

CHEMICALS

MADHUKAR B. PAREKH, CHAIRMAN, PIDILITE INDUSTRIES LTD

Glued to India

MADHUKAR PAREKH HAS BUILT ONE OF INDIA'S MOST ICONIC BRANDS ON THE BACK OF POWERFUL ADVERTISING.

BY **AJITA SHASHIDHAR**

 **TUCKED IN A** narrow, dusty lane, the Pidilite Industries headquarters in Andheri, Mumbai, is far from glamorous. The old-school campus is, however, home to one of the country's most loved brands, Fevicol. Be it a carpenter, a builder, an art teacher, a homemaker or a child, there's hardly anyone who would not relate to the iconic adhesive brand and its tagline—*'Yeh Fevicol Ka Jod Hai, Tootega Nahin'*—often used to symbolise not just the longevity of products, but also relationships that last a lifetime.

At the heart of this emotion of bringing Indians together is Madhukar Parekh, chairman, Pidilite Industries, who has always believed that emotional connect in businesses is crucial, so what if it's a category

like chemicals or adhesives. At a time when brand-building was a far cry in the chemicals industry (in the 1980s when Parekh took over the business from his father, the late Balvantray Kalyanji Parekh), the younger Parekh chose the brand route. "When I joined the business, my belief that even something as functional as an adhesive could evoke emotions and become a part of people's lives, became strong. That's how the journey of iconic communication and lasting collaboration with Ogilvy and Piyush [Pandey] began."

The strategy worked. In FY25, Pidilite clocked ₹13,140 crore in net sales, according to database provider Capitaline. Its flagship adhesive brand, Fevicol, currently, has an over 70% market share. The company has over 25 other brands, including Dr Fixit,

Roff, M-Seal and Araldite, which cater to specific adhesive needs. It exports over 1,300 SKUs (stock-keeping units) of adhesives across 70 countries.

"Over time, we have expanded into waterproofing, construction chemicals, and art materials, always staying close to the needs of our users. What made this possible was a mix of strong focus on pioneering product innovation, memorable advertising, and a deep understanding of consumers and the Indian culture," says Parekh. The company's approach hinges on four key pillars: brand building, digital transformation, supply chain agility, and innovation.

 **ADVERTISING HAS BEEN** the cornerstone of Parekh's strategy. Apart from the famous truck campaign (of an overloaded truck navigating a wobbly desert terrain, but where none of the passengers get displaced, with the tagline—*'Fevicol, The Ultimate Adhesive'*) that won a silver at Cannes, one of its most impactful campaigns in recent times was at the Kumbh Mela in Prayagraj—Fevicol Kala Teeka. It was a black sticker with a QR code that was put on the faces of children, so that if they got lost, people could reach out to their parents through the QR code!

"Advertising has been one of our strongest tools, not just for visibility, but for building emotional connections. The combination of humour and insight has proven to be a powerful way to communicate. Fevicol's advertisements, for instance, have become a part of everyday language. People don't just remember them, they feel them," says Parekh.

He believes powerful advertising has enabled Pidilite to become a successful Indian MNC. "Our deep cultural connect has helped us grow globally as well, and our Indianness is reflected in every brand, every campaign, and every market we enter."



WHAT HE DID RIGHT

- 1 Used ads effectively to connect with emotions, thereby creating a lasting impression for the brand
- 2 Entered into long-term collaborations to boost the firm's B2B business

HOW THE COMPANY FARED

Net sales (FY25): ₹13,140 crore

3-YR CAGR: 9.8%

PAT (FY25): ₹2,076 crore

3-YR CAGR: 19.8%

SOURCE: CAPITALINE; FORTUNE INDIA RESEARCH

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Madhukar B. Parekh

CAMPAIGNS SUCH AS *'Fevicol Ki Jod'* and *'Jor Laga Ke Haisha'* played a pivotal role in making Fevicol a household name, but the brand started off way back in 1959 as a white synthetic resin, a solution for carpenters and builders who until then used animal fat. “We listen to people’s stories, their needs, cultures and

rituals—and we build from there. We are connected with over 200,000 users through 3,000-plus clubs across India. That’s not just a network—it’s a community and a family. We’ve classified our brands into core, growth and pioneer categories; at the heart of it all is cultural relevance,” Parekh explains.

“On the B2B side, our growth came from technical expertise and long-term collaborations. Whether it’s water-proofing infrastructure or supplying industrial adhesives, we’ve always aimed to solve real problems.”

The entrepreneur continues to be at the helm but has empowered professionals to steer the business forward. Over the past five decades he has seen several cycles of change, and the only thing that has kept him relevant is agility with a sense of purpose. “Agility helps you adapt, innovate and stay relevant. Purpose keeps you grounded and allows one to operate with intellectual humility.” **f**