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KamaSutra spurned the
obvious marketing
strategy and set the entire
equation on its
head. Rather
than make
condoms a
matter of
forced need,
KamaSutra
worked on the
philosophy that
condoms were,
in the main,
pleasure
givers — even as
they
fulfilled the role of
prophylactics. In
that sense
prevention took
on a secondary
role and
pleasure, the
primary. This was very
different from the way they had been
perceived all along and accounted for the increased effort that would
need to be made to get users to
see condoms from another
perspective.

To facilitate consumers buying
into this point of view KamaSutra
designed and created a vast range
of pleasure-enhancing condoms.
This positioning had the
disadvantage of eliminating the
bottom rung of condom-buyers
and focussing on only the premium
end of the segment.

Since condoms were seen to be
pleasure inhibitors the early days
were difficult times. In this situation,
distribution gained importance
and chemists emerged as the most
important outlet followed by
general and departmental stores
and small kiosks. Today, however,
thanks to new strategies and
initiatives — many of them driven
by KamaSutra — the size of the
Indian condom market has grown
to about 850 million pieces per
annum. Of this, 250 million are in
the premium segment.

KamaSutra enjoys nearly 18% of the
total market. (Source: ACNielsen) It is the
second largest commercial player in the
branded segment.

KamaSutra condoms are exported to
over 70 countries including Philippines, Poland, Russia, Ukraine and Romania. The company
also supplies condoms under the European Union
and World Bank-funded programmes.

The condom market in India has come a long
way from the 1950s and 1960s when the
government encouraged family planning by
distributing free condoms and promoting female
contraception. In the absence of local
manufacturers the condoms distributed then
were imported.

The 1970s saw a shift in focus from
female contraceptives like oral pills to male
contraception, with condoms gaining
prominence. Today, the Indian market
is highly fragmented. There are over 200 brands
available in India with the majority of them
being regional.

Given the challenges of birth control and the
emergence of HIV as a serious health threat
India is a huge market for condoms. On the face
of it, therefore, and with the government
 strenuously promoting the fact that condoms
provide up to 98% protection from AIDS, it
would appear that the condom story-of-success
can be told literally off the hip.

Achievements
KamaSutra dramatically re-positioned the
condom industry scenario by striking a bold
new posture. It changed people’s outlook from
perceiving condoms as merely birth control and
family planning devices to regarding them as
pleasure enhancers and passion triggers.

Before 1991 condom brands were hush-hush
products. They were never boldly advertised.
KamaSutra then came out with its daring tagline,
"For the pleasure of making love." The condom
had finally come out of its confining closet.

The communications strategy for the brand
now began to focus on pleasure rather than
only on protected sex. It also took another far
reaching step it brought youth into focus and
converted the condom from a staid married
person to a young, vibrant brand. As another
stride in this direction KamaSutra introduced
condom variants. This initiative totally revamped
the condom market and injected new life into
the category. The characterisation of the
condom as a catalyst to lovemaking, as
opposed to a pleasure inhibitor; took the market
by storm.

In the competitive condom industry, where
every player strives to build brands by stiltling
the consumer through graphic skin shows,
KamaSutra took a bold step in November 2004.
It repackaged brand packs by strategically
covering the provocative pictures. This did
two things: it ensured better retail shelf space
and at the same time it reduced customer
embarrassment.

By revolutionising condom marketing in India
the brand earned professional respect as well as
customer support. Today, KamaSutra is
recognised as a high quality product and sold
from stores in major international markets.

KamaSutra is among the three largest condom
brands in the world.

History
The name Kama Sutra is familiar across the
world as a treatise associated with kindling
desire, igniting passion, triggering the senses and
unabashed advice on sexual techniques. In the
4th century AD, the ancient Indian sage
Vatsyayana wrote the volume on the 'Science of
love' that was to become the world's most
messages to the youth. With cutting edge humour, a perfect fit for the variant designed exclusively for amateurs.

Sextoons printed on the pack of KSSmooth – condoms delivered discreetly to their homes.

and cosmetics – and purchase KamaSutra through which consumers could find and not only public attitudes but also the product and the product profile.

KamaSutra, the new age condom, changed the product by incorporating an aggressive freshness in its approach.

The ads feature young male models, famous for their macho personality, specially hand-picked to convey brashness and sex appeal, while the female models are the presiding beauty divas of the time. Together they cast an image of desire with their portrayal of beauty and the product.

KamaSutra further spiced up the art of lovemaking with its portrayal of beauty divas of the time. Together they cast an image of desire with their portrayal of beauty and the product.

KamaSutra used print media very effectively, keeping in mind the responsibility it has towards Indian culture and its social obligations. To seek association with a young and vibrant image, KamaSutra started the concept of sponsoring youth events. Right from its launch in 1991, it has sponsored events such as Valentine’s Day, college fests, live pop or rock shows. At the same time, the company fulfils its role as a responsible corporate citizen by associating itself with NGOs to combat and address the issue of sex-related diseases.

KamaSutra personifies a new liberation in attitude and behaviour that is sweeping India’s youth. An individualistic attitude brand and a pleasure enhancer’ with its byline. For the pleasure of making love! KamaSutra has been successful in creating an image different from that of other condom brands which have been highlighting the functionality or medical aspects of condoms, emphasising the anti-HIV/AIDS properties or simply as a family planning tool. KamaSutra condoms have positioned themselves in the premium category reflecting an individualistic persona — sophisticated, glamorous, mature, confident, bold, proactive, charged, sexually indulgent and sexually competent.

While the other brands by and large focus on married couples, KamaSutra has evolved a brand personality that associates simply with couples. When history books are written KamaSutra will be recognised as the brand that singularly changed the condom market in India. It will be seen as the brand that brought sexuality out of the closet and placed it firmly in the shelves of millions of shops.

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