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IMAGES
Retail

RETAIL TECHNOLOGY LEADERS ENVISION
THE FUTURE OF RETAIL

- India Shopping Centre Forum 2016
- Success story of **Max India**
- India's new shopping sensation **VR Bengaluru**

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In today's increasingly connected world, brands and retailers are struggling to get an Omni-channel presence and find ways to appeal the shoppers who are now present on multiple channels. Burgeoning role of the technology has made the job of CIOs/CTOs challenging than ever. In the cover story, which is aptly titled as 'Retail Technology Leaders envision the future of Retail' we have spoken to CIOs/CTOs from top notch retail brands across the country. The feature highlights how technology leaders are leveraging technology to smoothly run overall operations and improving margins. In doing so, they are actually helping the brands to get an Omni-channel presence & reach the shoppers, who are everywhere today.

Not only the Retailers, but the Shopping Centres also need to reposition themselves as social spaces with leisure and entertainment being as important as the retail component and there should be a proper collaboration of brick and mortar sales with online presence. The agenda of the 9th edition of India Shopping Centre Forum was partially based on this. Including this, the forum also had who's who of the Shopping Centre industry trying to find out the key to success of the shopping centres of India and analysing the areas of improvement of this retail space. Our feature on the same will provide you a sneak peak on this informative knowledge series. Images Shopping Centre Awards, which has high regard in the shopping community, was also a part of the two daylong event.

On a concluding note, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to all the participants of ISCF 2016, whose presence have made the event a grand success and I am soliciting a similar response for the upcoming India Retail Forum 2016 which is scheduled for 21st-22nd September at Renaissance Hotel, Mumbai. I wish to see you all at IRF 2016. Stay tuned to upcoming issues of Images Retail to get more insights on the business of retail.

All the Best!

Amitabh Taneja

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COVER STORY

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RETAIL TECHNOLOGY LEADERS ENVISION THE FUTURE OF RETAIL

Till about a decade ago, Technology was considered unobtrusive, a "back-office thing" without a name or an identity. Consumers were shopping the old-fashioned way, wearing out their shoes instead of their keypads. Cover story also includes profiles of Top CIOS/CTOs in the county.

International retailers and e-tailers like GAP and Amazon are gearing up for further expansion. Article throws light on top notch development in retail world globally.

GLOBAL RETAILERS
PLAN NEW STRATEGIES
By IMAGES Retail Bureau

TESCO PLANS TO INTREGATE F&F CLOTHING SITE WITH TESCO DIRECT PLATFORM
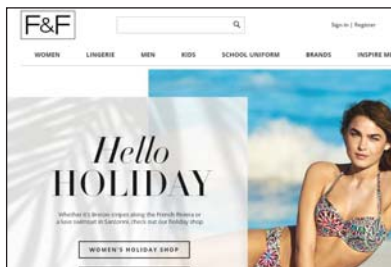
Tesco has chosen to close down its dedicated F&F clothing website clothingattesco.com and intregate it with Tesco Direct platform.

A public statement from a Tesco spokesperson said. "To serve shoppers better, we want to make shopping at Tesco as simple and easy as possible.

To provide customers with a comprehensive view of all the non-food products we offer, we will be bringing our F&F online store together with Tesco Direct. This means that customers will be able to add clothing and general merchandise products to the same basket and place as one order."

GAP MAY START RETAILING ON AMAZON IN NEAR FUTURE

Gap CEO Art Peck has indicated that the retail group which includes the Banana Republic and Old Navy brands plus its flagship brand, is considering selling its clothing via Amazon.

In a recent public interaction Peck said, "To not be considering Amazon and others would be—in my view—delusional. Selling online through leading e-retailer Amazon is an option under consideration but far from imminent. Amazon's presence in e-commerce is undeniable in this country,"

CBRE FINDINGS: LONDON-DUBAI TO BE THE MOST IMPORTANT INTERNATIONAL SHOPPING DESTINATION, USA THE TOP EXPORTING COUNTRY

CBRE's 2016 edition of the 'How Global is the Business of Retail?' has shown some interesting facts. London is still dominating the important international shopping destination category, but Dubai has become a very close second. Where London is the choice of 57.9% people around the world, Dubai has gained 2% growth from the previous year and finished at 57%. Shanghai has secured the third position at 46%. U.S. retailers have continued to dominate cross-border retail expansion like the previous years and thus making USA the top exporting country in the world. They are by far the most 'International.' Asia is on the top of the favorite list for retail expansion. Coffe chains and restaurant establishments are the top entrants globally.

AMAZON TO LAUNCH ITS SECOND CLICK AND COLLECT STORE, ALSO PLANNING TO SELL ITS OWN FOOD, BABY PRODUCTS SOON

Amazon aims to build a second "click and collect" grocery store. As per recent media reports, Amazon is planning a grocery store in Sunnyvale, California. This new store will allow customers to order their groceries online and then pick them up readied at the brick and mortar location.

In another major development, Amazon will begin offering house-branded coffee, nuts, and spices, as well as baby food and diapers, under its own brand, the Verge, quoted the Wall Street Journal.

Amazon is expected to launch three brands one at a time namely Happy Belly, which will handle basics like nuts, tea, etc. IR

Ingvar Bjork / Shutterstock.com

Textile giant is foraying online. From Ice cream maker to entertainment provider, everybody is in the mood for expansion! National retail scenario has noticed many positive movements recently.

By Images Retail Bureau

NEW BEGINNING AND EXPANSION
IS THE FLAVOUR OF THE MONTH

NNNOW.COM, INDIA'S FIRST TRULY OMNI-CHANNEL EXPERIENCE

The brainchild of Kulin Lalbhai, younger son of textile tycoon Sanjay Lalbhai, NNNow. Com has finally come into being. This web portal is the country's first true Omni-channel shopping experience provided by Arvind Limited, which currently owns and manages partnerships with multiple local and global brands It also runs beauty retailer Sephora and European. . Nnnow.com is a physical in-store experience powered by an online shopping network and digital kiosks connecting all its retail spots. It will offer same-day delivery, click-and-collect (store pick-ups) facilities while the mobile app for the portal will be rolled out in July. It will connect digital shoppers to every piece of merchandise from Arvind's warehouses, 50-odd brands and a network of more than 1,200 stores across 200 Indian cities.

"COVERSTORY", FASHION STRAIGHT FROM RUNWAY

Kishore Biyani led Future Group's new retail initiative "Coverstory" is all set to throw competition to international fashion brands like Zara, H&M etc.This exclusive store for fresh, runway fashion has already started operating from selected Central stores in a shop-in-shop format. As this article will go to press, Future Group might have opened Coverstory's first Exclusive Business Outlet at Infinity Mall, Malad. After that, the store will enter Delhi with a second EBO. Coverstory will bring newest trend in fashion monitored by a group of designers headed by Ainsley Mackney. Materials will be sourced abroad while the merchandise will be produced in India only.

MISSION IMPOSSIBLE OR POSSIBLE?

