



BUSINESS PLAN · INDIA

BTL & Brand-Activation Agency

Roadshows, activations, sampling and experiential campaigns for consumer brands

EVENTS

AISEVAK.IN · BY ABL DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES

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This document is confidential and prepared for planning purposes. All financial figures are illustrative model assumptions for an Indian MSME context and must be validated against live quotes, local rates and professional advice before any investment or borrowing decision.

1. Executive Summary

This plan sets out a **BTL & Brand-Activation Agency** in India — a below-the-line marketing services business delivering **mall and retail activations, sampling, roadshows, rural and multi-city campaigns, in-shop promotions, merchandising and brand experiences** for consumer brands. It is bought by marketing teams, and it is measured on marketing outcomes: contacts made, samples distributed, footfall converted, outlets covered.

When a brand launches a product, enters a new town, or needs to be physically in front of shoppers, it runs an activation. Unlike an event — which happens once, for an invited audience — a BTL campaign is **distributed and repetitive**: the same activation running in 40 malls across 12 cities for six weeks, or a van campaign covering 300 villages. An activation agency is therefore a **field-execution business**: its real competence is deploying, training, supervising and reporting on large numbers of people in many places at once.

How this plan measures revenue. The agency is an *agent* — it spends the brand's campaign budget on manpower, kiosks, materials, travel and venues, and retains a management fee plus margin. So **revenue here means NET revenue**, with gross campaign billings shown only as a memo. Modelling gross as turnover would describe an ₹18 crore business where a ₹2.87 crore one exists.

The financial signature of this business is the exact opposite of event management — and it is the thing most plans in this sector get wrong. An event firm collects client advances before paying vendors and can run on *negative* working capital. An activation agency does the reverse: it **pays hundreds of field promoters weekly or monthly while large brand clients settle invoices in 60 to 120 days**. The agency funds the gap. That structurally positive working-capital requirement — not margin, not pitching — is what limits growth and what kills undercapitalised agencies. This plan sizes working capital as the single largest use of funds accordingly. It models an agency requiring **₹60 lakh** (₹35 lakh promoter + ₹25 lakh term/WC finance), moving from **₹1.15 crore net revenue on ~₹7 crore gross billings and a ₹2 lakh loss** in Year 1 to **₹2.87 crore net on ~₹18 crore gross and ₹35 lakh profit** by Year 3. *(BTL activation; campaigns × net margin, field-execution-driven, working-capital-constrained — figures illustrative.)*

2. Business Description, Vision & Legal Structure

Concept: A BTL & brand-activation agency - planning and executing mall/retail activations, sampling, roadshows, rural campaigns, in-shop promotions and brand experiences across multiple cities, on a fee-plus-margin basis.

Vision: To be the execution partner brands rely on when a campaign has to happen in fifty places at once - and be reported honestly.

Mission: Put trained people in the right places with the right materials, execute to brief, and report what actually happened.

Legal structure options

- **Private Limited** — strongly recommended: brands empanel through procurement, large-scale contract manpower demands proper statutory compliance, and the working-capital requirement needs a company that can borrow.
- **LLP** — workable at a small regional start, but constrains both empanelment and borrowing.

Regulatory anchor — the compliance burden here is a labour burden, not an event one. Deploying hundreds of field promoters means: registration and licensing under the **Contract Labour (Regulation & Abolition) Act** where thresholds apply, **PF & ESI** contributions for field staff, **state-wise minimum wages** (which differ by state and by skill

category — a genuine costing complexity in multi-state campaigns), professional tax, and proper wage records. Brand clients increasingly audit this, and a compliance failure on manpower can cost an empanelment outright. Beyond labour: mall/venue permissions and space contracts, local body & police permissions for roadshows and public activations, vehicle permits for van campaigns, GST on services, PPL/IPRS where music is used, and product-sampling norms including FSSAI requirements when food or beverage samples are distributed.

