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FOCUS

Packaging, the Fifth P of Marketing

Packaging is the latest area that is seeing a raft of patent registrations by corporate India. As shelf spaces get crowded, companies are rushing in with innovative and clutter-busting packaging solutions across industries. And increasingly, companies are now filing patent applications to protect innovations around materials, package construction and features, technology and equipment.

Consider this: Recently, life science company Avesthagen was granted registration for its trapezoidal design by the Indian Patents Office for its Good Earth range of health foods. The trapezoid-shaped boxes, the company feels, created a distinct identity for its range of breakfast cereals. And companies across industry segments, led by a bevy of MNCs, are aggressively filing patents for registering their designs,

in India, including bluechips such as Procter & Gamble, Cadbury, Colgate-Palmolive, Hindustan Unilever, Reckitt Benckiser, Marico and Essel Packaging, among a host of others. Says Rahul Chaudhary, Partner at law firm Lall Lahiri & Salhotra: "Globally, packaging patents are on the rise. MNCs are first off the block in India as well."

Packaging, it seems, has joined product, price, place and promotion as the fifth cornerstone of marketing.

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PATENTS RUSH

- **Avesthagen**, an Indian life science company, granted patent for its packaging for its Good Earth range of health foods.
- **Tetra Laval**, a Swedish MNC, was granted an Indian patent for its packaging machines.
- **Bilcare Ltd.**, an Indian innovation-led solutions provider, has been granted an Indian patent for its metallised packaging films.