Vision 1000 and then Vision 5000, this is the target on which India's third largest multiplex chain operator Carnival Cinemas is working right now! Though it may seem to be an almost impossible target in the present scenario, as the chain operator now has only 320+ screens in its kitty, but the company is already on the way of expansion. Carnival has started its journey from Kochi and it is targeting tier II and Tier III cities as possible centres of expansion. According to their CEO P V Sunil, they understand 'rural' and there is immense scope of expansion in the country's rural market. They have also planned to develop multiplexes in these areas as Family Entertainment Zone. By the end of this year, Carnival has a goal to have a total number of 600 screens. If the group becomes successful in achieving the target, it would be the largest multiplex operating group in the country, surpassing current number one and two PVR Cinemas (519 screens) and Inox Leisure (420 screens).

HAVMOR IS GOING TO INVEST MORE

Stepping out of its comfort zone and exploring new avenues is not that easy for the brand. But Ahmedabad based ice cream brand Havmor is doing that only. Its growth plan aims at exploring newer markets and strengthening its presence across India with expansion plan which includes over 100 ice cream parlours and 10,000 retail outlets. The area, which the company want to get in first, is Delhi-NCR. Ankit Chona, MD, Havmor Ice Cream, said, "We are planning to open 10 exclusive ice cream parlours in New Delhi by June 2016 and another 25 by the end of the year." In the forthcoming months, it will also enter Uttar Pradesh, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh and Chhattisgarh. Over the next three years, Havmor will spend Rs.225-250 crore in setting up a new facility at Faridabad to cater to the northern markets, expand capacity at existing plants in Gujarat from 2.5 lakh litre a day to 3.5 lakh litre. ℝ

ALMOND MOCHA 90 ml
PINK CURRANT 90 ml
MANGO MGICE 90 ml
CHHOCO TRUFFLE 90 ml
COOKIE CREAM 90 ml
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BLACK BOX
ON WHITEFIELD ROAD

India's first integrated lifestyle destination VR Bengaluru is providing a sensational experience to the consumers in the truest sense of the term. This all in one lifestyle centre by Virtuous Retail has all the potential of becoming the talk of the town very soon

By Parama Sen

1. Black facade front view **2.** Mario Reyes performing at the launch **3.** Performance of Gypsy Sound Revolution **4.** Art Capsule at VR Bengaluru **5.** Perspective view of the striking facade **6.** Gypsy Sound Revolution & Raghav Sachar are putting the stage on fire **7.** VR Bengaluru has some very interesting game options for children **8.** Elektrovertz at VR Bengaluru **9.** View of the retail Arcade Atrium

t was a Saturday night, the auspicious night of Budhdha Purnima, the sky was lighted with soft hues of the extraordinary Blue Moon and Bengaluru was warming up with foot taping music at the grand opening of VR Lifestyle centre at the Whitefield Road.

Gypsy All Stars presented a musical treat by the legends, performing a mellifluous collaboration bridging western music with traditional Rajasthani folk music. On the other hand, Shillong Chamber Choir enthralled guests with their western chorals. Apart from this, internationally acclaimed DJs - Electrovertz and Dualist Inquiry also entertained everybody with foot tapping numbers.

But truly speaking, it was not the performances, but the centre, where these were happening, was actually the centre of attraction.

A future perfect lifestyle destination

Shopping centres of today should be the shopping resort of tomorrow. This is the thought of the day now. It seems that, VR Begaluru has already incorporated the shopping resort concept or should we say move a little ahead of that. The Black Box on Whitefield Road (a name inspired by its striking black facade,), the nickname with which the Bengaluru people have termed the newest sensation of the city, is country's first integrated lifestyle destination, which brings together approximately 500,000 sq. ft of premium retail space, along with a 54-key boutique hotel & residences and a 60,000 sq. ft. collaborative working space. If anybody would like to spend a day with his/her family within the city but in a truly relaxed manner, he/she just has to come to VR Bengaluru and can have a unique shopping experience with the all encompassing brand mix, have fine dining experience at the premium restaurants, pamper himself/herself at the luxury spa, have fun at the piazza, watch latest blockbusters at comforting gold class environment and so on and so forth.

The enviable mix of retail, food, entertainment, wellness options

VR Bengaluru is uniquely designed to attract the city's cosmopolitan and upwardly mobile consumers, firmly establishing Whitefield as the most preferred location in one of Asia's fastest growing and most attractive real estate markets. It is offering an unmatched blend of experiences to choose from, which include:

- The retail arcade at VR Bengaluru, home to an enviable range of premium global and Indian brands, many of which are debuting in the city for the first time and have set up flagship stores at the Centre
- A nine-screen multiplex including an IMAX and India's biggest Gold Class cinema providing a multi-sensory experience
- Several pubs like The Whitefield Arms, cafes & restaurants and an upscale food court for dining options
- State-of-the-art fitness and wellness options
- The Sky Deck on the rooftop with a pool and a bar & lounge, ALT alongside a unique banqueting space equipped with India's largest LED screen

Seamless design provides for effortless experience

The innovative design ethos of VR Bengaluru enables its customers to move seamlessly and comfortably through the entire centre. The centre has a separate entry for pedestrians and separate for the vehicles. 3 levels of basement

USP of VR Bengaluru

VR Bengaluru is designed with an aim to create an urban oasis for families and safe spaces for children. It is highly pedestrianised with an entry Piazza and lush green landscapes, art installations, outdoor events & promotional spaces, formal as well as Al-fresco dining experiences at the street level.

'Master Retailer' approach with a dual focus on retailers and consumer communities allows VR Bengaluru to provide unique experiences that are also locally relevant Ð a specially curated retail mix, award winning chefs, locally popular restaurants invited to setup QSR formats at Food Box; artisan and farmers' markets with representation from the region; a unique annual art collective with participation from artists from the city.

It has all the modern conveniences at one place Ð collaborative workspaces, boutique hotel & residences, health & wellness facilities, dining and entertainment, along with an enviable portfolio of leading global & Indian brands.

"Communities and cities are living, breathing entities. The phrase 'VR' in our centres like VR Surat and VR Bengaluru is a play on 'We Are', because we want this to be a reflection of our community. VR Bengaluru celebrates the rich heritage of Whitefield giving people a platform to indulge in their love for music, art and shopping. At Virtuous Retail, we have been able to move the needle on what retail developments can be, and should be, anywhere in the world while making them future-proof.'

– Siddharth Yog,
Chairman, *Virtuous Retail*

10. Performance of Shillong Chamber Choir **11.** Tribe Fitness community Zumba **12.** Teenagers shopping at F21 **13.** Synergy art installation at VR Bengaluru **14.** Kids having a great time at Fun City

parking allow more than 1,000 cars and 600 two wheelers to be parked at pick hours. The landscaped and pedestrianized outdoors of the centre is as eye-catching as the inside. The Garden City, which is located outside the main facade, will host all the community events such as art, music & food festivals as well as activities for children. So unlike other shopping centres, here if someone wants to enjoy the events only, he/she doesn't have to enter the main centre, which is very much convenient for them. Retail spaces, offices, hotels, multiplexes, skydeck...every facility of the centre is designed and placed in such a way that all of them ensures privacy from the other, but can be reached almost effortlessly.

