



How Tobacco Products Are Marketed Online

A Special Report on Tobacco's Glamorization
Through Bollywood and Sports

July 2025





Foreword

Over the past two decades, India has made commendable progress in tobacco control and is now recognized as a regional and global leader. Several key milestones have been achieved, reflecting the country's commitment to reducing tobacco use and improving public health. Between the first and most recent rounds of the Global Adult Tobacco Surveys ([2009–2010](#) and [2016–2017](#)), the country recorded a 17.3% relative decline in adult tobacco use, representing approximately 8.1 million fewer tobacco users (from 34.6% in GATS 1 to 28.6% in GATS 2). Even more encouraging is the 42% reduction in tobacco use among Indian youth aged 13–15 from the Global Youth Tobacco Survey 1 in 2003 to the 4th survey in 2019. These trends are promising indicators of the impact of effective policy implementation and increased public awareness.

Despite this progress, the challenge remains substantial and requires continued vigilance and stronger enforcement to meet our long-term public health goals. Over a quarter of Indian adults continue to use tobacco, and alarmingly, many young people [initiate tobacco use](#), such as beedi and smokeless tobacco, before the age of 10. Marketing remains one of the key drivers of tobacco consumption. India has instituted strong bans on tobacco advertising, promotion, and sponsorship. However, indirect and surreptitious marketing tactics, including surrogate advertising, continue to reach and influence consumers, particularly youth, through digital platforms.

Reports such as this one from TERM provide timely and critical insights into the evolving digital marketing tactics of the tobacco industry, highlighting emerging threats to our progress.

Tackling the tobacco/nicotine epidemic requires a collaborative approach, drawing on the strengths of public health institutions, enforcement bodies, and civil society. I appreciate the work undertaken in compiling this report and hope it contributes to a deeper understanding of the current landscape, ultimately supporting our shared vision of a healthier, tobacco-free, and nicotine-free India.

Sincerely,

Dr. Shalini Singh

Director

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Director

WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control Knowledge Hub on Smokeless Tobacco

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Introduction

Digital marketing of tobacco products is a powerful tool that exploits the vulnerabilities of young people. By glamorizing harmful substances, targeting susceptible audiences, and circumventing age restrictions, this marketing poses a serious threat to both the health and future potential of young people in India. Article 13 of the World Health Organization's Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (WHO FCTC) recommends banning all forms of tobacco advertising, promotion and sponsorship across all channels. Online platforms, which are more difficult to regulate than traditional media channels such as television, newspapers and billboards, pose a significant challenge to controlling and curbing tobacco marketing. Vital Strategies' [Tobacco Enforcement and Reporting Movement](#) (TERM), a digital media monitoring and reporting system that tracks tobacco marketing on social media platforms, presents this **special report** that summarizes observed examples of online tobacco marketing in India, with a focus on marketing through entertainment and sports.

Definitions used in this report

- **Surrogate products:** Non-tobacco products with a similar visual brand identity as the company's tobacco products. "Surrogate marketing" is the marketing of surrogate products, which in India are most often pan masala or mouth fresheners.
- **Brand-extended products and services:** Non-tobacco products and services that use the established brand name or trademark of a tobacco company, but do not have the same visual identity as the company's tobacco products. "Brand extension" is the marketing of brand-extended products, which may include confectionaries, processed food products, household items, incense, etc.
- **Non-tobacco products:** Surrogate products and brand-extended products and services.
- **Direct marketing:** Marketing of tobacco products with clear visuals of the product and/or its use, or the product brand name.
- **Indirect marketing:** Promotion of the tobacco company and/or product and its use through brand extension, surrogate marketing, price discounts and giveaways, and sponsorship of events or activities. of events or activities.

Highlights

- India's tobacco control landscape is evolving in response to digital marketing trends, industry diversification, and changing consumer behaviors. Despite regulatory safeguards such as the Cigarettes and Other Tobacco Products Act, 2003 (COTPA), monitoring tobacco marketing content across digital platforms presents new challenges. The tobacco industry, including companies with diversified portfolios, sustains brand visibility through brand extension (75%), surrogate marketing (11%) and general public relations. Direct marketing of cigars, beedi and electronic cigarettes were also observed (3%).
- 2,629 marketing instances were observed between December 2024 and February 2025 on various platforms such as Instagram (35%) and X (33%). These posts and news items had an estimated reach of 287.7 million. The report highlights how tobacco marketing was framed within entertainment (58%), lifestyle and cultural content.
- Tobacco companies continue to align their brands with high-profile sports events such as the Indian Premier League 2025. This tactic, also known as “sportswashing,” leverages the positive values of sports such as vitality, success, and national pride to sustain visibility while masking the harmful effects of its products.
- Social media posts by Miraj Cinemas featured scenes from Bollywood films depicting tobacco use by lead actors. These visuals, shared across platforms like Instagram, reflect how entertainment content may influence audience perceptions, particularly among younger viewers.

Recommendations

- Monitor and report regularly to support restrictions on tobacco marketing. Tobacco marketing must be carefully surveilled both online and offline.
- Build better accountability mechanisms. Public figures, especially celebrities and sports figures, should actively distance themselves from the tobacco industry by calling out its underhanded youth-oriented marketing practices.
- Ban sponsorships that let harmful industries use the glamour of sport and entertainment to mask the ugly reality of addiction. Protect the integrity of sports.
- Curb tobacco glamorization and promotion through online posters, teasers, and reels promoting films, in addition to the Film Rule regulation, which mandates health warnings and disclaimers.
- Use targeted counter-marketing campaigns to alert consumers, especially youth, to recognize harmful marketing tactics.

