

SHOES & ACCESSORIES

TRENDS • MARKETING • RETAILING

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LEADERS IN BUSINESS Women Entrepreneurs

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Being More Indigenous

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CFLA to propel domestic industry

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Editor's Letter

Decades back, women would operate businesses as a way of supplementing income. Then the ventures that women undertook were not entrepreneurial in nature due to society and domestic responsibilities. Women became more involved in business only when the idea of women in business became palatable to the general public.

It is said that Dutch women who had inherited money and lands were possibly the first business owners. One of the most successful women from this time was Margaret Hardenbrook Philipse, who was a merchant, a ship owner, and was involved in trading.

In the 1900s, due to the rise of feminism, female entrepreneurs began to be a widely accepted term. This was much later quickened by the availability of computers and the increasing popularity of the internet.

At home, entrepreneurship among women is comparatively a new trend, but today we have great women leading global as well as domestic corporations. Their success stories have placed the ladder for many.

On the policy front, allocation of Rs 200-crore budget by the Modi government towards the empowerment of women is welcome news.

Underscoring this rising trend and with the hope that more women will join the workforce in the coming years, we have dedicated a large section of this issue to successful women entrepreneurs in India.



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HIDESIGN TO GO SLOW IN INDIA



Pondicherry-based premium leather goods maker, Hidesign is going slow on store expansion in India owing to lack of new shopping malls. The company, however, is looking at expanding internationally. It is planning to start retail operations in six new markets this year including Kenya, Saudi Arabia, and Canada.

According to Dilip Kapur, Founder, Hidesign, "The big challenge this year is that the expansion within India is becoming harder as not many malls are coming up. No developer wants to do any real estate anymore. So now expansion will happen through e-commerce and a lot of our energy will go in international expansion."

At present, the brand has about 74 stores across the country. "In the next few years, we will have about seven stores coming up. But that's about it," Kapur added.

Hidesign is also eyeing increase in the share of its sales through e-commerce platforms like Amazon and Myntra from about 20 % now.

NEW BALANCE RE-ENTERS INDIA

Boston-based athletic footwear and apparel brand New Balance recently opened its first store in India—a 1,100 sq. ft standalone brand outlet at DLF Mall of India, Noida, near New Delhi.

This is the second time New Balance has entered India after a gap of about a decade. The American shoemaker, which reported \$3.3 billion of sales worldwide in 2014, made an entry into India in the early 2000s but shut its shops after a few years.

"We were ahead of time. We did not have such a wide brand presence globally that time, and (the) retailing experience was poor. Now, the market looks more mature," shared Darren Tucker, vice president, Asia Pacific, New Balance.

Founded in 1906 by British emigrant William J. Riley to sell arch supports to police officers and waiters, the shoemaker was bought by Jim Davis in 1972 and now sells athletic shoes, apparel and accessories for men, women and kids across 5,000 outlets worldwide under brands such as New Balance, Brine, Aravon, Dunham, PF Flyers and Warrior Sports.

"Over the next 2-3 years, the company will have about 50 stores across shopping malls and high streets in Delhi and the National

Capital Region, Mumbai and Bengaluru. The company has entered into a distribution agreement with Mumbai-based The Major Brands Group for retailing of New Balance products in India." Tucker said. "It's not about the number of stores. We would prefer operating a profitable retail presence and grow at a relatively slower pace this time. All our global competitors are here. The market is built. We know our competitors, and that's an advantage."

The company has also tied up with online retailer Jabong for e-retailing and is negotiating with global partner Amazon for the Indian market. "Considering the growth of e-commerce in India, that's a must. But, we don't intend to be in the discounting game," added Tucker.

The sports shoe and apparel market in India is dominated by Reebok, Adidas AG, Nike Inc. and Puma SE.



AFFLUENCE EYES MARKET WITH PREMIUM FOOTWEAR



Affluence shoes are designed with the latest trends from the world of fashion, and are on par with any global luxury brand. According to Aqeel Ahmed, promoter of the brand, "Indian consumers must have shoes with good fit, great quality and high standard with ethical values in manufacturing meeting the REACH compliance, which means adhering to high standards of global testing. Meeting 'quality' and 'comfort' is the main aim for bringing the product AFFLUENCE to the Indian consumer keeping in mind the latest trends."

Its parent company, SRL Trading Company, Chennai, has a successful history of 30 years in exporting finished leather shoes. The company will be exploring the Indian domestic market with to introduce world-class shoes and accessories for the Indian consumers.

The company was built on ethics adhering to every norm of the world: checked and periodically audited, corroborates to put its best for the Indian consumer. The concept of AFFLUENCE is that 'every consumer should touch and feel the product and know the real value of the shoe that is crafted with great talent and skill, right from raw material to finished shoes with durability.'

"The shoes are designed and developed in Design Studio in Italy with the latest trends, lasts and the finest leather. The company is a member of SATRA: the highest standard for testing and for factory production management systems," added Aqeel.

The promoter admitted that his entry into the domestic retail business in India was encouraged and promoted by Amit Chopra, MD Shoes & Accessories. The brand was registered and launched at the India Shoes and Accessories Forum, 2016 held in Mumbai.

MEDIFEET TO LAUNCH SPORTS FOOTWEAR

New Delhi-based GuruKripa Enterprises, the parent company of Medifeet, is now up for a new category. According to Dharmendra Singh Narula, MD of the company, "We will soon launch our sports collection. As our Medifeet health footwear has been doing exceptionally well in the market, the demand for more has been great. Instead of ignoring it, we thought we should give our consumers more or what they need in the form of sports footwear. The sports collection will be trendy and the USP will remain comfort."

The company has manufacturing units in Himachal Pradesh. The products will be available soon, said Narula.



ALIBABA SETTING UP ACQUISITION TEAM

Chinese e-commerce giant Alibaba has begun the process of setting up a team in India to look at merger and acquisition (M&A) opportunities. Though Alibaba has indirectly entered the Indian e-commerce segment through investments in Snapdeal and Paytm, it is widely believed that it could be looking for a more direct play in accessing the growing online consumer base here.

It is learned that Alibaba has already interviewed 10-12 executives, including a few from top venture capital firms and investment banks, to head its M&A team. The e-commerce giant may take the M&A route in India instead of starting from scratch. It might begin with a minority investment in some company followed by a complete acquisition.

Alibaba's focus is to expand its foreign business as growth in urban China is maturing and revenue growth might plateau

in the near future. According to Alibaba's December quarter results, the company is looking at getting about 50 per cent of its overall revenues outside China.

The recent acquisition of Singapore-based Lazada for \$1 billion is part of its strategy to enter new markets. Alibaba is looking at acquiring Shanghai-based Ele.me for \$900 million. It also took a majority stake in US-based ride sharing company Lyft for \$400 million recently.



JABONG LAUNCHES INTERNATIONAL FASHION BRAND MEXX IN INDIA

Online fashion retailer Jabong has announced a new partnership with international fashion retailer Mexx.

"We are very excited to launch Mexx exclusively in India and more than anything else we are thrilled that our brand ideologies are

similar. With Mexx on board, we continue to broaden our international brand offering and have few other exciting names in the pipeline," said Sanjeev Mohanty, CEO and managing director, Jabong.

Commenting on the partnership, Umit Eroglu, CEO, Mexx, also, saying: "We

are very excited to launch Mexx in India and to have Jabong as our experienced and knowledgeable partner for optimizing our online presence. Based on our global brand awareness and the outstanding price-quality mix of our collections we are very confident about the desirability that our brand will have with the Indian consumers."

Jabong has in the past launched high-street brands such as TOPSHOP, TOPMAN, Dorothy Perkins, Missguided, to name a few.



METRO SHOES LAUNCHES 'FIND YOUR PAIR' INTEGRATED CAMPAIGN

Metro Shoes has launched 'Find Your Pair' campaign. The campaign involves a multimedia integration of print, promotions, public relations and digital platforms to target men, women and children.

Talking about the new campaign Farah Malik Bhanji, Managing Director and CEO, Metro Shoes Limited said, "Metro Shoes as a brand has always aimed at being pertinent to the times. We have designed this integrated campaign to appeal to the sensibilities of our target audience. To build a connect with the consumers we have launched a campaign that twists conventional ideologies and renders it relevant. We have a fantastic range of stylish, on-trend and contemporary footwear that will appeal to our all customers."

The term pair implies finding a soul mate; however in today's day and age, finding one's pair could imply having a strong connect with someone, best friends and confidant, father and son, siblings, etc.

H&M OPENS IN NATION'S LARGEST MALL

DLF Mall of India has announced the launch of H&M's 4000th store. Spread over 40,000 sq.ft, H&M at DLF Mall of India is the largest and the first flagship store in the country.

The Swedish International retailer, known globally for its fast-fashion clothing, launched the store at DLF Mall of India on April 23.

The store spreads over 4 floors has a huge variety of merchandise, including certain collection exclusively available at DLF MOI.

Pushpa Bector, Executive Vice President and Head at DLF Mall of India, said: "H&M has created the largest flagship store at DLF Mall of India. Being an exclusive store, it will showcase the entire H&M merchandise range which will offer a new experience to the customers."



JABONG REVENUES DECLINE 19.3% TO ₹270.75 CRORE

Jabong's financials decreased further. The company reported revenues of ₹218.53 crore in the fourth quarter of 2015. This represented a decline of 19.3% from ₹270.75 crore in the same quarter last year.

The company also reported a gross merchandise value of ₹377.73 crore, a decline of 19% y-o-y from ₹465.61 crore.

Net loss for the company in Q4 2015, however, decreased to ₹1.98 crore, from a loss of ₹45.9 crore in the same period last year. The company reported an operational loss of ₹93.51 crore, down from a ₹144.91 crore loss in Q4 2014.

The company attributed the increase in profitability to better unit economics and reduced discounts.

For the full year, revenues increased 7.1% to ₹869.14 crore. The GMV increased 13.8% to ₹1,502.9 crore. Net loss stood at ₹46.74 crore compared to ₹159.58 crore last year.

The total number of orders in the period stood at 1.2 million, showing a decline of 41.5%, from 2 million in the same period last

year. The total transactions in Q4 2015 was at 1.9 million, down 36.9% from 3 million in Q4 2014.

Jabong reported ₹3144 per order for the quarter ended December 31st 2015, down 20.3% from ₹3943 per order for the same quarter last year. For the year, however, order value was up 24.3% to ₹2783 per order in 2015, from ₹2238 per order in 2014 and ₹1967 per order in 2013

The company added the contribution of mobile share increased 32% in share of revenue.

In November last year, Jabong appointed Sanjeev Mohanty as chief executive officer (CEO) and managing director of the company, effective early December 2015. He replaced Praveen Sinha, the founder of Jabong. Mohanty has over 20 years of experience in the fashion industry.

In the same week, it appointed Saurabh Srivastava as the chief marketing officer, replacing Praveen Sinha who also handled marketing activities. The company also

appointed Sumit Jain as its CTO to replace Sachin Sinha who had joined in March 2015. Sinha himself was appointed to replace former CTO Harsh Kundra, who had left the company in January this year to join Tolexo Online.

In February it appointed Muralikrishnan B as its COO. Muralikrishnan will report to Sanjeev Mohanty and look after the technology, product and digital marketing functions. He will also guide and assist in product management for other Global Fashion Group (GFG) companies, of which Jabong is one.



PUMA UNVEILS INDIA'S BIGGEST FLAGSHIP STORE

Sportswear brand PUMA introduced the biggest flagship store in India. The store is spread over three floors and covers an area of 4,800 sq. ft. in New Delhi's shopping hot spot South Ex. PUMA training and style expert Jacqueline Fernandez turned the tables to style for PUMA at the new Forever Faster store concept and gave celebrity stylist Tanya Ghavri a sporty new makeover.

To introduce the new store, youth icon Jacqueline, well known as a fashion trend setter shared her personal style tips, insights and experiences to a rapt audience.

The Forever Faster store concept imbibes PUMA's brand ethos which is reflected in the design, layout and top of the line product offering. The store design is captivating with clean lines and a very modern look and feel. The layout and design is simple to give focus on the products to ensure they demand attention, stand out and resonate with the consumer. The in-store product communication too has been planned in a strategic manner to aid customer understanding of the products. Through the store's design, unique product offering and concept PUMA has created a platform to give consumers an opportunity to experience the brand's DNA.

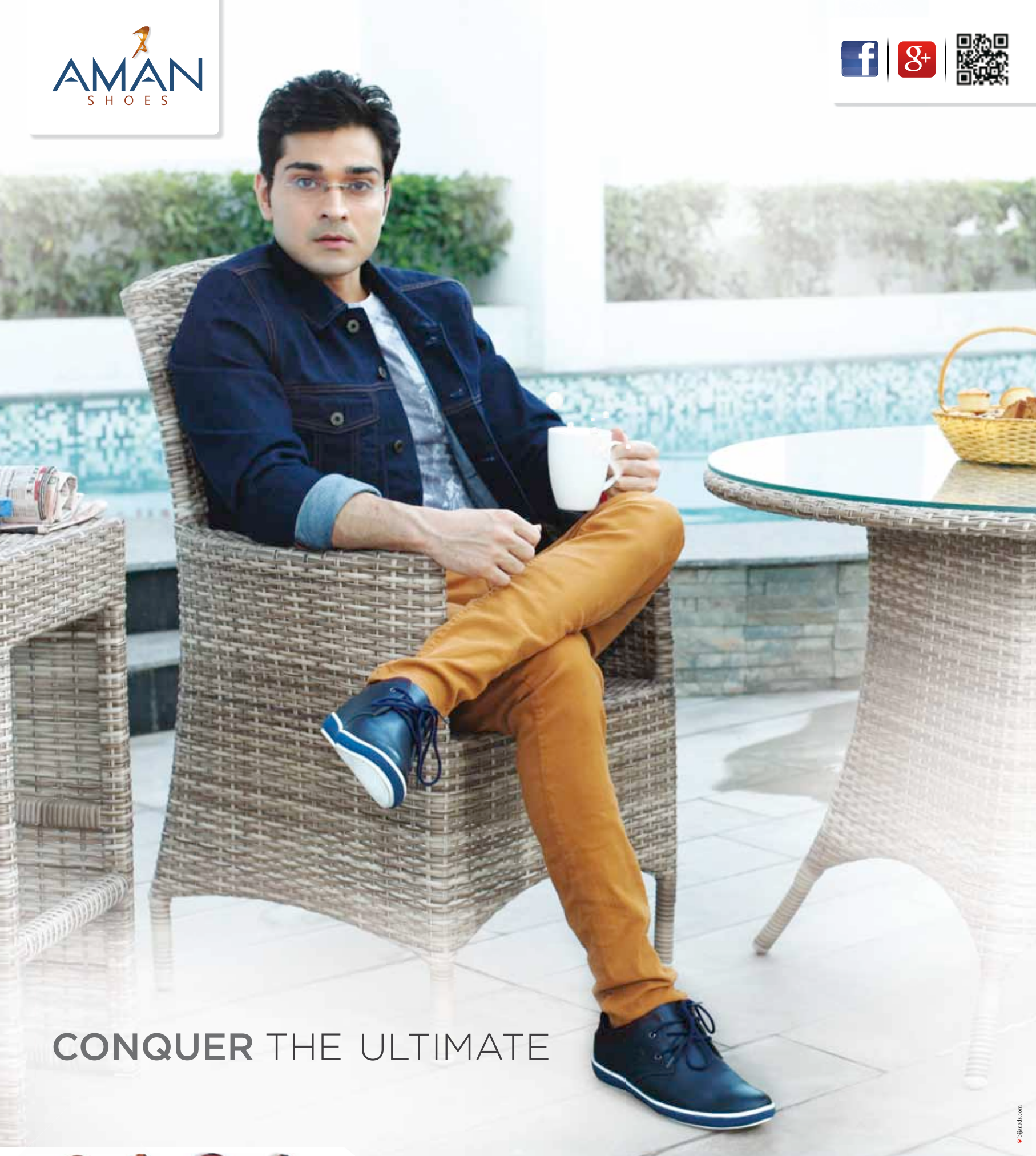
The store houses the widest range of PUMA's latest performance and sportstyle products, with a variety of products exclusive to the new store in Delhi only. Ranging from lifestyle to, football, cricket, golf, running gear and gym wear, the options are endless. PUMA select a special range of products in collaboration with international designers- Alexander McQueen and Chris Stamp etc. is made accessible at the store. The products are divided into different categories and displayed at the store. PUMA's strong heritage is underlined by a visible footwear wall, a hot spot in the stores.

Talking about the new store PUMA India MD, Abhishek Ganguly opined, "We are thrilled to introduce The Forever Faster store concept in Delhi, which is first of its kind and PUMA's biggest flagship store in India. The store's layout and bold visual displays allows

us to strongly engage with consumers in a very unique manner. In fact, the store is so exclusive that there are a number of products that are available solely at the Delhi store. As a brand, PUMA's endeavor is to provide the most stylish and cutting edge products, the store brings to Indian consumers a very international offering of footwear and apparel."

"I absolutely love the look and layout of the new store. The design is very unique and really makes the products stand out. My favourite part is the special women's section and the colourful sneaker wall." Adding further Jacqueline said- The store has a lot of space and the event here today was so much fun! It was real role reversal where I got to be the stylist for a change. I love sporty looks and really enjoyed putting together a sporty makeover, "remarked Jacqueline Fernandez.





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'PUMA AND ZARA MOST PROFITABLE IN INDIA'

Brands like Levis, UCB and Zara have turned profitable. While Zara has been profitable in India for at least four years, Levi's and United Colors of Benetton (UCB) despite being in the black, are dealing with accumulated losses.

German sports goods maker Puma, which has emerged as the top global lifestyle brand here in terms of revenues (₹878 crore) and Spanish clothing brand Zara (₹720 crore) are two leading global brands that do not have accumulated losses.

Adidas, with sales of around ₹805 crore in FY15, has accumulated losses of around ₹68 crore, while Reebok, which is owned by it, has accumulated losses of around ₹2,198 crore with sales of around ₹332 crore in FY15.

Nike with sales of around ₹804 crore in FY15, has piled up accumulated losses of around ₹541 crore, up from around ₹439 crore in FY14, according to the US firm's latest filing with the Registrar of Companies. UCB, with sales of around ₹719 crore, has accumulated



losses of around ₹84 crore and Levi's with sales of around ₹634 crore has accumulated losses of around ₹93 crore in FY15. Both companies made profits in the current year of around ₹47 crore and ₹11 crore respectively.

RETAILERS JOIN HANDS TO FORCE GOVT TO ROLL OUT NEW E-COM RULES



Retailers, including Future Retail, Shoppers Stop, Arvind Lifestyle, Infiniti Retail and Aditya Birla Retail, recently met for the speedy implementation of the new circular.

E-commerce companies have raised concerns over implementing new norms and even demanded a change in the policy. Some large e-tailers are also seeking six months' time for implementing the new rules. This has now forced brick and mortar retail companies to submit a petition to Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion and seek a level-playing field in the retail sector.

Some weeks back the government allowed 100% foreign direct investment in online retail of goods and services for the marketplace model of e-commerce companies. New rules have, however, disallowed marketplaces from offering discounts while capping total sales of group companies or one vendor at 25%.

Retailers are welcoming the new FDI policy for the marketplace but none of the e-commerce players are following the new notifications in the letter and in spirit.

SSIPL LAUNCHES "SPORTS STATION"

SSIPL Group, a name in the footwear manufacturing and retailing industry, launches "Sports Station", a chain of multi-brand sports stores. Sports Station endeavours to bring a plethora of international sports brands, offering an assortment of options in sports shoes, accessories and equipment, under one roof. Its portfolio includes renowned sportswear brands like Nike, Asics, Adidas, Reebok, Puma, Sketchers, Converse, Crocs, Solomon and Lotto, along with its in-house brand Mmojah. Sports Station also

showcases specialty brands like Speedo and Wildcraft at its stores.

"Sports Station is positioned as a Sports Specialty Brand Hub which aims towards providing an elevated service and retail experience to our customers. The signature Lime Punch colour renders a unique sporty and athletic feel at the stores in line with its positioning," said Pooja K. Sood, (Business Head, Sports Station). "We are currently operating 45 stores across India, with presence in most of

the major cities including Delhi-NCR, Chandigarh, Jalandhar, Amritsar, Meerut, Lucknow, Jammu, Jaipur, Gwalior, Indore, Pune, and Chennai." She concluded by saying that, "this is just the beginning. We intend to steadily increase our retail footprint across India, and become synonymous to sports and fitness in the Indian mind-set. Sports Station believes in bringing the best in sports to the Indian customer and aims at raising the fitness consciousness along with the standard of sports & athletics in the nation. We intend to Game on!"

Besides retailing, the company has also been engaged in manufacturing footwear for several international sports brands. Alongside, the company is also engaged in licensing/distribution of Lotto and Nike fitness equipment in India. SSIPL is also a prominent retail partner with other international brands like Levi's, United Colors of Benetton, Lotto and Clarks.





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VANS RENEWS US OPEN OF SURFING SPONSORSHIP THROUGH 2018

Popular skate brand Vans has announced that it has renewed its title sponsorship of the US Open of Surfing through 2018. Vans first signed on as the title sponsor in 2014.