One of a kind Retail mix
Be it resort or centre or just a mall, the first word of the phrase will always be 'shopping'. It is the interesting mix of the retailers that attracts the consumers to any shopping centre. VR Bengaluru has offered a brand mix, which can ensure optimum shopping satisfaction for its consumers. BCBGeneration, Cole Haan, Dune, Forever 21, H&M, Hunkemoller, Muji, Adidas Home Court, Adidas Originals Neighborhood, Pantaloons, Raymond - Ready to wear, Superdry,

Splash, Fun City, L'Occitane and many more national and international players are bringing in their latest for this shopping centre. It has dedicated retail zones for men, women and kids. Some of the brands like, Muji, Cole Haan, BCBGeneration have begun their journey to India through VR Bengaluru.

Some fun for everyone
Whether you are a fitness freak or a movie buff, a foodie or an out an out family person, who loves to hang out with whole family during weekends, VR has some fun element for everybody. Be it PVR gold class movie experience or The Magic Garden, a truly international standard sculpted soft foam play area for younger children to safely play in, or an upscale food court and bouquet of restaurant and cafes like Alt, The Whitefield Arms, The Whitefield Arms Café, Café Noir, The Beer Café, The Irish House, Toscano, Salt, offering varied cuisines…one can never get bored at VR for sure!

New landmark of the city
VR Bengaluru is designed as a vibrant multi-use community centre. Not only it is a world class shopping centre which offers hitherto unavailable global brands, it also hosts community art festivals and programmes for artists to showcase their work in an engaging environment, which encourage civic pride and enhance city's brand image. Some of the art installations at VR Bengaluru, including the Visual History Timeline of Bengaluru history and the IloveBLR installation are the hot-spots where the most "selfies" are taken in Bangalore currently. The Waverly Hotel & Residences also draws its inspiration from the local history including Sir Winston Churchill's visits to the Waverly Inn at Whitefield during his days as an Army officer posted in Bangalore. Rumour has it that he courted Ms. Rose Hamilton, the inn-keeper's daughter. So if it becomes one of the newest landmarks of the skytech city, nobody should be surprised. IR

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▲ L-R-Krish Iyer,Sanjay Dutt,Andrew J Taylor,Byron Lewis, Janne Einola,Tara Subramaniam (inaugural session)

INDIA SHOPPING CENTRE FORUM 2016

THE SECRET TO CREATE A "FUTURE READY" SHOPPING CENTRE

How to create a Shopping Centre, which is going to be successful in terms of ROI, be equally profitable-enjoyable for both retailers-consumers, who's who of country's shopping centre industry have tried to find out that in India Shopping Centre Forum 2016

By Parama Sen

How to make a shopping centre successful? How the developers would ensure that the retailers will get maximum benefit at that particular centre? Will the emergence of online shopping lead to a slow death of shopping centres? How the mall owners incorporate new technology for their own advancement? Do the shopping centres need to revamp themselves as shopping resort, where consumers can come, shop, have fun, enjoy, have good food, be entertained and spend quality time with their family members... around these and many more questions the 2 days of India Shopping Centre Forum 2016 revolved. Mall developers, retailers, service providers, industry experts have come, discussed, shared their valuable experiences, given suggestions, raised new queries in the

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platform, which has tried to build the blueprint of success of the Indian Shopping Centre Industry on 11-12th May, at the ballroom of The Renaissance Hotel, Mumbai.

These two days of ISCF were mainly divided between panel discussions and solo sessions And of course the very important event in the calendar of people related to shopping centres, The Images Shopping Centre Awards.

We, in this feature, are going to present the glimpses of the two day long events in a short, yet detailed way.

After the inaugural session by President & CEO of Walmart India and the chairperson of Indian Retail Forum Mr Krish Iyer (where in addition to the context of discussion on retail real estate, he had tried to find out what should be the agenda of the forthcoming India Retail Forum) the panel discussions begun.

The Mall Future Thinkpad — Shaping the Thinking on the Future of Retail Spaces

This was the inaugural discussion. Participating speakers were Andrew Taylor, Senior Managing Director, Macquarie Infrastructure and Real Assets, Hong Kong; Byron Lewis, Founder and CEO, Mall Solutions Europe; Janne Einola, CEO and Country Head, H&M India; Krish Iyer, President & CEO Walmart India, Tara Subramaniam, MD & COO, JM Financial Credit solutions. The discussion was moderated by Sanjay Dutt, MD, Cushman & Wakefield.

According to the panel, for the last two decades, Indian Shopping Malls have faced a hell lot of challenges, some malls were badly affected, and some were not. In the present situation of technological advancement, brick & mortar sales and online stores have to work together in a shopping centre. Retailer-developer collaboration is also necessary in this context. Omni-channel way of business has to be adopted in order to serve the consumer of tomorrow. Both the retailers and consumers are clients to the mall developers, and both of them are equally important. Malls should be

a part of an integrated township; they should train their staff like the hospitality industry, which in turn makes the consumers comfortable. Though a lot of best practices are yet to be adopted by most of the shopping centres of the country, but some of them have tried to incorporate these and have become successful too.

Designing Retail that Thrives with 'Smart Cities'

In this second discussion, the panel, which comprised of Alexandar Koth, MD & Founder, Minodes GmbH; Khair-Ull-Nissa, Executive Director, World Trade Center Services; M V Krishna Rao, Head-Retail and Commercial, Hyderabad Next by L&T Metro Rail, Mukesh Kumar, VP, Infiniti Mall; Nimish Sonawala, MD Skydata; Rajneesh Mahajan, ED, Inorbit Malls, Sunil Shroff, CEO-malls, Viviana Mall, Zubin Cooper, CEO, Bentel; Pankaj Renjhen, MD Retail, JLL; have tried to portray what smart cities actually are. This is a concept about making use of the limited resources available in the maximum possible way. Integrated development is actually the future here. Townships should be anchored by shopping centres. It should be

designed in such a way, so that it can ensure customer convenience to the fullest. One can note the example of world trade centres across the world, where retail space are combined with office spaces.

Funding Behind The Shopping Centres

What Makes Shopping Centre An Attractive Investment? Speakers like B V Bharadwaja, Country Head India, CapitaLand Malls Asia; Nikhil Chaturvedi, MD Prozone; Pankaj Jaju, Head-Strategic Partnership, Axis Bank; Rahul Rai, Executive VP and Head-Real Estate Business, ICICI Prudential Asset Management Company; Rohit George, MD, Xander Advisors India & Tara Subramaniam, MD & COO JMFCS and moderator R K Narayan, MD Macquarie Infrastructure and Real Assets India have tried their best to find out the answer to the topic. Actually, there were mixed views on this topic. According to the experts, though shopping centres of India are something, where investors are ready to put in their money, but as there is still a little uncertainty in the business, they have to be very, very careful before investing. It is true that, Indians are going to spend

In the present situation of technological advancement, **brick & mortar sales and online stores have to work together in a shopping centre.**

more and consume more. Malls are an excellent place of weekend hangout to the Indian consumers. So the developers have to think enough about the factor, which is going to help the mall last at least a generation. They have to think long term in order to attract maximum investment. India is a very different market. 70-80 thousand crores are already lend to the developers. They have to create IT-focussed malls keeping in mind the customer's need.

