

\$88 billion: The combined brand value of the world's top 9 soft drink brands in 2024.

IMAGES Business OF food

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FMCG
How India's FMCG
Titans are Reshaping
for a \$1.3 Trillion
Consumer Future.

FOOD SERVICE
Trends Shaping the
Future of Cooking.



Haldiram's

India's Biggest Food Service Brand.

Kailash Agarwal,
President - Retail QSR, Haldiram's

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Editor's Note

As food brands race to go global, their greatest challenge remains winning local. From Unilever's margarine misadventure in India to Maggi's iconic rise, and Yoplait's uphill journey in the U.S., the packaged food industry offers a fascinating lens into the dynamics of globalization, localization, and the ever-evolving art of consumer connection. Our feature on *pages 18-26* unpacks why some products soar across borders while others stumble—and lays out the new playbook for food brands navigating today's complex, cross-cultural marketplace.

This imperative to adapt and evolve is equally urgent on the home front. India's top FMCG players are entering a new phase of hypergrowth, powered by premiumisation, rural revival, wellness-led portfolios, and digitally rewired distribution models. As our deep-dive on *pages 30-38* shows, from behemoths like HUL and ITC to agile disruptors betting on D2C and functional innovation, the sector is in full transformation mode. With a \$1.3 trillion horizon in sight, the winners will be those who deliver not just scale—but also speed, precision, and relevance.

That same trinity—scale, speed, and soul—defines the journey of India's biggest foodservice name: Haldiram's. The cover story on *pages 40-45* charts how this trusted homegrown brand has gone from sweet shop icon to global foodservice force—without ever losing its cultural authenticity. With over 150 outlets spanning high streets, highways, and airports, Haldiram's is a symbol of tradition served with modern flair—delivering not just food, but trust and taste in equal measure.

On the future-forward side of food, our story on *pages 46-47* explores the technologies reshaping the way we cook. From AI-powered ovens to IoT-connected kitchens, culinary tech is no longer about convenience alone—it's about precision, personalization, and sustainability. The kitchen is becoming a smarter, more responsive space, where tradition meets transformation in real-time.

Each of these stories reflects a deeper truth: the future of food isn't just about what we eat, but how we connect—with cultures, technologies, and changing consumer desires.

Amitabh Taneja | Editor-in-Chief

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40. Cover Story

Haldiram's

India's Biggest Food Service Brand.

With over 150 outlets and a presence across high streets, highways, and airports, Haldiram's delivers speed, scale, and soul in equal measure. It's not just serving food—it's serving trust, tradition, and a taste of modern India.




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What Works Where: Lessons in Global Food Brand Reinvention



Over the last few decades, the global food industry has undergone significant transformation, driven not just by evolving consumer preferences but also by strategic restructuring among industry giants. A wave of high-profile mergers and acquisitions at the turn of the millennium reshaped the competitive landscape:

Unilever's acquisition of SlimFast and Bestfoods in 2000—valued at approximately \$2.6 billion and \$24.3 billion respectively—marked a decisive shift in its portfolio strategy toward high-performing brands. That same year, Kraft Foods acquired Nabisco for \$18.9 billion, dramatically boosting its footprint in snacks and processed foods. In 2001, General Mills acquired Pillsbury from Diageo in a deal valued at \$10.5 billion, reinforcing its position as a global packaged food leader.

Collectively, these multibillion-dollar deals reflected a common strategic goal: accelerated growth. Organic growth in the food sector had become increasingly difficult due to mature markets, evolving consumption patterns, and mounting competition. Acquiring successful products and brands from one region and adapting them to another was seen as a shortcut to scale and synergy. But this approach was fraught with pitfalls—most notably, the risk of cultural and culinary mismatch.

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From Chaos to Connectivity: How Badho is Building a Smarter Trade Network

India's kirana economy moves Rs 20+ lakh crore annually—but most of it still runs on guesswork. Badho is tackling the inefficiencies head-on, bringing digital structure to one of the world's most fragmented supply chains. By enabling smarter transactions without disrupting existing relationships, the platform is quietly rewiring how retail moves in Bharat.