Spotlight 1: Tobacco-Linked Sponsorships in Sports Raise Concerns for Youth Exposure and Noncommunicable Diseases Risks

Youth Exposure to Tobacco Marketing Through Sportswashing and Public Health Risks

Sponsorship of sports events, youth programs, or health-related initiatives may blur the line between brand-building and public health, particularly when the sponsoring brand is associated with products linked to increased risk of noncommunicable diseases such as cancer, cardiovascular disease, and chronic respiratory conditions. Associations with athletes or high-profile events can shape public perceptions, especially among adolescents who are more responsive to social cues and role models. Repeated exposure to brand-linked content in familiar and popular settings may influence attitudes and normalize future use.

Expanding Reach Through Digital Platforms

As sporting events continue to gain traction across digital platforms, the reach of brand-linked content now extends well beyond stadiums and television broadcasts. TERM's findings indicate that platforms such as YouTube and Instagram increase the visibility of these associations, making them more widespread and less easily captured by traditional monitoring and enforcement approaches. This shift in how brand messaging is encountered, particularly within entertainment and sports contexts, poses ongoing challenges for public health stakeholders working to limit early exposure to products associated with health risks. Continued policy implementation, monitoring, and strategic communication efforts remain important components of strategies to reduce tobacco-related harm and promote long-term health.

Tobacco companies have long used [sports sponsorship](#) to build brand associations with values such as vitality, success, and national pride. In India, cricket continues to serve as a prominent platform for brand visibility. In response, the [Board of Control for Cricket in India](#) has recently introduced additional restrictions to limit all forms of ad content, including surrogate advertisements, during the tournament.

The Indian Premier League (IPL) 2025 broke viewership records, logging 4,956 crore (49560 million) minutes of cumulative watch time on Over-the-top (OTT) platforms. According to TAM Sports, pan masala, a product category linked to smokeless tobacco through brand families, was the [most advertised category](#) on television during the tournament. This reflects a continued use of legally permitted product categories for widespread promotion.



These promotional reels by Vimal Elaichi invite audiences to guess the winning cricket team with the promise of prizes like an iPhone 16. Framed as an interactive contest, the reels garnered over 4.6 million views.

Source: @vimalelaichi Instagram (Internet search)

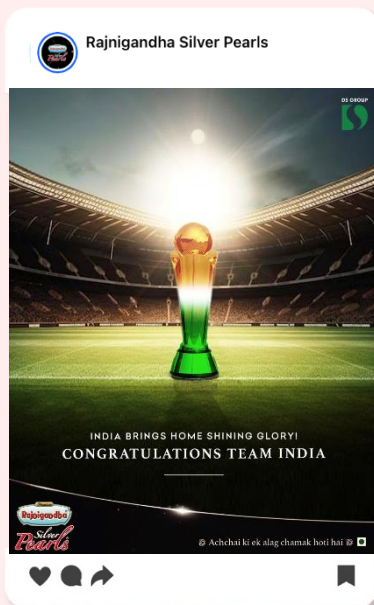
Indian Premier League's digital reach is evident in millions of online mentions.

Digital monitoring by TERM during the recent Indian Premier League, held from March 22nd to June 3rd found over 1.4 million IPL-related mentions and 20,000 interactions between March to April 2025. YouTube led platform engagement, followed by news sites, Instagram, and X (formerly Twitter). This volume of conversation underscores the broad reach of the IPL, particularly among young audiences engaging on digital platforms.



Online conversations referencing "IPL 2025" (March - April, 2025)

Additionally, from December 2024 to February 2025, TERM documented promotional content for the ICC Champions Trophy by Miraj Cinemas, which is affiliated with Miraj Group, a company that also markets smokeless tobacco. The [event drew 110 million TV viewers](#), highlighting the potential scale of audience exposure when brand-linked entertainment and sports promotions converge.



This is a promotional post by Miraj Cinemas encouraging audiences to watch the ICC Champions Trophy final match, featuring visible branding from both Miraj Cinemas and Star Sports.

Source: @MirajCinemas Instagram

This post by DS Group's Rajnigandha Silver Pearls congratulates Team India on their victory, using the moment to build brand relevance.

Source: @RajnigandhaSilverPearls Facebook (Internet Search)

Spotlight 2: Glamorization of Tobacco Use in Bollywood Films and Digital Platforms—Observations from Miraj Cinemas Content

India has comprehensive tobacco control legislation, including the Cigarettes and Other Tobacco Products Act, 2003 (COTPA), which covers restrictions under the Film Rules and tobacco advertising, promotion and sponsorship (TAPS) provisions. These regulations prohibit the display and promotion of tobacco products in films, trailers, posters and online media, and require content to be reviewed by designated authorities. However, enforcement across digital platforms presents emerging challenges due to evolving content formats and distribution channels.

Activity observed on social media accounts linked to Miraj Cinemas, a cinema chain under the Miraj Group, illustrates how traditional and digital media can intersect, potentially increasing the visibility of tobacco imagery among younger audiences. Miraj Group is a manufacturer of smokeless tobacco products. These trends underscore the importance of ongoing digital monitoring and the need for adaptable policy mechanisms that keep pace with shifting media environments.

TERM monitoring observed that social media accounts linked to Miraj Cinemas shared still images and short videos of actors using tobacco products in films. Such content, once circulated online, may contribute to how tobacco use is perceived by younger audiences, including perceptions of social acceptability or normalization. Bollywood films continue to play a significant role in shaping popular culture in India. Tobacco use, whether in the form of cigarettes, beedis or smokeless tobacco, is often portrayed by a range of characters, including heroes, villains and female leads. These depictions may appear without prominent health warnings, potentially increasing their visibility and impact. When such scenes are shared on platforms like Instagram, they can gain traction rapidly, embedding tobacco imagery within broader entertainment and youth culture.



This promotional post by Miraj Cinemas features the 2025 action film “Deva,” starring Shahid Kapoor. The poster contrasts two versions of the character—one holding a cigarette, the other a gun. This visual pairing suggests associations between smoking and traits such as power, masculinity and rebellion. The character’s portrayal reflects a common archetype of the fearless, rule-breaking hero, which contributes to the glamorization of smoking, especially among impressionable youth.

