

# IMAGES Business of Fashion™

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## MIXBAG MANIA

Poised to grow at a good rate, the evolving trend of Fusionwear promises new opportunities for the retailers

### REPORT

A series on FDI looking at the scope for international brands and retailers

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A new year, and a new era begins for the Indian fashion retail industry with the FDI widening the scope further for fashion retail. And then before the first quarter of the year ends, there is a grand annual event in Mumbai in the first quarter - India Fashion Forum (IFF) – an opportunity that every fashion retail brand should optimise, more so this year.

There has been a lot of debate and deliberation around the repercussions of the FDI on the local players. The entry of international fashion brands in the country has grown up to four times in the last six to seven years and the pace and numbers are likely to pick up now. That in no way means decreased opportunities for local retailers or brands. Joint ventures and franchise partnerships will flourish. Even for those who plan no such alliances, it's a good deal.

The influx of international players will create fresh buzz, and that could only have a positive rub off on the local brands and retailers. But it will become even more significant to showcase the brands properly, position them right and to keep your share of the market, and increase it too. It is a done thing to create product awareness for brand building. IFF is the platform where all the major fashion brands come together under one roof showcasing every dimension of their product to the Indian market. It is not only an effective medium for establishing and maintaining customer relations but also the perfect environment to network and identify profitable alliances. The stage is set here for connecting with thought leaders and industry experts who will give you those valuable insights that would contribute to your brand building exercise.

The sheer size and format of IFF contributes to empower participants with its sub events including Big Wheel – The platform for international and Indian fashion companies to present their brands, products and services to over 5,000 industry professionals; InFashion – an exclusive platform for Indian fashion retailers; India Shoes & Accessories Forum - an event for those in this business; India Brand Show - wherein leading global and Indian lifestyle brands present their new collections with their respective brand ambassadors and leading models walking the ramp; India Fashion Awards acknowledges and honours companies' expertise and intelligence in key fashion-categories in India.

Showcasing the brand is the one effective tool for brand building, which should be a never-ending exercise that every brand owner must unrelentingly pursue if he is to survive the ever-changing landscape of the fashion retail business.

Amitabh Taneja

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## mixbag mania

With international brands pouring into the country, growing customer exposure to trends that dominate the runways in the West and easy availability of global designs, Indian ethnicwear is now mostly restricted to festivals, weddings and formal occasions. However, fusionwear, one of the most prominent trends in this category, is gradually making a larger place for itself in our wardrobes thanks to its easy adaptability to all occasions. IMAGES BoF speaks to various brands and retailers across the country to understand the best-selling trends in this category.

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ETHNICWEAR HAS NEVER HAD IT THIS GOOD IN INDIA. **PRAVEEN AGARWAL**, MD, PRAPTI FASHIONS, SHARES HIS INSIGHT ON HOW THE MARKET FOR ORGANISED ETHNICWEAR HAS SHAPED UP IN THE LAST DECADE.



# The Ethnic Way

**T**his is probably the best time to pen down my thoughts on a subject really important to me and my family. The Indian ethnicwear industry seems to be poised for long successful innings as the country welcomes the whole concept of designer, readymade ethnicwear with open arms. Ethnicwear was never an organised industry in India. It is a recent progress with an initiative taken by ethnicwear manufacturers to make this an organised sector. The industry traditionally is an unorganised sector but slowly has demonstrated a growth in the past decade.

The process has begun with women's ethnicwear market still remaining the largest while men's ethnicwear slowly but steadily is catching up.

Indian consumers have never been entirely brand-driven.

However, given the availability of ready-made ethnicwear, the demand has grown; signalling a favourable change for the industry as a whole. Initially, the whole concept of ethnicwear was very restricted and confined only to the nearby tailor's shop. But now, given how fast times are changing and how busy lives have become, ready-made ethnicwear has completely captured the imagination of the globe-trotting young Indian.

Even at affordable prices, one can settle for a wide variety of cuts, designs, colours and fits without the hassle of getting things made from scratch and ofcourse, there are time constraints.

The Indian ethnicwear industry is growing at an amazing pace, and we really need to strive harder to be at par with other leading brands in this category. The ethnicwear market in India, still being in a nascent stage owing to lack of organised players, has huge potential for growth. The industry has always faced the problem of a lack in supply causing all possible hindrances in meeting demands.

I staunchly believe that organised ethnicwear sector is yet to take off in a big way in India, as there is immense demand that needs to be justified. Ready-made ethnicwear is hugely popular with the masses nowadays. Consumers all over India and abroad are embracing timeless, traditional ensembles for occasions such as marriages, festivals and social dos. Though women's ethnicwear is leading the organised market growth, menswear won't be lagging behind for long.

## ■ MARKET WATCH ■



FLASH RETAILING OR POP-UP RETAIL, A FAIRLY NEW CONCEPT IN INDIA, HAS BEEN CATCHING UP REALLY FAST SINCE THE LAST FEW YEARS. **SANJHI AGARWAL** EXPLORES THE NEW RETAIL FORMAT.



# Pop hit

**A**lso known as pop-up stores, this trend involves opening of short term sales spaces unannounced in a mall or a similar place. The venue is temporarily hired for a short duration which could span from one day to several weeks.

While these temporary outlets help generate consumer interest and exposure, they immensely help the brand in creating a distinct environment to engage the customer, thereby increasing interactivity with them. This concept tends to be more popular with brands offering apparel and accessories — primarily aimed at transacting profitable sales and increasing brand visibility more than the walk-in stores. Delhi-based Mandira Lamba who has a design house Fab Connection with Ridhi Bhalla, explains, "Pop-up retail has been an existing concept in the west wherein these initiatives have a tendency to pop up unannounced, quickly draw in the crowds, and then disappear or morph into something else, adding to retail the fresh feel, exclusivity and surprise. Often shops would operate for a short period of time in one place and then shut down and open in another." She adds, "The idea is to cater to the diverse tastes of the vast high profile clientele of Delhi and to introduce the people of India to pop-up retail."



