



SPOKESPERSON PROFILE

Atul Gupta is Executive Vice President—at Suzuki Motorcycle India Private Limited (SMIPL), a subsidiary of Suzuki Motor Corporation, Japan. In this capacity, Atul plays a key role in shaping long-term growth strategies for SMIL in the Indian market.

Atul has over 30 years of experience of which more than 23 years have been dedicated to the two-wheeler industry. He has been associated with Suzuki Motorcycles since beginning of 2007. At the time of his joining, Suzuki Motorcycle had just forayed into the Indian market with its initial range of products. The challenge was to establish Suzuki as a best-in-class 'two-wheeler' manufacturer, building on its reputation as a company that had created India's automotive revolution, though one that was principally seen to be a four-wheeler brand.

That said, Suzuki two-wheelers did have recognition as an iconic superbike brand. The launch of the Intruder M1800, Bandit 1250S, GSX-R1000 and the legendary Hayabusa reinforced the image of Suzuki's motorcycle prowess. While Suzuki quickly became the market leader in India in the 1000cc+ category, the desire was to be a volume player and build a brand that reached out to more and more customers. As one of the late entrants in the Indian market, Suzuki faced the challenge of creating a distinct identity for itself in a volume-driven, cluttered market with well-established players and strong brand loyalties.

Atul focused on creating marketing platforms that built equity for the core values of a mass brand: superior product quality, efficient after sales and service and a strong value proposition. The focus was on sustained growth through the year. The results were evident in month-on-month growth in sales for many consecutive quarters. The success of the strategies was most evident in the scooter segment where Suzuki grabbed over 20% share of the market and, today, is looking at expanding its share to over 35% in the near future.

Suzuki's ambitions are much larger and it is imperative for the Suzuki brand to broad-base itself and grab a much larger mindshare. Suzuki Hayate, the mass market motorcycle, attempted to secure a significant space for itself in the Indian motorcycle market. The Let's, Suzuki's first 110cc scooter, was launched this year and is creating a strong foothold for itself. V Strom 1000 ABS is the new entrant to the super premium bike segment. Suzuki has also ventured into the premium bike segment with the 250cc Inazuma. Besides these, Suzuki's flagship 155cc motorcycle – GIXXER has also hit the market and is expected to be the 'game changer' for Suzuki.

The route to market was also strengthened by combining the Suzuki brand proposition with the appeal of Bollywood. For Suzuki two-wheelers, the iconic status of Salman Khan and his national, cross-market,

cross-segment appeal combined well with the Company's brand theme. The brand has recently associated with the vivacious Parineeti Chopra to drive a connect with youth.

Another significant milestone for Suzuki was the unveiling of its integrated brand campaign '**Apna Suzuki, Apna Way of Life**' on the eve of the 67th Independence Day last year. A significant step towards building a strong image for the brand, Suzuki two-wheelers presented its global philosophy WAY OF LIFE with a touch of Indian-ness. The philosophy embodies Suzuki's customer-centric approach.

Suzuki also unveiled an exclusive club – **Suzuki Biking Lords** – for its superbike customers. Suzuki's superbikes stand at the apex of global biking in all their formats. This club was an initiative to bring Suzuki's global legacy closer home to its Indian customers. The community serves the interest of people who enjoy the thrill of biking, the pleasure of performance and appreciate the cutting edge technology of superbikes.

The year 2013 witnessed the launch of Suzuki's **National Consumer Connect Initiative**. A series of service and sales camps were held across the country as a manifestation to Suzuki's philosophy of focusing on customer satisfaction and creating customer delight. Suzuki tied up with renowned Bollywood music composer and singer Anu Malik for these camps.

However, Atul makes it clear that at the core of the brand proposition are core Suzuki product values: *"There are two key areas of focus for Suzuki: product quality and customer service. We will continue to focus on launching India-engineered products, keeping customers in mind. We are steadily building a loyal base of customers and would continue to expand by ensuring high customer satisfaction levels. A strong and steadily growing distribution network will be our strength. Our final objective is to provide a varied range of products to Indian customers. Our strategy would be based on the core philosophy of making 'value-packed products' that generate 'excitement'."*

Prior to joining Suzuki Motorcycle, Atul was Associate Vice President, Sales and Marketing at Yamaha Motor India and was the man behind the strong growth of Yamaha. Atul commenced his career in 1984 with Escorts Limited.

In 1986, Atul joined TVS Motors and over the next 11 years rose to head national sales, handling all aspects of sales and marketing.

A graduate in Mechanical Engineering from Regional Engineering College, Kurukshetra, Atul is also an alumnus of Faculty of Management Studies, University of Delhi. Besides his love for motorcycles, Atul is also passionate about cricket.