



## **InnoVision B-School Review**

### **CNBC TV 18 & HUL LIME Season XV Grand Finale**

Proposals for Open Network for Digital  
Commerce by four finalists of CNBC TV 18 & HUL  
Lessons in Marketing Excellence

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## CNBC TV 18 & HUL LIME Season XV Grand Finale

The goal of the competitive event is to push young minds to solve problems that are far bigger than the brands and important for the country and for the society.

From a total of 2500 teams, four have reached the finals.

For the finale, LIME has chosen [ONDC](#) the Open Network for Digital Commerce.

**About ONDC:** India has been a world leader in demonstrating the successful adoption of digital infrastructures at the population scale, such as UPI, AADHAAR, and more. ONDC (Open Network for Digital Commerce) is yet another tech-based initiative to transform the way e-commerce functions in the country by enabling e-commerce through an open protocol based on open-source specifications.

The initiative will not only facilitate the rapid adoption of e-commerce but also boost and strengthen the growth of startups in India. By facilitating scalable and cost-effective e-commerce through the open protocol, ONDC will empower startups to grow collaboratively.

### Brief for the final presentation

The two key aspects that the finale teams were asked to speak on were:

1. They need to come up with ideas to get more merchants on to ONDC. So how do you convince more shopkeepers? How do you convince retailers to jump into ONDC.
2. What's the value proposition to get more consumers to start using ONDC.

### Team Growth Catalyst

#### ISB Hyderabad

India is the country of shop people. We have one retailer for every 20 people.

We want to first understand three things.

1. What is the issue.
2. Why is it an issue.
3. How can we solve it

**Research:** Tier 1 and Tier 2 cities. Conversations with these sellers and other stakeholders.

#### Insights

1. Sellers are as diverse as customers.
2. Tier 1 city sellers are well serviced and Tier 2 city sellers face shortage.

**Approach:** Features and Value Proposition of Shikhar Seller App: Unleashing market potential Start with tier 2 city sellers and swiftly move into tier 1 city sellers with the tagline *Apni Dukan Apni Pehchan. Shikhar Se Bechiye Aur ONDC Pe Jitiye.*

AI Enabled *Shikhar Se Baat* to receive offers in a gamified platform.

**Loyalty Program:** Introducing a loyalty program that can incentivise consistent use of the buyer app can help with customer loyalty. By offering vernacular language support, we can cater to the 30% who prefer local language over English, enhancing user experience and accessibility.

**WhatsApp App:** You can also look at increasing the service reach of kirana stores beyond 6 kilometres so that people can buy from their favourite kiranas. Moreover, rationalising the app to align with local demands and preferences can further use personalise the user experience.

**WhatsApp integration:** Tap a message from your local trusted store and access their WhatsApp based app. It's quick, with a familiar interface and offers everything. From browsing to order tracking. our value proposition is bringing the local experience online the end-to-end journey is not just about buying it's about a smooth engaging shopping experience from start to launch.

### Team Lime-Light

#### IIM Kolkata

ONDC has immense potential when it comes to levelling the field for the Kirana wallas.

ONDC provides the sellers more control over their online businesses.

#### Barriers when it comes to going online

1. Lack of technical capabilities.
2. The need of skilled labour



3. Access to credit
4. Inventory management
5. Cataloguing the products and billing.
6. Psychological barrier of lack of trust in the parties helping them in their journey to go online.
7. High upfront costs and the commissions.

HUL, the brand that the retailers trust, could hand hold them in their journey of going on line. The app could have a module called the Shikhar Seller which helps the retailers go online and sell their catalogue of products. The early adopters would be the Kirana Wallas already on the app. They are aware of the technology and have the potential to be the early adopters. There is potential for Shikhar Seller to be adopted in the metro and tier 1 cities.

*Aap Aur Shikhar, Pahunche Har Ghar.* This embodies the proposition and help Kirana Walas through their digital journey and empower them to increase their sales.

### Addressing the barriers

1. Inventory and cataloguing support measures.
2. Leveraging the existing sales representative network of HUL.
3. Zero onboarding fees coupled with lesser commission rates.

The team formulated an AEIOU framework to assess opportunities for ONDC and the buyer apps. Focusing on *Accessibility, Efficiency*, making the users more *Intuitive*, ensuring a cohesive *Omni Channel* experience, providing a truly *Unbundled* service to increase adoption and decrease grievances and steps to check out.

### Team TSR

#### XLRI

Through digitalisation there is a huge potential for market expansion by marketing and selling niche products for very specific consumers. Now ONDC is able to do this onboarding of very local kirana stores into the digital ecosystem and because it is a democratised system it would be viable in this ecosystem which was earlier only for big online retailers.

How will HUL benefit from this? HUL will onboard its own local products to these kirana stores that are now onboarded on to the ONDC platform. Sell these local products in regional areas to niche customers on a scale that was not possible earlier.

Value Proposition: Simplicity and scale. The transaction will be handled by Shikhar. Tagline. *Shikhar Hai To Fikar Nahi.* The retailer will just focus on selling, everything else would be handled by the platform.