Source: @MirajCinemas Facebook

Adolescents are particularly impressionable. Repeatedly seeing tobacco use, especially by admired actors, can create the impression that it is normal, accepted or expected, shaping young people’s beliefs and choices. Repeated exposure to tobacco imagery in film or online content may lower perceived risks and influence decisions to try or use tobacco. Peer influence and the desire for social acceptance may further reinforce these perceptions, especially when tobacco use is depicted in appealing or aspirational contexts.



In a teaser reel for the film “Tere Ishq Mein,” actor Kriti Sanon is shown portraying a character experiencing emotional distress. The scene includes a moment where the character lights a cigarette, using the act to underscore her inner turmoil. This portrayal may contribute to the glamorization of tobacco use by linking it to emotional intensity and personal struggle—associations that can influence how smoking is perceived, particularly by impressionable viewers.



In the promotional reel of the Telugu sports action movie “Peddi” starring Ram Charan, the actor is shown smoking a beedi, and donning an intense, rugged look. The teaser opens with his dramatic entry, using slow-motion shots of him smoking to accentuate the character’s dominance and allure.

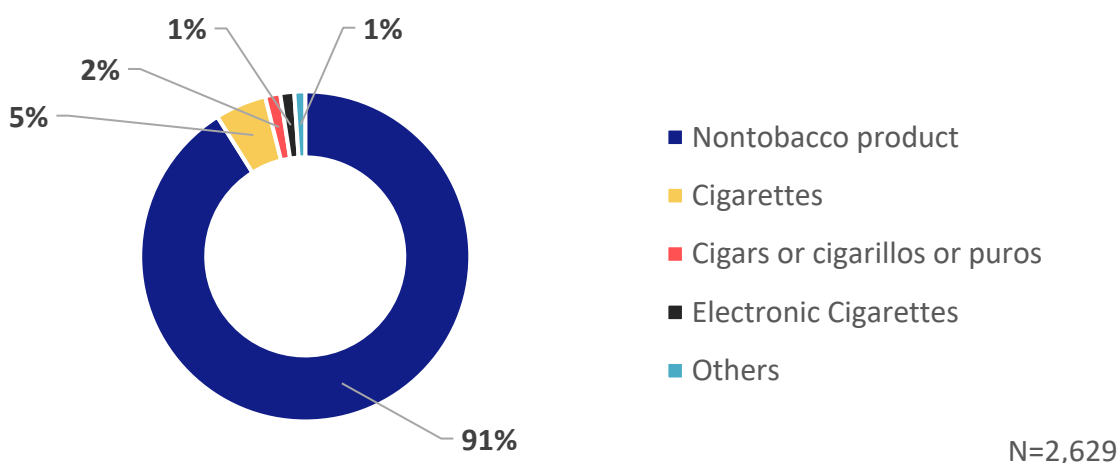
Source: @MirajCinemas Instagram

Detailed Insight

Building on the spotlight issue, the following section highlights a detailed analysis of online marketing activity observed from December 2024 through February 2025, outlining key insights on marketing tactics employed, platforms leveraged, and the strategies used in message framing.

Which product categories dominate the marketing landscape? Most observed marketing was for non-tobacco products (91%) (Figure 1). This included brand extension and surrogate products. Cigarettes, cigars and electronic cigarettes accounted for the remaining activity.

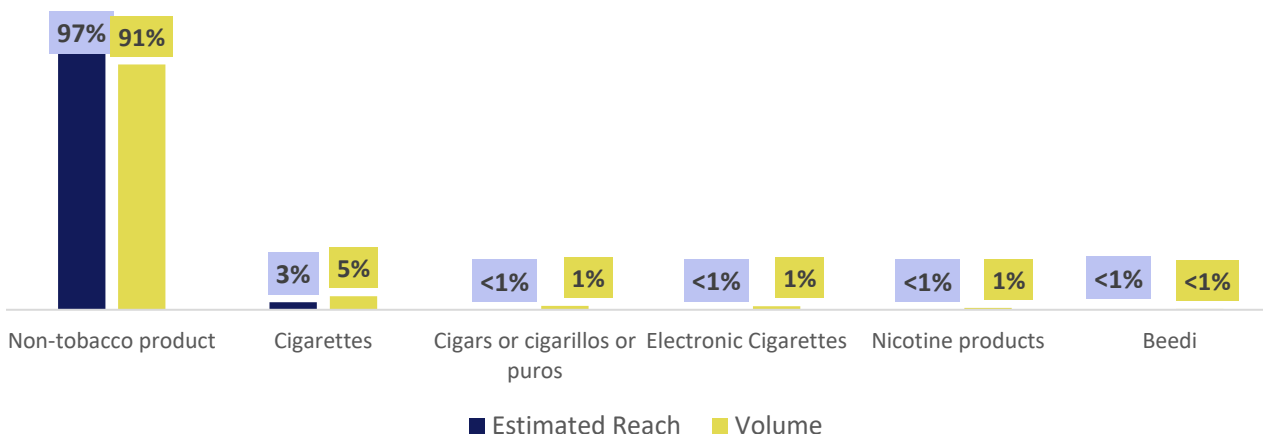
Figure 1
Total Posts by Type of Tobacco Products



Base: 2,629 total posts, India (Dec 2024 – Feb 2025)

What is the marketing reach by product type? Most observed marketing was for non-tobacco products (91% of total volume; 97% of estimated reach), commonly through brand extension and surrogate products (Figure 2). Tobacco and nicotine-related marketing made up a smaller share (9% of volume; 3% estimated reach), including cigarettes, cigars, electronic cigarettes, nicotine pouches and beedi (Figure 2).