Design, Architecture & Format: The 3 Crucial Pillars of Future Shopping Centres.

One of the very important factors in creating a successful shopping centre is the architectural design. So the next discussion revolved around this topic. The speakers, Brijesh Kanabar, MD Lewis & Hickey; B V Bharadwaja, Country Head, Capitaland Malls Asia;, Benu Sehgal, Senior VP & Mall Head, DLF Place, Saket; Gautam U Nambisan, CEO, UKN Group; Mahesh M, CEO, Ishanya Mall; Payal Makwana, VP-Interior Design, Mayash Space Designs; Shilpi Kapoor, Consultant Architect, L&T; Varun Shrotriya, Director, Studio 13 Design; Vivek Bhole, CMD, Vivek Bhole Architect and moderator Hiten Sethi, Founder & Director of Hiten Sethi Architects have tried to find out how these three can contribute to the success of a shopping centre. Though some were of the opinion that, a mall's success does not very much depend on the design of the centre, but it should definitely focus on the customer-retailers convenience. Both the wow factor about the design of the mall and exciting deals offered inside, will make the experience of the customer truly wonderful. Mall design is actually a combination of both functional

▲ Hiten Sethi,Mahesh M,B.V.Bharadwaja,Benu Sehgal,Gautam U Nambisan,Payal Makwana,Varun Shrotriya,Brijesh Kanabar,Shilpi Kapoor,Vivek Bhole

▼ L-R: Ajay Nayar,Bipin Gurnani,Majd Mashfej,Puneet Khullar,Rema Menon,Shrirang Sarda,Siddharth Sahgal,Manoj Agarwal,Sharad Sachdeva,Gaurav Ahuja,Amit Sharma,Saurabh Saxena,Sanjeev Mehra(Grand Finale)

attributes and symbolic values of the specific demographic. It should be kept in mind right from the inception point.

Elevating the Consumer Experience and Vibrancy of Our Malls: Leisure, Entertainment and Eating Out As the New 'Experience' Providers.

The Grand Finale of ISCF was actually a culmination of all the discussions and sessions of the two days. Speakers were Ajay Nayar, CEO, Silver Arc Mall; Bipin Gurnani, CEO, Prozone INTU Properties; Majd Mashfej, Head-Mall Management, Mantri Developers; Puneet Khullar, Group Head & VP Retail, Bharti Realty, Rema Menon, VP Retail & Commercial Developments, Parsvnath; Shrirang Sarda, Chairman and MD, Sarda Group; Siddharth Sahgal, Mall Mechanic & MD, Beyond Squarefeet Mall Management;

Amit Sharma, MD, Miraj Entertainment, Gaurav Ahuja, COO, Red Ginger Hospitality; Sharad Sachdeva, CEO, Light Bite Foods; Saurabh Saxena, COO, Carnival Cinemas, Manoj Agrawal, Head Operations, L&T Realty & off Course the moderator Sanjeev Mehra, VP, Quest Properties have stated their opinions on the topic very clearly. Malls in India are and will continue to be family destinations. So developers have to design them in such a way that there should be a proper balance between each category of the mall. Food and entertainment percentage should be at least 25-30%. It should be packaged well for full consumer experience. Developers have to look beyond the present and think about the future and hold hand of digitalization for a future ready product. In a nutshell, the experience of GEN Z (not Y, surely not X, this generation born after 90's are the future customers of Indian shopping centres) has to be elevated so that they will visit the space again and again and that in turn is going to make the malls successful. ℝ

" Developers have to design them in such a way that there should be a proper balance between each category of the mall. Food and entertainment percentage should be at least 25-30%.

-Sanjeev Mehra, VP, Quest Properties

For more information kindly visit following link: http://www.indiaretailing.tv/iscf

BRICK AND MORTAR MEETS E-COMMERCE

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WHAT DO THE EXPERTS SAY?

Experts from various fields have analysed the length & breadth of problems related to the retail real estate in their presentation and have tried to project the solutions too.

NEERAJ BANSAL PARTNER AND HEAD OF BUILDING, CONSTRUCTION AND REAL ESTATE SECTOR, KPMG INDIA

INAUGURAL SESSION: REIT
GAME CHANGER FOR COMMERCIAL REAL ESTATE

Neeraj Bansal, in his key note address in the inaugural session said, "There is around 70-75 million square feet of retail real estate space that is REITable including 16 million in Mumbai and 25 million in Delhi-NCR." Unlike in India, where REITs are just about getting introduced, the countries with several decades of REIT exposure has seen higher percentage of success.

What is REIT: It is a globally accepted investment vehicle for investing in real estate. More than 20 countries now have REIT or similar structure. However, not all countries have witnessed success with REITs.

REIT is highly successful in US, Australia and Singapore. It has got limited success in Hong Kong due to poor handling of first few REITs, tax benefits etc.

How to make REIT successful: 1) Tax structuring – essentially making REITs a pass-through vehicle, 2) lower stamp-duty, successful listing of first few REITs help in raising investment sentiments, 3) allowing limited investment in property development, 4) allowing domestic provident and insurance funds to invest in REITs, 5) allowing REIT to invest in foreign jurisdiction, 6) flexibility with respect to borrowing and leverage its assets.

ABHISHEK MALHOTRA PARTNER & CO-HEAD CONSUMER INDUSTRIES & RETAIL PRODUCTS PRACTICE INDIA & SE ASIA, ATKEARNEY

GEN Y & THEIR SHOPPING TRENDS

Who is Gen Y: they are born after 1980, digitally connected, very ambitious in their lifestyle choices & equally represented across gender.

5 things that Gen Y consumers do: they shop through multiple channels, take judgemental decisions depending on online, are still value conscious --- good prices still matters a lot, they do rapid transactions across multiple channels

To satisfy this 'Gen Y', retailers have to think Omni channel. If you are a mall owner, then assess store mix, placement, and brands to target the desired consumer base and provide greater connected services.

BYRON LEWIS FOUNDER & CEO, MALL SOLUTIONS EUROPE

TRANSFORMATION TODAY, TOMORROW AND BEYOND – FOR OUR SHOPPING CENTRES

- To avoid the closure of shopping centres, we have to create a total experience, we have to make it emotional to people, a space meant for the entire family.
- The shopping centres of today have to be the shopping resort of tomorrow. In order to do that, retailer-developer cooperation has to be accelerated. There has to be common spaces designed for entertainment.
- Trends to look forward: excessive personalization and connection to consumer, creation of a flexible format, builder-developer-retailer collaboration, fusion stores in e-commerce

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PUSHPA BECTOR EXECUTIVE VP AND HEAD, DLF MALL OF INDIA

CREATING AND SETTING UP THE BIGGEST MALL OF INDIA

In order to create the next generation mall, one should start the research from the very beginning as DLF has done during the making of Mall of India. Attention was paid in identifying immediate and secondary catchment points, the tenant mix was very important, tha mall has 6 levels of retail, it has collaborated with the retailers to upgrade the services, mall's hypermarket is appealing to the working women, Mall of India is divided into 2 halves and thus overloading at the front is avoided. Pushpa also mentioned that, 40% of the mall's space should be kept for food and entertainment, as that would lead to the increase of dwell time.