The next US Open of Surfing, presented by the World Surf League and IMG, is set for July 23-31 in Huntington Beach, California. The event is considered to be one of the largest action sports festivals in the US, as it hosts men's and women's pro surfing contests and a junior pro competition, as well as a BMX contest, curated retail spaces and the Van Doren Village with art exhibitions and workshops.

And for the first time at the 2016 festival, Vans is introducing the Pro Skate Park Series — skateboarding's first international competition in park terrain, featuring a roster of pro and amateur athletes.

According to Doug Palladini, Vans' VP and GM for North America, "As Vans celebrates 50 'Off the Wall' years of enabling creative expression, it's important for our brand to



continue to support the next generation of talented individuals through progressive platforms like the Vans US Open."

Vans is hosting events around the world to celebrate its 50-year heritage. Last month,

it kicked off a special-anniversary concert series at its House of Vans in Brooklyn, N.Y., to be followed by other House of Vans shows in London, Sao Paulo, Toronto, Seoul, Kuala Lumpur and Hong Kong.

NIKE SHOES 'AMONG MOST COUNTERFEITED GOODS'

The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development released a report that said international trade of "fakes" represented 2.5 percent of overall world trade, or \$461 billion, in 2013.

The report, "Trade in Counterfeit and Pirated Goods: Mapping the Economic Impact," describes the effect of counterfeiting on a range of industries.

"The scope of the phenomenon appears to be greater than a decade ago," according to the OECD, a group of mostly wealthy 34 nations that promote economic growth. The group includes the U.S., Germany and other countries that the OECD website describes as "advanced nations," as well as some "emerging" countries like Mexico, Chile and Turkey. A previous OECD study in 2008

estimated that counterfeit and pirated goods accounted for up to 1.9 percent of world imports, or up to \$200 billion.

Most of the fake goods appear to originate from China. Almost 20 percent of the total value of seized fake products violate the intellectual property rights of holders registered in the U.S., followed by Italy at 14.6 percent, France at 12.1 percent, Switzerland at 11.7 percent, Japan at 8.2 percent and Germany at 7.5 percent.

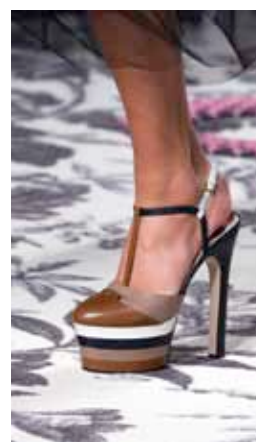
Rolex, Nike, Ray Ban and Louis Vuitton are brands that "seem to be more intensely targeted by counterfeiters," according to the report. The results corroborate a previous World Customs Organization report that identified Nike as the most frequently counterfeited brand in 2013.

Fake Nike shoes are worth between \$5 to \$200 on the counterfeit market, while Ray Ban sunglasses range from \$5 to \$150, OECD found. Fake Louis Vuitton bags ranged from \$5 to \$1,500, while counterfeit Rolex watches were sold for \$5 to \$20,000, the report said.

Some counterfeit products also pose health and safety threats, such as fake pharmaceuticals and toys that are of low quality.



GUCCI LAUNCHES NEW PRE-FALL SHOES



Italian label Gucci just launched a series of new men's and women's pre-fall footwear styles on its e-commerce website, and it features a heap of quirky shoes.

Among the standouts include new takes on

Gucci's classic horsebit loafer, as well as new interpretations of its sneaker and heel styles.

The women's collection features new mule loafers in a variety of treatments, such as floral prints and metallic uppers. The fur-lined mule — a major street-style star this year — returns in both flat and heel heights. New silhouettes include T-strap heels and scalloped ballet flats.

In the men's realm, sneakers prevail. Gucci's classic white court sneakers are reworked with quirky accents, such as an embellished lightning bolt or embroidered lip. Horsebit loafers are done in floral prints or lined with fur.

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STEVE MADDEN MEETS PROFIT EXPECTATIONS, EXCEEDS ON SALES

Steve Madden reported first quarter revenue and profit in line with guidance. The company reported net income of \$20 million, or 33 cents per diluted share, for the period ending March 31. It was less than a percent gain compared to the same year-ago period, when profits were \$19.8 million, or 32 cents per diluted share.

Madden sales beat analyst predictions and rose to \$329.4 million, up 1.7 percent from first quarter last year when sales topped \$323.9 million. Analysts expected sales of \$325.4 million for the firm.

As expected, the wholesale division was challenged a bit by industry-wide forces but did post growth in footwear wholesale sales, which was offset by a decline in accessories orders. The firm reported that sales for the wholesale business were \$275.8 million in the first quarter, compared to 2015's first quarter results of \$276.2 million. Gross margin in the wholesale business increased to 31.2 percent, which the firm credited to its footwear category.

"Our wholesale footwear business also grew in the quarter, led by strong gains in our Steve Madden Women's and Dolce Vita divisions," Ed Rosenfeld, CEO and chairman of Steve Madden, said. "As expected, these increases were partially offset by a decline in our wholesale accessories segment. While we remain cautious with respect to our outlook for the year due to the uncertain retail environment, we are heartened by the strength of our current product assortments and the renewed momentum in our core business."



CONVERSE HEAD JIM CALHOUN EXITS IN NIKE RESHUFFLE

Nike has announced that Converse president and CEO Jim Calhoun would leave the company. He will be replaced by Davide Grasso, Nike's current chief marketing officer.

In addition, Michael Spillane, vice president and GM of footwear, has been named president of product and merchandising, replacing Jeanne Jackson, who will work in a new advisory role with top boss Mark Parker.

"We are fortunate to have built a strong and deep bench of talent across our organization. As we move forward to deliver our long-

term goals, the leadership changes we are announcing today will help us to continue to drive growth around the world," Parker, Nike's president and CEO, said.

Under Calhoun, Converse evolved into one of the hottest sneaker styles, registering nearly \$2 billion in annual sales. He was focused on the brand's new corporate headquarters in Boston, as well as the launch of the Chuck Taylor All Star II, Converse's largest advertising campaign and investing in digital.



ALIBABA TO ENTER AUSTRALIA

China's most valuable internet company, Alibaba, has announced plans to open an office in Australia. Alibaba announced at an event in Hangzhou that it would open an Australian office "later this year".

James Hudson, the chief executive of the NSW branch of the Australia-China Business Council, will join the business. John O'Loghlen, a New Zealand-born entrepreneur, has also joined the company.

Alibaba, listed on the New York Stock Exchange with a market value of nearly \$ 200 billion, has had Maggie Zhou in charge of the Australia and New Zealand region for at least two years.

The company signalled that the move to establish an Australian office is designed to help local brands tap into the gigantic Chinese market, where Alibaba has 407 million active buyers on its platforms. However, the decision to establish a fully-

fledged office in Australia will fuel speculation it sees an opportunity for Australian consumers to buy products on its sites.

"We see a lot of potential in the Australian market as Alibaba continues its globalisation efforts. We aim to have dedicated country operations to work closely with Australian merchants and partners, and it is our plan to establish an office in Australia in late 2016 to better help local brands and merchants to access to the Chinese consumer market," the company said in a statement.

Australia ranked as the fifth top-selling country into China during the company's global shopping festival last year, Alibaba said.

A number of Australian retailers, including Woolworths, Bellamy's, Blackmores and Chemist Warehouse, have signed up to officially sell products on Tmall, Alibaba's Chinese language platform used by

businesses to sell goods to consumers on the mainland. Many well-known Australian products are sold on Alibaba properties by consumers to other consumers.

Last November, the company's "Singles Day" promotion in China was blamed for creating a severe shortage of Australian baby formula products, including Bellamy's.

Last year the company said it would expand into France, Germany and Italy. It has already established a foothold in the US.



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GERMAN COURT REJECTS ADIDAS' REQUEST

A German court has rejected adidas's petition to stop PUMA from producing its line of NRGY sneakers that rival the Three Stripes' BOOST shoes. The former filed an injunction for PUMA to stop selling the footwear.

PUMA launched its NRGY line back in 2014, after partnering with Huntsman Corp. Before that the brand was working with BASF, the same company that developed adidas's BOOST technology. adidas's BOOST line debuted in 2013, after the brand struck an exclusive deal with BASF in 2011.

During the injunction process, PUMA held back from launching new versions of NRGY kicks, but it will in turn proceed with promoting new models more aggressively.



CENTRAL GROUP BUYING ZALORA'S BIZ IN THAILAND AND VIETNAM

Zalora, the fashion-focused e-commerce site backed by Rocket Internet, is selling its businesses in Thailand and Vietnam to retailer Central Group.

The deal is said to be agreed on in principle and currently subject to paperwork and red tape.

Central Group is one of the region's largest retail players with a huge footprint in Thailand and forays into Vietnam, Malaysia, Indonesia and other countries. The group's assets, which include multiple shopping malls and national department store chains, are worth close to \$10 billion and it employs some 70,000 people across its operations.

The group has been tipped to enter the online commerce space for some time, and it has struck a deal to buy the country

businesses from Zalora for around \$10 million each. Online is estimated to account for around 3 percent of all commerce in Southeast Asia and, while that figure has grown in recent years and stands to increase as the Internet becomes more widely accessible throughout the region.

The low level of online commerce has been a challenge for Rocket Internet's e-commerce startups, which started out with ambitious targets, missed their projections. Lazada received a \$500 million investment from Alibaba this month after running out of cash, while Zalora remains unprofitable. Rocket Internet's latest financial results show Zalora's revenue rose 78 percent to €208 million (\$234 million) in 2015, but its net loss increased 36 percent to €93.5 million (\$105 million).

UK BLOCKED TOUGHER EU RULES AMID SHOE PRICE RISE FEARS

The UK has blocked tougher EU trade rules to help the steel industry partly because it could have raised the price of shoes for British shoppers.

Sajid Javid, the country's business secretary, argued the UK opposed scrapping the so-called lesser duty rule as it would have "cost British shoppers dear", including an extra £130m a year on the price of footwear.

A number of EU countries have been trying to get the rule lifted, as it would allow higher tariffs to be imposed on cut-price Chinese steel being dumped on the world market.

The industry, Labour MPs and unions have blamed Chinese dumping for the crisis facing the steel industry, which has led Tata to announce it is withdrawing from the UK,

risking tens of thousands of jobs.

During an emergency debate in the House of Commons, Javid said his country would consider supporting higher tariffs on steel at an EU level and would keep the evidence under constant review.

But he defended the UK's commitment to the lesser duty rule – a principle whereby tariffs on all industries are imposed at the lowest level possible to deter dumping in trade disputes.

Many are of the view that Javid had been using shoes as an example of "how the lesser duty rule can help – there were tariffs in place on shoes in 2007 until 2011", adding that the lesser duty has also saved UK consumers money on everything from solar panels, to candles, ironing boards and petrol.

APL ANNOUNCES DEAL WITH RENAULT SPORT FORMULA 1 RACE TEAM

Athletic Propulsion Labs has quickly garnered a solid reputation within the athletic and fashion worlds. The label has announced that it has entered a new partnership that is sure to propel its name to new heights.

The brand is now the official footwear supplier for the Renault Sport Formula 1 Team. The deal will yield a new advanced iteration of APL's acclaimed Ascend training shoe, which the team tested at the Australian Grand Prix and used during Chinese Grand Prix.

"Athletic Propulsion Labs and the Renault Sport Formula 1 Team share a common vision of creating world-class performance technologies in our respective fields," the brand announced. "The opportunity to join forces in support of Renault's re-entry into Formula 1 is very exciting and emblematic of the dedication our respective companies have towards reaching new levels of performance through technological innovation and breakthrough design."

The Ascend training shoe is designed to take a beating dished out during the toughest of workouts. It features APL's Propelium cushioning technology, a full-length honeycomb mesh upper with minimal overlays to give the shoe breathability and a secure fit, and an outsole boasting natural motion flex grooves that react to every movement.



According to Cyril Abiteboul, managing director of Renault Sport Racing, "Since returning to F1, we have aimed to position ourselves as dynamic and creative and to partner with brands who share this ethos. APL definitely fits these criteria. Adam and Ryan Goldston have come up with a product that is both innovative and attractive and at the very forefront of footwear technology. They've managed to go beyond being 'just' a trainer manufacturer and become a genuine lifestyle brand. We're looking forward to working with them on track with the race team and creating lots of exciting off-track synergies."

UBM BUYS BUSINESS JOURNALS INC. FOR \$69M

UBM, which organizes FN Platform and Magic, plans to beef up its portfolio of events. The company said it will pay \$69 million to buy Business Journals Inc., a producer of fashion trade shows in New York and Las Vegas such as Accessories the Show, Moda, Stitch and MRKet. As part of the deal, UBM will also acquire a number of trade magazines.

"Having the greatest possible selection of brands brought together in one place and merchandised in a compelling way makes every retailer's life easier, and helps the wholesale buying process," said Chris DeMoulin, managing director of the fashion division for UBM Americas.

"We are really excited about the expanded possibilities for helping retail

buyers be more efficient and find the best products for their stores. In doing so, we will be bringing exhibitors an even greater number of retailers who want to find and buy the best fashions. Additionally, having media brands like MR and Accessories will help our markets stay informed and connected 365 days a year," DeMoulin added.

NEW BALANCE TAKES STANCE AGAINST TPP

Boston-based athletic brand New Balance is taking a stand against the Trans-Pacific Partnership. After remaining neutral on the controversial trade deal, the brand announced it was changing its position.

In a conversation with Footwear News, the company said fundamentally it was anti-TPP because the deal would be bad for U.S. footwear manufacturing and jobs, as well as threatening New Balance's lead as a top domestic athletic-shoe manufacturer.

"From the moment TPP started to be contemplated, we were skeptical and nervous and had some concerns. We knew ... the tariffs that help us maintain our domestic workforce would be squarely in the targets," said Matt LeBretton, VP of public affairs at New Balance.

Generally the footwear and fashion industries have been big TPP supporters, arguing the agreement opens markets for U.S. goods and that it will help lower prices for the consumer. The Footwear Distributors and Retailers of America expect the deal will save about \$6 billion in tariffs in its first decade.

According to LeBretton, New Balance specifically took issue with tariff reductions on footwear, which were implemented at a



much faster pace than expected. He also said he had concerns over the enforcement provisions in the deal.

Up until this point, New Balance has remained quiet on the TPP because the company had a handshake agreement with the Office of the United States Trade Representative, Bretton added. The company said in exchange for being neutral on the deal, the USTR would help support New Balance's efforts to get the Berry Amendment extended to athletic footwear and set up a meeting with the Department of Defense for the brand.

Since the 1940s, the Berry Amendment has required that military uniforms to be made in the U.S., although sneakers and athletic footwear have remained outside of the

regulation.

Critics of New Balance's position are quick to challenge the brand's decision to come out against the deal, citing that nowhere in the agreement is the U.S. military footwear issue even addressed.

The move today also puts the athletic player in a tough position as an outsider on the issue in its own industry.

In March, executives at Wolverine World Wide, Elan Polo, Lacrosse Footwear and H.H. Brown (which all produce shoes at home and abroad) signed a letter endorsing TPP. The American Apparel and Footwear Association also reiterated its support of both the Berry Amendment and TPP today. (New Balance president and CEO Rob DeMartini is the chairman of the board.)

JOHNSTON & MURPHY READYING TO SHOD THE NEXT U.S. PRESIDENT

Keeping with a tradition started in 1850, legendary shoe brand Johnston & Murphy will be creating a pair of shoes for the next commander in chief, regardless of party affiliation. And, in a historic turn of events, it might be the first time a pair of women's shoes will be crafted.

William Dudley, an immigrant shoemaker and founder of Johnston & Murphy, originally named The William J. Dudley Shoe Co., offered to make a pair of custom shoes for President

Millard Fillmore, who accepted his offer.

Continuing down the presidential line, there's Abraham Lincoln, who wore a pair of lace-up boots in a size 14, the largest shoe created by the company to date.

It wasn't until President Benjamin Harrison's shoe made in 1889, however, that the company became Johnston & Murphy. It was acquired in 1886 by two new owners.

Moving on, Theodore Roosevelt opted for sturdy dress boots, while John F. Kennedy

preferred black wingtips.

Herbert Hoover wore a size 11 1/2 AA, the narrowest ever created for a president, while Lyndon B. Johnson need specially designed shoes to accommodate the difference between his right foot, and 11 C and his left an 11 1/2 C.

Barack Obama had two pairs of shoes crafted — black oxfords complete with a box handmade of loa wood from Hawaii in addition to a modern version of Lincoln's lace-up boots.

UNDER ARMOUR TEAMS UP WITH THE ROCK



Dwayne “The Rock” Johnson is the new voice of Under Armour — or at least the voice of its new advertising spot for the brand’s HealthBox fitness-technology package.

The one-minute video, titled “One Push,” debuted Johnson’s Instagram account and is airing on YouTube and Underarmour.com. It features a voice-over by the wrestler-turned-actor, outlining the benefits of technology.

For instance, he explains, one tap on a smartphone can get you food, flowers or a ride. Or: “With one push of a button, a stranger will go on a date with you, leave their home so you can make it your own, change your tire, steam your shirt, wash your pants ...” You get the idea.

But technology can only do so much, according to the commercial, created by New York-based ad agency Droga5. The spot

ends with a shot of an athlete embarking on a run, clothed in Under Armour gear, including the brand’s HealthBox-connected wristband.

And then we hear this from Johnson: “Or with one push of a button, nothing happens — unless you make it happen.”

The commercial marks Johnson’s first appearance in a major piece of Under Armour marketing, although the two partners, who teamed up in January, unveiled their first product collaboration in early March.

Under Armour’s “Rule Yourself” global brand campaign has been rolling out other high-impact ad spots recently, including intense videos featuring the USA Gymnastics Women’s National Team and Michael Phelps, showing the lengths they go to in order to achieve greatness.

WOLVERINE TOPS Q1 ESTIMATES

Wolverine World Wide reported first-quarter 2016 sales and profits that significantly surpassed market watchers estimates. Its management said a series of initiatives implemented last year are beginning to yield positive results for the firm.

“We exceeded expectations for both revenue and earnings in the first quarter and believe the company is well-positioned to achieve our objectives for the year,” said Blake Krueger, Wolverine’s chairman, CEO and president. “The actions we have taken over the past several quarters — particularly reorganizing our brand groups, adjusting our store fleet to address changing consumer preferences and assigning new leadership to key strategic initiatives — have gained traction and are already having a positive impact.”

Reported revenues, at \$577.6 million, were 8.5 percent less than the comparable period, when revenues were \$631.4 million. Still, the number exceeded market watchers’ predictions for revenues of \$567.5 million.

During the firm’s conference call, Krueger said that he would continue to focus on optimizing store operations as the company forges ahead with store closures and reorganization, at Stride Rite in particular.

“Last year and into this year, we continued to close stores to right size the go-forward brick-and-mortar fleet to keep in step with a significant changes in consumer shopping behavior,” Krueger said. “In 2016, we planned to close up to 100 additional sub-par doors. We’ve initiated programs to refresh the go-forward stores to deliver a much richer consumer experience. We’ve also consolidated our Stride Rite Children’s Group and our Michigan based direct to consumer group into one team and recruited new experience leadership to drive results.”

Among its progressive steps, Krueger said the firm has rationalized its retail overhead and created a new merchandising structure to support its smaller businesses.

“Our business model continues to provide a strong foundation and to mitigate global macroeconomic risks. Additionally, our recent strategic actions are progressing well and gaining strong momentum. I am pleased with our start to 2016, but we remain appropriately cautious given the slow pace of the global recovery and are reaffirming our outlook for the year,” the CEO added.

JIMMY CHOO TOASTS 20TH ANNIVERSARY

Jimmy Choo made a big splash for its 20th anniversary. The fete — hosted by CEO Pierre Denis and creative director Sandra Choi — was timed around the opening of the brand’s new Soho store. Rob Pruitt, Olivia Palermo, Genevieve Jones, Lauren Remington Platt, Cristina Ehrlich and Jessica Joffe were among the big names who attended the dinner at new Manhattan hot spot The Blonde.

The brand will debut another high-profile location at 699 Madison Avenue.

“New York has always been a very important market as it served as our first retail location back in 1998,” said Denis. “The opening of these two stores play an important role in serving the city’s dynamic clientele. With



locations both uptown and downtown, we are able to speak to a wider audience and cater to both New Yorkers and visitors alike.”



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PUMA (New Delhi)

Name of the store: PUMA Flagship Store

Location: E-32, South Extension I, New Delhi

Area: 4,800 sq. ft.

Product Range: Ranging from lifestyle to football, cricket, golf, running gear and gym wear, the options are endless. PUMA's special range of products in collaboration with international designers- Alexander McQueen and Chris Stamp etc -is made accessible at the store. The products are divided into different categories and displayed at the store. PUMA's strong heritage is underlined by a visible footwear wall, a hot spot in the stores

Store Design and Interiors, Fixtures, Props, Graphics: The Forever Faster shopping environment goes to the very basics of retail by placing heavy emphasis on our products. In doing so, we establish a meaningful connection with our consumers and effectively tell brand and product stories. The

concept has been designed to showcase and follow our principles and make a statement on the fusion of performance and lifestyle, all united for the passion of sport and to be Forever Faster.