Figure 2
Total Posts and Estimated Reach by Type of Product Marketing

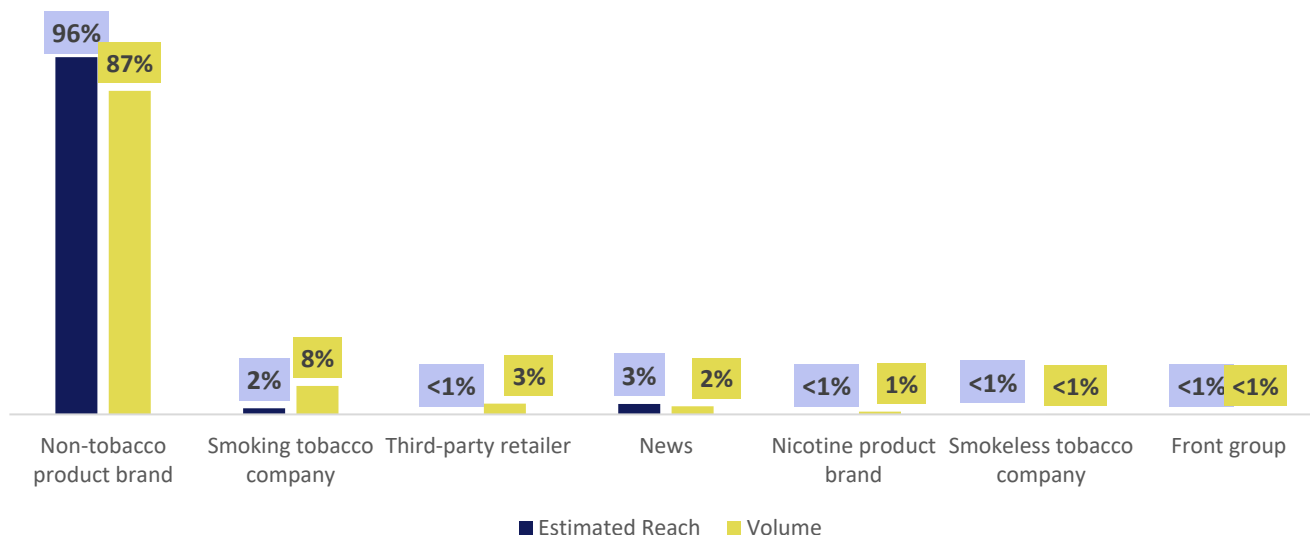


Base: 2,629 total posts & 247.7 million estimated reach*, India (Dec 2024 – Feb 2025)

What entities dominate tobacco marketing volume and reach? Non-tobacco product brand accounts accounted for the majority of observed marketing (87%) (Figure 3). These are brand extension and surrogate product accounts which have a huge number of followers across platforms and an estimated reach of more than 247 million (96% of estimated reach). In comparison, other accounts, such as smoking tobacco companies, third-party retailers, news outlets and smokeless tobacco companies had a smaller share of activity (13%) (Figure 3).

Figure 3

Total Posts and Estimated Reach by Type of Accounts



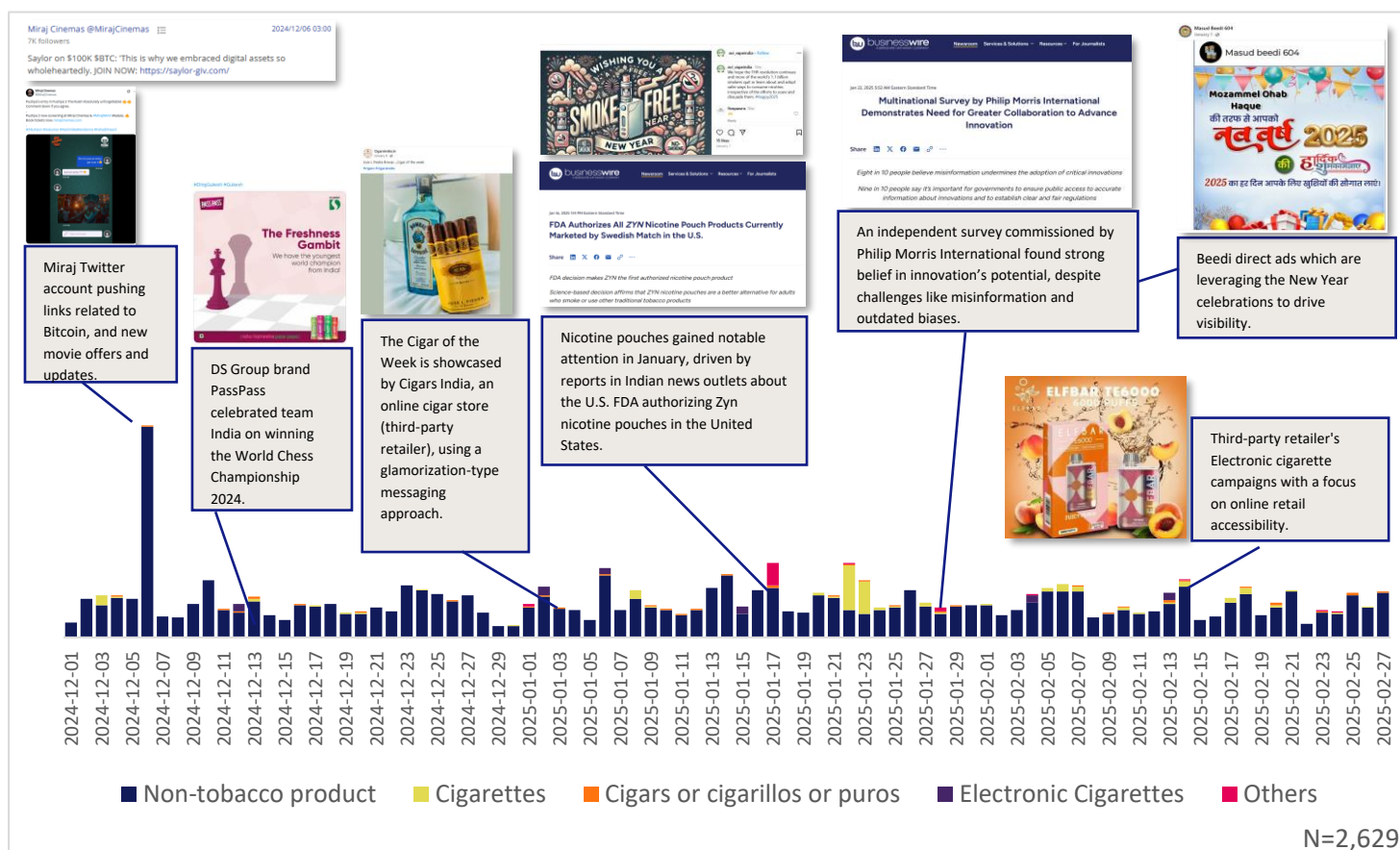
Base: 2,629 total posts & 247.7 million estimated reach, India (Dec 2024 – Feb 2025)