The team tried to understand the set preferences and why consumers were not shopping online for groceries in Tier 1 and Tier 2 cities. The top reasons included 1. There is no quality assurance, 2. No reliable information and feedback on sellers, 3. Non availability of products in demand locally and 4. Absence of a khata system. Shikhar Seller will address each of these concerns.

The team proposes a khata system where in customers can get say about Rs.3000 to Rs. 5000 monthly in their wallet and asked to pay that amount at the end of the month, which would allow similar experience if they got from a khata for a local kirana store.

### Calcium Oxide

#### IIM Bangalore

Democratise and centralise the digital ecommerce space in India.

Understand how ecommerce and HUL operate. Understand the ground realities of our consumers and sellers. Plotted the value chain to gain an end to end understanding of how everything is working and where there are white spaces and opportunities where we can contribute. Further supplemented by the on-ground realities of our consumers and sellers.

**Solution:** To create a system where everyone is included, and everyone has some kind of shared value. Our online presence will be through ONDC and Shekhar Seller. The seller will get one Shekhar account to gain their presence everywhere on ONDC.



**Ownership of the process:** Decentralised ecommerce is the idea to get the sellers to understand they own the product, own their customers and own their profits.

**Onboarding:** As we are going through the phase wise onboarding plan, we aim to increase our sellers initially through the initial Shekhar Sellers register. Then the 10,000,000 sellers that we target will be onboarded through Kirana associations, NGOs and outreach programs.

**Incentivisation:** The approach is to give them some incentives in the rural areas where they face the problem of limited infrastructure. We will first of all reach them through hub and spoke model. We will ensure transparency of sellers to make them feel locally about it. We will commoditise the offering to smaller packets, we will allow flexible delivery options and a lot of price comparison will be done through ONDC.

**App Integration:** Once we onboard the consumers, the buyer side app integration would be done for integrating both seller and buyer side on one platform and closing this whole chain. So it would provide data insights that could be used for further personalising products. So bargaining is something that can be done through a gamification model will be done to increase consumer engagement in the tier 2 and tier 3 cities.

### Discussions within the panel of experts

**Question by moderator:** In this 4th transformative journey that you have taken on, which is to digitise commerce in India, what do you think are the top enablers as to why you think the next 100 million consumers will actively shift into this form of shopping and through ONDC? What would be the big enablers for ONDC in its journey going forward?

**Answer by panellist:** The thing that is very exciting about ONDC is the possibilities. For online retailers, the focus, would be to maximise the interest of their shareholders. They select the most attractive thing, which would mean that the extent of the participation is limited by the imagination of a few. In an open network, it gives humongous possibilities for diverse segments of buyers, sellers, logistics providers who are the building blocks of e-commerce. It is a very interesting possibility of being there and succeed or fail based on their own capabilities.

**Question by moderator:** In your experience in in so many decades at Ogilvy when you heard our top teams present their value proposition ideas, when a brand team comes to you and speaks about a value proposition, what are the things that you see right? What are the things that excite you?

**Answer by panellist:** Fundamentally the idea must have some strong value propositions. Sometimes they come from the clients, sometimes we co create it with the client. It has to be simple. I think what's important is that it has to be an enduring proposition.

**Question by moderator:** What roles platforms like ONDC play in revolutionising the customer journey?

**Answer by panellist:** We live in a country where 11,000,000 neighbourhood stores are serving the needs of 1.4 billion consumers. We have got to be able to make them future fit. If they have to in this type of transformation, who will do this? Companies such as HUL, because we work at scale along the length and breadth of the country. What kind of products and brands do we do? We have been known for making aspirations accessible. We are the epitome of democratization. We compete with other brands in an open environment and win every time shoppers step out to buy products of their needs and wants. So what does Shikhar do? It makes retailers compete with all the walled gardens of digitised commerce in a manner that retailers could be future fit. It allows them to become comfortable with digital means so that they can start selling when ONDC equivalent protocol comes calling. The whole floor starts rising, everyone is able to sail well. And because we are organization of scale, we could invest in it for a long time.

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**Question by moderator:** Any key points for marketers to make their brand stand out even more as things get more fragmented.

**Answer by panellist:** No consumer gets up in the morning thinking I'm going to use this paste, I'm going to use this brand, I am going to use these drinks. I'm going to use the soap. No one will do that. No one cares about your brands. Why do you exist in my life is the most important thing and brands should work towards it. And that's where the magic comes. You know what problem you solve in my life, and I think that's the biggest thing that brands sometimes forget. The brands that are successful are those that change things to make you feel that you understand me you make me believe how you can impact a billion people's lives.



Team Lime Light, IIM Kolkata Winner



Team Calcium Oxide, IIM Blr. 1<sup>st</sup> Runner Up



Team TSR, XLRI, 2nd Runner Up



Team Growth Catalyst, ISB Hyd. 3<sup>rd</sup> Runner Up