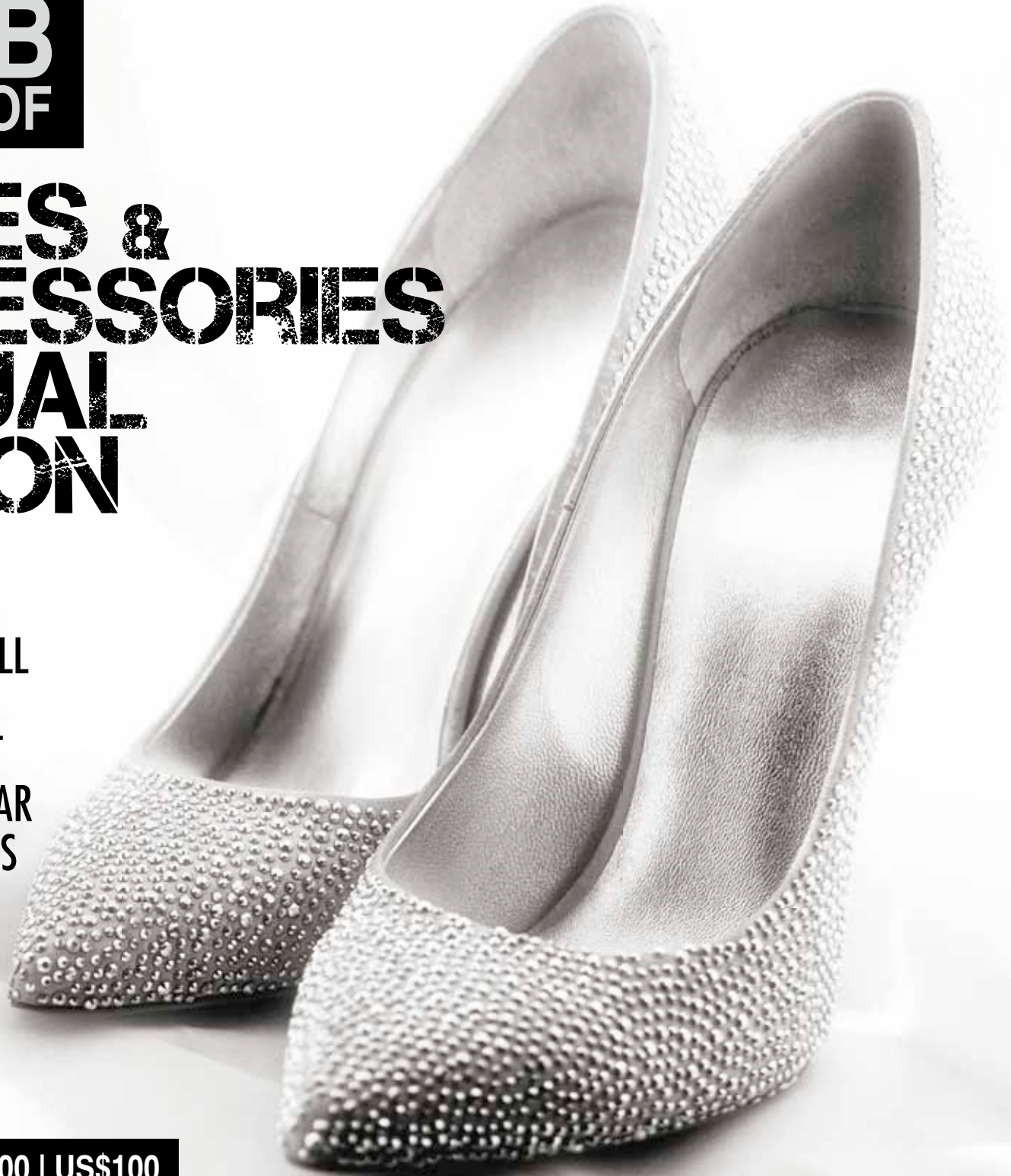
The look and feel is modern, inspirational and sport-focused. It is simple to give right focus to the products, which should resonate, stir emotions, stand out and demand attention. This concept allows full flexibility and great capacity. This store is visually less cluttered and has a strong mannequin dressing

Consumer experiences the PUMA brand DNA throughout their store journey. PUMA's strong heritage is underlined by a visible footwear wall, a hot spot in the stores. To make consumers experience more enjoyable, the concept offers smooth transition between categories and clearly split by gender. **S&A**

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THE LUCKY NUMBER



*Rhiti Sports Management, a sports marketing and celebrity management firm that represents Indian cricket captain Mahendra Singh Dhoni, has launched an active lifestyle brand called Seven. Dhoni will be the global brand ambassador for the brand that will come out with sports and leisure-wear apparel and footwear. Dhoni will have a licencing agreement with the company. As far as the brand name is concerned, millions of people consider the number seven influential in their lives, says **Devtosh Jha**, Director, RS Seven Lifestyle (P) Ltd, in an interaction with **S&A**.*



MOTIVATION AND CONCEPT

While there are several international brands that are available in the Indian market, we realised that there is not a single active lifestyle brand in the market which appeals to the ever transforming youth of India today. To fill this gap, the idea of SEVEN was born.

SEVEN is an enabler of a healthy and active lifestyle. It's a product and philosophy that invites everybody. It is the finest standard of active lifestyle footwear and apparel that is being specifically launched to target not just the cities but every small town of India.





SEVEN'S OFFLINE DISTRIBUTION STRATEGY INCLUDES AN ALL INDIA DISTRIBUTION CHANNEL AS WELL AS MULTI-BRAND RETAIL STORES AND LARGE FORMAT RETAIL STORES. IN THE ONLINE WORLD, SEVEN IS NOW AVAILABLE ACROSS ALL MAJOR E-COMMERCE PORTALS INCLUDING PAYTM, FLIPKART, SNAPDEAL ETC. WE ALSO HAVE STRONG ACCEPTANCE AND DEMAND COMING VIA INSTITUTIONAL SALES, WHICH WILL BECOME A KEY REVENUE CHANNEL FOR IS IN THE NEAR FUTURE.

As far as the brand name is concerned, millions of people consider the number seven influential in their lives. It is also considered to be a lucky number in the Indian mythology. Within the domain of sports, an array of star athletes have been sporting the number seven on their jerseys. MS Dhoni also sports number 7 on his jersey, which eventually formed the basis of our brand name selection. Interestingly, 7 also happens to be the birth date of MSD (7th of the 7th month i.e. 7th July).

ONLINE FORMAT AND OFFLINE STRATEGY

E-commerce is a very important channel in our distribution strategy. Given the target market we're catering to, a majority of them find themselves interacting in the online world. It, therefore, becomes an important platform for us to utilise and reach out to our core customers.

At present, SEVEN's offline distribution strategy includes an all India distribution channel as well as multi-brand retail stores and large format retail stores. In the online world, SEVEN is now available across all major e-commerce portals including Paytm, Flipkart, Snapdeal etc. We also have strong acceptance and demand coming via institutional sales, which will become a key revenue channel for is in the near future. Going forward, we will also be launching our own e-com store.

TARGET REGIONS

With SEVEN, our ambition right from the start has been to offer international quality active lifestyle products across every geography of India. Which is why we are a 'mass-premium' brand that aims to inspire and bring about a healthier way of living to every consumer in India, and eventually across the world. Our distribution has been specifically designed to cater to this goal, while our pricing strategy fits very well with the affordability index of today's thumb-texting, Google-researching connected youth of India and the rest of the world. I strongly believe that in the coming months, SEVEN has the potential to reposition the athletic leisure category.

At the moment we have also received huge demand from international markets, and we are currently in the process of signing up master distributors for GCC markets, African continent, South-east Asia, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh.

PRODUCT STRATEGY

From a business standpoint, we don't see ourselves in competition with existing sports brands. SEVEN's brand philosophy is built to directly compete with lethargy, procrastination and the old way of doing things. We have invested in design, in research, in production capabilities, but our biggest investment is our faith in the young generation of today's India.



Under the SEVEN banner, we manufacture and market running, training, indoor, sports and athletic leisurewear apparel and footwear. Our product strategy is to utilize the best-in-class active lifestyle technology, yet keep the price index low so that a major mass of the market can afford it. As such, SEVEN products are appeal to the mindset of the modern youth – changemakers - who are bold, confident go-getters, unafraid to go after what they want on their own terms. The brand aims to drive home the point that fitness is accessible to not just professional sportspersons but everybody, whether you want to break a world record or simply break a sweat.

INDIAN SPORTS FOOTWEAR SEGMENT

Over the years a rapid increase has been witnessed in the consumer trends with them shifting towards a more healthy and active lifestyle. Consumers have added new routines to their lifestyle such as meditation, yoga, gym workouts, swimming and jogging and have also started indulging in sporting activities such as football, basketball, volleyball and cricket.

This has hence resulted in the entrance of various national and international brands in the Indian market making it one the most booming sectors of the retail industry. This has resulted in high demand of high quality affordable footwear and apparel across categories. While earlier the options were limited with respect to the brands and their offerings, it has drastically evolved over the years with newer technologies and players entering the market. Each brand today makes sure to invest their money and time in extensive R&D to stay up to date with the market and give the best choices to their customers.



VIRTUAL ABSENCE OF INDIAN BRANDS

The biggest challenge with Indian brands has been the 'last mile connectivity'. While we are a country with a billion plus population, brands across categories (barring a few) have not been able to adapt to the international quality standards yet. There's often been a lack of focus on the part of brands to position themselves as global players. In the case of SEVEN, we have the backing of a globally popular sporting icon, MS Dhoni. Our aim was therefore to ensure that our brand is built in a manner which creates synergy between MSD's global appeal at one end and the mass aspiration on the other. SEVEN is India's first active lifestyle brand which is being marketed internationally right from the start, and we strongly feel that SEVEN will become a common name across households in the global market.

INDUSTRY GROWTH

The sports and athletic leisure products retail market is growing at an average of 13% CAGR. I witness the growth to propel in the next three years, given the increase in the size of the under-30 aged market. This particular segment, that we call 'NewNow', has very specific needs and requirements. They also exit their demand borders quickly to create new ones. As such, brands in this segment will need to continuously innovate not only in terms of technology, but more so in terms of preferential changes of the New Now segment. SEVEN's advantage comes from the fact that we've launched a brand keeping this transformative lifestyle of the target audience in mind; as such we see ourselves in a good position in the coming years with incremental demand, augmented top-line and strong profitability. **S&A**



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Adesh Gupta, Unanimously elected First Chairman of Council for Footwear Leather & Accessories

Council for Footwear leather & Accessories to propel domestic industry



*Prior to the formulation of 12th plan period, the Government engaged the industry representatives extensively to set up a body to exclusively deal with the interest of the domestic industry and formulate a viable growth plan. The result of the relentless effort is the birth of Council for Footwear Leather and Accessories (CFLA). It is the apex organization of Indian footwear; leather and accessories industry and it will primarily focus on the development and expansion of domestic setup. In an elaborate interaction, **ADESH GUPTA**, Chairman of the council, spells out what council will be doing. Gupta is also the Chief Executive Officer of Liberty Shoes.*

Leather sector has been included as a 'Focus Sector' under the Make in India programme announced by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in September 2014. Under this programme, the Indian Leather Sector has been given an ambitious target of achieving a total turnover of \$ 27 billion by 2020 (which includes export turnover of \$ 15 billion and domestic turnover of \$ 12 billion) from the present turnover of \$12.50 billion. As an apex body for footwear leather and accessories, Council For Footwear Leather And Accessories has been incorporated as a public company on 17 February 2016. It held its first annual general meeting on the 29th March 30, 2016, presided by directors of Council For Footwear Leather And Accessories Adesh Kumar Gupta, Raj Kumar Gupta and Inder Dev Singh Musafir.

Adesh specialized in Polyurethane (PU) Applications in Footwear and he pioneered the application of PU technology for the first time in India in 1983 and helped make Liberty a leader in domestic market. Adesh Gupta has acted as Chairman, Confederation of Indian Industry (Northern Region), headed the Footwear Design and Development Institute (2005–08) as Chairman under the aegis of Ministry of Commerce, Government of India. He heads a number of professional as well as Govt. bodies related to footwear industry in various capacities.

Inder Dev Singh Musafir, grand son of freedom fighter and first Chief Minister of

**THE LEATHER INDUSTRY
HOLDS A PROMINENT
PLACE IN THE INDIAN
ECONOMY AND IS KNOWN
FOR ITS CONSISTENCY IN
HIGH GROWTH RATE, AND
IT IS AMONG THE TOP TEN
SECTORS OF THE INDIAN
ECONOMY.**



(L to R) Members of Council for Footwear Leather & Accessories with Shri Atul Chaturvedi Joint Secretary – DIPP, Ministry of Commerce and Industry.

New Punjab (1966) Giani Gurmukh Singh Musafir, has carved a niche for himself in the world of domestic footwear business with international partners. A diploma holder in footwear technology from the United Kingdom, Inder Musafir runs a very successful shoe business, representing several prestigious international and national brands such as Lee Cooper (U.K), Provogue and ID. He has also served for over a decade as member of the Governing Council of FDDI (Footwear Design & Development Institute) Ministry of Commerce, Govt. of India.

Raj Kumar Gupta, President Footwear Park at Bahadurgarh and managing director of Action Shoes, a dynamic personality, has taken the company to new heights since its inception. He has been instrumental in shaping this success story into what it is today. He has strongly and pragmatically driven the company towards growth and success and continues to guide this widely spread organization on its way to a promising future.

The Leather Industry holds a prominent place in the Indian economy and known for its consistency in high growth rate and it is among the top ten sector of the Indian economy. With an annual turnover of over \$ 12 billion (₹80,000 Crores) the domestic trade account for leather and leather products of about \$ 6 billion (₹4,000 Crores) which increased manifold over the past decades and recording a cumulative annual growth rate of about 11%. The Leather industry is bestowed with an affluence of raw materials as India is endowed with 21% of world cattle and 11% of world

goat and sheep population. Added to this are the strengths of skilled manpower, innovative technology, increasing industry compliance to national and international environmental standards, and the dedicated support of the allied industries.

The leather industry is an employment intensive sector, providing job to about 2.5 million people, mostly from the weaker sections of the society. Women employment is predominant in leather products sector with about 30% share. The major segments of the industry are tanning, footwear, leather goods (including gloves and saddlery and harness sectors) and leather garments. Needless to mention that India is the second largest producer of footwear and leather garments in the world.

At the concluding half, Atul Chaturvedi, IAS Joint Secretary DIPP, joined the assembly and gave a serene consideration to various points expressed by the members. The members expressed their views with an intent to have a uniform voice to share with the policy makers, the crucial issues relating to multiplicity of tax matters such as GST, VAT, CST, Excise Duty and retail issues related to supply chain.

The main objective of the council is as follows:

- ▶ Creating a unifying body of the fragmented associations operating in the sector.
- ▶ How to grow at the manufacturing front.

The members concluded that the Council would initially concentrate on a ten point agenda initially:

- ▶ At center's level: Basic Excise duty reduction from 12 to 6%
- ▶ Approach Uttar Pradesh, Tamil Nadu and some select states with the appeal for reducing VAT rates in the first phase. This was to be rolled out progressively to cover the other states so that this sector is covered under merit rate of GST.
- ▶ Create an efficient Zone in Haryana as a Shoe City
- ▶ Comprehensive market study on the footwear industry in India.
- ▶ Sanction a field study in a few states
- ▶ Mega event for investment Promotion and Development at New Delhi.
- ▶ Initiate a wage study
- ▶ CFLA's representation at FDDI
- ▶ Increase CFLA membership base to 500

The Joint Secretary resonated an extremely positive and inspiring concluding remarks. Though, he did express that the sector needs a vigorous thrust from the manufacturing sector, as the economy or an industry cannot thrive only on domestic or export players.

Evidently, international trade brings us the valuable foreign exchange earning but at the same time it is full of risks as well. The recent economic recession in the traditional markets of Europe and USA which have affected not only the export growth but also the creation of additional employment opportunities in the last couple of years is an eye-opener for the Indian leather industry. Thus, total dependency on exports is not enough to

ensure sustainable growth of the Indian leather industry in the long run. The industry has to look inward at the domestic market and tap the growing potential, also and concentrate on areas, which will benefit both the export front and also the penetration of the domestic market. As significant efforts need to be taken to create the necessary atmosphere and facilities for achieving the objective of sustainable development at the domestic front, there is a need for focused initiatives to counter the challenges faced by the domestic industry.

The Government of India has announced setting-up of Mega Leather Clusters under the DIPP in states under ILDP during 12th Plan period. These Mega Leather Clusters which will come up in an area of 80-100 acres and will have world-class infrastructure and support facilities will play a significant role in production enhancement. Each 'mega leather cluster' will involve a maximum investment in the range of ₹160 crore per cluster and will also require integrated approach with regard to areas like land acquisition, creation of common facilities including customs, mobilization of trained work force etc., Also, establishment of each cluster will involve extensive consultations and co-ordination with Central/State Governments and their departments like Customs/ Revenue, Central Excise/ Service Tax, Pollution Control Boards, Industry, Labor etc., and also with industry organizations. However, in the absence of focused initiative no new mega leather cluster has been operated despite facilities being provided under the scheme .



(L to R Standing) Asif Merchant, Rashid Mirza, M. Amin, Lovely Singh, Sahil Malik, Harkirat Singh, Inderdev Musafir, Richard Daniel, Amit Chopra, Vipin Seth, Rajesh Bhagat
(L to R Sitting) KC Lakhani, Adesh Gupta, Atul Chaturvedi, RK Gupta, Motilal Sethi



“THE LEATHER INDUSTRY IS AN EMPLOYMENT INTENSIVE SECTOR, PROVIDING JOB TO ABOUT **2.5 MILLION PEOPLE**, MOSTLY FROM THE WEAKER SECTIONS OF THE SOCIETY. WOMEN EMPLOYMENT IS PREDOMINANT IN **LEATHER PRODUCTS** SECTOR WITH ABOUT 30% SHARE. THE MAJOR SEGMENTS OF THE INDUSTRY ARE TANNING, **FOOTWEAR, LEATHER GOODS** (INCLUDING GLOVES AND SADDLERY & HARNESS SECTORS) AND LEATHER GARMENTS.”

INDER DEV SINGH MUSAFIR,
Vice Chairman CFLA

Investment is one of the key factors, which will determine the growth of the leather industry in India. FDI in the leather sector, despite of numerous investment promotion programmes in place further last couple of years is in tune of only ₹234.68 crores (\$52.43 million) during the period 2000-2011. Availability of statistics is an important information base for projecting proper plan and policy for the holistic development of industry and the leather industry is not an exception to it. In the absence of proper statistics of production, it would be difficult for any government or institution to formulate policy and programs for its development.

THERE IS A NEED FOR CREATING THE FOLLOWING DATABASE FOR LEATHER INDUSTRY.

- ▶ Database of Indian companies interested in JVs/Technical tie-ups so as to exchange this information with overseas manufacturers.
- ▶ Production data on leather and leather products. Such a data needs to be compiled by having network with the District Industries Centre (DIC). Such a data is necessary to frame appropriate policies on enhancing/modernizing capacity in leather sector.
- ▶ Database of labor availability in different parts

of the country, which needs to be compiled in co-ordination with the State Governments. Such a data will be very useful to the Indian companies in finding the right labor for their production facilities.

- ▶ Database of major retail/departmental stores dealing in leather products and footwear, the major brands sold in such stores.
- ▶ Raw material bank - Details of hides, skins and leathers available for domestic sale. This can be compiled by having co-ordination with the various slaughter houses, shanties, market places etc.,
- ▶ As compilation of the above data requires extensive research and co-ordination, with different arms of the government.

The comprehensive program proposed under the Make in India campaign of the government of India is primarily to create confidence coupled with large-scale awareness in India and overseas with a view attract huge foreign direct investment in to the leather sector with superior technology to bring out revolutionary changes in the method of production, quality output, high-class design, efficient manpower, and support ancillary components industry with zero defect and zero effect principle.

INTERVIEW WITH ADESH GUPTA, CHAIRMAN CFLA

What development has led to the formation of CFLA?

The Indian leather Industry witnessed a substantial growth over the years and this led to focus on expansion for export-centric efforts as a result focus for development and growth of the domestic segment suffered a serious setback. The industry has been tirelessly working over the years to set up an institutional mechanism to exclusively look after the larger interest of the domestic leather industry with prime focus on footwear, leather and accessories segment which offers huge potential for expansion. Prior to the formulation of 12th plan period, the Government of India engaged the industry representatives extensively to set up a body to exclusively deal with the interest of the domestic Industry and formulate a viable growth plan. The Make In India programme has truly helped the industry efforts to realize the legitimate dream of setting up of Council for Footwear Leather and Accessories. The government truly deserves to be commended for facilitating the establishment of CFLA, and I am sure the council will meet the expectations of the Small Medium and Large Enterprises working in the field of Indian Footwear and Leather Industry.