Note: Estimated reach* is an estimate of the actual proportion of audience members presumed to have been reached by the message. This is automatically calculated by the Synthesio system using the number of account followers/subscribers. The Synthesio system assumes all the followers of those accounts have seen the message.

Trends: Monitoring indicates continued use of social media by tobacco and nicotine companies to promote brand-extended products. Third-party retailers often provide WhatsApp contact information, facilitating direct outreach to digital-savvy consumers. Cigar retailers appear to target affluent, lifestyle-driven audiences through luxury collaborations, cultural narratives, and curated experiences, sometimes pairing cigars with alcohol to enhance engagement and appeal (Figure 4).

The following examples in (Figure 4) show that the recent U.S. Food and Drug Administration's approval of Zyn nicotine pouches received coverage in Indian media, followed by the release of a Philip Morris International-commissioned survey emphasizing public support for innovation in tobacco harm reduction (Figure 4). These developments highlight how the industry uses ideas of choice, modern products, and reduced-risk options to promote itself. At the same time, they underline the need for the public health community to provide clear public messaging and push for strong, evidence-based regulations on new tobacco products.

Figure 4
Trend of Tobacco Product Marketing



Based on observed news articles, India's tobacco industry is navigating [increases in goods and services taxes \(GST\)](#), market volatility, and restructuring. Brands are diversifying, and regulatory pressures and shifting investor sentiment shape strategic moves, including Indian Tobacco Company Limited's (ITC Ltd.) restructuring and British American Tobacco's planned exit from ITC Ltd. Hotels.

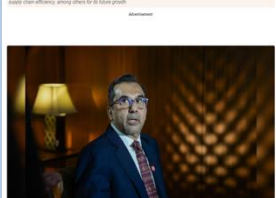
GoM's 35 per cent GST proposal raises concerns over impact on cigarettes, luxury cars



India's tobacco sector affected by proposed goods and services tax (GST) hikes

Analysts warn the rate increase could dent demand, already faltering amid slowing economic growth, a justification fronted by the tobacco industry to navigate regulations.

We aim to be a leader in every segment we operate in: ITC Chairman Puri



ITC Ltd. adjusting to new market realities

ITC Ltd. is sharpening its competitiveness and strengthening innovative capacity under its "Next Strategy" as the multi-conglomerate aims to be a leader in the segments in which it operates.

BAT to divest stake in ITC Hotels at "best moment", says Chief Executive Tadeu Marroco



British American Tobacco plans to divest its 15% stake in ITC Hotels

The industry continues diversifying into non-cigarette businesses while navigating regulatory pressures.

ITC Demerger: Analysts remain optimistic amid strategic restructuring, see up to 29% upside potential in shares

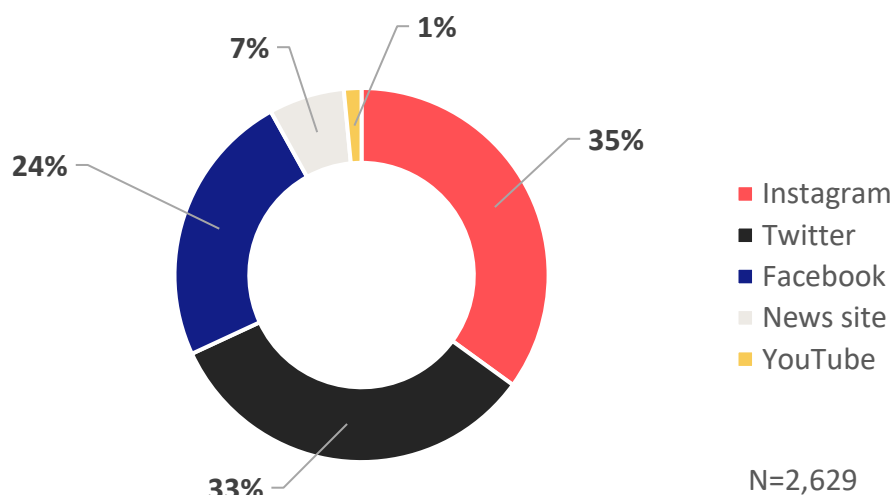


ITC Ltd. strategy to increase shareholder value

ITC Ltd. Hotels will be made independent after the demerger on Jan. 1, 2025, allowing full ownership to be kept by shareholders. This move is seen by analysts as a strategy to increase shareholder value in the hospitality sector.

