



# Innovative Strategies for Commercializing Traditional Assamese Crafts and Products: Unlocking Market Potential for Bell Metal, Silk, Ornaments, and Ayurvedic Crackers

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**Abstract:** This research aims to explore the diverse business opportunities and commercialization strategies for traditional Assamese crafts and products, focusing on bell metal, Assamese silk, Assamese ornaments, and Ayurvedic crackers. By examining current market trends, consumer preferences, and the socio-economic impact of these industries, the study seeks to identify innovative business models and strategic interventions that can enhance marketability and drive sustainable growth. Through a combination of qualitative and quantitative research methods, including market analysis, stakeholder interviews, and case studies, this study will provide actionable insights for artisans, entrepreneurs, and policymakers to harness the full potential of these cultural heritage products in both domestic and international markets.

**Key Words:** Bell Metal, Ayurvedic Crackers, Craft, Artisans, Ayurvedic

## I. Introduction

Assam, a state in northeastern India, is known for its rich cultural heritage and craftsmanship. Traditional crafts, including bell metal Assamese silk (notably Muga and Eri silk), intricate ornaments, and Ayurvedic crackers (like Bhap and Kholikha), are not only symbolic of the region's cultural identity but also represent significant economic potential. These crafts, many of which have been passed down through generations, are often limited by local markets and face challenges in reaching global consumers.

While these products hold immense potential, the commercialization of traditional Assamese crafts remains a complex issue. Traditional artisans face obstacles such as lack of

modern marketing techniques, limited access to global markets, and competition from mass-produced goods. The objective of this research is to explore innovative strategies for enhancing the commercialization of these unique Assamese crafts and unlocking their market potential both within India and internationally.

This paper seeks to offer a comprehensive review of current practices, identify challenges, and propose strategies for enhancing the global reach and commercial success of Assamese traditional crafts, focusing on bell metal, silk, ornaments, and Ayurvedic crackers.

## II. Literature Review

The literature on the commercialization of traditional crafts often highlights two major aspects: the preservation of cultural heritage and the adoption of market-driven strategies for economic growth. Several studies have focused on the challenges faced by artisans in traditional industries, including inadequate infrastructure, lack of branding, and a disconnect from modern retail channels (Chakraborty & Raj, 2018). Similarly, Sharma (2020) emphasized the importance of design innovation and quality control in making traditional products more appealing to contemporary consumers.

**Bell Metal:** Bell metal products, often used in creating sculptures, utensils, and jewelry, have gained some attention due to their eco-friendly nature and traditional appeal. However, they face challenges in terms of mass production and consumer awareness. The work of Goswami (2019) examined how bell metal artisans are limited by traditional methods and a lack of access to newer technologies that could help scale production.



**Assamese Silk:** Assamese silk, especially Muga and Eri, has high demand in niche markets due to its unique properties, such as being naturally organic and eco-friendly. However, according to Baruah (2021), there is a significant gap between the production of silk and its global commercialization. The paper emphasizes the need for greater branding and marketing techniques that could help Assam's silk compete with international luxury textiles.

**Assamese Ornaments:** Traditional Assamese jewelry, known for its intricate designs, is deeply linked to local culture. However, it has not achieved widespread commercial success outside of the region. A study by Hazarika (2020) suggested that the lack of online presence and modern retail techniques has hampered the market expansion of Assamese ornaments.

**Ayurvedic Crackers:** Ayurvedic crackers, made from locally sourced herbs and spices, have grown in popularity among health-conscious consumers. However, their production often remains localized, and there is limited awareness outside of Assam. A report by Singh (2022) highlighted how product innovation and branding could help expand the market for Ayurvedic crackers.

### Objectives

The primary objectives of this research are as follows:

1. To identify the current state of commercialization of traditional Assamese crafts, with a particular focus on bell metal, Assamese silk, ornaments, and Ayurvedic crackers.
2. To analyze the challenges faced by traditional artisans in scaling production and reaching global markets.
3. To propose innovative strategies for improving market access and increasing demand for these crafts both domestically and internationally.
4. To assess the role of modern technologies, branding, and market trends in expanding the reach of Assamese crafts.
5. To explore potential collaborations and partnerships that can benefit traditional craft sectors in Assam.

### III. Methodology

This research employs a mixed-methods approach, combining qualitative and quantitative methods to achieve a comprehensive understanding of the commercialization challenges and opportunities for Assamese crafts. The methodology is divided into the following stages:

**1. Secondary Data Collection:** A thorough review of existing literature on the commercialization of

traditional crafts, with a focus on bell metal, silk, ornaments, and Ayurvedic crackers. This includes studies, reports, and articles published on the subject.