How different are its objectives and roles from the body attached to CII?

Council for Footwear Leather and Accessories is the apex organization of Indian footwear, leather and accessories industry and it will primarily focus on the development and expansion of domestic setup with a view to create economies of scale, reduction in the cost of production, brand promotion, enhancing skill, thereby overall enhancing competitiveness and creating employment opportunities for millions of jobs. Thus it is distinctively different from CII, which focuses on Industries across all Sectors.

How closely will it work with the Government in fostering its roles and objectives?

CFLA will perform facilitation and coordination activities towards implementation of various schemes from time to time, including footwear, leather and accessories sector development programmes. The council will work closely with the governments in creating infrastructure of large-scale for capacity augmentation,

fair business environment, build confidence, and assist the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, MSME, Ministry of Finance and other Departments. The council will represent the governments in safeguarding the sector from tariff and non-tariff barriers including cheap and under invoiced imports impacting the domestic industry. The council will function under the aegis of the Department of Industrial Promotion and Policy and render necessary support for policy formulation to strengthen the operation of Indian footwear, leather and accessories industry.

Kindly share the first few measures it will take to address some of the pressing grievances the Industry is facing at present.

Indian footwear industry holds a crucial place in the Indian economy given its large social and economic contribution, especially for its potential to employ the weaker sections, and for supporting economy through its foreign exchange earnings. The sector itself contributes close to 1 per cent of India's GDP, and has all the basic attributes (like abundance of raw-material, basic skill sets, etc.) to contribute highly in India's manufacturing output. The domestic footwear, leather and accessories industry has been facing great challenges since long time, which has impacted its growth potential. The council would take measures to address the on-going grievances of the industry and few of them are enumerated as under:

- ▶ Conducting of awareness programme and campaigns for footwear, leather and accessories industry.
- ▶ To collect and disseminate statistics and information which are useful for the manufacturer.
- ▶ To represent the industry and submit on their behalf research reports and studies with the governments and other departments for developing and implementation of various sector specific schemes, policies, regulations and incentives.
- ▶ To promote brand equity of the industry
- ▶ To promote, facilitate and attract joint ventures, foreign collaborations and foreign direct investments in the sector.
- ▶ To organize domestic and international fairs and events.
- ▶ To enhance competitiveness in the domestic market through various innovative

tools including awareness of new and unique ideas, techniques, new information and methods of trade and communication technologies.

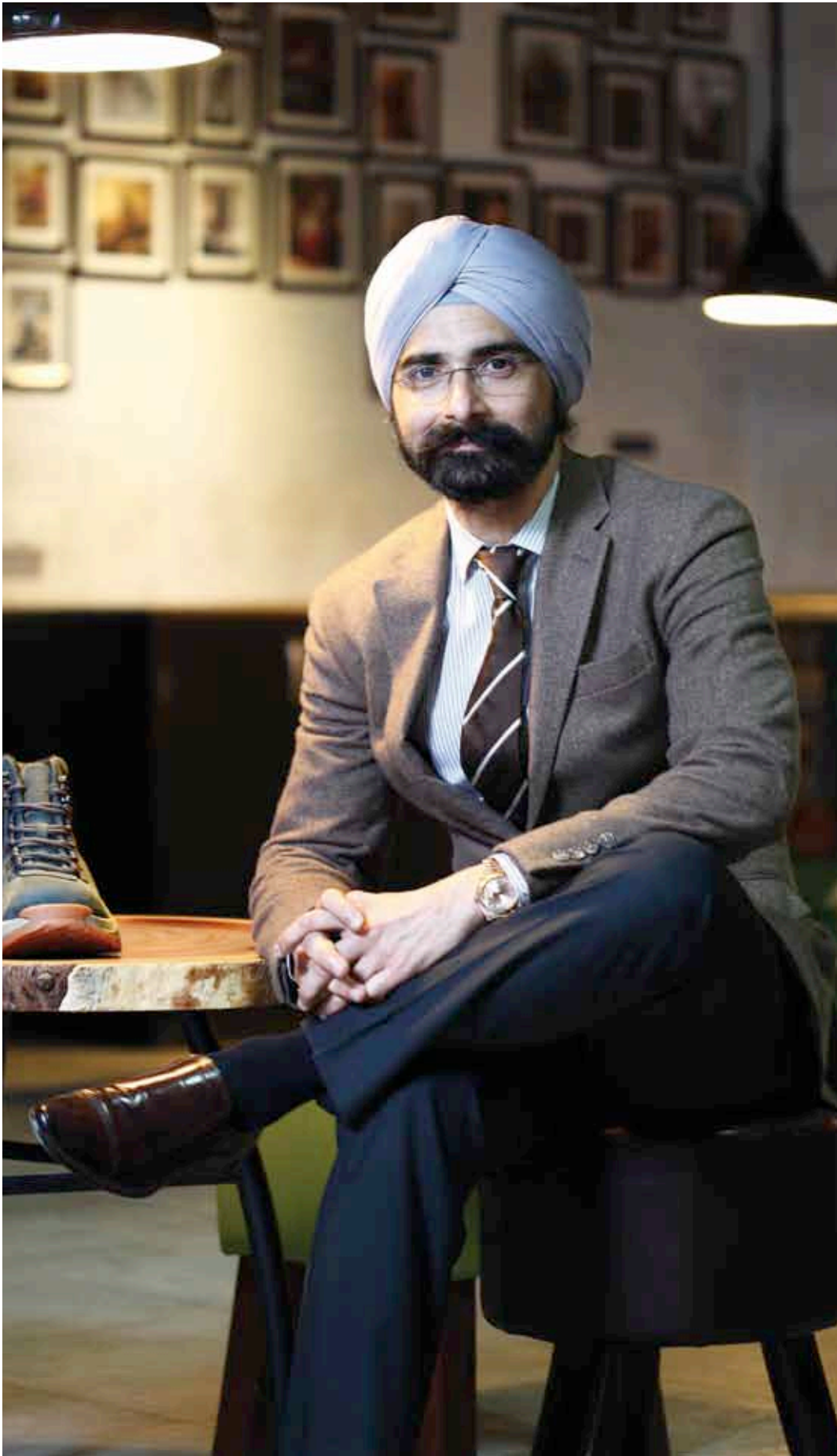
- ▶ To promote and ensure co-operation, integrity and collaboration within the units.

In what areas would you like to see more Government intervention to strengthen the Industry?

Below are few of the areas, which need Government intervention to strengthen the Industry:

- ▶ Rationalizing tax structures and introduction of incentives
- ▶ Reframing of labor and other statutes applicable on the industry in line with the other competitor countries and to support the industry.
- ▶ Bring the unorganized sector into mainstream for greater tax revenue.
- ▶ Minimize Chinese low quality products invasion into the Indian markets.
- ▶ Attract FDI into retail/JV and tie-ups.
- ▶ Increase domestic manufacturing and capacity building in the organized sector.
- ▶ Create skilled manpower for organized retail.
- ▶ Increase cost competitiveness of Indian footwear.
- ▶ Create quality and brand consciousness amongst consumers.
- ▶ Creating 5 world class Indian brands in the footwear and leather products sector
- ▶ Technology up gradation and infrastructure strengthening
- ▶ Improve internal processes such as HRM and technology for more qualified professionals to enter the industry.
- ▶ Recognition of Indian products across the globe.
- ▶ Creating same industry clusters and to promote integration, co-operation and collaboration among them.
- ▶ Setting up organizations for performing such functions as are necessary to attain the standards of quality and labeling and packing of products.
- ▶ Introduction of hi-tech systems for availability of information regarding the availability of raw materials, leather, manufacturing, trade or ultimate use of footwear, leathers and accessories and their substitutes and derivatives in India and other countries. **SA**

BEING MORE INDIGENOUS



Woodland is among a few major outdoor industry brands in the world to have its own integrated manufacturing facilities. With a network of over 600 stores and 4500 plus multi-brand outlets across the globe and a team of over 3500 professionals, the brand has pioneered the 'Outdoor and Adventure' segment. With the recent success of our products across various overseas markets around the globe like Russia, China, Malaysia, Singapore, Canada and the Middle East, the brand plans to make further inroads into other promising markets in Africa, Zimbabwe and other countries, shares **Harkirat Singh**, Managing Director, Woodland Worldwide, with **S&A**.

Aero group is reworking its business and sourcing strategies in response to the Make in India initiative. Kindly elaborate how this will be implemented.

The government has been very encouraging with the Make in India initiative. We are committed to it and steadily expanding our facilities in the country. The roadblocks are slowly getting streamlined, which were a concern earlier in terms of government clearances. The positive environment will further help in expanding our current facilities to make Woodland a complete in-house manufacturing brand – Made in India. The company plans to increase production in India by 25-30% every year and reduce sourcing of finished products and components from overseas.

How much of finished products and components sourced from China and Bangladesh will be reduced?

Our support on overseas markets for specialized products and raw components has been consistent, with low-priced labor and good quality of products being the reasons for us to source from these countries. But with the government planning many initiatives to strengthen domestic production



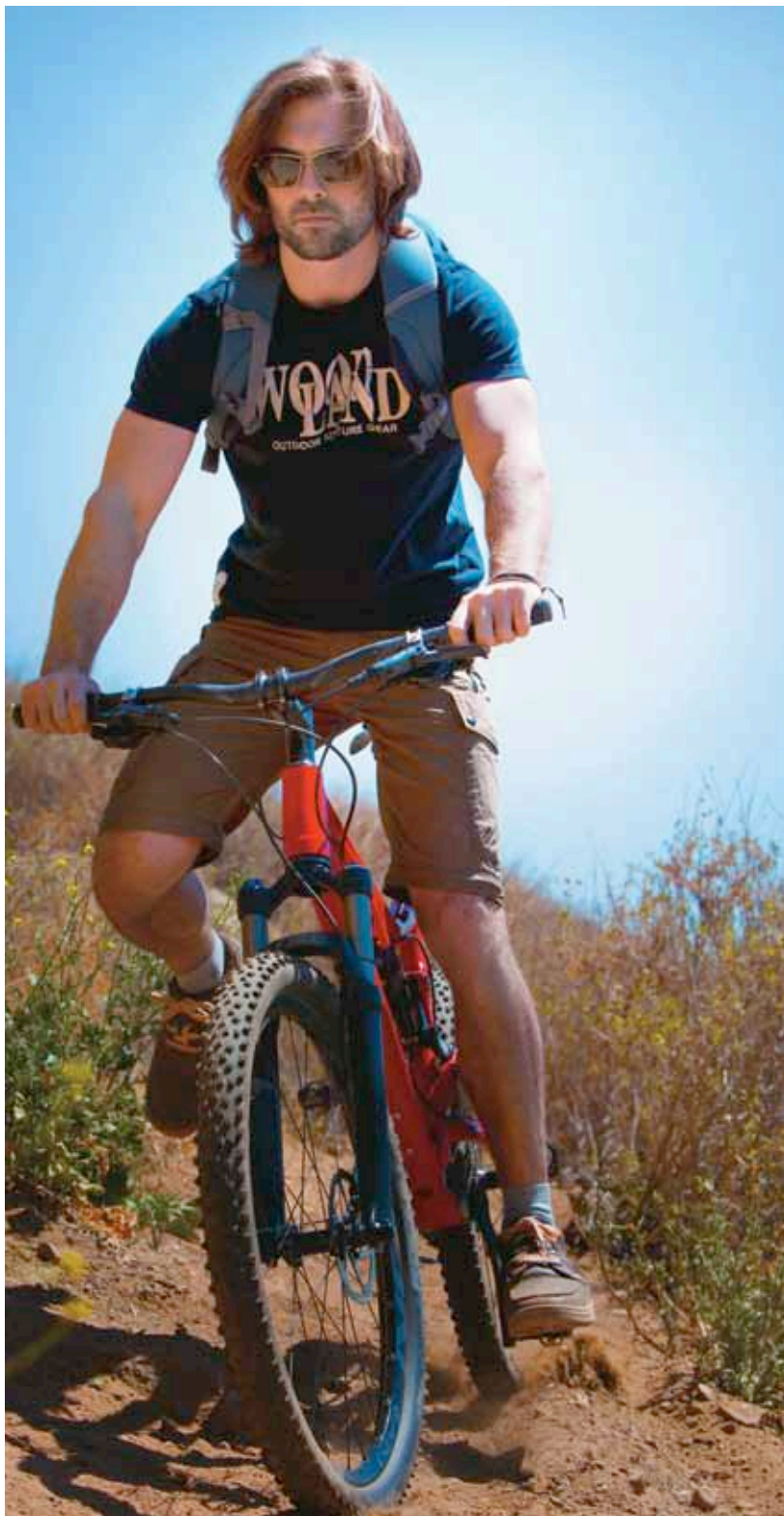
capabilities, we can definitely hope to become more indigenous. Things are expected to get simplified now and a conducive atmosphere to be created for production and manufacturing within our country. This will assist us to reduce dependence on imports from other countries.

How different is the product strategy you have adopted for the overseas markets?

Tech-based adventure gear and outdoor footwear business is the fastest growing arena among youth abroad and in India. With the recent success of our products

THE BRAND CURRENTLY HAS 600 COMPANY STORES IN INDIA AND PLANS TO ADD ANOTHER 50-60 STORES EVERY YEAR. AS A PART OF WOODLAND'S GROWTH STRATEGY, WE WILL FOCUS ON INTERNAL ACCRUALS APART FROM HAVING SHOP-IN-SHOP FORMATS.





across various overseas markets around the globe like Russia, China, Malaysia, Singapore, Canada and the Middle East, the brand plans to make further inroads into other promising markets in Africa, Zimbabwe and other countries. Every market is unique and our strategy is to first understand the geographical locations and consumer preferences and thereby make and sell products that are suitable for those markets.



In the domestic turf, you are targeting more of tier-II and III cities. Will this be in the form of EBO or through MBOs, and how many outlets will you open?

The brand currently has 600 company stores in India and plans to add another 50-60 stores every year. As a part of Woodland's growth strategy, we will focus on internal accruals apart from having shop-in-shop formats. With brand awareness and growing disposable incomes in semi urban India, Woodland will expand its retail network in tier – II and tier – III cities, besides expanding its range of outdoor accessories. Within the next two to three years, we are contemplating increasing the number of our own stores along with MBOs.

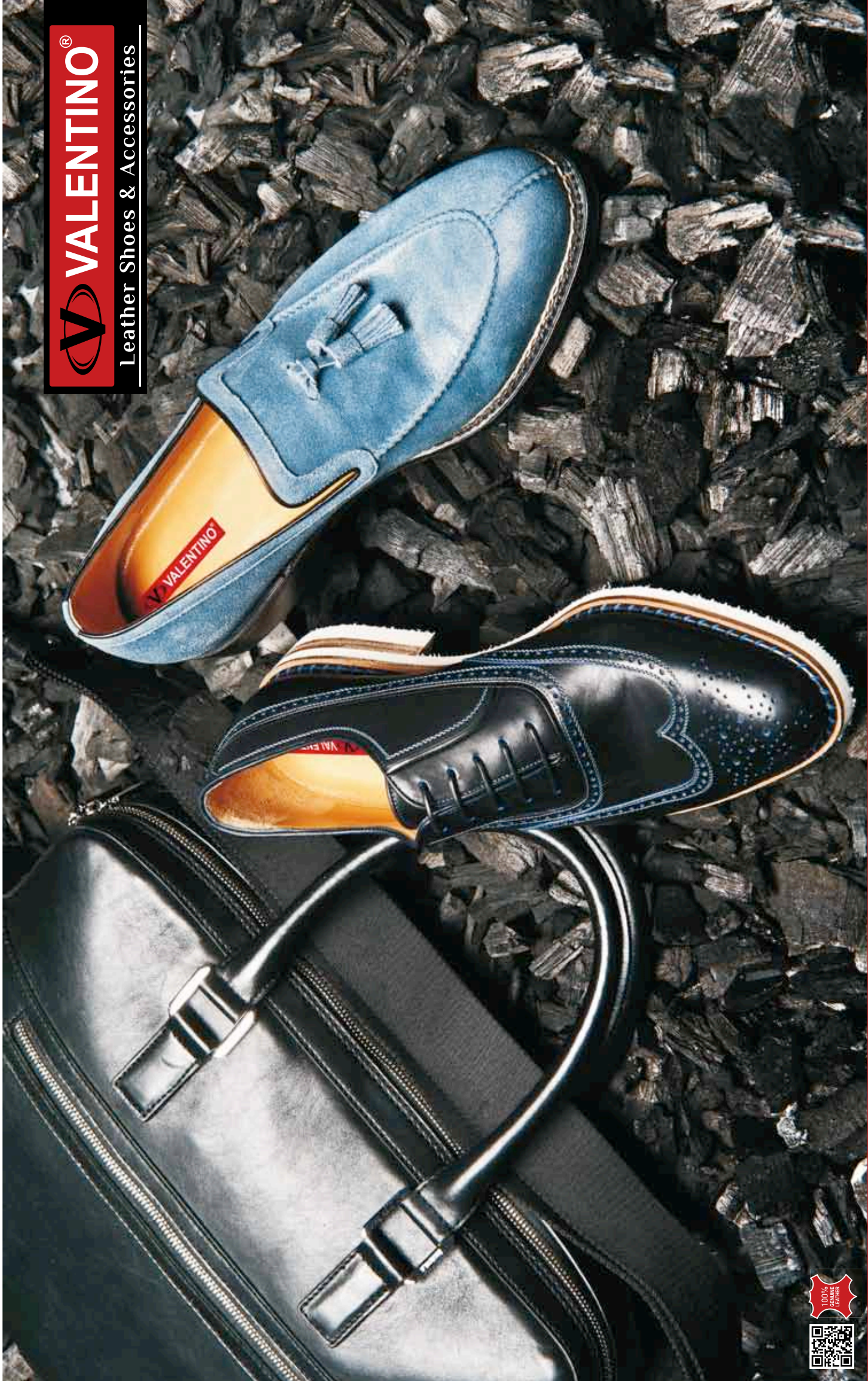
Product diversification is what you have been actively doing lately, what does it mean for footwear category?

We understand consumer preferences and try to innovate by being relevant and in tune with consumer demands. We explore new ways to give the consumers a new experience every time. Aero Group explores innovative technology embedded in products and integrates it with all aspects of our brands. We have already launched GPS-embedded jackets, BOA shoes, Client T-shirts, and many more new technologies and innovations in products are in pipeline. We had collaborated with a former NASA scientist under a royalty agreement and developed shoes and shirts that keep cool and comfortable even in extreme temperatures through phase change material technology. To ensure that the products are precisely engineered, we also brought advanced robotics technology from the German company, Desma, to ensure high quality on the product side.

The outdoor watch range is a specialized line of products from Woodland and it comes with features like compass, barometer and altimeter. We currently have some 15 models that have multiple combinations touching different price points, broadly starting from ₹8,000 onwards. In outdoor sports gear category, some of Woodland's upcoming products include lightweight carbon-made hands-free umbrella, camping lights, UV block T-shirt, super-charged cotton T-shirt, snake bite-resistant super shell shoes and anti-microbe shoes. The main purpose is to provide an adventure lover everything necessary to take on extreme weather and to cater to an all-terrain adventure sports market. **SA**

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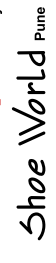
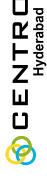
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Women Entrepreneurs

*This **S&A** feature showcases the stories of female entrepreneurs who are commanding their companies to uncharted territories, and to inspire and empower other women to turn their ideas into successful businesses. By interviewing female founders we have tried to find out about the entrepreneurial spirit that drives these women, learn how they got started and what they wish they'd known before entering the start-up world.*

Despite all of their differences, these women have something in common – they are all great role models who are passionate, determined and committed to turning their ideas into reality, building successful businesses!

Curated by: Dipika Chopra





“ NEVER MAKE THE SUCCESS OF YOUR BUSINESS LULL YOU INTO INACTION. THE POWER OF PRE-EMPTIVE APPROACH WILL KEEP YOU AHEAD OF THE COMPETITION AND HELP YOU TIDE OVER ANY POTENTIAL BUSINESS CHALLENGES. ”

FARAH MALIK BHANJI

A DARING DREAMER

Graduated from the University of Texas with high honors in Finance and Mathematics, Farah Malik Bhanji is a third generation entrepreneur with footwear retailing in her genes. With her strong business acumen, attention to detail and flair for fashion, Farah has led Metro Shoes into the new era of modern retailing, be it marketing, product development, new concept development and information technology. The key is to have clarity of mind with regards to where you want to position your brand and how you want to go about it, the CEO & MD of Metro Shoes Ltd told S&A.

BACKGROUND

When I started, I was not sure if I would always be involved in our family business. It was not a strong expectation. However, the more I was exposed to the different facets of the business, the more I enjoyed it. Retail is extremely challenging. It is a customer-facing business and needs to continuously evolve based on changing demands. Fashion retail is exciting because you are genuinely engaging with the way a person lives his or her life.