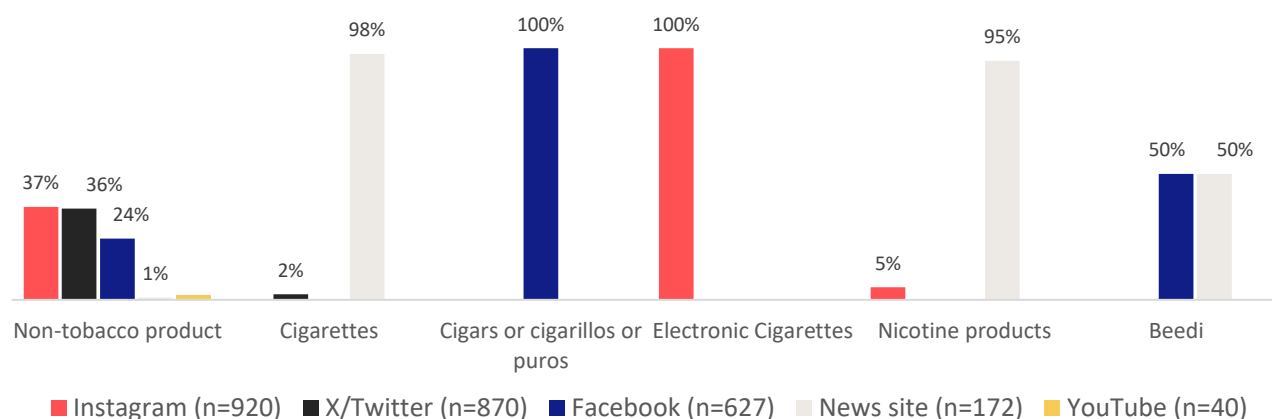
Where was the marketing observed? Marketing activity for tobacco and related products was primarily observed on Instagram (35%), which has a strong focus on visual and interactive content, followed by X (formerly Twitter) (33%) and Facebook (24%) (Figure 5). Facebook was commonly used by non-tobacco product brands to reach broad audiences and by cigar brands to engage with niche communities. News sites accounted for a smaller share of observed marketing (7%) (Figure 5).

Figure 5
Total Posts by Platform Type



How did the promotion of different tobacco products vary across social media platforms? Non-tobacco product marketing was spread across Instagram (37%), X (36%), and Facebook (24%) (Figure 6). Cigarette-related posts appeared almost exclusively on news sites (98%). Cigar marketing was observed only on Facebook (100%), while electronic cigarette promotions were split between Instagram and Facebook (100% each) (Figure 6). Nicotine pouches were primarily featured on news sites (95%). Beedi marketing was evenly divided between Facebook and Twitter (50% each) (Figure 6). These patterns suggest that different product categories rely on distinct platforms to reach their intended audiences.

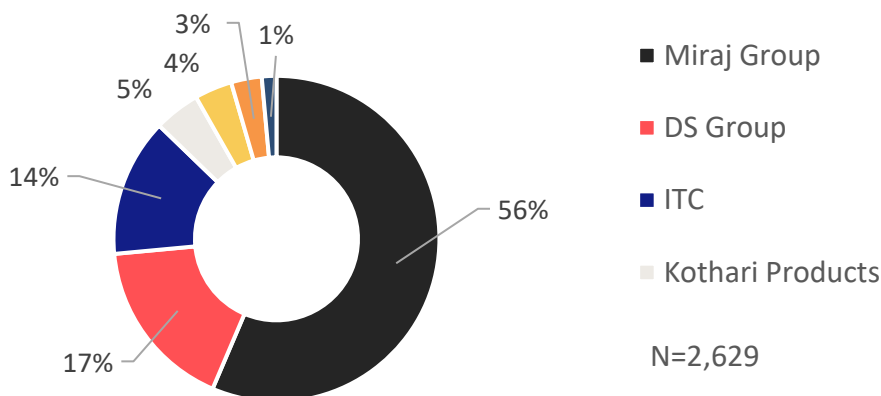
Figure 6
Total Posts by Tobacco Type by Platform Type



Base: 2,629 total posts, India (Dec 2024 – Feb 2025)

Who are the key players? Miraj Group accounted for the largest share of observed marketing posts (56%) followed by Dharampal Satyapal (DS) Group (17%), ITC Ltd. (14%), Kothari Products Limited (5%), and Philip Morris International (4%) (operating through its affiliate India Philip Morris Private Limited) (Figure 7).

Figure 7
Total Posts by Tobacco Type by Platform Type



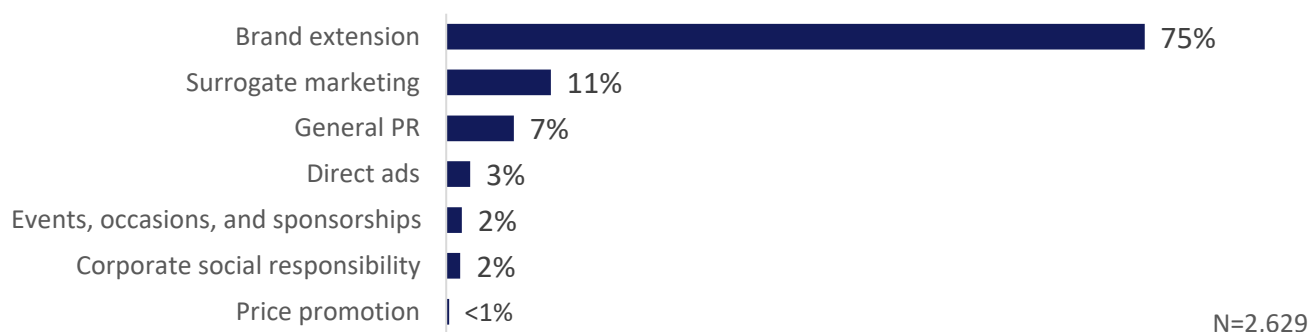
Base: 2,629 total posts, India (Dec 2024 – Feb 2025)

Note: General mentions posts are primarily posts from and third-party retailers and posts about tobacco but do not feature any brand such as regulatory and health mentions. Others include Godfrey Phillips, DB Signature, multiple companies, Masud Beedi 604 and front groups (Association of Vapers India – AVI)

What marketing tactics were used?¹ Tobacco marketing in India remains shaped by regulatory restrictions, with companies relying heavily on indirect approaches. The most frequently observed tactics were brand extension (75%) and surrogate marketing (11%) (Figure 8). These methods are commonly used to maintain brand visibility without directly promoting tobacco products. General PR tactics made up a smaller share (7%) and focused on industry news and regulatory developments. Direct advertising was limited (3%) and primarily observed for cigars and electronic cigarettes, often promoted by third-party retailers. Other tactics included events and sponsorships (2%), “corporate social responsibility” messaging (2%), and price promotions (<1%) (Figure 8).

