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WOMAN ON TOP

IMAGES BoF conducts a research to understand the growing potential of womenswear market

INDUSTRYSPEAK

Kaustav Sengupta,
Associate Professor,
NIFT, on Word of
Mouth as a key
marketing tool

HR WATCH

Head HR of M&S
Reliance India
on strategies and
development of
the brand's human
resource pool

FASHION • MARKETING • RETAILING

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Women in India have had a chequered existence down the ages. On the one hand she is revered as god and put on a shrine. On the other, she is relegated to the shadows and kept behind doors and purdah. The scenario is rapidly changing in recent times. Indian women have started stepping out of their homes and are rubbing shoulders with men not only socially but also in the corporate world. With three-quarters of our country having women as heads of state I would say they have arrived and are here to stay!

Take today's woman. She is modern, stylish and keeps abreast with the latest that is happening in the world. She wants the latest fashions in terms of lifestyle and clothes. And has the financial independence to fulfil her desires. This phenomenon has opened up a demand for a separate category for womenswear. In fact, according to research projections, the growth in womenswear market is touted to exceed that of menswear in the coming years. Technopak places it at 12 per cent vis-à-vis 9 per cent in menswear.

Interestingly, there are only few serious contenders in solely womenswear brands. Yes, there's a Zara and a Forever 21 establishing footprints in the Indian market last year. But what about our domestic brands? With so much potential why are there not more brands willing to step forward to bridge this existing gap in the fashion retail industry?

Our August issue is a womenswear special. And as cover story, *IMAGES Business of Fashion* conducted a survey with assistance from NIFT to find out the potential of the womenswear market in India. The findings were interesting and we bring it to our readers.



Amitabh Taneja

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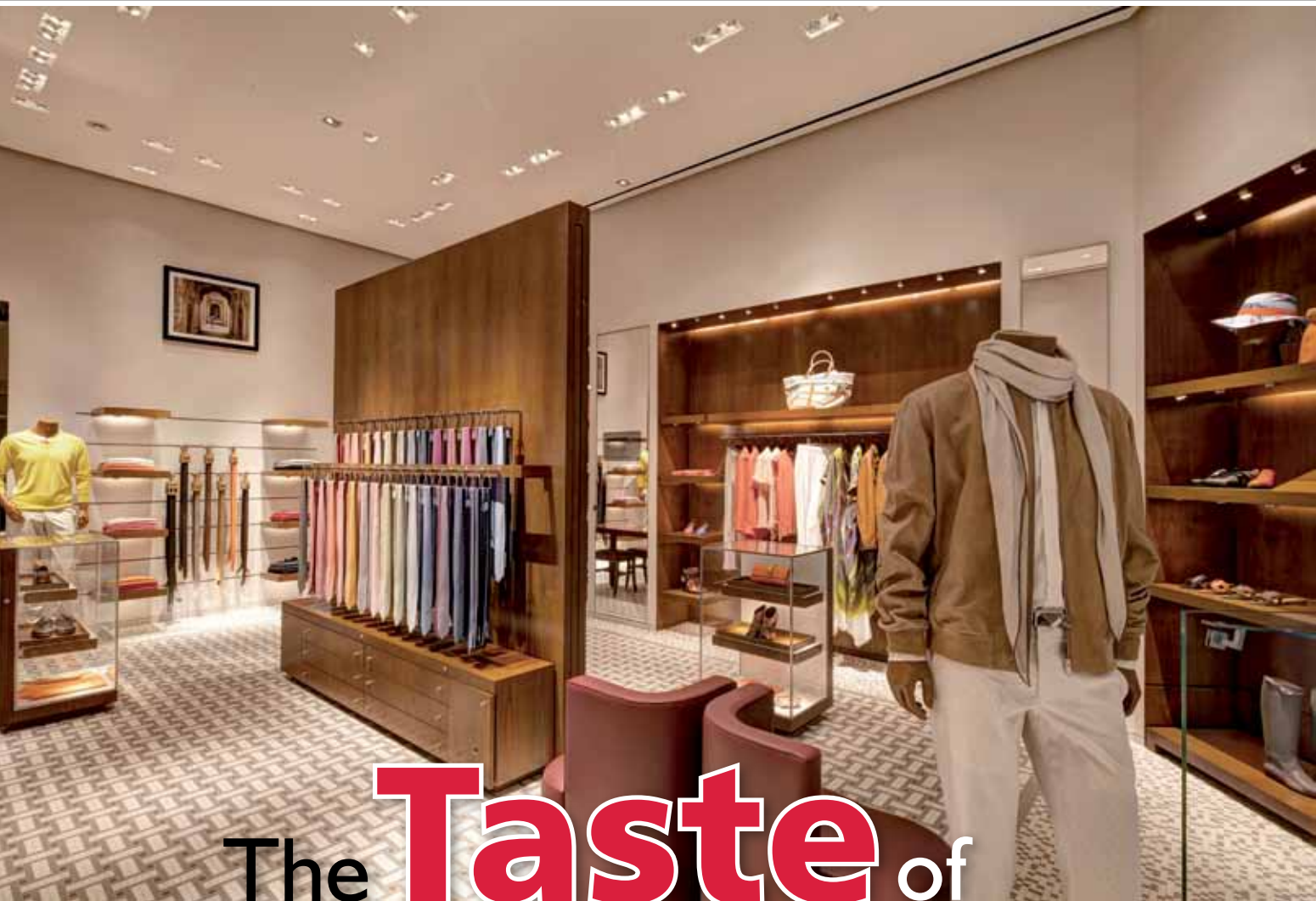
WITH CHANGING CONSUMER LANDSCAPE AND EVOLVING RETAIL MATRICES THERE PREVAILS AN EXCITING PLAYGROUND FOR ALL WOMENSWEAR BRANDS. **ANANT DAGA**, CEO, TCNS CLOTHING COMPANY THAT OWNS W, TALKS ABOUT THIS SEGMENT WHICH LOOKS ALL SET TO DOMINATE THE RETAIL FASHION SCENE IN THE COMING YEARS.