BELIEFS

True entrepreneurship means never becoming complacent. It's about always questioning the way a business runs and about changing processes to match the current needs of the organization. True entrepreneurship means keeping one foot inside the business and one outside keeping track of the way the world is changing.

MANTRA

Having been born in a family with only sisters, we were never made to feel like there were things women could not achieve. At such a time, I believe it is time for us to stop singling out women entrepreneurs because they are women, and instead start applauding entrepreneurship in its essence because it is a challenge to create a concept and turn it into reality. It is all about paying attention to all the details, be it big or small. I am, however, extremely grateful to the support network of my family that has enabled me to pursue my passion and raise my children in a balanced fashion.

IMPORTANCE OF WORKING WOMEN

India has the 2nd largest and the youngest population in the world. Roughly half the population of India is female. If we have more working women, we increase the productivity of our country. In our industry as well women shoppers, sometimes, prefer interacting with saleswomen who, sometimes, are better at perceiving their needs. Given India's significant population, entrepreneurs have a huge scope at marketing products for women. As more women begin working, they have more disposable and, more importantly, independent income and thus the freedom to spend on their needs.

KEY TO SUCCESS

Believing in yourself can make all the difference. To start with, the mental block that differentiates a man from a woman must be debunked; it is a myth. Going forward, the key is to have clarity of mind with regards to where you want to position your brand and how you want to go about it. There is no recipe to success but belief, clarity a great team and consistent hard work.

CHALLENGES

Today, there is increasing competition from other brands and India's retail landscape is changing every day. The basic strategy which I adopted is to consider my own brand as my greatest competitor and continually strive to excel and become better than what we were yesterday. We are asked time and again on competition with e-commerce players. I do feel that is a boon and not bane. It is an opportunity to be part of a marketplace that will never have its shutters down. The flexibility and analytics of online sales are now influencing our overall decision making.

EXPERIENCE

In retail, you have to wear many hats. If you are looking at budgets today, then you are looking at store interiors tomorrow or visiting a factory or checking bounce rates on the website. Being an entrepreneur requires you to get outside your comfort zone and get your hands dirty.

ADVICE

Be headstrong and determined about what you want. Believe in your dreams fervently and watch them turn into reality with time. Also, never make the success of your business lull you into inaction. The power of pre-emptive approach will keep you ahead of the competition and help you tide over any potential business challenges. In other words, despite the success keep your feet firmly on the ground.

FUTURE

Digitisation and bringing online and offline together will be a focus area this year. Besides this, we also want to strengthen our hold in the tier II and tier III markets.

SOPHIA PREMJEE

NURTURER OF A LORD

Sophia Premjee is a perfectionist. During her 20 years stint with Lords footwear retail, she has transformed it from a regular retail store to one of the most respected and dominant retailers. Fascinatingly though, she has done the magic for Lords consistently with Shoes & Accessories bestowing the Most Admired Retailer award four times since 2012. Sophia took a completely different path for her business and boost of distinctive clientele which includes Bollywood celebrities, Shah Rukh Khan and Shahid Kapur, to name a couple, politicians and television personalities.

BACKGROUND

From childhood, I was interested in a career that involved creativity and design. I had a shoe fetish; I remember a trip to Thailand as a college student when I returned with 16 pairs of shoes in my suitcases. So when I married Karim Premjee, owner of Lord's shoes, my parents were pretty pleased that I would have the scope to indulge myself.

MOTIVATION

A passion for fashion & footwear. I love dressing up and seeing well-attired people well-heeled (literally) too. It is creatively satisfying to offer an eclectic range of shoes that blends the traditional with the contemporary and see a customer walk out of the store with a smile on the face.

BELIEFS

We all harbor dreams. To me, entrepreneurship is the capacity to pick up on our dreams and translate vision into action, underpinned by innovation and calculated risk-taking. It is the ability to develop ideas into concrete products or services by organizing and managing a venture so as to generate profit.

ON WOMEN ENTREPRENEUR

The seed of entrepreneurial activity is an idea and the will to make it succeed. The idea needs to be watered with innovation, development and funding for it to take root. Anticipatory thinking is vital to ensuring that the activity satisfies a need or demand, for it to be sustainable. Growth is subsequently achieved through team building, organization, marketing and sales.

IMPORTANCE OF WORKING WOMEN

Women comprising about 48% of the population, we need to shift our approach to women becoming 'parallel earners'. By ensuring education of women, we can look forward to India raising a productive work force of women that can become a significant driver for India's growth.

KEYS TO SUCCESS

The most wonderful thing about being a woman is the fabulous opportunity we have to multitask and enjoy the various facets of life, be it family, career, the home front or social life. While this balancing act is a skill, it is important to realize that it isn't about choosing one priority over the other; it is about accommodating all the priorities and facts of life that we women hold the potential to enjoy.

CHALLENGES

Liberalization led to an influx of global players and internationally recognized brands posing a threat to home-grown brands. In order to compete and survive meant focusing on our brand USP and repositioning ourselves. The rapid changes in retail formats, with mushrooming of malls and online stores have thrown up their share of challenges as well. Challenges are opportunities to better one's self and come up with innovative solutions to obstacles.

EXPERIENCE

Being actively engaged as a volunteer in social service and community development activities enabled me to hone skills such as strategy, planning, target setting, communication, HR management, leadership, team building and training. Being a mother of three lovely children taught me patience.

DIFFERENT FROM WHAT YOU IMAGINED

Used to seeing customers try on shoe after shoe, preen in front of the mirrors at our stores and ensure a good comfortable fit before zeroing in on their purchases, I had honestly not imagined that someday people would shop for shoes through a handheld device – and that they would actually be satisfied with the fit!

GREATEST HIGHLIGHTS

Being awarded with ISAA "Most Admired Multi-brand Footwear Retailer - West" in 2012, 2013, 2015 and 2016. A highlight that will always be quite special is when Paris Hilton at the India Resort Fashion Week adorned Lord's shoes. Lord's had put together a scintillating and chic collection for the 24 fashion designers at the show.



THE MOST WONDERFUL THING ABOUT BEING A WOMAN IS THE FABULOUS OPPORTUNITY WE HAVE TO MULTITASK AND ENJOY THE VARIOUS FACETS OF LIFE, BE IT FAMILY, CAREER, THE HOME FRONT OR SOCIAL LIFE. ♪

SKILLS TO RUN A BUSINESS

Confidence and conviction in oneself is the key to start and operate a successful enterprise. Faith in one's ideas, one's abilities, the products and/or services is an attribute has a ripple effect, enthusing the organization and staff, inspiring investor confidence and also eliciting trust from a client or customer in turn.

ADVICE

I would refrain from advising, but one message I would like to share with women is what I have learnt through experience – Believe in yourself and walk the talk with conviction by being the change you want to see.

FUTURE

Business-wise, future plans entail consolidation followed by expansion through online and offline platforms. Personally, I enjoy devoting some time regularly to fitness and would like to continue running marathons to benefit causes close to my heart.

f TO BE SELF-SUFFICIENT AND NOT
HAVE TO RELY ON ANYONE FOR
MONEY GIVES A WOMAN OPTIONS
IN LIFE AS WELL AS CONFIDENCE. **y**

SONITA UNADKAT

A RELENTLESS PURSUIT

*Since 2007 **SonitaUnadkat** has been bringing the best of British products to India. Urban Shore, the company Sonita founded, started with 23 brands, and has continued to add on. Having studied Financial Economics in London, she began her career working at Harrods where she had learnt the importance of good quality products and excellent customer service. Not just in India but around the world, women are a vital part of society on a whole and the business world should reflect that, the successful woman tells **S&A**.*

BACKGROUND

I am from a very entrepreneurial family. My grandfather left Punjab for London in the 1960's and started his own business in the back streets of East London. My father and his brothers are also incredibly enterprising and entrepreneurial and so, I guess, you can say it is in my blood. In 2007, I founded Urban Shore in Delhi, bringing the best of British products to India. We started with 23 brands, and have continued to add to them. I look for brands which have a unique difference which would be of interest and enhance the lives of my customers in India.

BELIEFS

My husband shared with me the definition by a Howard professor for entrepreneurship as 'The relentless pursuit of opportunity without regard for the resources currently controlled' and I thought it was a very eloquent and articulate definition. It really does sum up everything that I have seen in my father growing up and how I try and approach my business.

MANTRA

A determined resolve, true dedication and an immense belief in what you are doing, and in your own ability.

WOMEN ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN INDIA

Not just in India but around the world, women are a vital part of society on a whole and the business world should reflect that. Due to cultural barriers and challenges, women have to balance a home/family life with their own ambition and will to work. I know from my own personal experience that I completely underestimated how demanding my baby

would be on my time. I naively thought I could continue as before and raise a baby on the side when in fact it is almost the other way around. I have to fit in time for my work and my self after the needs of my baby are met.

I also think it is a matter of independence and self worth for women. To be self-sufficient and not have to rely on anyone for money gives a woman options in life as well as confidence.

KEYS TO SUCCESS

One cannot underestimate the importance of family support. If it wasn't for first my father and now my husband, being as supportive as they have been, I think I would have found it considerably harder to do business. My mother always believed that I could do anything I put my mind to so to have that level of support creates an immense sense of self-belief which has been essential in getting me through the tougher times.

CHALLENGES

With India being the second largest footwear manufacturer in the world, the biggest challenge I faced while launching FitFlops was the number of copies and counterfeits available in India. We have had to work hard as a brand to highlight the benefits of wearing the 'real thing' as our technology is what makes FitFlops unique. We have had to educate our retailers and work with them to educate the end consumer.

EXPERIENCE

A willingness to listen and learn from those around us. Surround yourself with smart people and don't be afraid to ask questions.

DOUBTS

Doubts are a part and parcel of life in running a business. There have been times when a decision has kept me up at night but ultimately you have to believe that you have made the right choice.

ADVICE

Have the strength to say no and change your business model if it isn't working. Looking back at my path, I wish I had been willing to listen to advice I was being given when something wasn't working. I was too close to see it so I would say try and take a step back and look at the bigger picture. Ultimately, you want to have a successful business and it could be that the first road map you followed wasn't the right one, that doesn't mean you won't create an amazing business, it just means it will be slightly (or very!) different from your original attempt.

FOR MORE WOMEN TO BE ENTREPRENEURS

Education creates opportunities and the ability to think bigger. It can build a person's confidence and show them opportunities beyond their immediate thinking. I also think funding is a huge barrier and so access to capital would make a huge difference.

FUTURE

To continue to grow the business and evolve with the changing trends. I am always looking for new brands to introduce into India and in fact I already have my sights on two incredible ones. One is a footwear brand and one is in cosmetics. Watch this space as I think they will both be very well received in India.

I DESCENDED INTO EQUESTRIAN SHOE BUSINESS AS I KNOW THAT NO ONE ELSE HAD VENTURED INTO IT IN INDIA, AND DEFINITELY I COULD OFFER GREAT QUALITY PRODUCTS. *y*

RINA SHAH

ARCHITECT OF EQUESTRIAN FASHION

Rina Shah has had an eclectic career. Born with an artistic and creative bend, a devoted Bharat Natyam and Khathak dancer, a national level swimmer and athlete, Rina got smitten by the idea of entrepreneurship while pursuing international business at Harvard Business School. After taking a two-year project at Fashion Institute of Technology, New York with an accessory design degree and shoe design as specialty, she returned to India to set up a shoe factory and is churning out world class equestrian fashion and equipment. Rina is also the designer of RINALDI Polo.

BACKGROUND

In 1999, I pioneered customized shoes which were of top most quality and established the first of its kind, an award winning shoe retail store that presented the most desired collection. Subsequently, we expanded and now have four retail outlets in Mumbai and Delhi. Also in 2004, we opened a store in NYC. In 2012, we got into sports – Polo, which in no time besotted me and I decided to follow my passion. Polo prompted me to venture out into polo shoes and launch Rinaldi Polo, under which I hosted equestrian fashion and equipment for the horse lovers. Today, without any doubt, I can boldly state that we make the best polo boots in India, for that matter, in the world.

MOTIVATION

I descended into equestrian shoe business as I know that no one else had ventured into it in India, and definitely I could offer great quality products.

BELIEF

A true businessperson has to have these traits 1) Business is your dream 2) Create opportunity to fill a need 3) Be a risk taker 4) Passion is your top priority, and 5) Don't lose sight of the big picture

KEYS TO SUCCESS

- ▶ Confidence-Plan ahead, prepare for contingencies, get diverse feedback, avoid the speed trap.
- ▶ Creative thinker-Balance present and future, use metrics, prioritise, use simple structure, learn from failures.
- ▶ Determination-Share your optimism, partner with creative types, focus on big picture, be alert to environment.
- ▶ Independent-Focus on main objective, form alliances, delegate, don't let love for your product blind you.
- ▶ Knowledge-seeker-Write and share ideas, prioritise, get outside inputs, create a clear roadmap for changes.

CHALLENGES

When I attempted to get into this vertical, guess I was the only woman in the man's world which was a mammoth decision, particularly being in India. Surprisingly, I got a few threats to exit the business....anyhow, it's far behind me now.

EXPERIENCE

I believe, for picking up speed in business, few skills are acquired, but unquestionably certain skills are in your skin. Books teach only to a limited level, thereafter it entirely rests within the individual and how one conducts oneself.

GREATEST HIGHLIGHTS

There were many. Our store being nominated and elected for the best retail store award in the country, the other was dressing up more than 3000 brides in my career and customizing shoes for celebrities and movies.

DOUBTS

Every business goes through high and low and one always wonders if it's a good choice, and falling into a dilemma is a part of the process too. As you surpass that moment, you win more confidence and are ready to face more and bigger challenges.

ADVICE

Woman in business must find a niche, be a leader not a follower; be confident in whatever you decide and then follow your heart. Money is incidental which would follow eventually.

FUTURE

I want to take Rinaldi Polo across the world and be revered as the NO. 1 polo boot maker.

**CHASING
MULTIPLE RABBITS
(OPPORTUNITIES), WILL
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NOT HAVING A CRYSTAL
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WILL SLOW YOU TO A
SNAIL'S PACE. DEFINE
YOUR BUSINESS
AND YOUR BRAND
AND COMMIT TO IT -
EVERYTHING YOU DO
SHOULD BE CONSISTENT
TO YOUR BUSINESS'
IDENTITY. YOU SIMPLY
CANNOT BE ALL THINGS
TO ALL PEOPLE.**

RINKU MADAN

GOURMET INTELLECT

Rinku Madan recently completed her studies in Global Journalism from Harvard University. Her penchant for understanding food and other finer aspects of life commenced more than a decade ago. Her experience of writing feature articles about food, restaurants, cuisines, luxury properties, lifestyle products, etc, coupled with her interactions with the very "Elite" in India, provided her the push to enhance her skills and pursue "Luxury" as a focus area, not only as a writer but also a food stylist and consultant.

BACKGROUND

It all began with just a dream and a lot of passion. Starting with being a chef at the Chambers (a members only club) at the Taj Mansingh, New Delhi and becoming a certified food writer at the FCI, in Manhattan, New York. What followed was working with CNN International News. Subsequently, I went to Harvard to study Global Journalism at Harvard and launched www.damnnfinelife.com.

MOTIVATION

It was the intention to do something of consequence with my life, and, of course, being passionate about food only helped me getting a direction to follow my dreams.

TRUE ENTREPRENEURSHIP

I would say that a true entrepreneur would be a person who could be a 'high risk taker'. An Innovator, an inventor, like someone who envisions, creates and evangelizes an idea that is absolutely crazy. Someone who sees opportunities in everything they look at.

REQUIRED TO START A BUSINESS

Every great business starts with a drive and a passion. At that time my main passion was food, and that was and has been my focus for as long as I can remember. I wanted to have the flexibility to do what I loved and make a living that would set me up for the rest of my life. But I had no idea where to begin. As I put one foot in front of the other, I started seeing where my passion and skills intersected. I loved connecting with people through food and wine and adding value to their lives. I combined my passions, strengths, and vision to create the ideal journey for me along the way.

KEY TO SUCCESS FOR WOMEN

There is no set of formula to achieve success. Apart from hard work, passion and focus, in my opinion, are the qualities. They move you to action, to go above and beyond what's comfortable, the kind in which, you even surprise yourself.

CHALLENGES

a) Networking - building networks or penetrating existing ones is a challenge. I, for one, am shy by nature and find it difficult to attend networking parties. b) It's difficult for women to find investors as compared to men. Angel investors and venture capitalists (intentionally or unintentionally) favor men over women. c) Work life balance is very difficult to attain easily. While trying to manage multiple things at a time, it leaves me time.

ADVICE

I strongly suggest – 1) Never be afraid to ask other people for their help or advice. Never hesitate, always just ask for help. It's so simple and it sounds so trite, but it's true. 2) Don't start a business just for the money. Plenty of entrepreneurs jump in the game solely for big bucks. If you're in the game solely for the money, you will end up disappointed, as most seasoned entrepreneurs will tell you, money is usually the last thing to come. 3) My other piece of advice is to forge genuine connections with people inside and outside your industry. One relationship can make or break a year. Be truly interested in people and try to cast a wide net.

ENCOURAGEMENT

Just go ahead and start it. Sometimes, the more research you do upfront, as to how much work is involved and how much you need to learn, could easily put you off. It's much easier to tackle new tasks, once you've already got things going. Chasing multiple rabbits (opportunities), will breed dysfunction. Not having a crystal clear picture of where to focus your time and energy, will slow you to a snail's pace. Define your business and your brand and commit to it - everything you do should be consistent to your business' identity. You simply cannot be all things to all people. And last, but very importantly, keep a healthy balance. Don't get consumed with work to a level that's not healthy - keep a balance so you're still in touch with family and friends.

MALA JASUJA

CREATOR OF FOOTWEAR JEWELS

Mala Jasuja, with an eye for perfection and penchant for design, is a much-admired shoe manufacturer as well as an exporter who has been stirring women's fashion with her embroidered footwear. Her experience in amalgamating the Indian and Western designs to create a contemporary line of footwear, fit to call "Jewels for the feet", propelled her to enhance her talents and tail the top brands.

BACKGROUND

I started working in April 2000. My only connection with shoes was that of wearing great ones. Perhaps because of this passion, I have an eye for good shoes. Gradually, I started to help around with smaller details like selecting leathers and putting colors together. In June 2000, independently, I prepared a very small collection, comprising just 15 styles to exhibit at an Italian shoe fair, which was appreciated well. The applause gave me courage and confidence, since then I have been passionately involved in this business.

MOTIVATION

I have always wanted to do things as perfectly as possible. As an entrepreneur, I wanted to organize things better around me and at the same time also inspire the others too, to do the same as it improves the vision to have a good life.

BELIEFS

When your business becomes your extended family and your colleagues/staff work willfully to achieve new goals. For me this is true entrepreneurship because this shows that all the elements are in sync.

IMPORTANCE FOR WORKING WOMEN IN INDIA

Women are naturally endowed with multi-tasking skill, this was being used only to manage their households. But now we have enough examples to prove that women can be such an asset to any organization because of this ability. In other words, our country will have double the manpower if all women join in to work towards taking the country ahead on global map.

KEYS TO SUCCESS

I do not believe in having a different set of rules for women to be successful. There should be no difference between men and women, as far as entrepreneurship is concerned. Have a vision, set a goal, do some research, and then have confidence in your efforts with a liberal sprinkling of patience.

CHALLENGES

The fact that fashion industry filled up with tricky choices.

EXPERIENCE

When I started I had no professional training in this field, except the will to learn. But I was good in absorbing the information around me like a sponge.

DOUBTS

Maybe in earlier days when people were not used to seeing a woman working in a male-dominated industry, but now it's not; as many of us, from different strata of society, have shown courage to work edge to edge with their male colleagues.

ADVICE

Nothing is possible if you are not passionate about it. If your heart is in it, no matter whether you have the technical skill or not, you will succeed. Always be eager to learn all the aspects of the trade as it gives you a good hold over the complete picture.

WORDS OF ENCOURAGEMENT

Sharing our experiences with the women audience surely should give them encouragement to their heart and not be dithered during the journey.

FUTURE

Want to concentrate on making more specific collection, targeting niche customers. The focus now is more on originality and quality than quantity.



IF YOUR HEART IS IN IT, NO MATTER WHETHER YOU HAVE THE TECHNICAL SKILL OR NOT, YOU WILL SUCCEED. ALWAYS BE EAGER TO LEARN ALL THE ASPECTS OF THE TRADE AS IT GIVES YOU A GOOD HOLD OVER THE COMPLETE PICTURE. ♪

WOMEN LEADERS AND ENTREPRENEURS CAN BRING IN MORE WOMEN IN THE WORKFORCE. SHEER NUMBERS CAN LEAD TO LESS GENDER DISPARITY WHICH IS MUCH NEEDED IN A COUNTRY LIKE INDIA. HISTORY HAS SHOWN THAT WOMEN LEADERS HAVE BEEN ABLE TO BRING TO FOREFRONT WOMEN ISSUES TO THE FOREFRONT THROUGH THEIR CONTRIBUTION IN THE BUSINESS WORLD. y



KANIKA BHATIA

OF IDEAS AND PATIENCE

*It wouldn't be wrong to say that EGOSS is Ravindra Bhatia's dream that had come true. He had done so with great limelight in the industry. At a different time, young blood with similar vision and vigour has helped the brand consolidate its positioning in the industry. The tricky part came with internalising the processes and we can't stress more on just how mandatory that is, **Kanika Bhatia**, Director at EGOSS, told S&A.*

BACKGROUND

It was a year-and-a-half back, we, sisters from our respective explorations in the world of public policy and digital start up marketing journey, decided on 'homecoming'. We came back to Agra, our hometown and also the birthplace of EGOSS shoes. We wanted to venture in the world of business under the aegis of our father to tap into undiscovered territories for the brand and company he started two decades ago. We were some of the few female members of the gigantic Agra shoe community and the only within our own company.