3. Promoter & Ownership

Led by a promoter with BTL, brand-activation, FMCG sales or field-marketing experience. The decisive competences are *field execution at distance* — making a campaign happen identically in cities the promoter will never visit — and *client servicing under procurement pressure*. The team includes account/brand managers, field operations managers, planning & creative, MIS/reporting, and recruitment/admin. Execution reliability, reporting credibility, manpower quality & multi-city reach are the differentiators. Ownership, equity & any partner are editable inputs.

4. Market Analysis — India

BTL commands a substantial share of Indian consumer marketing spend because India remains a physically-shopped, trust-through-trial market: consumers sample, touch and ask before they buy, particularly outside metros. Demand is brand-launch-, distribution-expansion- & seasonal-campaign-driven. The market rewards multi-city reach, execution reliability, manpower quality & credible reporting; it is **procurement-led, margin-pressured & working-capital-intensive**.

Demand drivers

- **Product launches & trial generation** — sampling remains the most effective trial mechanism for FMCG and food brands.
- **Distribution expansion into tier-2/3 and rural** — brands entering new geographies need physical presence.
- **Retail & modern-trade growth** — in-shop promotion and merchandising as continuing retainer work.
- **Experiential shift** — brand budgets moving toward physical engagement alongside digital.
- **Measurability demands** — brands wanting contact-level accountability, which favours agencies with real reporting systems.

Market sizing (illustrative framing)

Layer	Definition	Indicative scale
TAM	BTL & activation spend by Indian consumer brands	Large
SAM	Addressable brand categories & geographies served	Serviceable
SOM (Yr 1-3)	Campaigns executed & retainer accounts held	Scaling

Target segments

- FMCG, food & beverage brands (the largest and most consistent BTL spenders).
- Consumer durables, telecom, auto & financial services.
- Retail chains & modern trade for in-shop programmes.
- Advertising agencies needing a BTL execution partner.

5. Competition & Competitive Advantage

Landscape: national BTL networks, regional activation agencies, manpower/field-force suppliers, full-service agencies with BTL arms, and brands' own field teams. The sector is fragmented and procurement-led, so pricing pressure is constant; differentiation must come from execution and evidence.

The business's edge

- **Multi-city execution reach** — being able to run the same campaign consistently across many markets.
- **Manpower quality & training** — the promoter at the kiosk is the brand for that interaction.
- **Credible reporting** — geo-tagged, photo-verified, real-time reporting rather than end-of-campaign spreadsheets; increasingly the deciding factor.
- **Statutory compliance on manpower** — a genuine differentiator, since brands carry reputational and principal-employer risk from non-compliant vendors.
- **Retainer relationships** — merchandising and in-shop programmes that recur monthly.

6. Services & Revenue Model

Service	Model	Basis
Mall & retail activations, sampling	Fee % + margin on campaign	Core
Roadshows, rural & multi-city campaigns	Fee % + margin / per-town rate	Scale volume
In-shop promotion & merchandising	Monthly retainer / per-promoter-month	Recurring
Experiential & brand-experience projects	Project fee + margin	Higher value
Field-force supply & management	Per-promoter-month management fee	Annuity
Reporting, audit & measurement services	Per-campaign / platform fee	Differentiator

Revenue is **campaigns × budget × net-take (typically 14-18%)**, plus per-promoter-month management fees on retainers. Economics = campaign volume × net-take – (core team + supervision + overheads + write-offs). **Retainer and field-force management work is strategically more valuable than its margin suggests:** it recurs monthly, is far less pitch-intensive than project work, and — critically — produces a predictable collection cycle in a business whose central problem is cash timing.

7. Go-to-Market — Brands & Empanelment

- **Brand empanelment** through marketing procurement — the gateway to repeat and retainer work.
- **Category credentials** — brands buy proof of comparable campaigns in their category and geography.
- **Agency partnerships** — creative and media agencies subcontracting BTL execution.
- **Regional depth first** — win a geography convincingly before claiming national reach.
- **Reporting demonstrations** — showing a live dashboard often wins the pitch outright against agencies offering spreadsheets.