The mall developers should focus on some key factors, like providing an entertaining shopping experience, every floor should be serviced like a hotel, every corner should be digitally ready, stores should be digitally formatted...have to create an unique customer experience is actually the key to success.

SANJEEV RAO
DIRECTOR, RAYMOND

BUILDING 100 YEARS OF A BRAND

- Raymond has the strongest franchised network, this '90 years young' brand is known for its international cut, finishes.
- Now the question is, how to make Raymond more relevant to the younger generation? This will be done by listening to the customers. There will be a change of logo; everything will be consolidated into single, centralised mechanism. Body scanners, smart mirror, e-trial room will be incorporated. 800 Raymond stores will sport new look.
- The brand is also working on a Omni channel way to ensure maximum client satisfaction.

ALOK TANDON CEO, INOX LEISURE

SATISFYING THE EXPERIENCE HUNTERS

- Future is retailtenment. It is the use of sound, ambience, emotions and all activities plugged in together driving a customer towards the merchandise and getting him to buy it. To implement this, developers and retailers have to think together.
- Why do we need retailtenment: customer has to be motivated to leave the comfort of his house and come visit us and stay with us longer. New experiences have to be created every day, so that the customer who came yesterday can have a new experience today. Technology will help us to interact with our guests. Like Inox have put Beacons everywhere, there is a food App embedded in the Inox App etc.
- The idea of retailtenment has to be as for the market demand. Every retail outlet has to develop in own to ensure that the customer is coming back.

YOGESHWAR SHARMA EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, SELECT CITYWALK

INNOVATING THE INNOVATION PROCESS

A mall owner has to innovate in the terms of brand mix, events, decor, promotions, and customer services, back of the house, technology etc.

Select Citywalk has started its journey nine years ago and it has innovated continuously in all the above mentioned spheres. Be it the continuously changing brand mix or from pre market promotions to organic market or house of secrets. It has incorporated loyalty programme, hands free services, delivery at home service, automatic tube cleaning system in chillers and many more keeping innovation in mind.

The mall is also helping the retailers to solve the challenges they are facing with the help of new technology. Like, new softwares are introduced which helps in tracking the customer's walking pattern inside the mall, or indicates which wall-portion of the store has attracted more people.

CHRISTIAN GRZONA REGIONAL MANAGER, ASIA PACIFIC, SCHEIDT & BACHMANN GMBH

REVOLUTIONIZING CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE

Parking in retail environment: forget waiting in the queue at the parking lot of the shopping mall, with the help of technology, anybody book parking in advance. Shopping mall owners can be aware of the actual scenario at parking lot. Each retailer in the mall can have different validation model. A customer can go to the website of the mall, book parking, can get an offer for himself from the retailers or mall authority, pay online, stay at the shopping mall for the time they have parked, if he has to overstay, then pay extra at the exit...as simple as that.

BHAVIK ZAVERI CEO AND FOUNDER PRETR

CONFLUENCE OF MALL AND MOBILE

- Malls are no longer a shopping complex but they are physical + digital = Phygital enabler to create holistic experiences.
- How do we create that wow factor, which the consumer is in search for? By adopting the following: O2O model, that is Online to Offline, curb side pickup, single identity checkout, cashbacks, real time promotions, incentives and reward programmes, cross promotions for different brands present in that mall, creating a navigation system between store and mall, try at mall-shop at home, exit time offer, impairment assistance etc.

P V SUNIL DIRECTOR AND CEO CARNIVAL CINEMAS

REACHING NEW FRONTIERS FOR RETAIL DEVELOPMENT THROUGH ENTERTAINMENT

FEZ, family entertainment Zones have to be created for the tier 2, tier 3 cities. These zones will comprise of multiplex, food chains, retail stores etc. That will in lead into organized retail, hygienic eateries, recreational facilities, rural employment, fulfilling aspirations of rural consumers, real estate development, energy conservation and an opportunity for investing in rural India. So basically empowerment of rural India and at the same time retail development is actually quite possible with entertainment.

S RAGHUNANDHAN
CO-FOUNDER, NEXT PRACTICE RETAIL

HOW PEOPLE ARE RE-INVENTING THE SHOPPING CENTRE?

- Consumer experience is everything: I want to shop when I want, where I want, online-offline...it's my prerogative.
- Three Cs are most important in redefining the shopping experience: Convenience, comfort, complimentary. Convenience: Click & collect: Order it online and collect it at the mall. Comfort: Ease of entry-exit and parking. Complimentary: order online, book table at restaurant within the mall, when walk in, food is ready.
- Malls should develop their own entertainment zone, which can be a key crowd puller
- What the Mall of the Future will look like: when the consumers enter a mall, they will know where to go... not just by retailers, but by products, by events, by experiences, for their own personal needs. And the way through which we get there is digital.

For more information kindly visit following link: http://www.indiaretailing.tv/iscf

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IMAGES
SHOPPING CENTRE AWARDS
2016

Mega retailer voting process culminates in glittering ceremony to recognize India's outstanding shopping centres

As the busy Day 1 of India Shopping Centre Forum was slowly progressing towards evening, curiosity was reaching its high among the representatives of the shopping centres present there. Later in the evening, when at the terrace of The Renaissance Hotel the Manuel Manual Trio was performing popular tracks of Michael Jackson and Adele, anybody can understand that the crowd can hardly enjoy the groovy music, as all were eagerly waiting for the envelopes with the name of the winners to get opened and announcements to get started!

The announcements of the 9th edition of the annual IMAGES Shopping Centre Awards (ISCA), which recognized outstanding shopping centres and professionals across the country under 29 different award categories, begun with the intriguing voice of Freishia Boman Behram.

To shortlist and rank best performing malls in India for financial year 2015-16, IMAGES undertook a first of its kind exercise in the world -- involving over 200 top brands and retailers with their respective business development/operation/ marketing & retail team members and associates -- to identify the best malls across India. Tenants in shopping centres with different retail verticals, formats and consumer segments joined in to rank malls on the basis of their overall performance including metrics like marketing promotion initiatives, trading density and ROI. Eight of the 29 categories at ISCA 2016 were the RETAILERS' CHOICE AWARDS, decided purely by India's leading national retail chains who voted for their preferred shopping centres from across the country on the basis of Return on Investment or ROI, and sales per square feet.

The Grand Jury for ISCA 2016 included Mr. Amitabh Taneja (Chief Convenor, India Shopping Centre Forum), Mr. Anuj Puri (Chairman & Country Head, Jones Lang Lasalle), Mr. Ajay Bijli (Chairman & Managing Director, PVR Limited), Ms. Ireena Vittal (Expert, India Agriculture & Urban Change), Mr. Krish Iyer (President & CEO, Walmart India), Mr. Neelesh Hundekari (Partner, Consumer and Retail, Head of Lifestyle Practice, Asia, A T Kearney), Mr. Phil McArthur (Founder & MD, McArthur Company), Mr. Pankaj Jaju (Head - Strategic Partnerships, Axis Bank), Mr. Sanjay Dutt (Managing Director, India, Cushman & Wakefield), Mr. Simon Thomson (Founder & Principal, Retail International) and Mr. Shishir Baijal (Chairman & Managing Director, Knight Frank India Pvt. Ltd.)