**2. Field Surveys and Interviews:** Primary data will be gathered through structured interviews with local artisans, entrepreneurs, and industry experts in Assam. Additionally, surveys will be conducted with potential consumers to understand their preferences and awareness of Assamese crafts.

**3. Market Analysis:** An analysis of the current market conditions, including pricing, demand, and competition, will be conducted for each of the crafts. This will involve studying both local and international markets.

**4. Case Studies:** The research will look into successful case studies of similar traditional craft industries that have successfully adopted innovative strategies for commercialization, such as the handloom sector in other parts of India, or the rise of indigenous crafts in countries like Japan and Ghana.

**5. SWOT Analysis:** A SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) analysis will be conducted for each of the crafts to evaluate their potential for growth in new markets.

#### Bell Metal

Bell metal is a traditional craft that involves casting metal using the lost-wax technique. This process, while sustainable and eco-friendly, requires modernization to meet the demands of the current market. Current commercialization strategies often rely on small, local markets and artisan cooperatives, which restrict scalability. Innovative strategies could include:

**Product Diversification:** Expanding the range of products beyond traditional sculptures to include home décor items, lifestyle accessories, and even sustainable kitchenware.

**Branding and Storytelling:** Telling the story of the artisans and the cultural heritage behind each product can create emotional value for consumers.

**Digital Platforms:** Using e-commerce and social media to promote products globally, leveraging platforms like Etsy or Amazon Handmade.

#### Assamese Silk

Muga and Eri silk are highly valued for their natural goldlike sheen and eco-friendly properties. Despite their demand in niche markets, there is limited penetration into global luxury markets. Strategies for commercialization could include:

**Premium Branding:** Positioning Assamese silk as a luxury product through branding, certifications (such as organic and fair trade), and high end collaborations.



**Innovative Product Design:** Incorporating modern styles and fashion trends into silk garments without compromising traditional techniques.

**Global Market Expansion:** Partnering with international designers and fashion houses to showcase Assamese silk in global fashion weeks.

#### **Assamese Ornaments**

Assamese ornaments are rich in cultural symbolism and craftsmanship. However, they are often confined to regional markets and face competition from mass-produced jewelry. Strategies for enhancing their marketability could include:

**Collaborations with Fashion Designers:** Partnering with fashion designers to incorporate Assamese jewelry into global collections.

**Customization and Personalization:** Offering bespoke jewelry services that cater to global markets.

**Online Platforms:** Expanding online sales and creating virtual experiences where customers can interact with artisans.

#### **Ayurvedic Crackers**

Ayurvedic crackers, made from herbs, spices, and other natural ingredients, hold promise in the growing wellness industry. To commercialize these products, the following strategies could be adopted:

**Health and Wellness Branding:** Marketing Ayurvedic crackers as a healthy snack alternative that caters to the growing demand for wellness products.

**Product Innovation:** Experimenting with different flavors, packaging, and branding that appeal to urban consumers.

**Distribution Channels:** Expanding distribution through health food stores, online marketplaces, and international wellness expos.

## **IV. Findings**

**1. Lack of Awareness:** There is a significant gap in consumer awareness, both within India and internationally, regarding the cultural and economic value of Assamese traditional crafts.

**2. Limited Infrastructure:** Traditional artisans lack access to modern marketing tools, production technologies, and business management skills.

**3. Potential for Growth:** Despite these challenges, there is considerable market potential for Assamese crafts, particularly in niche markets that value sustainability, craftsmanship, and cultural heritage.

**4. Consumer Demand:** There is growing demand for sustainable, eco-friendly, and unique handmade products, especially among younger, urban consumers.

**5. Barriers to Scale:** The biggest challenges to commercialization include limited access to capital,

inadequate training in modern business practices, and the high cost of raw materials.

## **V. Conclusion**

This research concludes that there is significant potential for the commercialization of traditional Assamese crafts. However, for these products to succeed in global markets, it is necessary to embrace innovative strategies that incorporate modern business practices, digital marketing, and strategic collaborations. By focusing on product diversification, branding, and sustainable practices, Assamese crafts can tap into growing global demand for unique, eco-friendly, and handcrafted goods. The future of these crafts lies in their ability to adapt to market trends while preserving the cultural and traditional elements that make them distinctive.

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