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Dhanda Digital Marketers

Building and Scaling Brands in a Digital-First Economy

How Mahek Walia and Anshika Sharma built a zero-investment digital agency grounded in credibility and execution

Anjali Sharma | *The CEO Magazine*

Building a services business without external capital places immediate pressure on credibility, delivery, and decision-making. For young founders, every client interaction becomes a test of competence, consistency, and long-term intent. This reality shaped the journey of Mahek Walia and Anshika Sharma. What began during their college years as an exploration of branding and digital work evolved into a zero-investment venture built through hands-on execution and continuous learning. In 2021, they formalised this effort with the launch of DDM (Dhanda Digital Marketers), a full-service digital marketing agency focused on building and scaling brands in a digital-first economy.

From Idea to Intent

Mahek and Anshika are Economics graduates from Delhi University, a phase that shaped their analytical thinking and entrepreneurial outlook. In 2019, during their college years, the idea for what would later become DDM emerged, sparked by a TEDx talk that deepened their interest in branding, digital influence, and storytelling in the modern economy.

Alongside their studies, both gained early exposure to the digital business ecosystem through internships. Rather than pursuing conventional career paths, they chose to build something of their own, driven by purpose, ownership, and long-term impact. Coming from business-oriented backgrounds, they were familiar with the realities of building and sustaining enterprises.

As they engaged more closely with the startup ecosystem, a clear gap became evident: early-stage brands struggled to access quality marketing support due to high agency costs. DDM was envisioned as



Mahek Walia

Co-Founder, Dhanda Digital Marketers (DDM)

a response, designed to deliver performance-driven marketing while remaining accessible to startups. Building the venture as a zero-investment initiative reinforced a focus on skill, credibility, and results over capital.

The early phase brought challenges around credibility, particularly as young women founders. These were addressed through persistence, continuous upskilling, and hands-on execution, with multiple courses

completed alongside client work to stay aligned with industry shifts. Rather than allowing stereotypes or judgment to define their journey, they focused on ethical practices, consistent delivery, and long-term client relationships – shaping a leadership approach rooted in competence, confidence, and authenticity.

In 2021, with growing clarity and market demand, they formally registered DDM and committed fully to scaling the business. From the outset, their intent was to build an agency guided by integrity, quality, and sustainable growth, supported by an inclusive culture with strong representation of women professionals.

A Full-Stack Growth Partner

DDM operates at the intersection of creativity, strategy, and performance, addressing the evolving needs of startups and growth-stage businesses. The agency helps brands establish strong digital foundations and scale sustainably in an increasingly crowded marketplace.

It offers end-to-end digital solutions under one roof, spanning brand creation and positioning, logo and website development, content and social media strategy, performance-led marketing, and visual storytelling through photography and videography. Positioned as a long-term growth partner rather than a transactional service provider, DDM ensures consistency across digital touchpoints while driving measurable business outcomes.

The agency has worked across industries including startups, interior design, real estate, fashion and clothing, and FMCG. While headquartered in India, DDM serves a growing international client base across Dubai, Berlin, and Canada, alongside a strong domestic presence.

Startups value the agency's understanding of early-stage constraints, its agile and collaborative approach, cost-effective yet high-impact solutions, founder-level involvement, flexibility in execution, and partnership-led mindset.

DDM is supported by a multidisciplinary team of strategists, marketers, designers, and creators, anchored by a core leadership group. Vijay Singh Chauhan oversees overall management and performance marketing, Khushi Sabbarwal leads social media strategy and execution, and Zaina Asad heads design with a focus on brand aesthetics and visual storytelling. The team continues to build brands by staying aligned with platform trends, consumer behaviour, and emerging technologies.



Anshika Sharma

Co-Founder, Dhanda Digital Marketers (DDM)

The Credibility Shift

Like many women leaders in entrepreneurial spaces, Mahek and Anshika encountered challenges that were both cultural and professional. In the early stages, credibility was often questioned, including instances where prospective clients asked to speak to the "sir" of the company. Rather than allowing such moments to define their journey, the founders adopted a results-driven approach focused on consistency, delivery, and outcomes. Over time, their strategic clarity, subject-matter expertise, and hands-on leadership helped shift perceptions and establish credibility.

