

STONE 'N' STRING®

Hooked on Fashion

Market

Stone 'N' String is the market leader in fashion jewellery in Sri Lanka, commanding over 30% of the market for gift items. On the face of it, jewellery may seem like a product with limited growth potential in a developing country, or as occupying a market segment that can easily be threatened by other fashion segments – but the opposite is true. It is a rapidly evolving market that has enjoyed a healthy growth momentum of over 25% for ten consecutive years.

Indeed, inroads have been made into the market, with many alternatives and substitutes that prove to be highly competitive. This has resulted in a diminishing share of the Sri Lankan wallet for jewellery. Yet, in the face of this, Stone 'N' String has stood strong – it is, therefore, a brand that is deeply entrenched in Sri Lanka. Its brand values, inspirational image, innovative designs, desirable gift options and impeccable service standards have enabled the brand to grow from strength to strength – not only locally, but in the international arena as well. Stone 'N' String's overseas operation is currently enjoying healthy growth.

There are two primary reasons for this growth. The first is Stone 'N' String's rapid response to emerging fashion trends – a given for any brand, but a prerequisite for a fashion brand. The second is price, an aspect that few brands succeed in satisfying. Stone 'N' String pre-empted the latest catwalk fashions at affordable prices, and it is for these reasons that its most demanding customers keep coming back for more. And thanks to a highly inspiring brand name, Stone 'N' String asks consumers to choose between cheap imitations and genuine quality, follow branded trendsetters and stay ahead of the times.

Achievements

Stone 'N' String has achieved success on many fronts. It pioneered high-fashion jewellery in Sri Lanka and it is one of the fastest growing brands in South-East Asia. It has over 40 outlets worldwide, spanning from Australia to the US – and it plans to open 100 new outlets. Stone 'N' String was the first Sri Lankan company to franchise its outlets globally – it operates under the Debenhams banner, the upmarket store in the Middle East and it boasts the largest jewellery store in South-East Asia, with over 8,000 square feet of shopping space.

It is the only company from Sri Lanka to sign an exclusive online franchise agreement with a Japanese organisation. It was also the only brand in the Asian and Middle Eastern regions to be sold on board five international airlines – Singapore Airlines, Emirates, Malaysia Airlines, Eva Air, Jet Airways and SriLankan Airlines. It was the only Sri Lankan company to market fashion jewellery by using plated metal and gemstones as far back as in 1981. And it was the first jeweller to win the Presidential Export Award in Sri Lanka. Stone 'N' String also emerged as the winner of the Taiki Akimoto 5S Award in 2003 and it was the first jewellery company to obtain ISO certification in Sri Lanka.

In 1994 and 1995, the top two sellers



onboard Emirates were Stone 'N' String products. And 15% of all sales on SriLankan Airlines flights related to its Ceylon Blue Sapphire free-size rings.

In just 24 years, Stone 'N' String has turned itself into a global lifestyle brand, creating history by being the only Sri Lankan jeweller with an extensive global presence. Its designers, the Dream Team, believe that every woman is beautiful and that a touch of fashion gives her a sense of added confidence. Its mission is to be a globally sought-after brand in fashion accessories. It also envisions serving the most satisfied customers, enjoying mutually beneficial long-term relationships with its business partners, offering the best possible rewards to its employees for their commitment and achieving the best returns on investments on behalf of its shareholders.

History

Some 25 years ago, Mohideen Saheed, a Chartered Accountant, believed that Sri Lanka – which was famed for its gems – was the ideal launching pad for a totally new brand of jewellery that projected a philosophy that fashion is a lifestyle.

The company has risen from humble beginnings, starting out in an attic where Saheed's wife and sister-in-law designed jewellery, thereby echoing his silent dreams. Their products evoked beauty, glamour, fantasy and excitement. They combined the intricacies of fine jewellery, exquisite workmanship and breathtaking designs.

Since the early 1990s, Stone 'N' String has been through a remarkable transformation – from being the only fashion jewellery store in Sri Lanka, to becoming a more serious trendsetting brand.

This success has made Stone 'N' String a retail phenomenon that enjoys substantial growth in sales and profit – and carving out a distinctive personality with its own DNA. It continues to grab headlines in most fashion titles and broadsheets, establishing a reputation for bringing innovation and style to the Sri Lankan fashion industry.