MOTIVATION

Working in a start up (read: war) zone, you're amazed at how huge setups are created out of nothing but an average idea/product. I saw EgoSS as a brilliant product capable of channeling its way through a lot more tributaries than it currently is.

BELIEFS

Everyone has a different working formula we would say. For us, focused passion, adaptable creativity and persistent determination (irrespective of what field one is in). Entrepreneurship thrives on innovation.

REQUIREMENT TO START A BUSINESS FROM ZERO

I would say nothing particularly different from what a male entrepreneur would require. This belief is the single most important entity for the cause of women entrepreneurship- must

be treated like nothing different when being analyzed by investors, women themselves and everyone else. Work-life integration is as important for men as for women and if anything, scientific studies have successfully proven women being full-time mothers, wives and full-time professionals faring better than males who do the same.

WOMEN ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN INDIA

Women leaders and entrepreneurs can bring in more women in the workforce. Sheer numbers can lead to less gender disparity which is much needed in a country like India. History has shown that women leaders have been able to bring to forefront women issues to the forefront through their contribution in the business world. Refer to companies like Menstrupedia (online guide for explaining unspoken periods' issues) and Desi crew (startuop training rural women in data processing).

CHALLENGES

Lucky for us, incorporation and finance were pretty much at par when we joined EgoSS. The tricky part came with internalising the processes and we can't stress more on just how mandatory that is. The second challenge came with making, talking, walking and behaving like a brand. It's a whole exercise essential for everyone in the process. The third challenge comes with your brain continuously asking 'What next?' At the same time, it is important to revisit your current scenario from time to time.

SKILLS BEYOND YOUR PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

I don't remember ever honing skills actively. My years with the start up grilled me on love for marketing and PR. Now if I see an idea, the first thought that comes with it is if it would be capable of generating PR. College taught me how there is more than just the balance sheet to be tallied when in business. My father skilled me on how it is extremely important to stay focused, even though I have the wandering eye.

ADVICE


There will be so many moments where you will feel you're at the wrong place at a very right time in your career, but keep a mountain of patience. Do not expect things to churn at lightning speed, because very often they won't. Don't expect people to appreciate your opinion on a lot of matters, but hold on to it, because every opinion comes with a powerful logic with an active brain behind. It means you can think, so keep at it.

WORDS OF ENCOURAGEMENT TO WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS

Financial independence and the power to create is enough to drive you to the think tank everyday.

FUTURE

We see a lot of movement in the zone of intelligent marketing and luxury market. The smartest thing would be to combine the two.

A woman with long dark hair, wearing a light blue, long-sleeved, floor-length gown with intricate silver embroidery, stands by a swimming pool. The gown has a fitted bodice and a voluminous, flowing skirt. She is looking towards the camera with a slight smile. The background shows a poolside area with lounge chairs and a building under a clear sky.

f WE HAVE TRIED TO MAKE EACH EDITION OF MEDUSA BIGGER THAN THE LAST ONE. OBVIOUSLY, IT TAKES A GREAT AMOUNT OF EFFORT. BUT WHEN YOU SEE THAT YOUR EFFORT HAS BEEN GREATLY APPRECIATED BY EVERYONE, IT GIVES YOU MOTIVATION TO WORK HARDER. y

SONAL JINDAL

INCUBATOR OF DREAMS

*Medusa functions as the fertile ground on which creative fashion, jewellery and footwear designers get the right environment to flourish. It takes care of promotion of their talent, makes the world aware about their unique qualities and helps monetize creativity to let them focus on what they do best. It does so through exhibitions and shows at select venues, handling entire logistics and marketing. Each show, each event is marked by a unique theme and presence of leaders in respective segments, shares **Sonal Jindal** the promoter.*

BACKGROUND

The journey so far has been absolutely wonderful. We have tried to make each edition of Medusa bigger than the last one. Obviously, it takes a great amount of effort. But when you see that your effort has been greatly appreciated by everyone, it gives you motivation to work harder.

MOTIVATION

I always wanted to be an entrepreneur. From my childhood, I have seen my father experimenting a lot in his business so I used to keep telling him that I wanted to start of my own business.

BELIEFS

Entrepreneurship is the ability to recognize the bigger picture, find where there's an opportunity to grow, design hypothesis is around these opportunities and continually test your assumption.

REQUIREMENT TO START A BUSINESS FROM ZERO

With an Idea of business plan, a will to make it, one can start with it.

WOMEN ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN INDIA

Development of a country depends upon its people, so the working of Indian women is also very important which will lead our country to a whole another level on a global platform.

KEYS TO SUCCESS

Courage to face anything, confidence, planning, tactful thinking and a long-term vision.

EXTRA SKILLS BEYOND PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

We complement each other (Me and My Team) perfectly and that is what is needed.

GREATEST HIGHLIGHTS SO FAR

We are growing day by day and event by event stronger and organised, that's the greatest highlight.

DOUBTS

Yes, there always be challenges but one shouldn't lose any hope, just stick to your work it will overcome all the hurdles.

ADVICE

The only advice I want to give to young women is 'Life is what you make out of it and try to make the best out of it. Follow your dreams. Don't be scared, your dreams lead to your destiny'.

FUTURE

To accomplish Dreamer's Dream which is larger than life itself and make MEDUSA a global brand.

SHRUTI KAUL

MAKER OF OWN PATH

Shruti Kaul is no stranger to the parallel universe of footwear industry. She was born and eventually married into the family of footwear accessories manufacturer. She launched **TRISHULI**, a high-end women's fashion footwear brand, at a time when putting a foot in this category was an uphill task. She shares her experience with **S&A**.

BACKGROUND

Trishuli Creations was started out as a hobby and transformed into full fledged company now. We have seen a tremendous growth in ourselves along with a graph that has seen a lot of spikes in a very short span.

MOTIVATION

I started this venture for the sheer love of shoes. Passion is the only belief I hold for any venture to go through.

TRUE ENTREPRENEURSHIP

The one who demands, commands and makes her own path.

REQUIREMENT TO START A BUSINESS FROM ZERO

It's tough to start from scratch as everyone seems to play the devil's advocate. There is more negativity coming your way than a positive approach. Apart from this, a woman is supposed to be wearing a lot many hats than just of a working lady. She is expected to deliver in every scenario.

WOMEN ENTREPRENEUR IN INDIA

Working women culture in India is still very minute as compared to other countries. Now with more and more women heading their way to work we see them holding top positions at reputed MNCs.

KEYS TO SUCCESS

A lot of energy, strength, patience and the will to ignore is what you require for a successful run .

CHALLENGES

As a fashion start-up, we faced a lot of challenges like unorganised market scenario, unethical customers and copying of our designs. But like I mentioned earlier, we shall keep creating and our loyal customers come back for the originality.

GREATEST OBSTACLE

For the domestic market, taxation is a huge issue. It has been the most challenging to work our way through.

DOUBTS

Certainly, I guess everybody has their doubts.

REQUIRED SET OF SKILLS

Only the will, mental strength and passion, rest follows.

ADVICE

Let's all play along. The more the merrier. All you need to do is take the plunge.

WORDS OF ENCOURAGEMENT

I know a lot of women who have ventured into shoes. It's a growing space with amazing designers coming into perspective.

FUTURE

Break the norms and do your own thing is our motto. So let's see how the future shapes out for us.



IT'S TOUGH TO START FROM SCRATCH AS EVERYONE SEEMS TO PLAY THE DEVIL'S ADVOCATE. THERE IS MORE NEGATIVITY COMING YOUR WAY THAN A POSITIVE APPROACH. APART FROM THIS, A WOMAN IS SUPPOSED TO BE WEARING A LOT MANY HATS THAN JUST OF A WORKING LADY. ♪

NIDHI SHARMA CHADHA

QUEEN OF DÉCOR

*From being a model, then being a Miss India and jetting across the world, **Nidhi Sharma Chadha's** venture décor has been an exceptional one, given her background. It isn't just the switch, but also the success she has endowed herself in an industry where the success stories are few. She shares her journey with **S&A**.*

BACKGROUND

I started modeling when I was in college just for fun, so I did some good campaigns for Pepsi, Airtel, Indian Airlines etc. I also worked with quite a few designers and walked the ramp for them. Very soon I was crowned Miss India in 1995. There after, I started flying with KLM airlines as an in-flight interpreter. In the few years that I had worked with them, I travelled the world and learnt a lot. When I married JC, he was already into the entertainment business. This way I would attend a lot of parties where JC was taking care of the artists, sound and lighting arrangements etc. I always felt that the décor and styling done at these parties could have been done in a much better way. I had so many ideas in my mind and I wanted to see them turn into reality. From here on I took baby steps and started doing décor for close friends and family, that's how the ball started rolling.

BELIEFS

To be truly successful in any field you should do what you love doing and give more than your 100% to it.

REQUIREMENT TO START A BUSINESS FROM SCRATCH

Starting any business from scratch always requires a lot of hard work, will power and determination. Also as a woman, I felt I had to work much harder to be taken seriously.

WOMEN ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN INDIA

I think a woman entrepreneur generates employment opportunities for others by initiating, establishing and running the enterprise and hence keeping pace with her personal, family and social life. Also, I personally believe that women are much better at multi-tasking as compared to men.

KEYS TO SUCCESS

The biggest key is to always keep learning, be open to change and never think that you know it all.

CHALLENGES

The biggest challenge that I faced when I started work is the same

challenge that I face even today i.e. my work and my creative ideas being used by others.

GREATEST OBSTACLES SO FAR

I have always believed in giving nothing less than the best and that itself can create problems sometimes. For example, some of my clients have asked me to compromise a bit at times so that I can work within the budget that they have in mind. This leads to creative differences and does not give me the freedom to achieve what I want.

EXPERIENCE

Some people assume that it is an easy glamorous job, but in fact it is the opposite. It requires a lot of long hours, late nights and extensive travelling.

GREATEST HIGHLIGHTS

I recently did a destination wedding in Udaipur where we were handling 6 venues at the same time. It was a big challenge but the end result was spectacular.

DOUBTS

I feel when you love what you do, but there is no turning back or looking back. You give the best of what you have and nothing is a challenge anymore.

SKILLS A WOMAN ENTREPRENEUR NEEDS

Before one starts any new venture, it is very important to do a market research. As an entrepreneur, you need to have a business plan and keep yourself updated with the things happening in your industry.

ADVICE

Be prepared for long hours of hard work and only get into it if you have a creative mind. A strong family support goes a long way.

FUTURE

After gaining enough experience over the years, I would like to expand my business much more on the international front.



I HAVE ALWAYS BELIEVED IN GIVING NOTHING LESS THAN THE BEST AND THAT ITSELF CAN CREATE PROBLEMS SOMETIMES. FOR EXAMPLE, SOME OF MY CLIENTS HAVE ASKED ME TO COMPROMISE A BIT AT TIMES SO THAT I CAN WORK WITHIN THE BUDGET THAT THEY HAVE IN MIND. y



“NOT ONLY FOR WOMEN IN INDIA, BUT I THINK GLOBALLY WOMEN FACE THE SAME ENVIRONMENT AND CHALLENGES THAT THEY NEED TO OVERCOME TO BE A SUCCESS PROFESSIONALLY. BEING FEARLESS IS THE KEY. IT OPENS SO MANY AVENUES IF YOU HAVE NO FEAR IN YOUR MIND.”

GEETANJALEE BAHL

CURATOR OF FAST FASHION

Geetanjalee Bahl, founder of **THE TAN BASE**, a fast-fashion brand of leather footwear, offers women well-curated collections that are available at affordable prices. Growing up in a family of professionals, graduated from Lady Sri Ram College, Delhi and then an MBA from FIIB, Delhi she developed her idea for **THE TAN BASE**.

BACKGROUND

That women love shoes is a known fact, and I've always had a passion for footwear myself. As a part of the footwear fashion industry for the last two decades, my travels abroad have only reinforced the fact that there is an absence of good Indian quality and stylish footwear brands in our country. Prior to starting this venture, I was heading marketing for Crocs India that gave me useful insights into the footwear industry and retail. This has been coupled with more than a decade of marketing and PR experience handling various lifestyle brands. When one is working with lifestyle brands, one gets the required experience such as trend spotting, ideation, customer feedback, business model, research etc. All of this made me confident about launching The Tan Base for the Indian market.

BELIEFS

There is a quote that I once read somewhere: Buckle up, and know that it's going to be a tremendous amount of work, but embrace it.

TO START BUSINESS AS A WOMAN

Self-motivation, fearless, passion and, importantly, family support. Personal experience also says that some bit or more of knowledge about the product/service is always an advantage.

KEY TO SUCCESS

Not only for women in India, but I think globally women face the same environment and challenges that they need to overcome to be a success professionally. Being fearless is the key. It opens so many avenues if you have no fear in your mind. You tend to try things differently and tread on the path unknown. This is the emotional aspect and from the other aspect that is more practical, one needs to have a clear understanding of where one wants to reach, have a plan to reach the goal that you have set for yourself and constantly keep monitoring your progress to know where have you reached and how far you have to go.

CHALLENGES

The biggest challenges are pricing, designs (they have to be such that are difficult to copy), creating visibility for the brand in the ever-increasing cluttered market (both online and offline). For The Tan Base, it's creating awareness about the benefits (comfort, fitting) and premium visual appeal to a leather footwear versus cheap synthetic material amongst women in India as it is still a very unknown concept.

EXPERIENCE

There certainly have been challenging times. Guess, it's always. But the key is to keep going. When in doubt, I refer to the following three messages that are always written on my working board: 1) Courage to begin 2) Patience to continue, and 3) Determination to step into the future.

SKILLS TO RUN A BUSINESS

Skills in the respective field that you intend to pursue are critical. One needs to have understanding of the product (both technical and design), financial skills such as knowledge and understanding of how the costing works, tax structure is very complicated in India, hence it's imperative to know about how that works for your product. One should know how to minimize the costs in early days of business as there is always a budget constraint that you might need to overcome (if not done initially, then unforeseen expenses will surely show its ugly head later). And of course, the multi-tasking skill that most women can proudly say they have- it gives us an additional advantage over men.

ADVICE

I would advise to have a real time retail and technical experience (by taking up a job for few years to understand the nuances) about the product category before you venture into it as footwear is more technical than you think it is. Create a good professional network of people around you who can eventually help you in putting together your start up dream and make it a success as well. Every woman, I am sure, wants a work-family balance. It's as important to be financially independent in today's uncertain world as it is to have family support and loved ones around you. Entrepreneurship will give you this balance to lead a happier life.

FUTURE

Continue creating visibility for the brand through right channels and partners as it's only a year old brand. Will also target placement of products at more offline channels in addition to the online ones and focus on innovation to stand apart from the others in the field.

REEMA ARORA

THE GRAND EXHIBITORS

Reema Arora started with boutique concept exhibition to test the market and its audience. It was an instant hit and gave me lot of boost. Then she went for more and bigger ones. Today she is into large format lifestyle exhibition, where they guarantee good footfall and marketing. But there are players in the market who offer stalls at cheap prices with no marketing and footfall, at times, innocent exhibitors become prey to such people, Reema tells **S&A**.

BACKGROUND

We started with boutique concept exhibition to test the market and its audience as I didn't want my exhibitors to not have audience. I started with personal network at The Flying Saucer Cafe, Nehru place in 2013, our exhibition was small a fair with 10 fashion exhibitors. It was an instant hit and gave me lot of boost. Then we organised at SKOOTER, Hotel Samrat later in the same year. After consecutive three hits, we organised Monsoon Gala Fashion showcase at Vasant Continental in 2014 and Winter gala fashion showcase later which turned out to be huge fashion and shopping paradise. We try to do Different things all the time, and definitely we have evolved over time.

MOTIVATED

I draw my inspiration from everywhere. Inspiration comes from people, from places, from clothes, from what people are wearing. I look at something and plan things with positivity in my mind that this definitely can be done and achieved and I go for it.

BELIEFS

Just have faith in yourself.

WOMEN ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN INDIA

It is really important. I just feel you grow as a stronger person if you work for your own. One should always have their own identity. It makes you a better person inside and outside.

KEYS TO SUCCESS

I just feel that family support is the most important thing for women in India; without it one can just dream but can't afford to fulfil those dreams.

CHALLENGES

There is challenge at every step these days. Ours is a large format lifestyle exhibition, where we guarantee good footfall and marketing at X amount of stall charges, but there are players in the market who offer stalls at cheap prices with no marketing and footfall, At times, innocent exhibitors become prey to such people. Our biggest challenge is to make sure that our exhibitors are promoted well and we get good footfall.

GREATEST OBSTACLE SO FAR

There is no obstacle as such. I am sure about my product, and we put a lot of efforts to promote it.

GREATEST HIGHLIGHTS

I started with a boutique concept exhibition in restaurant. Today, I do my exhibition in 5-star hotels with around 60 known exhibitors; the growth of everything is my biggest highlight.

ADVICE

You have to really work hard, it seems to be a glamorous field but you have to be interested in what you do to keep you growing in your business or job. Everything is related to one's growing interest and loving your profession which will motivate to achieve your desired goals.

WORDS OF ENCOURAGEMENT

I strongly believe that it's about women's ability to exercise full control over their actions. Swami Vivekanand said: "That nation which doesn't respect women will never become great now nor will it in the future." So women should be allowed to study and work in the areas of their choices and fulfil their dreams.

FUTURE

I am planning to organise a larger version of fashion exhibitions outside Delhi and abroad this year.



f I JUST FEEL THAT FAMILY SUPPORT IS THE MOST IMPORTANT THING FOR WOMEN IN INDIA; WITHOUT IT ONE CAN JUST DREAM BUT CAN'T AFFORD TO FULFIL THOSE DREAMS. *y*

SUNAINA HARJAI

FURTHERING THE ART OF SHOEMAKING

Born and brought up in a family of shoemakers, where the dinner conversations were always about shoes, Sunaina made herself a go-getter professional. A graduate from Pearl Academy, Delhi and London College of Fashion, she interned with Formula One and Salvatore Ferragamo. She shares with S&A her experience in making Hats Off Accessories a formidable brand.

BACKGROUND

Working at Siddharth Exports shoe factory instilled my vision to launch my maiden venture, Hats Off Accessories, with a vision to offer premium products by cutting out the middleman and reaching the customer directly. The brand is symbolic of affordable luxury and is made for the masses. Hats Off Accessories make leather brogues inspired by British heritage, but with inspiration from India.

MOTIVATION

While studying in the UK I comprehended to create my own vertically integrated shoe brand, a good quality leather footwear at affordable prices. The ultimate inspiration has been to highlight the legacy of shoemaking, my father's three decades in shoe making. To outshine the male-dominant sector with my entrepreneur skills has been the biggest motivator.

BELIEFS

It's about doing what one can, with what one has in hand. It's believing in the product, that does not need a seven digit marketing budget, plunging in a very strategic way. It's self-driven, and it's for people who are passionate about what they do.

REQUIREMENT TO START A BUSINESS FROM ZERO

I think it requires exposure and experience in the field of work. I want to highlight the craftsmanship, the factories, the rawness of the leather, and the art of shoemaking. As an entrepreneur, if one's not getting what one needs, then go knocking on the opportunity door instead the other way round.

WOMEN ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN INDIA

In this digital world, times are changing, and it's important for every woman to be independent, and take entrepreneurship to a level. I'm so glad there are portals like Images Retail, ShethePeople, HerStory

that highlight victories of women entrepreneurs and inspire many other women out there.

KEYS TO SUCCESS

I think there is no key to success, except dedication, hard work, and discipline.

CHALLENGES

For a start-up in fashion industry there are many challenges, such as various types of taxation, managing the finances, getting trademark approved which takes almost a year. I personally faced challenges in protecting the brand patent and designs. Being a start-up, we invest a lot of our money in research and development of our designs.

GREATEST HIGHLIGHTS SO FAR

Actors like Sidharth Malhotra and Sooraj Pancholi have worn our brogues. Our brand was also among the 20 designers under the age of 35 at the Alliance de Francaise, Delhi.

SKILLS TO START FROM SCRATCH


Think like a boss, before acting like a lady. Keep focus only on the agenda, be shrewd enough to run a business successfully and say "no" when needed. Be a multi-tasker.

ADVICE

Don't do it, because everyone is doing it'. It should be about your dream, and what your aspiration. For start-ups, do an extensive research on uniqueness of the product & price points.