Sales approach

Build credentials on regional campaigns → get empanelled with brands and their agencies → prove execution and reporting credibility → convert project clients into merchandising and field-force retainers → expand geography with supervised local teams rather than thin national claims. The strategic priority is deliberately *revenue quality over revenue volume*: a smaller book of retainer clients who pay in 45 days is worth considerably more than a larger book of project clients who pay in 120, because the constraint on this business is cash, not opportunity.

8. Operations Plan (field execution at scale)

- **Campaign planning:** brief interpretation, geography & outlet mapping, manpower calculation, materials specification, costed proposal.
- **Recruitment & training:** sourcing promoters city by city, brand & product training, grooming standards, briefing kits — recruitment is a continuous function, not a project task.
- **Deployment & supervision:** attendance systems, supervisor ratios, spot checks, replacement protocols for absentees — **promoter absenteeism is the routine operational problem of this business.**
- **Materials & logistics:** kiosks, standees, sampling stock, uniforms & collateral distributed to many locations on time.
- **Reporting:** geo-tagged attendance, photo evidence, contact/sample counts, outlet coverage, daily dashboards to the brand.
- **Compliance & payroll:** wage disbursement on schedule, PF/ESI, state-wise minimum wage adherence, records for client audits.

Campaign cycle

Stage	Activity	Metric
Brief	Objectives, geography, budget	Win rate
Plan	Manpower, materials, costing	Net-take vs. plan
Staff	Recruit, train, brief	Fill rate / training pass
Deploy	Execute across locations	Attendance & coverage %
Report	Geo-tagged evidence & counts	Reporting timeliness
Settle	Wages paid, invoice, collect	Collection days

The wage cycle cannot be delayed; the invoice cycle cannot be accelerated. Field promoters are paid weekly or monthly — delay wages and the field force evaporates mid-campaign, taking the client relationship with it. Meanwhile a large brand's payment runs on its own procurement calendar regardless of how well the campaign went. This asymmetry is permanent and structural. The agency's only real levers are: negotiate mobilisation advances on large campaigns, favour retainers with predictable monthly billing, invoice the same week the campaign closes, and hold a working-capital line sized for the gap rather than for the average.

9. Regulatory, Licences & Compliance (India)

- **Contract labour:** registration/licence under the **Contract Labour (Regulation & Abolition) Act** where applicable; the brand may be treated as principal employer, which is precisely why client audits are rigorous.

- **Social security & wages:** PF & ESI for field staff; **state-wise minimum wages** by skill category — a real costing complexity when a campaign spans several states; timely wage disbursement records; professional tax.
- **Permissions:** mall/venue space contracts, local body & police permission for roadshows and public activations, traffic permissions for van campaigns, vehicle permits.
- **Sampling:** **FSSAI compliance where food or beverage samples are distributed**, product-labelling norms, and safe handling/storage of sampling stock.
- **Music & media:** PPL/IPRS licensing where recorded music is played at activations.
- **Tax & contracts:** GST on services; TDS on vendor and manpower payments; client contracts with clear scope, reporting standards, payment terms and mobilisation-advance clauses.

10. Organisation & Manpower Plan

Role	Yr 1	Yr 2	Yr 3
Promoter / business head	1	1	2
Account / brand managers	3	6	8
Field operations managers	2	5	7
Planning & creative	1	2	3
MIS, reporting & technology	1	2	3
Admin, accounts & recruitment	2	3	4
Total (on roll)	10	19	27

Field promoters and brand ambassadors — on the order of 150 deployed in Year 1 rising to 600 by Year 3 — are engaged campaign-wise and billed through to clients within campaign budgets, so they sit in pass-through cost rather than in this headcount. They are nevertheless the agency's largest statutory and cash obligation, and managing them is the business.

