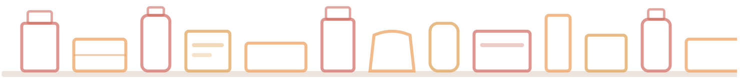

✦ FMCG · GTM STRATEGY · SCALE-UP

When everyone said cut the price, we *changed the game.*

How Core Ideas helped a first-time FMCG founder protect a ~₹60Cr (~$7M) plant investment — by holding the strategic line when it mattered most.

CLIENT	SECTOR	ENGAGEMENT	SCOPE
Premium Snacking Brand	FMCG	2019 – 2022 Built through COVID-19	GTM · Strategy · Scale-up

01 ✦ THE SITUATION

A state-of-the-art manufacturing facility. Premium packaging. A sales team in place. A founder with absolute conviction — but zero FMCG experience on the team. Core Ideas was brought in for GTM strategy and launch, and quickly became the most experienced voice in the room on everything that mattered most.

~₹60Cr (~$7M)	Invested in plant and manufacturing before any GTM strategy ex
750T	Monthly premium breakfast cereal capacity sitting idle at launch
Zero	FMCG experience across the entire founding team

02 ✦ THE DEFINING MOMENT

Three people. One decision. *Everything at stake.*

Premium-priced against multinational cereal giants with far larger budgets. As volume pressure mounted, the room divided.

GM — SALES & MARKETING

"Drop the price. Match the competition."

Conventional FMCG instinct — drive trial through accessibility.

THE FOUNDER

"I believe in this product. I won't cheapen it."

Deep conviction, but needed a strategic path to back it up.

CORE IDEAS

"Don't compete on their terms. Change the field entirely."

Aligned with the founder's conviction — and found the smarter way to make it work.

Cutting price would have been fatal — commoditising a premium product, losing marquee retail relationships, destroying the export story. **We held the line. Then we solved the actual problem differently.**

03 ✦ THE STRATEGIC INSIGHT

Don't fight their battle. *Own the one they've ignored.*

> *"Don't fight the multinationals for the breakfast bowl. Own the snacking moment they've left completely uncontested."*
>
> — CORE IDEAS, ON THE REPOSITIONING DECISION

Consumer feedback revealed people weren't eating the product only at breakfast — they were eating it straight from the pack, mid-afternoon, between meals. The crunch made it genuinely snackable in a way milk-based cereals weren't.

Reposition from "premium breakfast cereal" to "healthy anytime snack" — a category no one owned. This wasn't a messaging tweak. It was a strategic reset that changed every downstream decision: which channels to target, how to pitch modern trade buyers, what the export narrative looked like, and critically — **how to solve the volume problem without destroying the brand.**

Six moves that *built the market.*

01	**Repositioned the brand** Breakfast cereal → anytime snacking. Changed who the competitor was, who the customer was, and what the brand could charge.	02	**Built distribution from scratch** Secured listings with leading premium modern trade chains across India from day one.
03	**Developed lower price point variants** New segments using the same factory line — zero additional capex, no flagship brand dilution.	04	**Launched white labelling programme** A parallel revenue stream now supplying major industry players, generating factory ROI while the brand scales.
05	**Opened GCC and Europe** Partnered with international distributors. Strong early traction in the Gulf. Found markets where the brand could win on its own terms.	06	**Scaled 7 → 18 major cities** Systematic metro expansion — brand consistency and execution quality maintained in every new market.

RESILIENCE UNDER PRESSURE

November 2019 launch. March 2020 lockdown. Growth trajectory: unbroken.

Four months after launch, India shut down. Distribution never stopped — we accelerated D2C to capture the online grocery surge. The ~$7M investment kept running without missing a beat. This is what a three-year engagement built through the worst global disruption in a century looks like.

05 ✦ THE OUTCOME

From zero to *two continents.*

0 → 18 Major Indian cities with active distribution, built over three years	**2 continents** Export markets opened — strong Gulf entry and Europe via international distribution partner
~$7M protected Investment protected — white label programme supplying major industry players	**Brand intact** Premium positioning held throughout — marquee modern trade listings across India

06 ✦ WHAT THIS DEMONSTRATES

What a Fractional CMO actually does *in a room like this.*

This wasn't a marketing project. It was a test of strategic nerve — a ~$7M investment at stake, an inexperienced founding team under pressure, and the path of least resistance pointing straight toward destroying the brand.

Core Ideas played every role the situation demanded: marketing consultant, business strategist, sounding board, and at the critical moment — the steady voice that said **"don't solve the volume problem by destroying the brand. Solve it a different way."** That's what 25 years on both sides of the table makes possible.

> FOR EUROPEAN SAAS & D2C FOUNDERS
>
> Holding pricing discipline under competitive pressure while finding growth on your own terms is identical to what early-stage SaaS and D2C founders face when incumbents enter their category. Whether you're defending ARR or protecting positioning while investors push for faster growth — the thinking is the same: don't compete on their terms. Change the field entirely.

Building a brand that needs strategy, not just marketing?

We work with a small number of clients at a time. If the fit is right, let's talk.

START THE CONVERSATION

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core