ISCA 2016 AWARDEES

→ IMAGES Most Admired Shopping Centre of The Year – Best ROI
East: **South City Mall, Kolkata** | West: **Infiniti Mall, Malad** | South: **Forum Mall, Koramangala** | North: **Select Citywalk, New Delhi**

→ IMAGES Most Admired Shopping Centre of The Year – Best Sales Per Sq. Ft
East: **South City Mall, Kolkata** | West: **High Street Phoenix, Mumbai** | South: **Express Avenue, Chennai** | North: **Select Citywalk, New Delhi**

→ IMAGES Most Admired Shopping Centre of The Year – Marketing & Promotions
East: **South City Mall, Kolkata** | West: **The Oberoi Mall, Mumbai** | South: **Phoenix Market City, Bengaluru** | North: **DLF Promenade, New Delhi**

→ IMAGES Most Admired Shopping Centre of The Year – Best Turnaround
Saharaganj Mall, Lucknow

→ MAGES Most Admired Shopping Centre of The Year – Socially Responsible
West: **Viviana Mall, Thane** | South: **Orion Mall, Bengaluru** | North: **Select Citywalk, New Delhi** | Special Mention: **Forum Vijaya Mall, Chennai**

→ IMAGES Most Admired Shopping Centre Launch of The Year
East: **Acropolis Mall, Kolkata** | South: **VR Bengaluru, Bengaluru** | North: **DLF Mall of India, Noida**

→ IMAGES Most Admired Shopping Centre of The Year – Non Metro
East: **P&M Mall, Patna** | West: **Pheonix Market City, Pune** | South: **Lulu International Mall, Kochi** | North: **Elante Mall, Chandigarh**

→ IMAGES Most Admired Shopping Centre of The Year – Metro
East: **South City Mall, Kolkata** | West: **High Street Phoenix, Mumbai** | South: **Orion Mall, Bengaluru** | North: **Select Citywalk, New Delhi**

→ IMAGES Most Admired Shopping Centre Professional of The Year
East: **Manmohan Bagree,** South City Mall, Kolkata
North: **Pushpa Bector,** DLF Mall of India
South: **Vishal Mirchandani,** Brigade Enterprises
West: **Rajnesh Mahajan,** Inorbit Malls

A special honor under the IMAGES Most Admired Shopping Centre of The Year: Socially Responsible category was given to Forum Vijaya Mall, Chennai, for its highly-lauded initiatives during the Chennai floods of 2015. A front runner in relief work and with the support of its staff and the tenants, the entire mall was open for citizens as a safe haven; hundreds spent three days within the mall. The cinema halls were used for accommodating people to rest overnight, the food court and the restaurants prepared food for thousands of people during the four-day period. The mall's hypermarket operated on all days; mall management bought groceries from the hypermarket in preparing food for the flood victims.

IMAGES Most Admired Shopping Centre of the Year: Best Turnaround honor went to Saharaganj Mall, Lucknow, which restructured its complete brand mix last year. Major renovation and fresh mall promotion activities were highly visible last year. As a result of these, total lease rent income in 2015-16 grew by 79% over the previous year, while supplementary income (ads, signage etc.) grew by 70%.

RETAIL IS DEAD LONG LIVE RETAIL!

The Retail industry is suffering. Most retailers are struggling to maintain any growth; profitability is compromised, and the future looks gloomy. As I travel across the many countries we work in, I hear the same story. And I also hear the same questions: Is this because of ecommerce? Is this because of the economy? Is this because of geo-political strife?

Naresh Ahuja,
Chairman, ETP GROUP

So let's break it down. In Asia Pacific, India and The Middle East (we call it the AIM market), eCommerce has between 2 % and 10 % market share. Is this enough to cause the stress in the retail industry? Maybe, and we can do something about it.

Are the economies really doing so badly? Yes, some of the more developed ones like Japan, Singapore, HK, etc. are finding growth difficult. China is slowing down. But some economies like Thailand, Indonesia, India, Philippines, etc. are coming through. Is the geo-political tension between the powers that be, hurting customer sentiment? Maybe. But what can private enterprise do about it?

The key question to ask is which brands are performing and which are not and why? We have many customers and friends in the retail industry who carry scores of brands. And they would do well to examine their brand portfolio. Customer tastes have shifted; all the above factors have driven a changed customer who is willing to spend a lot of money on holidays and mobile phones but will look for value while buying lifestyle items. Value being defined as a great price for a good quality product that is a trend setter. Gone are the days of such products demanding a premium, today that's the baseline for the customer.

The king is dead, long live the new king, the customer! Sounds obvious? It's not, with the retailers' primary focus being location and brand, there has not been much focus on the individual customer. The recognition and acceptance of this will be the change that will drive success and growth in retail and eCommerce. Though I must admit, eCommerce companies have done a better job at personalizing their relationship with customers in a short time.
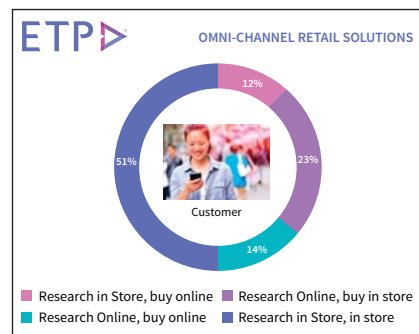
In the new omni-channel commerce paradigm, the customer is planted firmly in the center of the lens, serviced by any channel that she chooses to interact with, when she chooses, and where she chooses and at the best value. The customer wants hassle free experiences interacting with the brand, recognition, rewards, and superior post sales service.

At ETP, as we work with retailers across 22 countries and over 25,000 stores and 500 brands, here's what we've observed: a tremendous depth in their skills in Merchandising, Brand Management, Sales and Supply Chain Management, their understanding of diverse customers and employees, their ability to manage cycles and seasons and still produce a profit, their infrastructure management, their cash management, among other things.

In the last one year, we are now seeing these giants waking up to the need to focus on the individual customer both in retail and in the eCommerce space. With all their powerful management and execution capability they could be the game changers of this new "Omni-channel" retail world. Like all large organisations with a legacy and systems & processes in place, they may not be as nimble as the pure play eCommerce players, however they seem to have got it now, and are ramping up their organization's technology, culture and capability to play the eCommerce game. At the same time the eCommerce players have grown and are struggling with the lack of the same competencies that the larger retailers have. You will see many of them opening stores, to better service their customers.

It's a fascinating new battle front and the next couple of years will tell all. My guess is that the winners will be the ones who leverage the core competencies of retail and deploy the technology savviness of eCommerce companies. Somewhere in the middle, focused on customer service, the successful companies will emerge, after all, isn't retail a service industry?