11. Implementation Timeline & Milestones

Phase	Timeline	Milestone
Setup	Month 0-2	Entity, compliance framework, reporting platform, credentials
Ramp	Month 2-12	Empanelments & first campaigns; ₹1.15cr net on ₹7cr gross, ₹2L loss
Grow	Year 2	Retainers & geography expansion; ₹2.07cr net on ₹13cr gross, ₹17L profit
Scale	Year 3	₹2.87cr net on ₹18cr gross, ₹35L profit; retainer base established

12. Financial Plan (Illustrative)

*All figures are illustrative model assumptions for an Indian context, shown so the promoter can replace them with live rates. They are not projections of guaranteed results. **Revenue below is NET revenue (fee + retained margin); gross campaign billings are a memo line, not revenue.** Campaign volume, net-take %, retainer share, collection days & execution discipline are the levers.*

12.1 Project cost & means of finance

Capital requirement	₹
Working capital (manpower float against brand receivables)	28,00,000
Activation assets (kiosks, van fit-out, reusable props)	12,00,000
Office fit-out & IT	10,00,000
Brand, credentials & reporting/MIS platform	6,00,000
Security deposits (office / vendor)	4,00,000
Total project cost	60,00,000
Promoter contribution	35,00,000
Term loan / WC finance	25,00,000

12.2 Projected Profit & Loss (3 years) — NET revenue basis

Particulars	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
<i>Memo: gross campaign billings</i>	<i>7,00,00,000</i>	<i>13,00,00,000</i>	<i>18,00,00,000</i>
Mall & retail activations, sampling (net)	40,00,000	72,00,000	1,00,00,000
Roadshows, rural & multi-city campaigns (net)	35,00,000	62,00,000	85,00,000
In-shop promotion & merchandising retainers (net)	25,00,000	45,00,000	62,00,000
Experiential & brand-experience projects (net)	15,00,000	28,00,000	40,00,000
Total NET revenue	1,15,00,000	2,07,00,000	2,87,00,000
Team salaries (core, on roll)	55,00,000	95,00,000	1,28,00,000
Office, overheads, travel & BD	26,00,000	42,00,000	55,00,000
Field supervision, training & recruitment	14,00,000	22,00,000	30,00,000
Overruns, write-offs & bad debts	12,00,000	19,00,000	25,00,000
Depreciation, interest & other	10,00,000	12,00,000	14,00,000
Total expenses	1,17,00,000	1,90,00,000	2,52,00,000
Net profit / (loss) before tax	(2,00,000)	17,00,000	35,00,000
Net margin (on net revenue)	(1.7%)	8.2%	12.2%
Net-take (net revenue ÷ gross billings)	16.4%	15.9%	15.9%

12.3 Unit economics & break-even

- **Per-campaign economics:** budget × net-take of 14–18%. A ₹40 lakh multi-city sampling campaign at 16% yields ₹6.4 lakh net. Note the net-take *declines* slightly as the business scales — larger brands negotiate harder, which is the normal trajectory and should be planned for rather than assumed away.
- **Growth consumes cash, it does not release it:** this is the counter-intuitive core of the business. Every new campaign requires wages paid now against an invoice collected in 60–120 days, so **a rapidly growing activation**

agency can be profitable and still run out of money. Growth must be paced to the working-capital line available.

- **Retainers change the cash profile more than the margin profile:** monthly merchandising billing collects on a predictable cycle and requires no repeated pitching. Raising retainer share is the highest-value strategic move available.
- **Write-offs are structural:** ~10% of net revenue is carried against overruns, disputed deliverables and slow debtors. Campaigns get cut mid-flight, coverage targets get disputed, and reconciliations get contested — credible reporting is the main defence.
- **Break-even:** at the campaign volume/net-take covering core team, supervision, overheads & finance; margins expand with retainer share, campaign size, execution discipline & collection speed.

12.4 Projected Cash Flow — Year 1 (quarterly, illustrative)

Shown on a **net basis**, consistent with the P&L: collections are net revenue realised after field and vendor costs. The ~₹7 crore of gross campaign billings routed through the account is excluded, as it nets off — but note that the timing mismatch within that gross flow is precisely what the working-capital line funds.