By Jigyasa Aggarwal

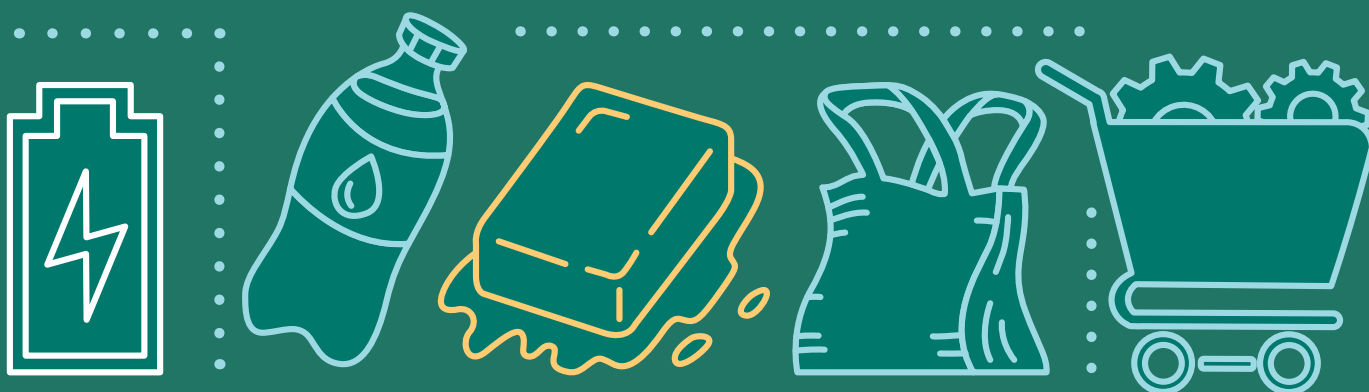
When your kirana store doesn't get stock for three days or your distributor faces blocked credit in peak season, it's not a supply issue — it's a structural one. The Badho Platform wasn't built to disrupt India's traditional retail; it was built by people who grew up in it. That's why it understands the chaos and knows how to rewire it.

Built as a mobile-first interface, the Badho APP connects retailers directly with FMCG brands and local distributors. It streamlines every part of the B2B transaction — order placement, delivery, credit access, and even brand engagement. Whether it's a manager in Mumbai wanting insights on what sells in Rajasthan or a retailer in UP seeking instant festival season credit, Badho delivers both visibility and access.

Badho's design philosophy is simple: intelligence meets intuition. With transaction data from over 16 lakh retailers, brands can spot demand shifts and launch region-specific campaigns that actually convert. Their gamified features — from training videos to new product promotions — spark interest among retailers, turning routine ordering into engagement touchpoints. One of its most talked-about innovations is a partnership with the POS SoundBox. Each time a payment is made, brands can trigger custom jingles — turning payment into in-store marketing. It's organic brand recall, embedded at the point of sale.



Rs.20 Lakh Cr in Sight: How India's FMCG Titans Are Reshaping for a \$1.3 Trillion Consumer Future



India's FMCG market—projected to reach \$240 billion (Rs.20 lakh crore) this year (2025) and \$1.3 trillion (Rs.107 lakh crore) by 2030—is no longer just growing. It is morphing.

With a blistering CAGR of 27.9% expected between 2024 and 2030, this sector is being redefined by new consumption drivers: rising rural demand, urban premiumisation, Q-commerce acceleration, health & wellness trends, and digital-first distribution models.

Over 50% of FMCG volume now comes from rural India, while online channels are projected to account for 11% of FMCG sales by 2030. The balance between traditional and modern, affordability and aspiration, scale and personalisation—has never been more dynamic.