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Omnichannel commerce delivered

An End-to-End Globally Competitive Enterprise
Omni-Channel e-Retail Product Platform Technology

Gartner. 2012
CoolVendor

ORDER FROM ANYWHERE	FULFILL FROM ANYWHERE

Customized Store Front

The most preferred point of browsing and ordering

Mobile APP's / Responsive Technology

For browsing and purchasing from the web store and price/product comparison & buying when on the move

Kiosk / TV Commerce

Enables consumers to buy on the move on kiosks and in store using TV Commerce

Affiliate Integration

Easy plugins to Aggregators and Market Places to sell your goods on their web stores with analytics

CRM / Loyalty Points

Enables consumer to burn points seamlessly online and offline

Click & Collect

Buy on the webstore and collect at store of choice

Order at Store Get Delivered at Home

Part of Omni-channel fulfillment

Cross visibility of Inventory Online / Offline - Data to be filled

All stores inventory is available on the system and auto allocation of an order can be seamlessly made to a store nearest to the customer location

Call Center / Email / SMS

For customer support online and offline. Call center executive can punch orders

Log-in Through Social Media

You can log-in using any social media sites of choice

Multi-currency / Multi-lingual / International Shipping

Allows a consumer to see the language and currency of his choice as well as get goods shipped from next nearest country

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Mumbai

Octashop eRetail Services Private Limited

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WHERE TECH WILL TAKE RETAIL
RETAIL TECHNOLOGY LEADERS ENVISION THE FUTURE OF RETAIL

Till about a decade ago, Technology was considered unobtrusive, a "back-office thing" without a name or an identity. Consumers were shopping the old-fashioned way, wearing out their shoes instead of their keypads. Today, buzzwords like 'consumer-centric' and 'Omni-channel' have raised their expectations and they now seek experiences rather than just delightful products and services. Technology has transcended from an aspiration to an expectation and has wedged itself securely between consumer and experience to create an everyday interface. A plethora of experiences have migrated online and with them, consumers.

By Sheetal Choksi & Sharmila Cirvante

From a service extension, technology has evolved to a lifeline for businesses. Retail is no stranger to the tech-revolution; today, it has technology woven into its DNA. In this landscape, the role of the Technology Leader in creating seamless consumer journeys between the online and offline realms is invaluable. If technology is the face of retail, the CIO is its brain.

While the rapid changing pace of technology has caused seismic shifts in shopping habits, its tremors have ripped apart the definition of the Retail Technology Leader. Images Retail spoke to 29 Chief Information Officers across the country to understand how their roles have changed over the last few years and the future they foresee. Presented here is a consolidation of their responses.

We have structured the article in two sections: the first part documents the CIOs' views on their changing role in this tech driven world, the technology challenges retailers will face, as well as an analysis of the Top 5 tech priorities of 2016-2018 they anticipate. The second part introduces us to the man behind the designation and spotlights the priorities he envisages will shape the retail world of the future. On a lighter note, we also peek into his personal tech choices.

> **"**IT teams are expected to know the retail business realities as much as marketing or operations and be involved in conceptualisation, rather than just solutions **"**
>
> – **Indresh Pradhan,**
> Head - IT, Kaya

> **"**Now the same CIO has to be Chief Innovation Officer/ Chief Intelligence Officer/ Chief Integration Officer/ Chief Infrastructure Officer **"**
>
> – **Yakeen Gazi,**
> Sr. V.P. IT & Supply Chain,
> Hypercity Retail India Limited

> **"**The challenges will be on how to use mobile tech without tearing down the virtual walls of security **"**
>
> – **Kiran Komatla,**
> AVP - IT, Burger King India

The changing role of the CIO: from business enabler to business stakeholder

Gone are the days when impressive IT or Engineering degrees staked claim to a CIO's fame. With most companies fusing their IT strategy with Business strategy, today's Head of Technology is getting down to business and is expected to use technology to drive business strategies and fulfil the corporate vision. The tech credentials are not even a mandate anymore.

Given the consumer demand for digital transformation, it is important for Technology Heads to develop the mindset of Digital Enabler and Growth Hacker in the next couple of years. *"Heads of Technologies now need to have a deeper understanding of business and its challenges to drive sales and margin growth, without ignoring the customer intimacy needed to stay aligned with their expectations from retailers as a service provider,"* observes Abel A. Correa, Head IT Strategy and Governance, Arvind Ltd.

The age of web and mobile technology has created highly tech savvy customers who look for a seamless shopping experience across multiple channels. Consumers use technology in various ways before they shop and during their time in the store – they search for online coupons, use mobile devices to check prices, research products, make shopping lists and read product reviews. From being present across channels, the focus now is to provide a unified experience across channels. Customers will naturally gravitate towards retailers that can combine a competitive shopping experience with high customer satisfaction.

With lines getting blurred between service offerings, it is important for retailers to be creative and innovative to provide a relevant and unique differentiator.

The three big technology challenges retailers will face: technology solutions must evolve to business solutions

Technology is becoming more agile and responsive. It is relevant to almost every business function and process of an organization today, and the impact of this change on business is significant and challenging. The Technology Leader is expected to convert this challenge into opportunity and while they are rising up to the task, some lacunae between service and delivery are expected.

While customer retention, a seamless Omni-channel experience and creating differentiation in products and services topped the list, there were others. Some of it had to do with a fast changing pace, while others involved a change of mindset.

When we asked CIOs on what they believed would be the three key challenges that retail would face from a technology point of view, we received myriad answers.

The key themes however revolved around:

1. Managing customers and their changing expectations

From creating a one view of the customer and one view for the customer to customisation and personalisation for customers. From

"Retailers who analyse their data and convert it to actionable information will be better at understanding and engaging their customer needs and hence will be able to create more relevant offers for their customers **"**

– Vikram Idnani,
Head-IT, Trent

"Omni-channel customer engagement combines orchestration and journey management to provide multi-channel contact centre best practices for great customer experience with compelling business outcomes **"**

– Sandeep Kothari,
VP - IT, Travel Food Services

Indresh Pradhan believes that the big challenge will be "making sense of the data."

3. Skilling and Re-skilling of the workforce
Technology providers will have to change their positioning from providing technology solutions to business solutions. This shift in positioning will mandate a shift in mindset, both with the IT teams as well as across management. This will necessitate investments in re-skilling of existing teams, as well as investments in training and development of both IT personnel.

drawing insights from data to retaining consumers as the price war has driven away margins and loyalty.

From creating a seamless shopping experience to managing rapidly changing consumer preferences, CIOs will be on their toes to identify the right platform or products, keeping in mind the high degree of obsolescence.

On the subject of providing differentiated and unique personalised experiences, **Anil Shankar, Customer Care Associate & VP, Shoppers**

Stop adds, "The need is for in-store digitization to match the other channels and to improve the interaction of frontend association with customers."

2. Data, Data Analytics and Data Protection
With the ability to collect large amounts of data comes the responsibility of managing that data, making sense of that data to be able to impact business decisions as well as protection of that data.