FUTURE

We will be working to make our new collections available at major portals like amazon, flipkart and also grow internationally on the e-commerce platform.



f FOR A START-UP IN FASHION INDUSTRY THERE ARE MANY CHALLENGES, SUCH AS VARIOUS TYPES OF TAXATION, MANAGING THE FINANCES, GETTING TRADEMARK APPROVED WHICH TAKES ALMOST A YEAR. I PERSONALLY FACED CHALLENGES IN PROTECTING THE BRAND PATENT AND DESIGNS. y

f SUCCESS FOR ME IS HAPPINESS;
TILL THE TIME YOU ARE HAPPY
YOU ARE THE MOST SUCCESSFUL
PERSON. FOR ME, I AM VERY
SUCCESSFUL IN MAKING MY
CLIENTS HAPPY WITH THE APT
OUTFIT. **y**

MONA PUNIANI

SETTING TRENDS WITH DRAPES

Mona Puniani always wanted to get into the fashion industry. She feels it incredible to be recognised as a trend-setter. But she never dreamt that someday she would have come this far in just a short span. Today, her designs are available at global level in Canada, Malaysia and Dubai. I am living my fashion dream right now and have started my own brand 'Drapes by Mona Puniani', Mona tells **S&A**.

BACKGROUND

My journey started 10 years back. I always wanted to get into the fashion industry. It's an incredible feeling to be recognised as a trend-setter and I never dreamt that I would have come this far in just a short span. I consider myself lucky to have achieved a coveted position. I am living my fashion dream right now and have started my own brand 'Drapes by Mona Puniani'. Today my designs are available at global level in Canada, Malaysia and Dubai. I am excited to think that people across the globe are wearing my designs, but it's just the beginning.

MOTIVATION

My family and my friends are my biggest motivating factor. But it was my father who always had confidence in me and believed that I could reach the sky. I believe am living and fulfilling his dreams. He was the one who recognised my inner talent and showed me the right path.

TRUE ENTREPRENEURSHIP

A true entrepreneur is a combination many factors. To be one, you have to be passionate, convinced and lunatic, to mention some.

WOMEN ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN INDIA

In today's business environment, patience is the key and women seem to be more patient. Their decisions are well-thought, well-analysed and well-judged. Business environment today is more challenging and requires a lot more. Woman entrepreneurship in India is an emerging concept and very crucial for economic growth. The gender gap between men and women has narrowed.

KEYS TO SUCCESS

To succeed in business, women need to be flexible and have good planning and organisational skills. 'Stay focused' and 'be consistent' should be a woman's mantra.

CHALLENGES

Biggest challenge I am facing in the fashion industry is competition on price and awareness and a flooded market where it is difficult to innovate.

GREATEST OBSTACLE SO FAR

Success for me is happiness; till the time you are happy you are the most successful person. For me, I am very successful in making my clients happy with the apt outfit.

SKILLS TO START FROM SCRATCH

Some skills which I think are important are - Planning, as it can make or break your business; Communication, being friendly in a business-to-business relationship is a sure way to make a step ahead; Customer focus, which means you will see every client as an opportunity to do better and grow; and Curiosity, will allow you to utilise new technology to the best of your ability to streamline your venture.

ADVICE

Fashion can be a really stressful choice, even though it is seen as glamorous. The only advice would be to show your skills and have confidence in yourself. If you feel, you have it in you, you can do wonders.

FUTURE

My future plan is to be an inspiration and a trend-setter for my followers and thus to be recognised as the most successful woman in fashion industry.

VETA RATRA

SHAPING BRANDS WITH PASSION

Veta Ratra started working as soon as she had passed out of college without even giving a day to herself. When she started working in a PR firm, little did she know about the hard work that goes into a brand; for her, it was all about meeting people and selling ideas. That was then. Today, she designs PR services to meet the requirements of clients with the best innovative services, and the portfolio of her clients comprises of fashion designers, artists, fashion exhibitions, to highlight a few.

BACKGROUND

My Journey has been journey full of challenges. I started working as soon as I passed out of college without even giving a day to myself. I started my journey as an intern in a reputed PR firm and gave 3 years to that company before I stepped out to chase my own dreams. When I started working in the PR firm, little did I know about the hard work that goes into a brand; for me, it was all about meeting people and selling your ideas. But when I joined I realised it is all about executing ideas. It's a difficult job of making sure that your brand gets best visibility.

MOTIVATION

I have always been passionate about achieving my goals. The support from my parents, my in-laws and my husband motivated me to start my own journey and my own venture.

TRUE ENTREPRENEURSHIP

It is said that the path between dream to success does exist, the need is vision to find it, courage to get and preserverance to follow it. A true entrepreneur is about being able to follow your dreams and do efforts to fulfill them. Dreams don't work unless you do. A true entrepreneurship is the combinations of factors like passion, vision, dedication and action.

WOMEN ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN INDIA

Entrepreneurship and working woman are both really important factors for India

as a whole. Modern women are inclined towards the social issues and trying hard to improve the social status of women at large. Increased awareness and education have inspired women to come out of the four walls of the home. Many women secured eminent positions and offices in administration and public life in free India. Traditionally, Indian women exist because of the family and for the family. The modern woman has started caring for her health, figure, cultural needs and interests, academic pursuits, social intercourse, religious activities recreational needs, etc. Women are blessed with traits of adaptability, tolerance, never-say-never attitude, and they are born go-getters. They are multi-taskers and have the ability to handle family, professional and social networks at one time. Their success helps society to grow as a whole, thus contributing to the nation.

KEYS TO SUCCESS

Enthusiasm, attitude, tolerance, patience, assertiveness and ability to face criticism are the keys for professional and business success.

CHALLENGE

There has been no obstacle as such. My vision has always been very clear- To work for the benefit of my clients. I have been honest in giving them advices. My honesty and my

dedication have helped me reach where I am today. There is lot to achieve, though.

GREATEST HIGHLIGHTS SO FAR

It's competitive world with lot of top agencies. In such scenario, I have carved a niche for myself and people know me for the work I do. I could not ask for more.

DOUBT

Every day is a new challenge of making sure that your clients are visible and being marketed well. I never had any doubt about my business model. In fact, challenges make you work better, even in toughest situations.

ADVICE

Follow your dreams, work for yourself instead of showing it to your peers and dears. There are no short cuts to achieve success.

ENCOURAGEMENT TO WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS

Self-realisation, being independent and faith in inner self. Women need to understand their potential and I am sure there will be no stopping.

FUTURE

I am content with my achievements, but then future always demands more. I think I will soon be setting up a brand consultancy firm.



f THERE HAS BEEN NO OBSTACLE AS SUCH. MY VISION HAS ALWAYS BEEN VERY CLEAR- TO WORK FOR THE BENEFIT OF MY CLIENTS. I HAVE BEEN HONEST IN GIVING THEM ADVICES. MY HONESTLY AND MY DEDICATION HAVE HELPED ME REACH WHERE I AM TODAY. *y*

NIKITA KHATTAR

SELF-RELIANT CHANGEMAKER

*Living abroad for years added an immense work experience to Nikita Khattar's life and made her a different person altogether. Things changed drastically when she returned to India in 2012. I have learnt to value human beings, time and money. My motivation and passion to learn, experiment and achieve have always encouraged me to look forward, she informs **S&A**.*

BACKGROUND

I pursued my undergraduate degree in Law, thereafter an MBA in London. Living abroad for nine years added an immense work experience to my profile and made me a different person all together. My expertise, talent and mingling around with multi-cultural people helped me win the elections for Middlesex University Students' Union twice for the post of Vice-President Academic Officer. Thereafter, I acquired an opportunity to work with an immigration law firm in the UK.

My visit to India in Oct 2012 changed my life altogether, I decided to open a TIKI BAR, Hawaiian Themed Restro-Bar in Delhi, at the age of 26. The journey doesn't end here, as I started my own event management company, THE FAIRYTALE'Ss, with specialisation in concept-based corporate and club events, wedding planning and exhibitions. With over 2 years of experience, we have held our exhibitions successfully in Delhi and Dubai and showcased over 500 designers like Soltee by Sulakshana Monga, Anu Kaushik (Bollywood Celebrity MUA), Reve Luxury by Khushali Kumar, Satya Paul, Mahamaya Jewellers and many more.

MOTIVATION

I have learnt to value human beings, time and money. My motivation and passion to learn, experiment and achieve have always encouraged me to look forward.

BELIEFS

A true entrepreneur is one who has combination of factors like passion, conviction, lunacy (let's face it) and need to make a name for yourself.

REQUIREMENT TO START FROM ZERO

To start a business from zero as a woman entrepreneur requires a vision, support from family (morally), experience, dreams and passion along with the expertise of adept minds in the business.

IMPORTANCE OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN INDIA

The need to improve the status of women and the promotion of women's roles in development are no longer seen merely as issues of human rights or social justice. It is merely an investment to achieve sustainable development.

Women entrepreneurs, when successful, act as a changemaker in their families and society and inspire others to become self-reliant and take up entrepreneurship. Their success helps families, society, and local and regional economies by contributing to the growth of the nation.

KEYS TO SUCCESS

Assertiveness, aggressiveness, empathy, ego strength, energy and stress tolerance.

CHALLENGES

The challenge is taking the long-term vision and working backward to map out your trajectory starting with today, and breaking down steps for initial short-term growth. We're almost two years in and have now seen a lot of our early ideas come to fruition. We are still constantly brainstorming, but we're much more skilled at capturing ideas for a future state, and continuing to stay focused on the short-term execution to make them happen.

GREATEST OBSTACLE

There has been no obstacle as our vision is clear, however, budgets, sometimes, hold us back.

EXPERIENCE

Luckily, my partner is involved in the business with me. We complement each other perfectly, which is the key strength of our business. He handles all where I lack and vice-versa. My father helps me out for various account and taxation related work.



THE CHALLENGE IS TAKING THE LONG-TERM VISION AND WORKING BACKWARD TO MAP OUT YOUR TRAJECTORY STARTING WITH TODAY, AND BREAKING DOWN STEPS FOR INITIAL SHORT-TERM GROWTH.

GREATEST HIGHLIGHTS

We make shopping fun for our clients by adding themes and concepts to our event. Adding decor, photo booths, entertainment, activities, contests and fun elements keeps our clients involved. We provide free beauty makeovers, nail art, tattoos, gifts to people visiting the exhibition. Women feel happy when they get free services from dieticians, spa vouchers, travel and tours packages, hospitality vouchers, etc. Moreover, we provide activities for kids, which help woman to shop for longer hours. We started very small but with strong motivation, over two years we have grown tremendously and also been able to go internationally.

DOUBTS

There have been difficult times but I strive not to be successful; but rather to be of value to my work.

ADVICE

Don't allow emotions to get in the way, don't take things personally, keep a positive attitude, remain fearless and respond decisively.

FUTURE

With over 2 years experience in Exhibitions in Delhi and Dubai, the company is now expanding with its international projects in Bangkok and London soon.

SUMMER BOULEVARD

As we battle Season's heat waves, rising hemlines aren't the only fashion change-ups on our thoughts... Look up to the streets for some inspiration from both everyday women and street style stars.

Curated by: Dipika Chopra





Ready for the weekend





Statement sailor stripes



Happy girls are the prettiest

Ladylike Grace



Life isn't perfect, your shoes can be





Breezy Layers



Streamlined Sophistication





Different is beautiful





MAKING IT HAPPEN

New Delhi-based Bhai Ajinder Singh runs one of India's leading shoe retail companies, M&B Footwear Pvt Ltd. Hailed for his financial and strategic acumen, he transformed the firm into a customer-centric and innovation-oriented company. He is lauded for his leadership qualities and operational proficiency which helped Lee Cooper expand its product portfolios. He's a graduate from North Eastern University, Boston (USA), with specialization in Marketing & Finance. He shares his views on Make In India with **S&A**.

What is that the Indian manufacturers need?

Manufacturing requires simplification of laws, procedures and taxation for easy compliance and limiting liabilities, unpredictability along with moderate taxation and good infrastructure rather than incentives.

Would it be easy to compete with China in its own terrain?

I believe it would not be advisable to compete headon with China. It would be better to find our unique competencies and opportunities unless there is a large divergence in cost or exchange rates.

Wouldn't a policy to discourage imports through a weak currency counter-productive for our consumers?

The government has limited power to control the currency per se; it is driven more by our competitiveness and the state of the global economy.

Should we focus more on creating an internal market rather than creating an export-centric market?

U.S. was never built focusing on exports. They built their industries focusing on domestic consumption. Yes, usually in successful export industries, competencies and scale have first been achieved in the domestic market, leading to competitiveness in the export market.

Recently, we have seen that the growth rate of China declined a lot.

In any large economy as it matures, the growth rate

will regress i.e. to have a moderate average long-term growth rate. Slower growth rate in a very large economy is actually a large absolute addition to GDP and therefore will still have more lucrative opportunities than economies growing fast on a small base.

Should we focus on Make in India or Make for India?

Priority should be for Make for India as we have more capability to influence both the demand and supply side with a better understanding of the local markets. Building efficiency in the local economy is a prerequisite for being competitive in global markets for most manufacturing based industries.

Is there a scope for increasing domestic demand?

Yes, Indians are as hardworking and enterprising, and if no more shackled by antiquated control, laws and procedures. IT companies have already demonstrated what can be achieved in industries not severely limited by the local infrastructure. Therefore, there is tremendous scope for increase in domestic demand as the economy grows.

The Indian demand is highly price-sensitive and not quality driven. How can we change the consumption?

The demand is price sensitive due to low disposable income for the vast majority. As income levels improve, consumers will automatically be drawn towards quality products. **S&A**



THE INDIAN MARVEL

*Valentino is the venerated brand owned by Guru Shoes Tech Private Limited (GSTPL), founded by Moti Lal Daultani in 1985, in Agra. GSTPL today boasts of state-of-the-art leather processing and manufacturing facility which also has a world-class CAD design centre. The company has expanded its wings and now possesses a strong international presence and a well-built retail presence through more than 700 multi-brand outlets across India. **Chander Daultani**, Director, Valentino shares his vision with **S&A**.*



WE ARE WIDELY APPRECIATED IN TIER 2, TIER 3, AS WELL AS IN METROS FOR QUALITY AND COMFORT BUNDLED ALONG AT A VERY AFFORDABLE PRICE. TODAY, APART FROM OUR PRESENCE AT 700 PLUS MBOS, WE HAVE A WIDE ONLINE PRESENCE THROUGH DIFFERENT PORTALS

VALENTINO'S PHILOSOPHY

Valentino doesn't believe in just growing in numbers. It's not difficult to open a chain of stores, what is difficult is to make sure each and every customer's happy and to maintain a loyal customer base. We wish to make and sell products in such a way that the end-user is happy to buy and wear a Valentino shoe. Valentino deals in shoes that are easily distinctive with snazzy cool look, 100% genuine leather, light in weight, heavy in durability, crack-resistant and extremely comfortable, and lot more.

UNIQUE RETAIL BUSINESS

We are widely appreciated in tier 2, tier 3, as well as in metros for quality and comfort bundled along at a very affordable price. Today, apart from our presence at 700 plus MBOS, we have a wide online presence through different portals.

SIGNIFICANT SLICE

Most significant and consistent slice of the group has been formals for us. We have been manufacturing formal footwear for almost 3 decades now. We consider our handwriting the strongest in formals.

STRONGEST CATEGORY

Fashion and consistency are two sides of a coin. Therefore, we stick by formals to perform consistently because this category is not too affected by the changes in fashion world.

USP

We offer a good quality leather shoe with utmost comfort at a very reasonable price.

RATIONALE BEHIND THE LAUNCHING IN VARIOUS PRICE POINTS

We have fixed MRP's and across the entire country and on all online portals we sell at the same price.

CHALLENGES

Challenges in terms of retail, the brick-and-mortar model will eventually have a setback because of the online model, competing online sales will be a challenge for the industry as a whole.

BILLION-DOLLAR IDEA

The key to million-dollar idea is to work hard and be fair in your practices.

SERVICES TO A RETAILER

One of the reasons why our MBO network is so wide is the service we provide. We replenish cut sizes. Mostly stock is ready, so a short lead time restock. Any kind of complaints from customer are taken care of, and we assist in marketing and advertising at local level.

HIGH SALES DENSITY FACTORS

High sales density factors are consistency in quality and keeping yourself abreast with the demands of the end-user.

PROFILE OF TYPICAL VALENTINO CONSUMER

Valentino customer is a graduate professional in the age group of 25-45 living in independent houses in tier 2 or tier 3 cities who wants a blend of fashion and comfort.

RETAIL MARKETING STRATEGY

The retail strategy is to grow in terms of presence. So we are aiming at being present in more cities that we have not covered as yet. We are looking forward to tapping the North India market in the future.

ONLINE STRATEGY

Our online strategy is to be present on portals which share goodwill with our target market. We don't wish to sell on each and every portal. We are working with a few selected ones and shall continue doing so. **SA**



ITALIAN BLEND OF CRAFT AND TECH

*Corneliani is a brain child of Alfred Corneliani from Mantua, Italy. Marking its presence in India with OSL Luxury Collections since 2012, the brand acquires a decent position. In a tête-à-tête, Prem Dewan told S&A that the brand strives for the perfect blend of shapes, proportions and materials. **Prem** is the RETAIL HEAD at OSL LUXURY COLLECTIONS PVT LTD-CORNELIANI.*





WE HAVE ALWAYS INVESTED IN ENVIRONMENT TO ALLOW OUR CUSTOMERS TO FEEL THE BRAND'S ECCENTRIC CACHET. WE HAVE BEEN DOING FAIRLY WELL AND I AM SURE THE ROAD AHEAD IS LIKELY TO BE SMOOTH.

THE BRAND CONCEPT

Corneliani is a brain child of Alfred Corneliani from Mantua, Italy, a truly magnificent place which inspires the tastes and sensitivities of anyone who lives and works there. It all began with a thought to provide unique, finest quality garments and create quality that stands for ingenious blend of excellent craft skills and cutting edge technology with respect to Italy's great tailoring heritage. The brand strives for the perfect blend of shapes, proportions and materials.

POSITION IN THE MARKET

Marking its presence in India with OSL Luxury Collections since 2012, the brand acquires a decent position today, and we are doing fairly well. We have embraced quality by securing top locations in the market for our showrooms in India, including the DLF Emporio, Vasant Kunj- New Delhi, The Taj Mahal Palace- Mumbai and UB City, Bangalore.

PRODUCTS IN COMPARISON OTHERS

Corneliani has always been known for its tradition, quality and modernity. We are the one to create a milestone of made-to-measure in the luxury segment. The brand always aims to combine Sartorial excellence with modernity assuring the pleasure of being able to choose from the most prestigious material and embellishments where great attention is paid to details that is visible in our remarking accessories such as ipad covers, belts, shoes, cufflinks etc.

SALES VOLUME AND TARGET

We have experienced a great response in the last few seasons, and certainly aim to better and up the same every year.

ONLINE VERSUS OFFLINE

We use various mediums to tap our customers. As the luxury business environment is undergoing a rapid change, it's the need of the hour to make it a two-way communication without any restriction in time, place, and medium. Undoubtedly, online promotions are convenient and profitable to elevate brand value by creating a platform to exchange ideas and information among people.

BRANDING STRATEGY

Though Corneliani at OSL Luxury Collections generally go with the guidelines of the brand, the strategy is simple. We have always invested in environment to allow our customers to feel the brand's eccentric cachet. We have been doing fairly well and I am sure the road ahead is likely to be smooth.

HIGH RENTAL AND RETAIL SPACE SCARCITY

It seems unusual not to be effected with the high rental and space scarcity like all others. For example, some prime locations that are important to communicate the feel with our customers are not cost effective and hence we are definitely losing opportunities to bring in more luxury brands. As far as dealing with the situation is concerned, we are exploring and testing waters through trunk shows, exhibitions, social media and whatsapp to reach out to right neighborhood.

FEW INDIAN BRANDS IN PREMIUM SEGMENT

In my opinion, there is still a big gap between the two but affirming a revival of the economy and rise in purchasing power will lead to up gradation of the sector. The market is such that no luxury brand can afford to ignore India.

PREMIUM SEGMENT GROWTH AND CHALLENGES

As of now I can speculate growth to be 15-20%. Though it's a happening sector and has a lot more to offer but lack of infrastructure may pose as a problem. **SA**



LEATHERWORLD MIDDLE EAST ENDS WITH MORE MOMENTUM

Leatherworld Middle East 2016, which concluded on 28th April 2016 at the Dubai International Convention and Exhibition Centre, featured 73 exhibitors from 16 countries, and welcomed 2,270 visitors from 40 countries.





The buzz is growing around the Middle East's leather industry, as international tanners, designers, and manufacturers shared the stage with local players at the region's dedicated leather trade show. Leatherworld Middle East 2016, which concluded on 28th April 2016 at the Dubai International Convention and Exhibition Centre, featured 73 exhibitors from 16 countries, and welcomed 2,270 visitors from 40 countries.

The 2nd edition of three-day event gathered wide support from leading international leather trade and tannery associations, including the French Hides Association, the French Federation of Tanners, South African Footwear and Leather Export Council, and the Indonesian Footwear Association.