Operating as a zero-investment venture added further complexity, requiring disciplined decision-making and resilience. To counter this, the founders invested heavily in continuous upskilling and staying current with industry trends, ensuring competence remained their strongest currency. What initially appeared as barriers gradually became sources of strength.

As the business environment evolved, particularly in the post-pandemic period, their leadership philosophy

matured from execution-focused involvement to a balanced emphasis on strategy, adaptability, and continuous learning. They view technologies such as artificial intelligence not as disruption, but as enablers that enhance creativity, efficiency, and decision-making when applied thoughtfully.

This mindset of remaining proactive in a fast-changing landscape has become central to how they lead teams, design strategies, and build long-term value. Today, the organisation reflects a culture that prioritises merit over hierarchy and capability over labels, grounded in credibility earned through performance and purpose.

What Sets DDM Apart

In a crowded agency landscape, DDM differentiates itself through a set of non-negotiable values that guide both client engagements and internal decisions. For Mahek and Anshika, growth is meaningful only when rooted in integrity, trust, and long-term value creation.

A defining principle of the agency is its refusal to promote brands solely for commercial gain. Despite opportunities across categories such as finance, skincare, and consumer goods, DDM works only with brands it genuinely believes in, evaluating every collaboration on whether the product or service delivers real consumer value. This standard remains non-negotiable.

Equally central to DDM's differentiation is its people-first culture. The founders foster a flexible, trust-driven environment that prioritises ownership, accountability, and well-being. Accountability also extends to client relationships. Any error or dissatisfaction, even at a minimal level, is met with full ownership and compensated through extended services beyond the original scope. As a women-led enterprise, DDM's distinction lies not in symbolism, but in the consistent practice of these values.

Talent and Culture

DDM's approach to talent prioritises mindset over résumé. Dedication to growth, ownership, and loyalty are valued over formal credentials, based on the belief that skills can be taught, but intent and integrity cannot.

The agency actively creates opportunities for freshers and early-career professionals through structured exposure, mentorship, and hands-on learning. Leadership development is tied to trust and responsibility, with team members encouraged to take ownership early and learn through execution.

Retention is viewed as a natural outcome of shared progress. Team members grow alongside the organisation, professionally, creatively, and personally, resulting in a culture where success is collective and long-term commitment is recognised and rewarded.

Staying Ahead of the Curve

DDM remains future-ready by actively using the same AI, creative, performance, analytics, and automation tools employed by leading Indian digital agencies. These include AI-driven platforms for content ideation and strategy planning, collaborative design and creative suites, advanced performance marketing and analytics tools, social media management platforms, and automation and CRM systems supporting growth operations.

Beyond tools, the agency stays current through certifications, beta testing, platform updates, and hands-on experimentation. This ensures clients benefit from a modern marketing stack, deep execution capability, and a continuously evolving growth mindset aligned with industry best practices.

The Vision for 2026

For Mahek Walia and Anshika Sharma, success in 2026 is defined by credibility, impact, and the ability to build an enduring organisation. Key milestones include building DDM from their homes in Kanpur and Delhi, transitioning into a shared rented space in Delhi, and scaling operations in 2022 with a dedicated office in Gurugram.

The agency has since developed a strong core leadership group, partnered with companies generating over ₹100 crore in annual revenues, delivered for international brands, and built cross-industry credibility across fashion, interior design, real estate, education, FMCG, and allied sectors. Growth has been driven largely through referrals, repeat engagements, and long-term relationships rather than aggressive outbound selling.

Equally integral to this journey has been family support. Mahek draws inspiration from her parents, Vicky and Rashmi Walia. Anshika's journey is rooted in the memory of her late father, Arun Sharma, and carried forward by the unwavering support of her mother, Kalpana Sharma, and her aunt, Rita Sharma. Looking ahead, success represents a stage where DDM is widely respected for its ethics, quality of work, and people-first culture—an organisation founders, teams, and families are proud of.