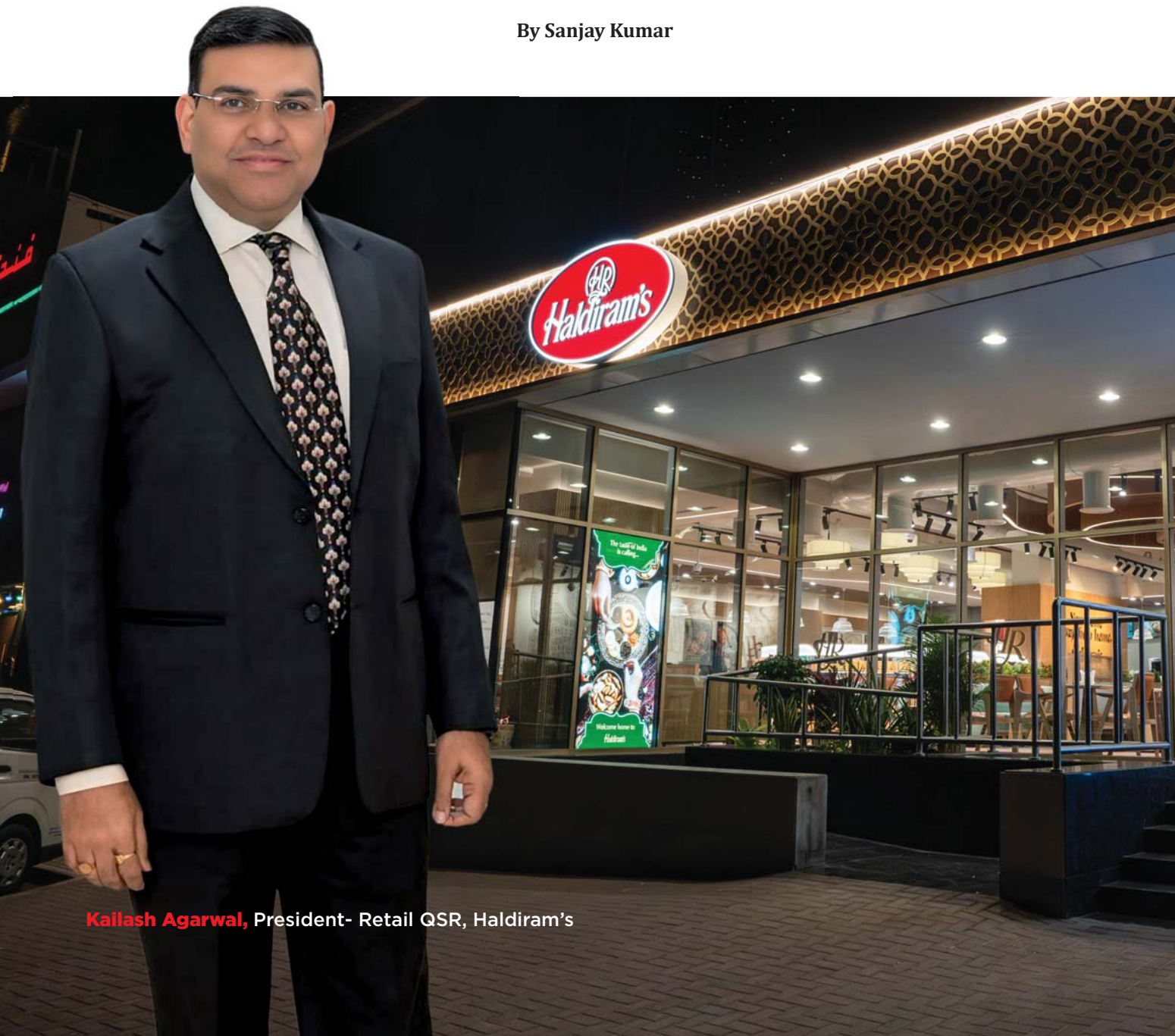
Across 100+ listed players, the top 15 FMCG companies contributed over Rs.3.8 lakh crore in FY25, revealing not just strength in size, but a directional shift towards platform-led growth, omnichannel orchestration, and brand reinvention.

This is not an era of linear expansion—this is an inflection point. And the future belongs to those who evolve faster than the market.

How Haldiram's Became India's Biggest and Most Trusted Food Service Brand

Few brands have captured India's culinary imagination quite like Haldiram's. From a trusted name in sweets and snacks to a national and now global foodservice powerhouse, the brand has reinvented itself without losing its core identity. With over 150 outlets and a presence across high streets, highways, and airports, Haldiram's delivers speed, scale, and soul in equal measure. It's not just serving food—it's serving trust, tradition, and a taste of modern India.

By Sanjay Kumar



Kailash Agarwal, President- Retail QSR, Haldiram's

Trends Shaping the Future of Cooking



From AI-powered ovens to IoT-connected ecosystems, the next wave of kitchen technology is transforming how we cook, live, and eat, making cooking more efficient, personalized, and sustainable than ever before.