Product

Despite its name, Stone 'N' String's jewellery is made from coral, pearls, sterling silver and copper. Stone 'N' String's collection is exhaustive. It includes Fire Of Desire, ultimate luxury items, bridal and exclusive party wear, Attitude (a new hip collection), Everyday Gold (gold jewellery for everyday wear), a semi-precious range (for daily wear and office wear), party wear, a designer collection for formal wear, the Crystal range (a glitter collection), Divo (gents and corporate gift items), De Vida (lifestyle products), power and health jewellery, and souvenirs. There are bracelets, ear-rings, watches, pendants, necklaces, chains, ear-studs and rings for every occasion at Stone 'N' String's showrooms. Customers can shop by price or category, and online customers can shop anytime by accessing



a store in Sri Lanka, Australia, the UK, the US, Bangladesh, the Maldives, Oman or India. Stone 'N' String offers online shoppers free delivery in Sri Lanka.

Stone 'N' String's after-sales service revolves around what it calls the four Rs – repairs at nominal prices, re-plating at nominal rates, redesigning for exclusive designs and a generous refund policy.

Recent Developments

The company recently made its presence felt in the leisure industry hotspot of Goa, in India. The Stone 'N' String store in the Indian state spans over 2,000 square feet in terms of shopping space, catering to the aspirations of holiday makers. The company is also opening more stores in Mumbai and Delhi.

De Vida, an exclusive brand that typifies lifestyle luxuries, was introduced to the market in December 2005. De Vida includes a range of candles, footwear, handbags, toiletries, luxury leathers, silk, linen and plant jewellery made from the finest semi-precious stones.

The much awaited collection for men, Divo, was also launched in 2005. The brand comprises merchandise ranging from cufflinks and tie-pins made from gold, sterling silver, stainless steel and

studded with semi-precious and precious stones to designer belts and bracelets made from the finest leather. Sterling silver and stainless steel key rings studded with semi-precious and precious stones are also marketed by Stone 'N' String.

Its Style Advisor Service, the ultimate in personal shopping services, is available at Stone 'N' String's flagship store on Duplication Road, in Colpetty. Here, style advisors offer free fashion tips. They also specialise in bridal jewellery.

Stone 'N' String Online is a shopping portal that enables consumers to shop from the convenience of their homes. It accepts all major credit cards. The online store now caters to delivering items to any part of the world and it has an online inquiry function 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Stone 'N' String is the first and only Sri Lankan company to sign an exclusive online franchise agreement with Japan. The online franchisee, Rama DBK, plans to market Stone 'N' String merchandise via its online platform at www.ramadbk.com.

It was also the exclusive licensee for souvenirs at the South Asian Federation Games, an international sporting event held in Sri Lanka in August 2006.



Promotion

Jewellery for the 2006 celebrity cricket match was exclusively sponsored by Stone 'N' String. In addition, jewellery for the annual bridal fair was also exclusively sponsored by the company.

The crown worn by Miss Sri Lanka for Miss Universe 2006 was designed and manufactured by Stone 'N' String. Likewise, the crown for Miss Tourism International, an international pageant hosted by Sri Lanka, was also designed and manufactured by Stone 'N' String.

Brand Values

Stone 'N' String's brand values revolve around an aspirational image, product excellence, desirable gift options, innovative designs and impeccable service. The brand lives and breathes the core values that reflect this philosophy. And its foray into the global marketplace has reaped rich dividends in terms of enhancing the Stone 'N' String brand.

www.stone-n-string.com

THINGS YOU DIDN'T KNOW ABOUT

STONE 'N' STRING®

- Pope Benedict XVI was gifted The Raja, a jewelled elephant designed and manufactured by Stone 'N' String.
- Celebrities and VVIP customers of Stone 'N' String have included the President of Sri Lanka, the First Lady of Mauritius and the First Lady of Pakistan.
- It boasts the largest jewellery store in South-East Asia, with over 8,000 square feet of shopping space in its flagship shop in Colpetty.
- Five inventions have been patented by Stone 'N' String.
- The company has embarked on a programme that recognises the role played by mothers in the future leadership of the country. It has felicitated 1,000 mothers, whose children passed the GCE Ordinary Level Examination. Booklets titled *Bright Sparks*, with tips on how to succeed at examinations, were distributed.
- A 10% stake in the company is held in trust, to meet the social needs of the community at large.