Figure 8

Total Posts by Marketing Tactics Used



Base: 2,629 total posts, India (Dec 2024 – Feb 2025)

¹ See Appendix 1 for definitions of marketing tactics.

Examples of Marketing Tactics



Brand Extension

This post by Catch, a food and spice brand owned by DS Group, features festive-themed content titled “Tasty Christmas Recipes.”

While the post promotes food-related content, it is shared by a company with a broader brand portfolio that includes tobacco products. The post aligns with a broader trend in brand extension marketing, where the overall presentation reinforces the brand’s identity as a household name, appealing to consumers through festivity, tradition and culinary inspiration.



Direct Ads

This Facebook post by Dada Bidi features a photo showing large woven baskets filled with hand-rolled beedis.

The post does not include any promotional text or hashtags and appears to focus on the presentation of the product itself. This type of post reflects a product display approach, where the emphasis is placed on the visual depiction of beedis in bulk, possibly highlighting traditional manufacturing or local trade practices.



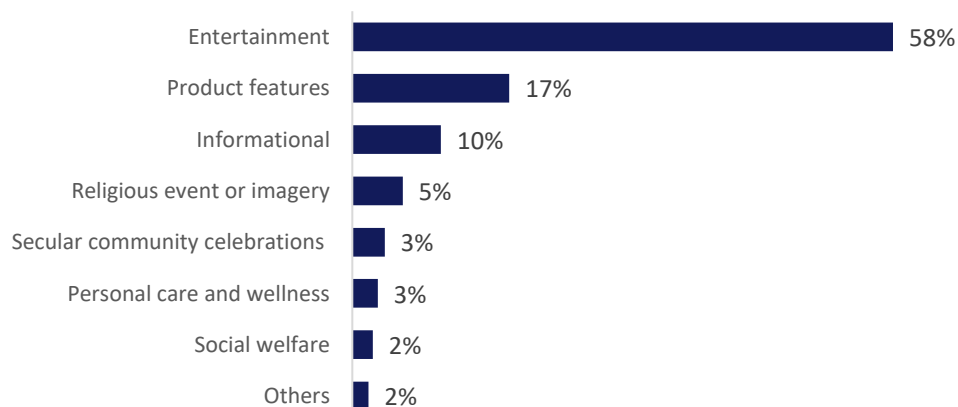
Surrogate Marketing

This Instagram post by Jagran Film Festival prominently features Rajnigandha logo, a brand widely recognized for its smokeless tobacco products. This is an example of surrogate marketing where branding elements visually identical to Rajnigandha’s pan masala packaging are used.

What messaging was used? Entertainment-themed messaging was the most frequently observed in marketing related to tobacco and associated products in India (58%), largely linked to non-tobacco product categories (Figure 9). Brands such as Miraj Cinemas featured seasonal themes such as Christmas and [Valentine's Day](#), and engaged audiences on social media platforms.

Product feature messaging was common in electronic cigarette content (17%) (Figure 9). While overall levels of direct marketing were low, some posts related to [cigar](#) and [electronic cigarettes](#) included product images, often appearing in content shared by third-party retailers. Informational messaging accounted for a smaller share (10%) and primarily included coverage of industry news or updates on how companies [are responding to regulatory pressures](#) (Figure 9).

Figure 9
Total Posts by Message Framing Used

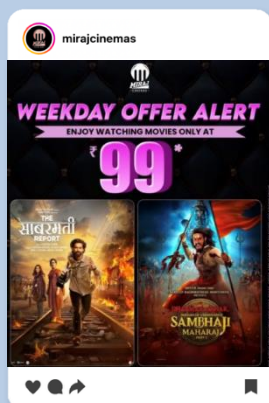


N=2,929

Base: 2,629 total posts, India (Dec 2024 – Feb 2025)

Note: Other tactics include glamorization and eco-awareness.

Examples of Message Framing



Entertainment

The post engages the brand community in their favorite pastimes, in this case cinema, as Miraj Cinema, a brand extension of Miraj Group, seeks to build brand loyalty. This cinema chain is owned by Miraj Group, which produces smokeless tobacco.



Secular community celebrations

The post shows Miraj Cinemas marking the new year and highlighting its "toast for the new year." This endears consumers with the brand philosophy and builds brand loyalty. This is a brand extension of Miraj Group, a smokeless tobacco company. The company logo is prominently displayed.



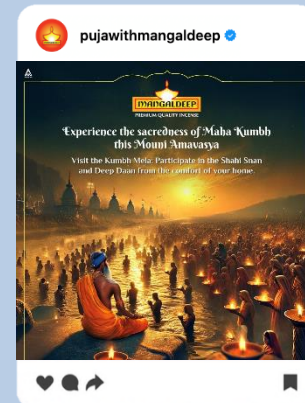
Product Features

The post highlights the qualities of the Sunbean coffee product, manufactured by ITC Ltd., a smoking tobacco company, with focus on its rich aroma and strength. Note the use of the ITC Ltd. logo in this image.



Informational

The post showcases recipes themed around the new year festivities to maintain relevancy with audiences. This is a brand extension of DS Group, a smokeless tobacco company. The DS Group logo is used in this image.



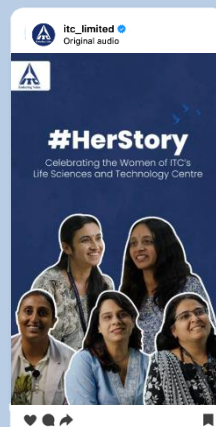
Religious event or imagery

Mangaldeep incense marks the Kumbh Mela in harmony with its consumers to build loyalty for the brand and increase visibility. This is a brand extension of ITC Ltd., a smoking tobacco company. The ITC Ltd. logo is used in this image.



