



Ritu Bhagat

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Summary

Built a beauty brand from zero - **50,000+** units shipped, **400+** influencers, **20M+** influencer reach & **20%** repeat purchase rate. Skilled in balancing the creative and data side of brand building, a strategic mind always enthusiastic about solving problems.

Professional Experience

Founder | Harkoi | Mumbai

- Solo founder of a **7-member D2C beauty** brand designed to celebrate dusky Indian skin tones, in **India, UAE & Saudi Arabia**.
- Cracked **Product-Market-Fit** by **identifying deep problem statements** like whitecast when applying sunscreen, sweat-droplets when playing sports, etc by the user during customer research interviews.
- Launched **10+ high-margin SKUs** in Makeup, Skincare & Haircare, overseeing formulation strategy, ingredient innovation, packaging architecture, building manufacturer relationships, retailer partnerships. Harkoi was sold through **Tira, Vanity Wagon, Amazon**.
- Generated a **ROAS of 2** on AOV of INR 699 (industry averages of ROAS 1.5 at a similar price point) by designing data-backed performance marketing funnels across Meta, Google & Amazon. Harkoi hit the **top 10 in Tinted Sunscreen category on Amazon for 2 months**, competing against **Lakme**. Increased website conversion rate from **0.8% to 2.1%** by restructuring product pages, simplifying checkout, and aligning landing pages with ad creative.
- ~ Achieved **10% of new monthly acquired customers** through a community-led referral program, the ‘**Gift your friend**’ program. *30% of these gifts* converted to full-size products, and 8% of these customers turned into loyal customers of the brand.
- Improved product-level gross margins from **45% to 52%** through vendor renegotiation and formulation optimization, extending supplier payment terms from pre-payment to 45 days - improving working capital without external debt.
- Built brand visibility organically - *securing press coverage in Grazia, LBB, Verve, and Tweak India* within year one (no PR agency).
- Expanded into *offline retail across Vanity Wagon and Shoppers Stop* - 10 stores across 7+ cities - training 10 sales associates on product and customer engagement.
- Cleared stock worth **10 lakhs**, of an unsuccessful nail polish launch, by listing on *Meesho* & capitalising on organic reach via influencers to cater to volume-conscious buyers from small towns.

Marketing Consultation & Strategy | ThatSlaps | Mumbai

- A consultancy model to help founders struggling with performance marketing.
- Helped **5 clients** across therapy, e-commerce, services, and ghostwriting. Trained and coached the internal team on performance marketing fundamentals over several months - covering campaign structure, creative testing, audience building, and day-to-day optimisation - transferring full capability in-house rather than creating long-term external dependency.
- Scaled lead generation for one client from **20–30 to 600+ leads/month within two months** - a 20x increase - and supported **3 new program launches (₹1–2L price point, ~30 students/batch)** through the funnel.

Education

Bachelor of Commerce – *Monash University | Melbourne, Australia. (2016-2019)*

Accomplishments and Awards

- Harkoi won the **Nykaa x LBB** Top Emerging Brand Award in 2023 in the Beauty Category, amongst 22 other brands in the beauty category.

Co/Extra-curricular

- Created a **pro-bono WhatsApp** community called '*All Things Pop-Up*', made up of **430+** brand owners, helping each other out by discussing physical pop-ups, past experience and sharing new opportunities.
- Start-Up & Niche Vertical Head for **IIM A Placement Committee**, 2026.