

Creature Companion®

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Promoting Indian Pet Industry Globally

Interzoo 2022
Special Edition

**COME
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MOST TRUSTED PET RETAIL BRAND**



**AND MAKE YOUR WAY
INTO THE INDIAN PET MARKET**

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Voices of Leaders from Indian Pet Industry





Kunal Khanna, Founder CEO,
Vivaldis Health and Foods Pvt Ltd.



Vivaldis is Disrupting the Companion Animal Space

Creature Companion Magazine engaged in a lively freewheeling conversation with Kunal Khanna, Founder CEO, Vivaldis Health and Foods Pvt Ltd.

During the interaction Kunal talks about his journey as an entrepreneur during the last seven years; his plans for the coming years and his global ambition.

Drawing from his rich experience in human healthcare he is producing some of the best-in-class products for pets.

DO TELL US ABOUT YOUR BACKGROUND AND THE INSPIRATION TO START VIVALDIS HEALTH AND FOODS PRIVATE LIMITED

Before I start, I would like to talk about myself and the inspiration behind Vivaldis. I started my career as a banker, worked with various global multinational banks.

Took a break and completed MBA from the London School of Business.

I moved to pharmaceutical business, joined GSK as Business Development Head, was based in Dubai for the Middle East and North Africa region. After GSK I worked as Director, Business Development with Emcure Pharma.

Way back in 2000 we had a young Cocker Spaniel called Ginger, she passed away due to cancer at the age of three. It was a painful moment. I realized that there were not enough treatment options available in this country for pets. Being a family of pet lovers,

I decided to come back to India and start Vivaldis, hence it was for both personal and professional reasons that I started the Company.

My exposure to the pharma industry made me realize the gap between animal healthcare available in India and what was available in the world.

The Indian healthcare market was lagging behind.

This was the right time to launch a pharma company focused exclusively on pet health offering innovative product solutions.

We, at Vivaldis have been doing this for the last 7 years.

WHAT HAS BEEN YOUR LEARNING IN THE LAST 7 YEARS?

I observed a massive increase in pet humanization trends where pets are considered as children, not like children.

Pet parents are doing for their pet everything that is done for a child. They indulge in specialized food, maintaining their pets with regular grooming and taking them for parties or vacations as there are now pet friendly hotels.

We took an annual holiday at Coorg this year. The hotel was pet friendly. There were as many as 10 dogs on the property. It was wonderful to see that pets are now a part of people's everyday lives. Pet human kinship has gone altogether to a different level.

The second fact is the per capita spend on pets has gone up drastically. These days pet parents really want to spend a lot on their pets from basic necessities to advanced medical treatment.

The size of vet clinics has completely changed from about 100 sq ft to multi specialist clinics all across the country equipped with the top-class diagnostic services which means the treatment is more science driven; and based on human treatment model of diagnosis, prognosis and treatment.

IS VIVALDIS PRESENT PAN INDIA?

We are present across the country. Today we have one of the largest distribution and sales network in the country. We have crossed 100 field sales persons. Our presence is almost in every city. However, there is a lot of scope to grow.

HOW MUCH OF YOUR EXPERIENCE FROM HUMAN HEALTHCARE IS USED IN ANIMAL HEALTH?

Quite a bit actually, when I decided to start Vivaldis, there was a huge gap of good molecules and good drug supplements in the market. The available treatments and supplements were run of the mill products.

In GSK, we were trying to innovate and get new products; new molecules into market. In Emcure we were marketing generic global patented medicines.

THIS YEAR A KEY FOCUS FOR US IS GLOBAL EXPANSION. WE BELIEVE THAT WE HAVE AN EXCELLENT AND A WELL-ROUNDED PORTFOLIO, WE HAVE ESTABLISHED OURSELVES WELL IN INDIA. WE BELIEVE THAT THE PORTFOLIO WE HAVE DEVELOPED IN-HOUSE CAN BE A VERY GOOD VALUE ADDITION TO COMPANIES GLOBALLY.

In Vivaldis, we bring patented products when their global patent expires. Our aim is to get generic medicines for India at much cheaper prices. We are the first to launch generic medicines.

Our entire team's focus is to constantly develop new formulations and new molecules. Our pipeline of products for the next 5 years is already in place. We plan our launches this way.

YOU HAVE A COMBINATION OF IN-HOUSE BRAND AS WELL AS FOREIGN BRANDS, WHICH ARE THE FOREIGN BRANDS YOU'RE DEALING WITH AND COULD YOU TELL US A LITTLE ABOUT THEM?

We have a global tie up with three different companies. The first was Bioiberica based in Spain. They are a leading player of biomolecules in the world today. So with them, we have launched a number of products for treatment of joints, hair, skin and various other ailments including hepatic health.

The second tie-up is with Catalysis another Spanish company. They have patent protected Molecular Activation Technology designed along with the Centre of Research for Spain. Their technology improves the potency of a molecule from 100 to 1000 times. In simple words the medicine becomes far more effective.

The third tie-up is with Rx Vitamins based in USA, wherein, we have got great condition specific nutraceuticals to treat various disorders related to kidney, liver, cardiac health and many more.

WHAT ARE YOUR FUTURE PLANS? DO YOU HAVE A PLAN TO LAUNCH PET FOODS OR TREATS?

Yes! Last year we launched our B2C brand 'Bark Out Loud'. This brand has been launched in association with Virat Kohli Foundation and all our products are co-branded with the foundation.



We have kept the same principle in mind while designing treats. We have designed a range of treats which are obviously fun because treats are supposed to be fun but they are functional as well.

We have come up with unique treats after a lot of work by scientists, vets and our marketing team. Our first launch was with hemp. We are the first ones to do that in the country. The second product has activated curcumin in it. Third is a range of multivitamins in a chew. Every treat we launch will have functional benefits for pets.

We started these treats around three months back and we are already present in almost 600 pet stores across the country. This entire year, we are going to rapidly expand our treat range. We want to be the no. 1 player in treats market in India by the end of the year.

We have a very aggressive plan of marketing and distribution as well as product development. This is how we have created space for ourselves in the pet healthcare industry. We will do the same in the B2C segment.

A LOT OF COMPANIES GOT FUNDED. THIS STARTED IN 2021 AND IT IS STILL CONTINUING. WHAT ARE YOUR THOUGHTS ON THE FUNDING SCENARIO AND MARKET'S APPETITE?

I speak to a lot of private equity financiers and bankers because of my previous background in banking.

I have realized that there is a lot of appetite in the global space in regard to animal healthcare. The pet healthcare space is growing but still very small in India. It needs time to establish itself and a lot of these investors, private equity players, want to get in early. So, I think it is a very exciting time because a lot of interest is being developed in this field, a lot of money is coming in, and a lot of product development is going on.

Positive signs are pet store chains are coming up across the country and an increasing number of veterinary clinics and hospitals. Pet keeping is increasing drastically y-o-y.

I would say that the industry is on the rise.

IS VIVALDIS LOOKING FOR GLOBAL MARKETS?

This year a key focus for us is global expansion. We believe that we have an excellent and a well-rounded portfolio, we have established ourselves well in India. We believe that the portfolio we have developed in-house can be a very good value addition to companies globally. I think that our next growth, at Vivaldis, is going to come from global expansion.