huge pool of talent could turn into one of country’s most prosperous regions. However, owing to its unique challenges, the conventional market-based solutions might not work here. Issues like poor infrastructure and connectivity, unemployment and law and order problems etc. have always acted as a deterrent.

As multiple avenues for growth and development are emerging, it has become essential that the region, as a collective identity, embarks its journey to realise the dreams of a better future. This vision can be realised only with the combined efforts of all the stakeholders - both private investors and government. This year while attending the 19th Youth Festival, Union Minister of State for Information and Broadcasting, Rajyavardhan Singh Rathore said that the “Prime minister not only wants to look east but he wishes to ‘act East’ as well. Therefore, ministers are being asked to visit Northeast India frequently.” It finally seems that the NE is coming out of oblivion and the sun is shining bright with a promise of better opportunities for the region.
WELL KNOWN. WELL DISTRIBUTED. WELL AHEAD OF ITS TIME.

THE PIONEERING C&S CHANNEL OF THE NORTH EAST.
We reach North East like no other

sales@f7broadcast.com