By Rakesh Patil

In the last decade, kitchen technology has undergone a remarkable transformation. From refrigerators that track your groceries and notify you when items are running low to devices that automate cooking, technology has become an integral part of modern kitchens. These advancements have made cooking more efficient and intuitive, allowing us to save time and effort in our daily lives. However, this evolution is just the beginning. As technology continues to advance, smart kitchens are poised to become even more transformative, blending innovation, convenience, and sustainability. They will redefine cooking spaces as dynamic environments that cater to our evolving needs, preferences, and lifestyles. The integration of artificial intelligence, connectivity, and immersive technologies promises to turn kitchens into intelligent hubs that offer seamless and engaging culinary experiences.



Here are some key trends driving the growth and transformation of kitchen technology:

Hyper-Personalized Cooking Experiences

Personalization has become a key factor in winning consumers' hearts, and kitchen technology is no exception. Imagine a world where AI-powered appliances understand your dietary preferences, nutritional needs, and even your mood—suggesting recipes that fit your lifestyle seamlessly. Picture a smart kitchen assistant that not only knows your family's favorite meals but also adapts to your unique cooking habits, helping you reach your health goals without sacrificing flavor or enjoyment.

With advancements in machine learning, appliances are becoming smarter, adapting to a variety of cooking styles and preferences. These systems will recommend the best techniques for different cuisines or dietary restrictions, offering an experience that feels personal and intuitive. For example, a smart oven could automatically adjust cooking times and temperatures based on the ingredients you're using, ensuring consistent, perfect results every time.

IoT-Integrated Smart Kitchen Ecosystems

The Internet of Things (IoT) is shaping the future of kitchen technology by creating connected ecosystems where appliances work together seamlessly. Imagine a kitchen where your refrigerator not only monitors the

Category Watch Plant-based Food



How Organic, Herbal, Natural & Ayurvedic Foods Are Reshaping India's Food Culture and Retail Futures.

By Business Of Food Bureau



Greening India's Plate: Inside the Plant-Based Wellness Boom

Just a decade ago, the phrase “plant-based” barely registered in India’s culinary consciousness. While the country has always been a haven for vegetarian diets due to religious and cultural influences, the modern notion of plant-based—centered on sustainability, animal welfare, and health consciousness—was an alien concept to most. Now, with the convergence of rising health awareness, environmental urgency, and a booming startup ecosystem, India is witnessing a full-fledged plant-based revolution.

From the fields of Madhya Pradesh to the kitchens of Mumbai, from the labs of food scientists to the menus of QSRs, the plant-based revolution in India is gaining momentum. It is a movement

that honors tradition while embracing innovation, that prioritizes health while respecting the environment, and that invites everyone—vegetarian or omnivore, urban or rural—to be part of a more sustainable and conscious way of living. As the experts in the Organic & Plant-Based Foods sector suggest, this is not just a passing trend but a fundamental shift in how India thinks about food, health, and the future. And as the plant-based sector continues to grow, it will undoubtedly play a pivotal role in shaping the next chapter of India’s culinary and cultural story.

On the ground, the signs are everywhere. Almond milk now sits beside cow’s milk on supermarket shelves. Plant-based kheema is finding its way into momos and biryanis. Ayurvedic herbs are being



“Our objective is to make Ayurveda a part of modern nutrition. Our protein powders, vegan gummies, and immunity blends are a response to what today’s consumer wants—convenience without compromise.”

– AMEVE SHARMA,
Founder and CEO, Kapiva



“Consumers are no longer just driven by labels like ‘vegan’ or ‘plant-based’. The product needs to deliver on taste, experience and price. That’s where the challenge—and the opportunity—lie.”

– AKSHAT JAIN,
Founder, VeganDay



“Today’s consumer doesn’t just want healthier food—they want food that understands them. We’re working with tech to personalise recommendations based on fitness and lifestyle goals.”

– ANKIT CHONA,
Founder, Phab

Plant-based Food

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- # Specialty Coffees and Teas
- # Premium Honey
- # Imported Foods
- # Exotic Spices, Seasonings and Condiments
- # Premium Olive Oils and Vinegars
- # Fine Cheeses
- # Jams and Preserves
- # Nuts and Dried Fruits
- # Baked Goods



What's in the Issue?

- Top Trends in Food Gifting Categories
- New Brands and Product Innovation
- Packaging Innovation
- In-store Merchandising and Promotions
- Marketing and Distribution Strategies
- Leading Brands in Food Gifting
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