

TITLE OF CASE STUDY: Diamond Bride

Diamond bride: more happy than married

“More married, than happy”

(New York Times #1 Bestselling author Sarah Ban Breathnach commenting on how many marriages today happen for the wrong reason and to the wrong person, to settle *down*, without knowing who we are.)

SUMMARY – THE STORY OF THE DIAMOND BRIDE: IMAGINATION TO REALITY

The self-sacrificing, dutiful bride has been the Indian ideal for years. This is a story of how research helped the agency imagine a new kind of bride. For our client, DTC, weddings were the single largest purchase occasion. The agency was entrusted with the job of creating preference for diamond jewelry over gold jewelry at weddings. Instead, with the help of research, we redefined the task as creating a new cultural paradigm for brides. And then created it. A bride who is more happy, than married. Free to be herself and brimming with joy. Diamond brides are happy brides. Gold brides, just dutiful ones.

When the campaign ran its course, we found that 73% of brides are willing to replace gold with diamonds for their wedding jewelry. And 95% of brides vouch for the sentiment “this is a vision of the bride I want to be, this is for me, this is me.” (research)

In terms of consumer behaviour as well as attitude, the results more than matched up to the intent behind the campaign

BUSINESS CHALLENGE: GOLD DOMINATES THE MARKET & THE CULTURE

Weddings represent a huge business opportunity for diamonds. Weddings are the single largest purchase occasion for diamonds, and the value of bridal sets is 1.49 that of non bridal sets. However, gold dominated weddings. Out of every 13 pieces of jewelry worn at weddings gold is 8.7, diamonds just 1.4. (DTC)

Gold was chosen not merely because it looked pretty but also because it evoked deep socio-cultural meaning. Gold also connotes the transfer of wealth.

Moreover, when it comes to marriage, Indians are loathe to change anything. Even today, most marriages are ‘arranged’ by parents – based on factors such as the couple’s family background, social standing and even a horoscope match. In such a context, personal choice takes a backseat and the traditional way holds sway.

CAMPAIGN OBJECTIVE: CREATE ATTITUDINAL PREFERENCE FOR DIAMONDS AT WEDDINGS

Our challenge was to disrupt this age-old mindset altogether. The client's brief was to create a preference for diamonds vs gold. We could have taken the path of metal vs stone. But knowing that the challenge was as much cultural as it was market based, the agency redefined the task. It was about changing mindsets, creating a preference for one kind of wedding vs another, one kind of bride vs another.

RESEARCH BREAKTHROUGHS:

Research was key to how our campaign unfolded in terms of target, strategy and channel development.

BREAKTHROUGH # 1

THE TARGET AUDIENCE: THE BRIDE HERSELF.

Most wedding communication focuses on parents. It stands to reason because most weddings in India are financed and managed by parents.

Yet, focus groups suggested the evolving role of young women, particularly in terms of marriage. It was being reflected in longer engagements (read courtships), a spirit of unbridled participation in their own affairs and a remarkable degree of comfort in their interaction with their future in-laws. Wedding communication seemed stuck in what used to be. To add certainty to our findings we commissioned some quantitative research.

The survey (TNS) threw up startlingly new developments, confirming our belief. For example, in terms of purchase of jewelry, the main decision maker and influencer is as much the bride as the mum herself.

	Key decision maker	Key influencer
Bride's mum	94%	90%
Bride	87%	82%

Research conclusion: Talk to the bride (unnoticed among advertisers), instead of her parents. The conventional wisdom was to talk to parents, but research convinced us that the role of the bride was evolving and there was potential in addressing her. This was a significant choice to make and dare we admit, required a fair degree of conviction.

BREAKTTTHROUGH # 2

THE STRATEGY:

FROM PAST RESEARCH: We learnt that gold jewelry had a lot going for it. Gold stood for security, values, tradition. No gold was no go. Diamond jewelry too, had a lot of positives such as modernity, status, glamour but, could not take on the 'rightness' of gold.

NEW RESEARCH ASKED A SIMPLE QUESTION THAT PAST RESEARCH HAD NOT ASKED: How is a bride adorned in gold different from a bride adorned in diamonds? To understand this, the agency planners hit the road doing 9 focus groups in 3 cities Mumbai, Delhi, Chennai, using techniques of category archaeology and semiotics. Consumers created mood boardsⁱ and as a short hand we simply titled them gold bride and diamond bride. In effect, the term Diamond Bride, was a research short hand. Or so we thought...

The gold bride was vividly projected as being “too decked up, traditional, with a vernacular accent, accent, fearful, obedient, surrounded by uncles, aunts, squealing cousins, at a hustle-bustle-hotch-potch of a wedding party”.