Particulars (₹)	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Opening balance	28,00,000	20,00,000	14,00,000	12,00,000
Net collections	22,00,000	26,00,000	32,00,000	30,00,000
Team, supervision, overheads & operating	30,00,000	32,00,000	34,00,000	28,00,000
Closing balance	20,00,000	14,00,000	12,00,000	14,00,000

Read the declining Year-1 balance as the model working correctly, not failing. The opening ₹28 lakh of working capital is deliberately consumed through the year as receivables build — that is what the money is *for*. The risk is not the drawdown; it is running the business without it. Three disciplines contain the exposure: **mobilisation advances** on large campaigns before deployment begins; **invoicing within the week** a campaign closes, since delayed invoicing is self-inflicted and startlingly common; and **credit limits per client**, because a single large brand paying at 120 days can consume the entire facility. Concentration in one big-name client is comfortable commercially and dangerous financially.

12.5 Key Performance Indicators to Monitor

- **Commercial:** pitch win-rate; campaigns executed; average campaign size; net-take %; **retainer share of net revenue**.
- **Execution:** promoter attendance & fill rate; outlet/location coverage vs. plan; reporting timeliness; client audit outcomes.
- **Cash: collection days by client** (the number that governs growth); mobilisation advance received %; days from campaign close to invoice; client concentration.
- **Compliance:** PF/ESI & minimum-wage adherence; wage-disbursement timeliness; contract-labour licence currency.

13. Funding Requirement & Bankability

Total ask: **₹25 lakh term/WC finance** against ₹35 lakh promoter contribution — of which working capital is deliberately the largest single application at ₹28 lakh. Fundability rests on the empanelment base, campaign order book, retainer contracts & client quality: this is an asset-light business, so lenders should read the *contracted campaign pipeline and the receivables book* as the substance. **The honest framing for a lender is that this is a receivables-financing proposition, not an equipment one** — the business's need is a revolving line that scales with the order book, and invoice discounting or a cash-credit facility against receivables suits it far better than a term loan. MSME/CGTMSE routes

apply. Year 1 is a small planned loss of ₹2 lakh while empanelments build, reaching ₹35 lakh by Year 3. Two disclosures belong in the conversation: the **₹18 crore Year-3 gross billing figure is client campaign spend, not turnover** — the business is a ₹2.87 crore one; and the agency carries a **statutory obligation to field staff that must be met regardless of client payment timing**, which is why the working-capital line is non-negotiable rather than a convenience.

13.1 Funding utilisation

Use of funds	₹	% of total
Working capital (manpower float against brand receivables)	28,00,000	46.6%
Activation assets (kiosks, van fit-out, reusable props)	12,00,000	20.0%
Office fit-out & IT	10,00,000	16.7%
Brand, credentials & reporting/MIS platform	6,00,000	10.0%
Security deposits (office / vendor)	4,00,000	6.7%
Total	60,00,000	100%

14. Risk Analysis & Mitigation

Risk	Mitigation
Working-capital squeeze — wages weekly, brands paying at 60-120 days	Mobilisation advances, retainer mix, invoice within the week of campaign close, per-client credit limits, revolving/receivables-backed facility, pace growth to the line available
Client concentration with a single large brand	Cap single-client share of revenue; diversify categories & agencies; treat comfort with one big name as a financial risk
Promoter absenteeism & attrition mid-campaign	Over-recruitment buffer, replacement protocol, attendance systems, prompt wage payment, supervisor ratios
Statutory non-compliance on contract labour	PF/ESI & state-wise minimum wage systems, wage records, licence currency — client audits are routine and failure can cost the empanelment
Disputed coverage & contested reconciliations	Geo-tagged, photo-verified real-time reporting as the evidentiary defence; agreed measurement definitions in the contract
Procurement-led margin compression	Differentiate on reporting & compliance; grow retainer and measurement services; decline work below viable net-take
Campaign cancelled or cut mid-flight	Cancellation & notice clauses, staged commitments, redeployable manpower
Multi-city execution failure at distance	Local supervisors, spot audits, standardised briefing kits, escalation protocols
Demand shock or marketing-budget cuts	BTL is cut early in a downturn — keep on-roll headcount lean, retainers as ballast, maintain cash buffer