It's Time to Step It Up



There never has been a more exciting time for the womenswear category in India. Launch of Zara and Forever 21 has heralded the next decade which would see many more exciting names in the fray. Alongside these international bigwigs, home-grown womenswear brands are making their presence felt in the market.

It is no secret that womenswear category, which contributes close to 35 per cent of the total apparel industry in the country, has outpaced menswear category growth rates and this trend looks to continue over the next few years. There are clear socio-economic reasons for this phenomenon. The working women population is on a rise, double-income families are becoming common, tier II and III towns are catching up with their metro counterparts and the Indian women consumers are showing increasing appetite for fashion products. This coupled with an enhanced platter of fashion brands and quality retail space is sure to explode consumption in this segment. The market clearly realises the



The Taste of Luxury

UNDER AN ARCHWAY OF GREEK MEANDER FRIEZE PATTERNS AND SERIES OF LARGE CONNECTING ROOMS, LUXURY BRAND HERMÈS OPENS ITS DOORS TO MUMBAIKARS. IMAGES BOF VISITS THE STORE TO BUILD SOME FRENCH CONNECTION.

After its first boutique in the plush arcade of the Oberoi Hotel in New Delhi and second one at Ista Hotel in Pune, Hermès, the luxury French brand, is all set to conquer Mumbai. The store that was launched on 18 July 2011 at Horniman Circle, Fort, is spread across two levels and 3,000 sq. ft. area in one of the Fort's iconic Victorian buildings. Previously, the brand had been facing several restrictions in opening a flagship store that resulted in their late entry to the country's financial capital. "I think India deserves a store like we have in London, Paris [and] Milan," says Bertrand Michaud, the regional managing director of Hermès for India, the Middle East and Southeast Asia.

The new Hermès store stocks everything under one roof — from the brand's elegant scarves, perfumes, jewellery, watches to ready-to-wear apparel for men and women. The store offers a new perspective of the brand's roots, providing an opportunity to explore a world of emotions and pleasure, as it enchants every Hermès customer with the beauty and elegance of each of its products. It will become the first European luxury brand to be located directly on street. Hermès India is a 51:49 joint venture between France-based

WOMEN'S FASHION MOVES AT A RAPID PACE, AND IN INDIA IT IS NO DIFFERENT. MEHER CASTELINO FINDS OUT WHAT ARE THE LATEST DESIGNER TRENDS FOR THE CONTEMPORARY WOMAN.

