

# Don makes a 'fair' deal...

...but will Emami get a 'handsome' return?

**'H**i handsome! Some years ago this tag was for those tall & dark macho men. But no more! As the 'to look fair' fever grips the desi market, fairness is no longer exclusive to the eyes of the country. Indian males are now being viewed as a fair game in the Rs.800

crore fairness creams market. And the Rs.600 crore Emami Group is considered to be a pioneer in the men's fairness cream market. The company unleashed 'Fair And Handsome', the men's fairness cream in 2005. The cream was a runaway success doing business of Rs.27 crores in the very first year itself. Even after big daddy HLL launched the Fair & Lovely Menz Active, Fair And Handsome continued to rule the market with business of Rs.40 crores in 2006. Clearly first mover's advantage did wonders for the Emami Group. But now with players like Nivea too jumping into the fray, Emami has roped in king of Bollywood, Shahrukh Khan to take on the threat from competition. In a candid interview with 4Ps B&M, Mohan Goenka, Director, Emami Group,

talks about the company's marketing and advertising plans with the Bollywood badshah.

**Excerpts from the interview:**

**Do you think Shahrukh Khan can promote a fairness cream like Fair And Handsome?**

Our internal research showed that we need a strong brand ambassador to promote the men's cream. And when it comes to looking beautiful and fair, the man has to be from Bollywood. Specially, if you want to inject fairness, with looking handsome, it has to be said by someone like Shahrukh who has a mass appeal as a fashion icon.



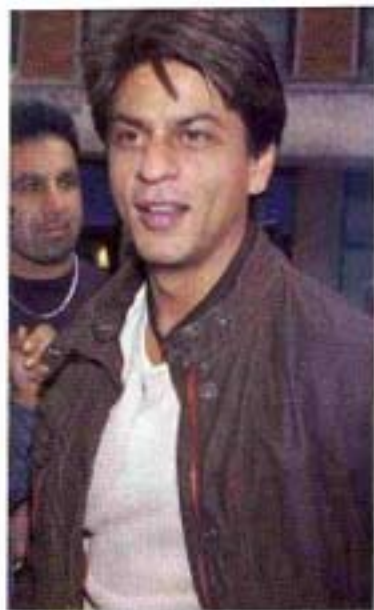
**Is the factor 'tall, dark & handsome' a major bottleneck to sell men's fairness cream?**

No, not necessarily. Two years back, when we started, people said that men's fairness cream won't work here. But what they didn't know was, there was an inherent need for fairness among men. Tall, dark & handsome is applicable in foreign countries, in India the scenario is still dominated by fairness. So the demand was there and we addressed it through right strategies.

**"Coming in of so many fairness brands implies that there's going to be healthy competition & men's fairness cream is going to be a more organised market"**



Mohan Goenka, Director, Emami Group



**What was the pricing strategy behind 'Fair And Handsome'?**

Our prices are higher like HLL, because we were not into economical products. At the same time, we never wanted to be priced the way global brands like Nivea, EOREAL are. Our pricing has been lower than them. Proper pricing, an Indian image & being a two-year-old brand has made us different from Nivea.

**But it's not only Nivea, more and more players are coming in. So is it a threat for you?**

If you have a strong brand image, these sort of threats can never disturb you. Rather the market is growing and coming in of so many fairness brands also implies that there's going to be a healthy competition and men's fairness cream is going to be a more organised market.

**Your future plans?**

We are already present in 5 lakh outlets, so we will definitely penetrate more. In mid July, our ads with Shahrukh will be aired and we are planning to close this financial year with revenues of Rs.55 crores from 'Fair And Handsome' alone. **BB**