



## “What We Are Doing Is Filling a Unique Void”

Donald Trump Jr on how he picks licensing partners, what brand Trump stands for and more

By Delshad Irani

*Donald John Trump Jr last visited India in 2014. Much has changed between then and last week's tour of his luxury real estate operations in India. The biggest change of course, is there's now a Trump in the White House. Trump Junior's latest excursion has come under heavy fire, with critics and business ethicists in the US and in India. Meanwhile, full page ads announced the price - \$38,000 (the booking fee for a luxury crib in Trump Towers) - of a conversation and dinner with the eldest of President Trump's children.*

*In a chat with Brand Equity, 40-year-old Trump Jr tells us it's "obviously" not business as usual for him with his father running the world's most powerful country. He explains why Brand Trump is stronger than ever and what luxury really is.*

### How has the enthusiasm for Trump properties and the brand evolved in India?

The brand always resonated well to the Indian market place. Now that we're with these incredible partners, whether it be Lodha, Panchshil, Tribeca, M&M, Unitech, we've been able to find the best in those respective markets. And most important is meeting and exceeding expectations. If you don't deliver to expectations, the brand is finished.

What we are able to do with our partners is bring lessons we've learnt. Being on the cutting edge of design, innovation in real estate, in luxury, and actually delivering that here.

India is a cosmopolitan country, I went to school with half of the people I've been meeting with over the last few days. They all seem to be Wharton guys. They experienced it, they've travelled the world, they've been to those cities and for them, to not be able to get that level of luxury at home... they were starved for luxury. So, what we're doing is filling a unique void.

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## THE ECONOMIC TIMES

### “What We...”

The high-end market may be struggling and may be tough. So many people have been disappointed by developers, they’ve been led down a bad path. I think there’s an element of trust and security that comes with our brand.

**What are your rules of thumb when it comes to deciding on a licensing partner?**

First and foremost, for me, you have to become actual friends.

**How does that happen?**

Time. I speak to these guys all the time. We’re going back and forth on text. It’s evolved from a partnership to a friendship. When they’re in the States, we’re together. They come to major events with our families. They’ve truly become friends. That’s part of our brand standard. But when they actually believe in that, you’re on the same wavelength, it makes it easier.

When I first came here, there would be a sort of Indian entrepreneur....You’d meet someone in New York who’d say, “Oh, I have the greatest piece of land.” It looks good on paper and when you get here, “Well, I got a great piece of land; it’s not mine. Well, it’s my cousin’s land. Well, it’s not really his land it’s someone else’s. Well, now that I’m here, now that we’re talking, I’m your guy in India.” No, you’re not. I just flew halfway across the word and you don’t even own



BHARAT CHANDA

what you said you own! That’s not a great way start a relationship. We made our mistakes. You learn the hard way sometimes, but it drives home the point and it also makes you appreciate what you have now.

**So what does brand Trump stand for today?**

It’s the ultimate in luxury. I can’t really name another brand that has done luxury real estate. There’s hotels that have dabbled in it a little bit. There’s a couple

### YOU HAVE TO BE ABLE TO GET THROUGH THE NOISE AND CONVEY THE RIGHT MESSAGE

other fashion brands that have thrown their name on a building here and there, and then you don’t really hear from them.

It’s not as easy as you would think. There’s a lot to luxury real

estate - experience, innovation and being on the leading edge of amenities. My father has been doing that since the early 80s when he really started creating his brand and forging that way.

You can call something luxury but just because you call it, doesn’t make it so.

**You were very active, campaigning for your father. Is pitching brand Trump to voters any different from selling it to business partners and end buyers?**

In any aspect of business, there is an element of salesmanship. That doesn’t make what you’re selling any less true or any less real. You have to be able to convey the right message, to get through the noise. To get the subtle points of what matters to that person.

When I’m negotiating a deal with a partner, there’s something he needs or wants. It means more to him than perhaps I care about, more than perhaps I let on that I care about. Same thing with a consumer. You walk them through an apartment, you walk them through a floor plan, you see what they key in on, if you’re perceptive enough. That’s salesmanship. It’s not saying that the product itself isn’t great. But I know what you like more, so, I can focus on those aspects because that’s going to matter. I think it’d be foolish to say there isn’t a selling component to both of those things and at all levels.

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<https://brandequity.economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/marketing/what-we-are-doing-is-filling-a-unique-void-donald-trump-jr/63094968>

## "What we are doing is filling a unique void": Donald Trump Jr



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