15. SWOT Analysis

Strengths Low capital assets with strong operating leverage; retainers create recurring revenue and predictable collections; compliance rigour is a real differentiator; reporting technology wins pitches; scalable geographically with local supervision.	Weaknesses Structurally positive working capital — growth consumes cash ; procurement-led margin pressure; statutory obligations to field staff regardless of client payment; high write-off rate; client concentration risk; execution quality hard to control at distance.
Opportunities Rural & tier-2/3 expansion by brands; measurement & audit services as a premium line; field-force management annuities; category specialisation; technology-led reporting differentiation; agency subcontract partnerships.	Threats Marketing budgets cut early in downturns; digital substitution of some trial-generation spend; brands in-sourcing field teams; price competition from non-compliant manpower suppliers; wage inflation; payment-term extension by large clients.

16. Recommended AiSevak Tools for This Business

This BTL & brand-activation agency would use AiSevak's Events vertical tools in operations:

- **Campaigns & margin:** per-campaign budget vs. actual, net-take tracking, coverage-vs-plan & write-off analysis tools.
- **Field force:** attendance & fill-rate tracking, recruitment pipeline, geo-tagged reporting & client-audit evidence tools.
- **Cash & compliance: collection-days-by-client & receivables ageing**, mobilisation-advance tracking, PF/ESI & minimum-wage compliance tools (with HRtech and Finance verticals).
- **Practice:** Business Plan, break-even and working-capital-cycle tools to model the agency.

17. Key Assumptions & Notes

- BTL & brand-activation agency: AGENT/field-execution business - mall & retail activations, sampling, roadshows, rural & multi-city campaigns, in-shop promotion, merchandising, experiential; revenue = campaigns × budget × net-take (14-18%) + per-promoter-month retainer fees.
- **NET revenue convention** - gross campaign billings (₹7cr Y1 → ₹18cr Y3) are a MEMO line only. Gross as turnover would describe an ₹18cr business where a ₹2.87cr one exists.
- **THE FINANCIAL SIGNATURE IS THE EXACT OPPOSITE OF EVENT-MANAGEMENT-FIRM — the key contrast in this vertical.** An event firm collects client advances before paying vendors and runs on NEGATIVE working capital. An activation agency **pays hundreds of field promoters weekly/monthly while brands settle at 60-120 days**, so it runs on structurally POSITIVE working capital and funds the gap itself. WC is therefore the LARGEST single use of funds (46.6%), and **growth CONSUMES cash — a rapidly growing activation agency can be profitable and still run out of money.** Pace growth to the WC line.
- **Frame it to lenders as a RECEIVABLES-financing proposition, not an equipment one** - it needs a revolving line scaling with the order book (invoice discounting / cash credit against receivables), not a term loan.
- Levers: retainer share (changes the CASH profile more than the margin profile — monthly billing, predictable collection, no repeated pitching), mobilisation advances, invoicing within the week of campaign close (delayed invoicing is self-inflicted and common), per-client credit limits. Client concentration in one big-name brand is comfortable commercially and dangerous financially.
- Note net-take DECLINES slightly with scale (16.4%→15.9%) as larger brands negotiate harder — the normal trajectory, planned for rather than assumed away. Write-offs ~10% of net revenue are structural (campaigns cut mid-flight,

coverage disputed, reconciliations contested) — credible geo-tagged reporting is the main defence.

- **The compliance burden is a LABOUR burden, not an event one** - Contract Labour (R&A) Act licensing, PF/ESI for field staff, **STATE-WISE minimum wages by skill category** (a genuine costing complexity in multi-state campaigns), wage records. The brand may be PRINCIPAL EMPLOYER, which is why client audits are rigorous and a manpower compliance failure can cost an empanelment outright. Plus FSSAI where food/beverage samples are distributed.
- Promoter absenteeism is the routine operational problem; the wage cycle cannot be delayed (delay wages and the field force evaporates mid-campaign) while the invoice cycle cannot be accelerated. Figures illustrative, exclude GST; BTL budgets are cut early in a downturn.

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