



AT A GLANCE

Incorporation: 2018

Sector: Waste to resources

Website: www.bunkojunko.com

Stage of Startup: Maturity/Price Competition

Stage of Product: In-market

Customer Focus: B2B, B2C

Funding: Raised grants



Bhavini Parikh

Bhavini started her career in 1991 with ₹ 500 and strong willpower to keep her creativity alive. Before starting her upcycling venture, Bhavini worked in textile surface ornamentation and embroidery work orders for large Indian brands. She also had her own manufacturing unit, BN Fashion. She observed tonnes of pre-consumer textile waste discarded in her journey, which inspired her to become an impact entrepreneur!

ABOUT

Bunko Junko was founded in 2017 by Bhavini Parikh, her daughter Captain Jill Parikh and Dr. Shikha Gandhi. The company aims to promote fashion with a conscience by repurposing pre-consumer textiles. Bhavini being a fashion industry veteran works tirelessly to prevent this waste from going to landfills.

Bhavini deliberated on the name 'Bunko Junko' for long as she wanted to create a strong brand. In Japanese, the term 'bunko' means 'to create art' and 'junko' means 'from junk' which resonates with Bhavini's endeavor to create art out of waste.

THE CONCEPT : PROBLEM & SOLUTION

Almost 15% of pre-consumer textiles are discarded in production houses, making it the second-largest polluting industry. Bhavini has made this pre-consumer textile waste her niche and is determined to create value from it, while upskilling women.

PRODUCT

A bootstrapped business, Bunko Junko develops and designs a range of products like chic apparel, accessories, bags, and more. They promote ethical fashion with a strong focus on women's empowerment. They focus on increasing the range of their products and the unique designs.

CUSTOMERS

Initially, Bhavini sold the upcycled products at exhibitions. The unique products and the impact story attached to the products attracted customers immediately.

According to Bhavini, they thrive on customer retention. She and her daughter go the extra mile to maintain strong customer relationships, which has led to an impressive 80% repeat customer base. Word of Mouth among the eco-conscious segment has been helpful to scale.



FUNDING

With the pandemic severely impacting operations, Bhavini has put fundraising on back pedal. Bhavini won a grant from Visa for R&D. She is looking to get additional grants for further R&D to increase the range of their products offered.

VALUE PROPOSITION

Despite each Bunko Junko product being unique in its raw materials, and the women who design it, Bhavini realized quite early on that this might not be the only factor driving sales.

- The main value proposition is the uniqueness and style quotient of the product, followed by affordability. At Bunko Junko, all products are marketed from this angle. Impact Story is written with each product as an add-on hoping that this inspires more people to become eco-conscious.
- These clothes are created from cloth cuttings during the production process and discarded as waste but are otherwise unused. Hence, the upcycled products are not from 'old' clothes but 'new' scraps from cuttings.

SUPPLY CHAIN

With a strong industry network and the high amount of waste generated in the textile units, raw material sourcing has never been a challenge. Bhavini leverages both online and offline channels for selling her product.

Offline channels:

Traditionally, many customers shop offline, and they only trust brands they have tried before. Bhavini firmly believes, "Jo dikhta hai, vo bikta hai" which means "What can be seen, can be sold".

To reach out to a wider audience and spread awareness about ethical fashion, Bhavini regularly sets up stalls at exhibitions. Additionally, she recently opened an offline store in Mumbai.

Online channels:

For maximum visibility with influencers, e-commerce, and collaborators, Bhavini registered herself on several directories online.

IMPACT

Since 2017, the initiative has saved



368 tonnes of textile waste



270 billion gallons of water



2790 tonnes of CO₂

In her career span of 30+ years, Bhavini has worked with 1000+ underprivileged women and with the goal of establishing them as entrepreneurs.



The growing awareness about sustainable fashion is prompting brands and influencers to seek out affordable alternatives.

CHALLENGES: HURDLES & LESSONS

For Bhavini, the pandemic has acted as a major hurdle. Due to lockdowns, Bhavini had to close their manufacturing unit. It became difficult for Bhavini to sustain the employees and she had to send the employees back with a retainer.

Resilience being her strong suit, Bhavini still managed to inaugurate her first mortar store in Mumbai which will soon be open to the public.

They continue to build their online presence by collaborating with influencers to promote their products and create awareness about sustainable fashion.

WHAT'S NEXT

Bunko Junko's next step is to scale their online platforms and reach out to wider customer base. Their plan for the next five years is to open franchises pan-India. To achieve this, they are looking forward to collaborating with other brands with similar visions to create a greater impact.