Vanity Fare



The fairer sex is always on a look out for the latest in trends and is very keen in keeping abreast with fashion. But while the lady maybe trendy, she is also a little Indian at heart and prefers fusionwear with traditional and ethnic touches. At the same time comfort rules, so there are, even today, ethnic and traditional touches in her contemporary garments. She is modern but very Indian at heart and loves bright colours, regional prints and hand embroideries.

She experiments a lot and creates her own fusion garments such as T-shirts with salwars and shirts with churidars. She has come out of her



DIAMONDS ARE FOREVER AND ORRA HAS BEEN ABLE TO CREATE THAT LUST IN THE INDIAN JEWELLERY MARKET. VIJAY JAIN, CEO AND DIRECTOR, ORRA, TALKS TO IMAGES BOF ABOUT HIS STRATEGIC APPROACH TO CONTINUE THE SPARK.

Orra, a diamond-centric jewellery brand was launched in India in 2004 by Intergold Gem Pvt. Ltd., which is a part of the Belgium-based Rosy Blue Group, one of the world's largest diamond manufacturing companies. The brand is registered in four countries but is active only in India in its retail format. It retails on a custom order basis in Europe, U.S. and other countries. The brand sources its diamonds mainly from DTC (De Beers) and Platinum Guild India (PGI). It has its design centres spread across the globe including India (Mumbai), New York, Antwerp, Hong Kong and Tokyo. The jewellery collections offered varies from solitaires to bridal, spiritual to Mughal collection, platinum ornaments and more.

Orra has 32 exclusive stores at high streets in 25 cities in India and is gradually making its presence felt with new stores in tier II cities. The total retail space of the brand, in the country, is about 48,000 sq. ft. With major expansion plans to open 8 to 10 stores every fiscal of around 1,500 sq. ft, Vijay Jain, CEO and Director, Orra, says, "We are targeting tier II cities along with the existing markets and are looking at clustering. The reason for the expansion is the huge aspirational value the category has created. Propensity to consume in these markets is very high. We are introducing gold in these markets and offering customers what they are seeking."

The brand prefers to have its presence at the high streets in selected markets where there are significant number of branded players in the vicinity. Other factors considered are presence of other jewellery brands, newer markets and the profile of the catchment area that needs to meet the target consumer of the brand.

Orra has also opened three large format stores in the past two years. These stores are targeted at prolific buyers. The store offers customers a world-class experience in terms of ambience and merchandise. These stores stock high-end jewellery, offering higher range of bridal products. Jain says, "We expect to garner

Creating an **Aura**

Contemporising **Vintage**



FOR [MALINI AGARWALLA](#) WHO LAUNCHED HER ACCESSORY LINE MALAGA IN 2004, FASHION IS NOT JUST APPARELS, BUT ALSO ABOUT TEAMING THEM WITH CLASSY ACCESSORIES. THIS ART CONNOISSEUR LOVES TO BLEND THE CONTEMPORARY WITH THE TRADITIONAL TO CREATE HER OWN SIGNATURE STYLE. IN A CANDID CHAT WITH [TISTA SENGUPTA](#), MALINI REVEALED A WARDROBE THAT REFLECTED HER LOVE FOR VINTAGE ALONG WITH A STUNNING CONTEMPORARY COLLECTION OF BAGS.



Hong Kong Fashion Week

Strengthening Ties with India

WITH ITS REPUTATION AS THE WORLD'S FREEST ECONOMY AND WITH LOW TAX POLICIES, FASHION DESTINATION HONG KONG IS A HAVEN FOR THE RETAIL INDUSTRY. THE 18TH EDITION OF THE HONG KONG FASHION WEEK SS, AN INITIATIVE OF THE HKTDC, EPITOMISED THE ORGANISATION'S SPIRIT IN PROMOTING TRADE THROUGH ENTERPRISE OPPORTUNITIES.

By **Madhumita B Sinha** —————

A statutory body established in 1966, the Hong Kong Trade Development Council (HKTDC) is the international marketing arm for Hong Kong-based traders, manufacturers and service providers. Creating opportunities for Hong Kong companies through their network of more than 40 offices worldwide, and the city's natural business advantages, HKTDC provides a range of services to help global trade and more particularly, promote Hong Kong as a platform for doing business with China and throughout Asia.

This July showcased the 18th edition of the Hong Kong Fashion Week SS 2011. Held at the Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre, Hong Kong, concurrently with the HKTDC Summer Sourcing Show for Gifts, Houseware & Toys, the trade fair started off with a fairly



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