



the 19kg and 47.50kg cylinders are marked for industrial and commercial consumption. Indane LPG is also supplied in bulk to large volume consumers in the manufacturing and engineering sectors.

History

The marketing operations for LPG commenced in India in 1955 at Mumbai, under the Burmah Shell Oil Company. However, it wasn't until IndianOil took charge that it actually became a flourishing and recognisable industry.

Brand Indane, conceived in 1964 to bring modern cooking to Indian kitchens, had very modest beginnings. The first Indane LPG

Market

Domestic Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) users consume a massive 90% of the total production of LPG in India for cooking purposes. The three PSU oil companies meet the entire demand of the household LPG market. IndianOil leads the competition with a share of over 50% in the domestic segment currently accounting for 5.67 million tonnes of the 11.78 million tonne per annum market (Source: company data).

The sheer size, spread and complexity of its distribution network would be the envy of most fast moving consumer durable (FMCG) companies. IndianOil delivers Indane to the doorsteps of more than 52.40 million customers across the country through a dedicated network of 5000 distributors.

Achievements

In the initial stages, immediately after launch, cooking gas did not find ready acceptance. Between 1965 and 1970, the registrations of Indane LPG cylinders barely achieved 235,000 connections. Market studies and feedback indicated an innate resistance. To counter this negative perception and impress a change in the mindset, IndianOil launched a massive educational and awareness campaign on the safe use of LPG as a cooking medium. It was, perhaps, the largest mass media campaign of its time.

With a combination of above-the-line advertising, media interventions, safety clinics, conservation workshops, educational programmes in community centres, clubs, households, schools, colleges and other areas of mass congregation the campaign helped change the attitude of customers. It was one of IndianOil's first marketing successes and resulted in the user base growing to 14.80 million in 32 years between 1965 when Indane was first launched and 1997.

However, it was the economic boom of the 1990s that generated a truly massive demand for LPG. At the same time the economic emancipation was resulting in seminal changes in

the family structure; large undivided families were giving way to small, nuclear families putting further pressure on demand for LPG. To meet this burgeoning demand, IndianOil released 15.20 million additional Indane LPG connections between 1997 and 2001 pushing the total past 30 million. Simultaneously, the company doubled its bottling capacity from 1.45 million tonnes per annum to over 3 million tonnes per annum. Presently, Indane LPG is used by over 50 million households served by a countrywide network of about 5000 Indane distributors.

IndianOil was the first company to introduce the concept of LPG rural marketing. This was designed to be essentially a mobile LPG bottling plant which penetrated rural markets refilling cylinders in remote places. This concept was mooted largely to counter the extensive deforestation that takes place in rural areas. It has since contributed immensely to the preservation of the environment and helped limit the use of conventional fuels like firewood.

Today, Indane LPG is sold and delivered in four different pack sizes. The 5kg and 14.20kg cylinders for domestic use are subsidised and comprise almost half of all gas distributed while

connection was released on 22nd October 1965 at Kolkata. At that time the concept of a cooking gas was alien and customers were apprehensive of keeping a gas cylinder in their kitchens, somehow perceiving it as unsafe and a potential hazard. The use of a fuel that was inherently safe but required adherence to certain basic safety norms was a psychological barrier that consumers had to first surmount.

In those early days it was hard to project that in a few short decades Indane would emerge as a hugely transformative LPG brand and would gain recognition as being amongst the world's largest in this segment.

Product

Liquefied petroleum gas is a mixture of lighter hydrocarbons – propane and butane – which are in a gaseous state at ambient temperature and pressure. For ease of storage, handling and transportation, however, they are liquefied under pressure at room temperature.

LPG is obtained through either crude oil refining or from natural gas fractionation. Traces of iso-butane, butylene, n-butane and propylene are also present in LPG. Since LPG has only a





faint aroma, a mercaptan odorant is added, as a safety measure, to help in its detection.

Recent Developments

Indane has identified three priority areas for itself: customer relationship development, up gradation of supply channels and value-added services.

To resolve customer grievances IndianOil has developed and launched an all-inclusive software that allows the company to electronically capture customer feedback and promptly address complaints. As an added empowerment, customers are also provided with a single toll-free number across the country for registering their feedback and suggestions.

Up gradation of the supply channel is being handled at two levels. On one hand, IndianOil is planning to launch new generation light-weight composite cylinders, which are transparent and trendy. On the other hand, IndianOil is offering a

reticulated system, which would directly pipe Indane LPG into the kitchens of modern urban customers. Reticulated systems eliminate the need for cylinder storage in kitchens, offering uninterrupted gas supply and enhanced safety.

For Indane, the kitchen is a workplace. Over 100 million women in India work here to provide food and nutrition to their families. The task of the brand is to make this into a safe, reassuring, healthy and a convenient place. To answer all queries relating to the kitchen, IndianOil has upgraded its Indane distributors so they have emerged as a one-stop solution for all home needs.

In addition to delivering solutions IndianOil has also attempted to further its equity with the house wife. Through its Indane LPG distributors, IndianOil markets several home aids and conveniences. These include electric exhaust chimneys, non-stick kitchen cookware, pressure cookers, pressure pans, oven-proof crockery, cotton aprons, gas detection alarms, pre-fabricated modular kitchen cabinets, Nestle ready-to-cook items, microwave and multi-wave ovens, fire extinguishers, direct-to-home receivers for free-to-air channels, FMCG items, water purifiers, LPG industrial burners and auto LPG kits.

As a responsible company, conscious of its environment, IndianOil has also tied up with leading manufacturers of 'Green Label' branded LPG stoves. These eco-friendly burners, trademarked as Green Label by the Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS), give thermal efficiency of 68% and fuel savings of 15%. IndianOil R&D continues to work on energy efficient devices and is supported by the efforts of the oil

industry's research wing – LPG Equipment Research Centre in Bangalore.

Promotion

While cooking gas is a boon to homes across the world, its very nature makes it a volatile, handle-with-care product. As a result, educating consumers on its safe usage is a primary concern. To bring home the importance of safety, IndianOil conducts periodic safety clinics at regular intervals. These workshops also educate customers on the merits and methods of fuel conservation. To fulfil its social obligation to communities living around its bottling plants, Indane operates community kitchens. These cater to the pressing needs of several hundred families living below the poverty line.

The Indane LP Gas brand has not only been a pioneering brand, it has also proved to be an iconic symbol which has made a difference to an entire generation of Indians. As an exercise in social marketing, IndianOil has taken prime time commercial space on television and radio and used several special-interest newspapers and magazines to educate readers on all aspects of safety and conservation.

The massive rural thrust that IndianOil has embarked on for Indane LPG has been supported by sponsorship of several talk shows, phone-ins and customer interview programmes. The utility of using skits and humorous shows on radio has also been very effective in promoting the Indane LPG brand.

Brand Values

Indane is, today, one of the largest packed-LPG brands in the world. Its reputation is built on the bedrock of trust that Indane has developed with successive generations of users. Its multi-pronged platform of safety, convenience and reliability has been an integral part of the brand's growth and success.



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Things you didn't know about Indane

- Every second LPG cooking gas connection in India is an Indane
- The world's highest LPG bottling plant – situated 3500 metres above sea level – is the Indane plant at Leh
- Each day, the Indane distribution network delivers 1.20 million cylinders
- Of the 52.40 million customers served by 5000 Indane distributors, 27% are in semi-urban and rural markets
- Indane's sales network is backed by 41 Indane Area Offices