In contrast, the diamond bride was imagined to be “elegant, at a select gathering, an extrovert who speaks her mind, and above all casual, cheerful and happy, not nervous at all, even though she is getting married”.

Analysing these projections revealed deeper motivations of purchase for both types of jewelry. There certainly was more to it than met the eye.

On the surface, gold jewelry purchase at weddings was about doing the right thing. But underneath, gold was a glittering cover up of family and financial pressures.

On the surface, diamond jewelry purchase at weddings was about high status. But underneath, the purchase of diamonds at weddings was a curious mix of style and a happy informality.

This was a discovery with enormous implications that research identified and focused on.

Our strategy was that there was a contemporary cultural paradigm waiting to be advanced—Happy Brides! Diamond brides were happy brides. As distinct from gold brides—traditional, dutiful and with their eyes downcast most of the time..

Research focused the team's thinking on the point that celebrating the emotional high point of a wedding from the bride's point of view is vital. The happy bride is one who is free to express herself. Even at her wedding, an occasion marked with tradition, she is bold enough to add the small touches that make her wedding day truly 'hers'. This is her day, EXCEPT she never knew that. And that is exactly what diamonds will now tell her. **The creative brief** was – Celebrate the happy bride, celebrate the diamond bride. What creative took away was that it takes more than a diamond to make a Diamond Bride. **The creative idea** was that the diamond is the stone for the bride with a spark.

BREAKTHROUGH # 3

DIAMOND BRIDE: DESIGNING THE DRESS AND OTHER CHANNEL THINKING

A bride wearing a bright red dress and bedecked in gold jewelry is an iconic Indian image. The diamond bride though was our creation. Before this campaign, the concept did not exist. We had to make the Diamond Bride a reality, so that young brides out there knew what they could aspire to be on their big day.

The dress is a focal point of her wedding for every girl. **In focus groups, brides-to-be had told us, that even if they wanted to, they could not wear diamonds until they found outfits to match. And the market was full of wedding outfits that matched gold jewelry.** The agency's answer was an intensely practical one – create a distinct look for the diamond bride to help translate bridal desire into action.

Thus, clothing emerged as a channel for the diamond bride ideaⁱⁱ. This also created innovative channels of expression and PR support for our campaign.

We set out to inspire the ideal of becoming a diamond bride, using a holistic communication model. With re-inforcing pillars working together.

	ROLE OF COMMUNICATION
Dress	help translate desire into action
Advertising	create desire around the notion
PR	raise the legitimacy of the action

CAMPAIGN DESCRIPTION: BRINGING ALIVE THE DIAMOND BRIDE

1. TREND BOOKLETS, ADVERTORIALS, INFORMERCIALS, PR

The best way to take this idea forward emerged via communications planning, we thought of approaching India's finest designers to imagine this so-far mythical figure and imbue her with flesh and blood. Creatively speaking, that meant making India's top 3 fashion designers Ritu Kumar, Rohit Bal and Tarun Tahiliani de facto advocates of the diamond bride. Each designer had their interpretation of the bridal look—the common thread being diamonds. This look was given visibility across media—as infomercials on TV and advertorials in influential magazines like Vogue and L' officiel. Additionally, we used the route of direct marketing to reach our target. Literally, handing them images they could shop to. A 36 page trend booklet on the Diamond Bride was sent out to subscribers of leading magazines like Femina and Hello.

2. “WHISPER” TELEVISION COMMERCIAL

The film shows a bride bedecked in diamond jewelry. Once the ceremony is complete, the husband puts the sindoor (vermillion applied on hair parting for married Indian women) on her hair and the diamond tiara falls into place.

The campaign was aired in the wedding season.

RESULTS.

In terms of preference, there was positive shift towards diamonds. Source: Drshti Research

ATTITUDE

- Diamonds are a must have for my wedding 91%
- Prefer diamonds over gold for my bridal jewelry 85%
- Modern generation brides prefer diamonds 95%

BEHAVIOUR

- Will buy more diamonds than planned 72%

Diamond jewelry goes well with bridal outfits 82%
Will chose diamonds over gold for my bridal jewelry 86%

LIKING FOR CAMPAIGN

Feel this campaign is premium and stylish 99%
Feel this campaign is for brides like me 95%

In terms of market results, the wedding diamond jewelry growth exceeded the overall diamond jewelry growth. Source: DTC

CONCLUSION.

We learnt that the preference between precious products is actually the preference between precious cultures. We learnt that research is about exploring old things for new meanings.

Our client's response to the campaign said it best : "The best part of this campaign is that it is not product focused. It is not just about the shine of the diamond, but about the shine of the bride, which is a real discriminator.



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