"The high-end luxury feel was evident throughout Leatherworld Middle East, where the strong global exhibitor contingent sent a clear message that this is a region worth investing in," said Ahmed Pauwels, CEO of Messe Frankfurt Middle East, Leatherworld Middle East's organiser. "The finished goods on show, from footwear and handbags, to small items and accessories, wouldn't look out of place at the upscale boutique stores on New York's 5th Avenue, or Avenue Montaigne in Paris."

That would seem fitting, given that many of the European tanners out in force supply their premium hides to the world's largest fashion houses, including Italtide from Italy, which counts Bulgari, Dolce & Gabbana, Louis Vuitton, Gucci, Prada, and Mulberry, among its key clientele.

Now, Italtide, along with fellow Italian exhibitors such as Conceria Superia, Dani, and Real Piel, and French tanners Remy Carriat, Degermann, HCP, Sovos Grosjean, and Bodin Joyeaux, are testing the waters of the Middle East, which they hope will be the new leather manufacturing frontier.

"We decided to focus more on the Middle East in 2015," said Mohamad Khallouf, sales manager for Italtide, which specialises in exotic skins such as ostrich, crocodile, snake, stingray, eel, springbok and shark. "The luxury goods market has slowed down recently in major countries such as Russia and China, which has affected the entire leather supply chain, however luxury spending in the Gulf in particular is still



strong. Arab brands that would five years ago produce goods in Europe and then sell in the Middle East, will now start producing in this region, while we think demand will increase for exotics used for interiors in yachts, hotels, homes, and especially cars."

"Also, more designers and entrepreneurs are coming through here, and it would be great if the Middle East established more big designer names, making high-quality leather goods that the region can be proud of. There're a lot of opportunities, but we're at Leatherworld Middle East to find out the possibilities," added Khallouf.

Leatherworld Middle East is divided into different segments that span the leather industry's entire value chain, including Leather Production, Designers' Area, Shoe Box, and Fashion Avenue, while at the centre of the show floor was the Trend Forum, a lavish showcase of the most innovative and unique leather products, from diamond dusted alligator skin, to gold embossed crocodile hides.



The crowd favourite, however, was a pair of blue suede loafers with 24 karat gold weaved into the outsole. Hand-crafted by Italian shoe maker Antonio Vietri, the unique footwear was debuting in the region with a hefty price tag of 18,000 euros.

"This shoe is exclusive to the Middle East, and is custom-made, requiring about 70 hours of work and 240 individual stitches," said Vietri, who also showcased an entire range of footwear, including men's sandals and dress shoes hand-painted with famous historical figures such as Leonardo Da Vinci and Marco Polo.

"Each pair has its own serial number, and no pair will be the same. It's of course a very niche shoe for exclusive customers, but the



reaction has been very positive so far. People are astonished when they see shoes made with real gold – it's a real crowd puller."

The international flavour at Leatherworld Middle East 2016 was underlined by three country pavilions from Italy, France, and South Africa, while the Indonesian Tanners Association presented half a dozen tanners and manufacturers from a country famous for its python and fresh water lizard skins.

"In Indonesia, we have a quota of 150,000 python skins and 475,000 fresh water lizard skins every year," said Erick Wiradinata, the owner of Raflo Tannery, which farms crocodiles for their hides, but sources its python skins from Indonesia's vast palm oil plantations. "Every two years the government does a population survey, and determines the quota. Our main customers are in Europe and the USA, but we don't have any business in the Middle East so we want to know more about the market here. There's been a lot of interest at our stand at Leatherworld Middle East, mainly from GCC manufacturers and designers."

Meanwhile, leading the UAE-exhibitor charge at Leatherworld Middle East 2016 was the show's Founding Sponsor Al Khaznah Tannery, the region's only tannery that specialises in 100 per cent biodegradable and chrome-free camel hide.

"With the increase in demand of chrome-free leather worldwide, we are concentrating on producing sustainable products," said Mohammed Ghanem Al Mansoori, Al Khaznah's General Manager.

"We're going to start exporting very soon, primarily focusing on Europe and Southeast Asian market. We are experts in colouring and believe in delivering a high-end soft hide. Our products have a double coating, with two layers of hide compressed together," he said.

Leatherworld Middle East 2016 also featured an inspiring showcase of leather garments, handbags, and accessories from year-two students at prestigious fashion institute ESMOD Dubai, combining a mix of traditional techniques, leather manipulation and cutting edge technology. The 3rd edition of the Middle East's only dedicated trade show covering the global leather industry's entire value chain will return in April 2017. **S&A**



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TRADING HEALTH SHOES

Veer Preet Singh, owner of V.R. Traders, was originally in the tyre industry trading Dunlop and Birla tyres in Andhra Pradesh and Telangana. When he met Dharmendra Singh Narula, owner of Medifeet, in 2010, he instantly liked the idea of distributing the brand's health footwear. He is one of Medifeet's major distributors in the states of Andhra Pradesh and Telangana.



FOOTWEAR BUSINESS

I was originally in the tyre industry trading Dunlop and Birla tyres in Andhra Pradesh and Telangana. But I was very fortunate that I met Dharmendra Singh Narula, owner of Medifeet, at a gurudwara in Andhra Pradesh in 2010. He was there to explore the retail opportunity for Medifeet. In the course of time, we became good friends, and in the year 2013 I became a Medifeet distributor for Andhra Pradesh and Telangana. The demand for Medifeet right at the start was strong, and it continues to grow even today. Technology in Medifeet footwear is the main reason why the products have become instant success.

NUMBER OF COLLECTION EACH YEAR

The brand brings out more than 120 products each year.

UNSOLD STOCK

In general, we take orders from the retailers depending on his selling capacity and forward this to Medifeet. This way, we don't have any unsold stock and also the demand, and besides the demand is growing day and day.

COLLECTION YOU GET REPEAT ORDERS

We get repeat orders for footwear specially designed for diabetic and orthopedic patients. The shape and pattern have also been approved by diabetic associations worldwide.

PROBLEM IN INDUSTRY

Government, in general, does not support the footwear industry. Policies should be implemented to take the industry to the level it will become more organized. Additionally, taxes are very high and labour is also a big problem.

IMPACT OF GLOBAL BRANDS

In my view, the entry of international footwear brands opens up the opportunity for the general consumers. If we talk of competition to Medifeet from international brands, we have a very affordable and economical range which foreign brands cannot match.

DISTRIBUTOR'S MARGIN

15% – 18%.

RETAILER'S MARGIN

30%-33%.

PRICE POINTS

- ▶ Ladies': Sandals – ₹700 – 1500, Walking Shoes – ₹900-1,000
- ▶ Men's: Sandal – ₹800- 1,500, Shoes: ₹999 – 2,799.

NUMBERS OF RETAILERS

More than 650 retailers.

BUSINESS MANTRA

It's very simple, work hard. **S&A**

IN GENERAL, WE TAKE ORDERS FROM THE RETAILERS DEPENDING ON HIS SELLING CAPACITY AND FORWARD THIS TO MEDIFEET. THIS WAY, WE DON'T HAVE ANY UNSOLD STOCK AND ALSO THE DEMAND, AND BESIDES THE DEMAND IS GROWING DAY AND DAY.





LAKMÉ FASHION WEEK SUMMER/RESORT 2016 TRENDS

Lakmé Fashion Week Summer/Resort 2016 was a colourful fashion presentation for garments as well as for foot wear, jewellery, head gear and bags. Keeping the season in mind, the designers worked around printed fabrics as the basis for most of the foot wear and bags, which matched the garments perfectly. Styles were simple and practical making them easy to wear and ideal for the rising mercury. Foot wear seems to get more basic as comfort is the key word for the feet. Keeping sustainability in mind, leather was seen in very few styles with faux leather, canvas and fabrics being favoured by many designers.

by Meher Castelino

ACCESSORIES

DEEPA GURNANI - DECONSTRUCTED JEWELLERY

Deconstructed and reimaged jewellery by Deepa Gurnani along with Jay Lakhani called 'Oblivion' was presented in an innovative form under the arc lights with the theme being 'Live as One'. Brass was combined with mini pompoms, and crystals; while blood red stones glittered on antique metal and gilded feathered pieces. Semi-precious stones worked with embroidered jewels but the watery hues of blue, grey, soft waves, rivers, streams and faded pastels came seamlessly together with mother of pearl, metal, sequins for aemone flowers.

The richness of the earth and desert also inspired the jewellery and were visible with geodes of rocks, Druzy and lava beads with colours like red, earth tones and sun splashes. Hair accessories were given pride of place in the collection as crystallised statements had black and glittering gold accents. The flowing black, very tribal inspired garments that formed the base of the jewellery, brought to centre stage Deepa's fashion design creativity.

Deepa Gurnani's handmade accessories called 'Oblivion' reflected the true beauty and grandeur of Indian colours jewellery and clothes, which are perfect additions for summer wear.





RELIANCE FOOTPRINT

Adding to the masculine look of Kunal Rawal's "Between the Line" collection was the Reliance Footprint collection. Launched at the show was the Cristiano Ronaldo's CR7 collection. Available in select markets the Footprint will provide premium leather and quality Portuguese materials.

The very regimental ethnic wear was teamed with the footwear collection from Reliance Footprint, which featured brogue lace-ups, and some slip-ons in brown, black, two-tone patent leather options of black/beige or maroon/beige.

The Reliance Footprint store chain, which began in 2007 with the first store at Indiranagar in Bangalore now, has footwear and accessories stores in 120 cities and 250 stores.





Little Shilpa

FOOTWEAR, HEADGEAR AND BAG FASHION DIRECTIONS' SUMMER/RESORT 2016

CROWNING GLORY

When it is Little Shilpa then there has to be some excitement for the Crowning Glory and the designer did not disappoint. A black and white head piece was form her spring summer 2016 collection called "Madness of Muchness" inspired by Lewis Carroll's classic Alice in Wonderland Book. The blue parallel giant curves on the head form the "Satellite 20.16" line was called "Earth Etc." created in neoprene polyester lace and in neon pastels. Shilpa's hand-crafted head pieces were outstanding in design detailing and execution; while the jewellery and apparel were inspired by her travels, cultures and global observations. Her medium for both the creations and the accessories was totally out-of-the-box as always, and Shilpa used nearly everything that can be turned into show stopping embellishments for the hair.



LITTLE SHILPA



LITTLE SHILPA

LAKME
FASHION WEEK
SUMMER/RESORT 2016



AMRICH



AMIT AGGARWAL



VERANDAH BY ANJALI



AMRICH



NISHKA LULLA



NISHKA LULLA

EVENING ELEGANCE

Get set for summer cocktail evenings in stylish high heels and wedges. Amit Aggarwal had them in beige with a gladiator like tie-ups around the ankle; Amrich preferred wedges with tassels and teamed them with matching leather overnight bag or 'T' straps deep beige ones with a comfy portfolio to carry. Amrich also added ankle strap black high heels with stylish shoulder bags but Nishka Lulla brought in multiple nude straps for high-heeled foot wear or silver straps with jute wedges. Anjali Patel Mehta's Verandah label created chunky white sling back platform wedges and teamed them with box suitcases for bags.



FLAT STORY

Keeping it comfortable and easy for the summer holidays flats were the favoured option for the feet. 11.11 CellDSGN showed simple white laceups, while Aiman had flat peep toe slip-ons. Archana Rao added summer foliage on brown laceups, while Doodlage kept it very basic with black canvas moccasins. Injiri's summer offering was feminine cloth Mary Janes in black or white with hand-knitted duffel bags. Payal Singhal's flat story matched the garments with mojris made from the same fabric. When it comes to Aneeth Arora, she had her individualistic look for this genre by having crochet booties for that angelic look.



AIMAN



INJIRI



ARCHANA RAO



FUNKY LACEUPS

When it comes to funky laceups, Ajay Kumar presented a flower power look for matching shoes and printed duffel bags. From Dhruv Kapoor it was ankle high black bootees with contrast white laces, while Huemn went for the masculine black laceups with matching socks. Ka-Sha gave conventional sneakers a bright colourful look while Swati Vijaivargie and Vrisa created them in fabric to match their outfits along with roomy cloth bags.



KA SHA



SWATI VIJAYARGIE



VRISA



SWATI KALSI

SHIVAN & NARESH



THE MERAKI PROJECT



AISH

GLADIATOR GLORY

The gladiator look seems to have a permanent place for summer foot wear. Aish offered black mini gladiators with gold laces while Shivan and Narresh went for high heels and a futuristic look for the straps that encased the leg all the way up to the calves. Swati Kalsi presented her version with woven leather uppers and dual leather straps above the ankles. The Meraki Project remained true to the original Roman Gladiator style for the brown version that snaked up to the calves.

HERITAGE LOOK

There was a marked Indian touch for his "Indica Emporia" collection by Wendell Rodricks who went totally rustic with yellow tong slippers and dramatic pink mojris for men. Made from silk they were a perfect match for the very innovative Indian collection.



SUMMER BOOTIES

They are back for formal wear, and Sahil Kochhar had them in black ankle length styles as well as a platform version in nude leather.





PRATIMA PANDEY



DHRUV VAISH



POCO AND JACKY

SUMMER SANDALS

What is summer without sandals, and there is a wide choice to pick from. Aarti Vijay Gupta had them in a strappy brown version with ankle straps. Dhruv Vaish gave men a stylish thong style, while Poco and Jacky had multiple straps for beach wear lounging in beige or brown. Pratima Pandey's glittering sandals and Quirkbox's Granny cloth ones were perfect for the rising mercury. Sneha Arora had black or brown leather sling back styles for easy movement.

SUMMER SLIPONS

For long walks during summer evenings nothing is more comfortable than slip-ons in canvas. Rimi Nayak had them in indigo to match her collection while Rahul Mishra showed buckled white ones with his collection called "Knots of Love". Ujjawal Dubey kept them basic for men in white canvas again. Shimmer and shine appeared for thick soled glitzy slip-ons from Farah Sanjana.





URVASHI KAUR



DHRUV KAPOOR



MRINALINI

WEDGE THEM

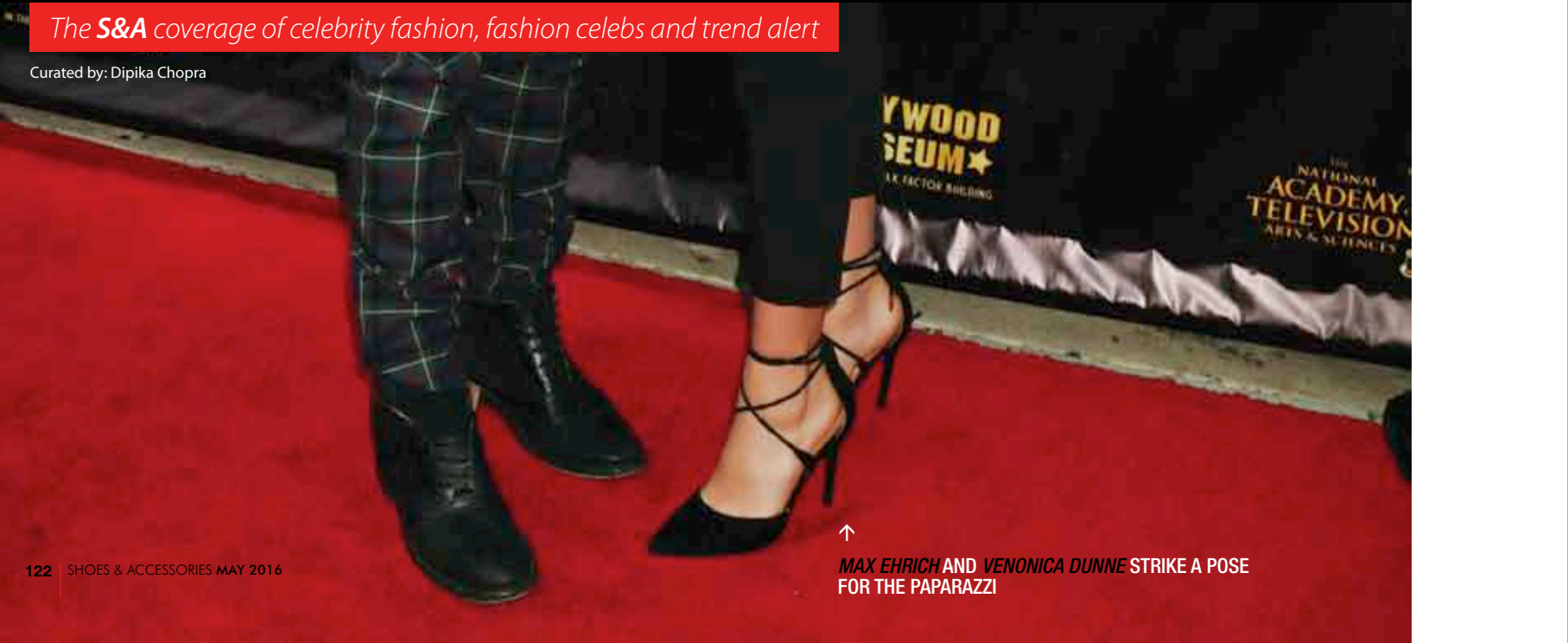
The wedges are the perfect summer footwear option. Dhruv Kapoor's brown cross strap style was comfortable. Urvashi Kaur went for chunky wedges in white with broad wrap around straps and Mrinalini added slim brown straps to give a feminine look to this elegant comfortable foot wear. **SA**



Glamorous Throwback

The **S&A** coverage of celebrity fashion, fashion celebs and trend alert

Curated by: Dipika Chopra



MAX EHRICH AND VENONICA DUNNE STRIKE A POSE FOR THE PAPARAZZI

THE BEAUTIFUL ACTRESS **VICTORIA VIDA** DONNED A TUBE DRESS MATCHED WITH SEQUENCE CLUTCH AND HIGH HEELS IN SILVER
↓



↑
ACTRESS **REIGN EDWARDS** LOOKED RAVISHING IN A STRIPED CUT-OUT DRESS AND CONTRAST HIGH HEELS.

ACTRESS **MELISSA ORDWAY** LOOKS VIBRANT WEARING A BLACK FLORAL STRAIGHT DRESS AT THE 2016 DAYTIME EMMY AWARDS NOMINEES RECEPTION AT THE HOLLYWOOD MUSEUM



TERESA CASTILLO STRUTS HER STUFF IN A RED PEPLUM TUBE DRESS TEAMED WITH HIGH HEEL PUMPS

AMERICAN ACTRESS **CHRISTEL KHALIL** WAS SPOTTED WEARING A PENCIL SKIRT TEAMED WITH A CROP TOP. THE NECKPIECE IS TO DIE FOR.



MARA MCCAFFREY IS SEEN WEARING A CHIC STRAPPY DRESS AN SPORTING BLACK STRAPPY HEELS.

JENNIFER LOPEZ LOOKS RADIANT CLAD IN THE EXQUISITE ELIEMADI FROCK, WHICH FEATURES A HIGH-LOW HEMLINE.



KIRA REED LORSCH LOOKS STUNNING IN A PINK CHAMPAGNE PLEATED DRESS AND STUDED NUDE HEELS

HEIDI KLUM STRIKES A POSE ROLAND MOURET 'CLIFFON' DRESS WITH FLORAL EMBROIDERY DETAIL FROM THE SPRING 2016 COLLECTION AND OLGANA PARIS BLACK 'L'IMPERTINENTE' LEATHER PEEP-TOE HEELS.



ACTRESS **ASHLYN PEARCE** LOOKS FLAWLESS AND BRIGHT WEARING A HALTER NECK JUMP SUIT WITH LACE DETAILS TEAMED WITH A HIGH BUN.



Name: Shivani Malik

Personality: Let's meet and you'll find out

Where you can find her? : Not on the internet, I love meeting people and you'll usually find me at events and business lunches.

Mixer of Colours and Print

Shivani joined Da Milano back in 2007 when the brand had only two stores. Soon she took up the challenge of expanding the brand across horizons. Today, Da Milano has over 55 stores and plans to grow in the coming years. Mother of two, Malik is an economics graduate. The Da Milano Marketing Director discloses her personal choices to **S&A**.

Describe your personal sense of style
I feel colours bring an outfit to life, so I love mixing bright colours and prints.

Your daily wardrobe
Dressy top with jeans.

Your favourite formal look is made up of
Depends on the type of occasion, I switch between black dresses and formal Indian wear.

A trend you would never be seen wearing
Crop tops.

What has been your biggest wardrobe binge so far?
I buy more dresses than I need. And I love buying formal Indian wear.

The watch you wear for an evening about town?
Bregeut.

Your favourite brand
Da Milano.

Accessories you like collecting
Statement neck pieces.

Favourite shopping destination
London.

Shoe/accessory brand that you would love to see in India
Tory Burch.

Favourite shoe brand
Rosso Brunello.

What's your one Vice?
I need to stop binging on masala chips.

Your fear?
Not getting everything done today.

Which person do you admire the most? And why
This might sound a cliché, but my husband. He's one of the most hard-working and determined people I know.

What do you think is your most valuable trait?
My ability to talk to anyone - leave me in a room with strangers and I'll walk out with friends. **S&A**

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