Personal care and wellness

DS Group through its Rajnigandha brand provides wellness motivational messages to drive brand engagement.



Social welfare

This post from the ITC Ltd. Instagram account highlights its support for women scientists in time for International Women's Day. This post positioned the company in solidarity with women and portrays itself as a good corporate citizen.



Glamorization

Cigar Conexion (third-party retailer) focuses on glamorization, indulgence and aspirational positioning, which also leveraged Valentine's Day. Note the cross-promotion of alcohol products with cigar smoking.

What were the most frequently used hashtags? The word clouds below illustrate the most frequently used hashtags in tobacco-related marketing observed across social media platforms. Larger words in the visual indicate higher frequency of use (Figure 10).

Prominent hashtags include #mirajcinemas, #chinglesmaxi, #explorepage, #bollywood, #viral, #life, #reels and #miraj. Many of the terms reflect entertainment themes, references to films and public figures, and commonly used social media tags. Additional hashtags were related to surrogate products (e.g., #panmasala, #mouthwatering), seasonal or cultural events (e.g., #diwali), and trending formats (e.g., #trendingreels, #instareels). These patterns suggest that marketing content frequently incorporates elements of popular culture and digital engagement trends.

Figure 10
Top Hashtags Used by Tobacco Related Accounts



Base: top 50 hashtags with highest frequency within the total posts, India (Dec 2024 – Feb 2025)

Appendix Table 1. Definitions for concepts, marketing tactics and message framing identified

Marketing tactic	Type of marketing strategy used, which captures the intention of the marketing (to sell products, create brand endearment/loyalty, etc.)
Brand extension	A separate brand of non-tobacco items that are produced by tobacco companies/conglomerates. The products may use the trademark logo or the name of the parent tobacco company. These products do not show any features that indicate association with any tobacco products.
Community-based marketing	Promotes the sale or use of tobacco products indirectly by creating brand connection to a specific community or subculture. (e.g. Photography enthusiasts, electronic music lovers).
Corporate social responsibility	Pairs the company/brand or product with socially responsible activities (e.g., water conservation projects, financing vaccination drives).
Direct ads	Promotes the sale or use of tobacco products in a straightforward manner; shows images of the product.
Events, occasions, sponsorships	Pairs the company/brand or tobacco product with events, occasions, sponsorships and contests (e.g., product sponsorship of sports events, live concerts, holiday greetings).
General PR	Intended to raise the profile of the brand/company but does not fall into any of the other categories (e.g., brand/company wishing a happy new year).
Price promotions	Promotes the sale or use of tobacco products and new nicotine and tobacco products through price discounting (e.g., 10% off).
Message Framing	Underlying theme around which the whole message of the post is built.
Entertainment	Posts that promote the product as being entertaining and fun. This category also includes posts that use entertainment-related content including memes, funny videos or jokes.
Environment eco-awareness	Any post that addresses climate change, conservation, sustainable development goals, or encouraging people to support environmental causes.
Glamorization	Posts that associate use of products as aspirational, luxurious or part of an ideal, fashionable lifestyle.
Health claims	Posts that present the product as healthier than other products or as being less harmful than conventional tobacco products.
Informational	Posts that instruct viewers how to use a product. This category also includes posts that provide background information on the company.
Personal care and wellness	Posts that associate products with relaxation or stress management. This category also includes posts that frame products as being used for social bonding, including forming community around use of the product with like-minded peers.
Product features	Posts that primarily emphasize the available choices of product flavors and design including device colors, as well as technical specifications of the product. Posts without any text descriptions or keywords that only display the product are also included in this category.
Religious event or imagery	Posts that feature religious imagery or celebrate religious festivals and events.
Secular community celebrations	Posts that offer celebrations or greetings for non-religious social and sporting events that are celebrated globally or nationally. This category also includes content celebrating achievements or honoring the memory of those who passed away.
Social welfare	Posts that showcase activities sponsored or supported by company/brand that are meant to improve their public image. Any posts associating the company with social welfare schemes, livelihood initiatives, women's empowerment, entrepreneurship, educational scholarships, etc.

Methodology

The Tobacco Enforcement and Reporting Movement (TERM) is a digital media monitoring and reporting system that is AI-supported and human expertise-driven that tracks tobacco marketing on social media platforms and news sites. The primary purpose of TERM is to identify instances of tobacco marketing, a known public health risk. TERM does not allege or attempt to identify whether these tobacco marketing instances are in violation of local or international laws.

This report summarizes information gathered by an AI-supported monitoring tool from publicly available posts on social media platforms including Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube and TikTok (except in India), and from online articles on news sites. Instances of tobacco marketing on social media are identified using keyword-based queries and through the regular monitoring of social media accounts that were identified purposively via input from tobacco control experts, market research data and keyword searches. News articles are identified by tracking the top 20 newspapers based on circulation in English and the commonly spoken language in each country through their social media accounts, RSS feeds and Google Alerts and via LexisNexis if behind a paywall. Data coding is first conducted automatically and is then reviewed by Vital Strategies researchers using a theory-driven codebook. The analysis is currently restricted to content in English and Hindi. The platform does not track targeted paid ads, peer-to-peer marketing, or marketing in private groups. Data restrictions and privacy laws followed by social media platforms may lead to undercounting of marketing activity.

About the Tobacco Enforcement and Reporting Movement

Vital Strategies' Tobacco Enforcement and Reporting Movement (TERM) is a digital media monitoring system that tracks tobacco marketing online on social media platforms and news sites. TERM is currently operating in India, Indonesia and Mexico.

About Vital Strategies

Vital Strategies is a global health organization that believes every person should be protected by equitable and effective public health systems. We partner with governments, communities and organizations to reimagine public health, and the result is millions of people living longer, healthier lives. Our goal is to build a future where better health is supported across all facets of our lives, in our families, communities, in our environment and our governments.

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