# THE SARI state of affairs

SIMPLE, STYLISH, EXPERIMENTAL AND BASIC - SARIS ARE AS TIMELESS AS THEY ARE TEMPESTUOUSLY VERSATILE. **SHILPA SHREE** FIND OUT WHAT LIES AHEAD FOR THE WHOLE FIVE YARDS.



“A sari is no more just a necessity; it is a fashion statement,” says Prahlad Rai Khatri, a Kanpur-based wholesaler and retailer of saris under the brand name Goverdhan Sari Centre. He could not have defined it better.

Saris have been draping Indian women for a couple of millennia in over 80-recorded styles. However, the most common thread among all styles of draping a sari is the fact that it is worn over a lehenga (a petticoat) and a choli (a blouse).

### Proof's in the past

What started as a piece of cloth to be worn to leave the midriff bare has culminated into a gigantic market of ₹25,000 crore market in the country today.

“In terms of value it would be impossible to even give an approximate figure as it is too wide a market and no study has ever been done particularly on this. But it should not be less than a ₹25,000 crore industry,” said Prashant Dhariwal, Raipur-based owner of Vama, a sari retail store.



# One-stop Solution for Womenswear

VAMA HAS BEEN IN THE TEXTILE AND FABRIC BUSINESS FOR THE LAST 70 YEARS. THE COMPANY ENTERED INTO THE RETAIL SECTOR ABOUT 30 YEARS BACK AND IN 2005, IT STEPPED INTO ORGANISED RETAIL.

**ANUJ GOSWAMI TALKS TO PRASHANT DHARIWAL, CO-OWNER, VAMA ABOUT ITS FUTURE PLANS.**

“**T**he idea of entering into traditional retail was conceptualised by the third generation of the family and to turn the idea into reality, a 5,000 sq. ft. modern retail store in Raipur, Chhattisgarh, was chosen. Vama today is a well known brand name for Indian ethnicwear in Raipur,” says Prashant Dhariwal, Co-owner, Vama.

## **The Inception**

Whether it is the high-class end-user or the wise mid-segment customer, Vama has a wide range of garment selection for all kinds and classes of audience. From traditional lehngas and ethnic saris to dress materials and matching fabric, Vama has all that you might be looking for. With such a vast range of ethnicwear on offer, the name Vama has become synonymous with ethnicwear in Raipur.

Vijay Dhariwal, Prashant Dhariwal’s father, has had a very humble beginning. He started with retail of saris and dress materials about three decades back, while textile and fabric was his family business since 70 years. In the year 2005, young Prashant Dhariwal started gaining interest in the



# Online Force to Channel with

WITH A 1.5 MILLION MEMBERSHIP GROWING MONTHLY BY 20 PER CENT, 99LABELS IS GOING GREAT GUNS. CO-FOUNDER AND CEO, **ISHITA SWARUP**, TALKS TO **BHAVYA VYAS** ABOUT THE THREE-YEAR JOURNEY AND PLANS AHEAD.



**A** members-only e-commerce website, 99labels.com, offers fashionwear, accessories, lifestyle products, sportswear, electronics and furniture to its buyers. The online venture that plays host to more than 800 international and Indian brands has seen rapid expansion since its inception on 9 December 2009. 99labels has also established its presence across the globe with offices in five major cities including Paris and New York. The website offers discounts on high-end brands such as Diesel, Pierre Cardin, Calvin Klein, Gucci, Versace, Ritu Kumar, Tarun Tahiliani and others to its consumers.

**What's the USP of 99labels.com? How do you stand out in a sea of online portals?**

**Ishita Swarup (IS):** 99labels introduced the concept of online flash sales in India when the concept was just catching on in the West. From that launch three years ago, we have come a long way and today have a member base of 1.5 million, and a huge percentage of returning buyers. Rather than focus on one factor alone, we make sure the consumer has an overall pleasurable experience - finest brands and merchandise, fresh sales daily the best possible discounts, on-time deliveries and seamless customer service.

**Please elaborate on the products you offer.**

**IS:** We carry an elaborate range of discounted luxury items, premium goods and upcoming brands that include apparel, accessories, fragrances, cosmetics, homeware, kidswear and menswear.



# Opportunity in **INDIA** for **GLOBAL BRANDS & RETAILERS**

The Indian government's decision to allow foreign direct investment (FDI) – 100 per cent in single brand retail and 51 per cent in multi brand retail - is a step forward to welcome Global players in to the Indian retail market which is among the largest and fastest growing in the world. With a population of over 1.2 billion and household size of 4 to 5 on an average, it is not difficult to see the potential attractiveness that this market offers. With this issue of Images Business of Fashion we begin a three part series – making an attempt to look at the scope that India offers for international brands and retailers and opportunities for Indian businesses in the form of joint ventures, franchising, distribution and licensing.

by **R S Roy**

*with information support from Third Eyesight*

## **Private Consumption & Retail**

The country's dynamic retail landscape presents a grand opportunity to investors from across the globe, to use India as a strategic business hub. With private consumption growing at estimated 16.2 per cent from ₹4,411,155 crores (\$800 bn) in 2011 to ₹5,126,131 crores (\$930 bn) in 2012, the retail business is expected to stand at 28,50,055 crores (\$516 bn) in 2012 increasing at 16 percent CAGR over past two years. The CAGR is further expected to accelerate to 18.8 percent over the next few years to reach a figure of ₹47,80,318 (\$866 bn) by 2015.





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