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Babu Datta: Driving Brand Communication in Emerging Markets

Company Name: Evolve Creative

An Indian-born design consultant is finding customers in the country of his birth and other emerging markets with assistance from UK Trade & Investment (UKTI).

Following his degree studies in Graphic Design at London's Central School of Art & Design, Babu Datta, CEO of design agency Evolve Creative, specialised in the FMCG sector, where he developed an appreciation of global brands working with international companies.

Having achieved considerable success on the domestic scene, with an impressive worldwide FMCG client base, including Hamleys, L'Oréal, Thorntons and US golf retailer Nevada Bob's Golf, Evolve looked for new ways to expand the business and improve the company's visibility abroad.



Babu Datta shown with his products

With this in mind, Babu approached UKTI to commission an OMIS (Overseas Market Introduction Service) report to uncover potential clients. The company then joined a UKTI market visit to India. The main objectives were to combine his previously established international brand experience with an understanding of the Indian market culture, and to follow up the leads obtained with the help of the British Embassy.

As a result of the visit, he is now working on the brand portfolios of major Indian companies. One such company, Emami Ltd, was looking to rebrand one of its flagship products, Boroplus antiseptic cream. Evolve concluded that the brand packaging needed updating and created a more contemporary styling that reflected the product's benefits, in line with its' international competitors. This resulted in an impressive 32 per cent annual increase in sales.

After the visit, the company's activities in Asia have been so successful that a marketing office has been set up in Delhi. Although he was born in India and is familiar with its culture and customs, Babu sees the market visits he made with UKTI and individually as a vital part of the company's expansion abroad.

As he put it: "Going to India before we started to operate there was extremely valuable in order to really appreciate the market environment and difference between how products are displayed, and how the consumer buys, which is very different to the UK." Evolve has since extended its Indian client base to include Kohinoor, an Indian food company with offices and customers in over 57 countries and a turnover of US\$136 million.

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Babu Datta, CEO of design agency Evolve Creative

Discussions are under way with other potential snack food clients who are diversifying into biscuits, pastas and noodles and want to expand into international markets. Evolve also has an eye on the lucrative pharmaceutical market, and is working with a leading pharmaceutical company that sells across India, Africa and Latin America. Profitable re-branding contracts with government and real-estate sectors are also in the pipeline. Building on his experience in India, Babu has now established a four-phase expansion programme into emerging Middle East markets and has plans to expand into Russia, other Eastern European markets and South Africa.

Babu said: "India is the model for other emerging markets. Brands must be global in nature but meet the needs of local markets. In addition, consumer preferences and demands are ever-changing and understanding of customer diversity in the international sphere is vital.

For more information, visit <http://www.evolvecreative.uk.com>

Evolve Creative was assisted by a UKTI international trade adviser.

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