

The Wireman gears up for a WiFi era Coverage: **India Tech Online**

Date : May 31st, 2019

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The Wireman gears up for a WiFi era

In its 40th year, a home grown consumer electricals business reinvents itself for a new 'connected' era by adding WiFi, touch and voice, to boring old switches... the Goldmedal Electricals story

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June 1 2019: When Goldmedal Electricals was born in 1979, it was just another family run supplier of Electrical switches and accessories. A small manufacturing unit in Mumbai produced electrical goods, doorbells, wires, cables, security systems etc. But 40 years on, the second generation of owners, the Jain brothers, realised the market was changing rapidly, with a new breeze of smart automation, threatening to disrupt the market. They decided to reinvent themselves – in multiple ways:

One, by pulling money into good design and R&D to create a new suite of 'connected' electrical goods and two, by creating a new persona for the company, in line with modern perceptions.

Launching a new mascot

They began with the second track – launching a new brand mascot - 'The Wireman', for its wires & cables segment, to symbolise strength, reliability and safety – the important features of Goldmedal's products – and emphasise their USP: The company's wires are of flame retardant (FR) grade and have a self-extinguishable property which mean even in high temperatures, they are able to resist fire. Additionally, they are available in Flame Retardant Low Smoke (FRLS) variant which ensure higher visibility in the event of a fire. This enables easier escapes and rescues in case of a fire. Says Kishan Jain, Director, Goldmedal Electricals: "Through the launch of our brand mascot, we aim to differentiate Goldmedal wires from our competition by focusing on the flexibility and adaptability of our products".

Riding the government's Make in India wave, the owners set up new manufacturing units in Vasai, Vjaywada and Bhiwadi even as it became a Rs 1200 crore company last year. Its early thrust on R&D enabled the company to quickly address the challenge of technologies like Touch and Voice that consumers demanded.

New Touch and Voice-controlled switches

Last week Goldmedal introduced a new family of i-Touch Wi-Fi Switches, for home automation that can be controlled manually at a touch panel as well as through a remote control, mobile app and voice commands through Amazon Alexa and Google Assistant.

With the i-World app, a user can control and know the status and even set scenes that control a series of switches at a pre-defined time. Switches are available as dimmers, fan regulators and multi switch control panels. Goldmedal i-Touch Wi-Fi switches are available offline or at retail outlets for Rs 5,900 onwards.

Kishan Jain, suggests Goldmedal Electricals' rationale in the future: "The rapid proliferation of new technologies such as internet of things, artificial intelligence, connected devices & home automation, have provided FMEG companies tremendous opportunities to grow, flourish and expand into newer industry segments. Additionally, the past few years have seen the Government of India having a keen focus on the promotion of