Priority 1: Build a single customer experience across channels
Today's customers want a seamless shopping experience across multiple channels. Omni-channel fuels this shift, but the current technologies used by each channel do not talk to each other smoothly. This puts the onus on the retailers. *"In order to provide a seamless experience*

FORECASTING THE FUTURE: THE RETAIL CIO'S TOP 5 PRIORITIES FOR 2016-2018

In such an amorphous and rapidly changing scenario, what key areas are CIOs focusing on in the future? We gave them a list of 10 options and asked them to select the top 5 priorities and the reasons for choosing these. The options were:

1. Build a single customer experience across channels
2. Integration methodologies to manage co-existence of multiple disparate systems used in retail
3. Build/enhance the mobile strategy
4. Big Data Strategy: storage and analysis
5. Data Security and Fraud Protection
6. Up-skilling People and getting organizations digitally savvy
7. Building alignment of IT with other functions
8. Reducing Costs
9. Embrace the Cloud and Cloud Services
10. Internet of Things

■ % who consider it among their top 5 priorities

Category	%
Build a single customer experience across the channel	100
Build/enhance the mobile strategy	80
Data Security and Fraud Protection	53
Big Data Strategy: storage and analysis	53
Building alignment of IT with other functions	53
Integration methodologies to manage co-experience of multiple disparate systems used in retail	43
Up-skilling people and getting organizations digitally savvy	37
Embrace the cloud and Cloud services	33
Reducing costs	30
Internet of Things	23

for the customer, it is important to build a consistent experience across all channels to make it simpler for the customer who does not think channels, but just thinks experience", says Vikram Idnani.

According to Sandeep Kothari, Vice President - Information Technology, Travel Food Services, the answer lies in Omni-channel Journey Orchestration.

"Omni-channel, sooner than later will become a hygiene factor for all retailers", confirms Yakeen Gazi, Sr. V.P. IT & Supply Chain, Hypercity Retail India. *"But integrating existing legacy fail-safe systems with online technology requiring 100% connectivity and stability will be the main challenge in reaching the goal".*

For Omni-channel to become a reality, agile software solutions are a must. Unfortunately, the industry is yet to witness a proven comprehensive solution. *Abel A. Correa, Head IT Strategy and Governance, Arvind Ltd. expresses a different point of view. "The game changer will be the adoption of Cloud based deployment strategy for delivering IT in a cost effective manner as retail business will continue to be hard pressed for margins and returns on capital employed.The other major game changing touch point will be Mobile enabled software".*

Priority 2: Build/Enhance the mobile strategy

Mobile first is the new mantra. It is a must-have for the Millennials, a customer segment which cannot be ignored for business sustenance and growth in the coming years. In today's competitive marketplace, mobile strategies help retailers remain relevant to modern consumers. *"In fact, it's been here for quite some time, but retailers have been slow to catch on to consumer habits and behaviours",* points out Sunil Nair.

On the other hand, Pooraan Jaiswal, CTO, Globus Stores believes that mobile technology is still new and limited, but is investing in it as it offers tremendous cost and space savings and increases productivity with collaboration in real-time.

With mobile technology becoming universal, how can retailers drive disruption and create a value differentiator? *According to Sandeep Kothari, "The firms that can best capture mobile moments will have a great advantage over their competitors, and the ability to engage customers or employees in their mobile moments depends on the organisation's ability to innovate, build, and deploy".*

Mobile technology is an equally valuable tool to improve employee engagement, performance and productivity. *Ranjan Sharma, Head IT & SCM, Bestseller confirms its*

❝Be it in-store, website or mobile, it is important for retailers to drive competitive advantage to win in the digital era ❞

– Anil Shankar,
Customer Care Associate & VP, Shoppers Stop

❝Though IT heads have started getting into the business, there is a long way ahead to create a proper bridge between IT and other functions ❞

– Pooraan Jaiswal,
CTO, Globus Stores Private Limited

importance. "We intend to bring the entire life of an employee to this app to execute his day to day transactions and manage his issues and problems". Liberty Shoes uses the mobile strategy to exhibit significant data to reach their widespread sales work force and employees.

Priority 3: Data Security and Fraud Protection

The increasing use of digital technology, social media and the adoption of technology without a full understanding of its boundaries is creating a playground for cyber criminals. Data theft is a misfortune that plagues even offline retailers. The threats amplify with the addition and integration of an online channel.

As a preventive measure, *Uzwal Kumar Chatterjee, VP & Head IT, Shop CJ Network advises to, "Insulate the organisation from Cyber-attacks and provide a robust and resilient IT security setup".*

Priority 4: Big Data Strategy: storage and analysis

In today's turbulent world of ever-changing customer expectations, big data can help retailers find new ways of remaining relevant and competitive. *Sunil Nair says, "Big Data solutions can facilitate predictive analysis on customer data collected from a wider range of sources such as POS, online transactions, social media, loyalty programs and more. This can help retailers more accurately identify shopping behaviour of customers, which in turn can be used to deliver highly targeted, location-based services almost in real time".*
While data storage and analytics will play a pivotal role in understanding the consumer, Abel A. Correa, Head

IT Strategy and Governance, Arvind Ltd., feels that Indian retailers would first have to evolve on the sanity of current Master data layers to be able to move from descriptive to prescriptive to predictive analysis. This underscores the necessity of strong Master data management processes.

Priority 5: Building alignment of IT with other functions

In this day and age where technology is ingrained in every breath we take, IT has to be Enabler, Enhancer, and Experiential for its stakeholders and drive sales, operational excellence and customer intimacy.

Competitive advantage is what all businesses need and the same can be achieved thru IT automation and integration at all levels across the company. It is therefore important

for the IT team to understand the business better and delve deeper into the functions and goals of different departments.

Priority 6: Integration methodologies to manage co-existence of multiple, disparate systems used in retail

The technology landscape is a complex, fragmented mix across channels with every retailer having built individual systems. This has resulted in a patchwork of antiquated solutions prone to errors. As retail organizations grow, the complexity of systems increases. Having systems that integrate closely with each other makes it possible to view information end-to-end as well as maintain a single source of truth.

Today, the availability of new integration methodologies and national level connectivity can move retailers up the value chain on data flow, from being End of Day routine to Real Time. This will allow them to engage the customer with highly relevant and accurate information while provide the latter with a glitch-free unified experience.

❝Fail Fast, Learn Fast and Evolve Fast should be the mantra to overcome the above challenges❞

– Abel A. Correa,
Head IT Strategy and Governance, Arvind Mills

❝The CIO is very visible in most business meetings❞

– Vishal Kapil,
IT Director - Emerging Market India, Adidas Group

On the other hand, adopting new mobile based and cloud based solutions and integrating the same with existing systems could be the other game changer for the retail industry.

Priority 7: Up-skilling people and getting organisations digitally savvy

However sophisticated or modern technology may be, it is worthless if it is implemented with errors. A retailer cannot be digitally enabled if its employees fumble with the nuances involved in engaging with the customer to deliver a product or service.

The ever changing nature of digital has also redefined the profile of people. *Ranjit Satyanath, Head – Technology, Infiniti Retail Limited observes, "Earlier it was the super specialists. Now with the need to move fast, all-rounders are in great demand. Retailers must continually upgrade customer service skills to be able to leverage the digital prowess which will enable them to provide the speed, quality and richness of experience that customers expect today. It may be more cost effective to mass up-skill the current generation using modern training tools like online portals, mobile apps, games and other interfaces as they are comfortable with digital interactions."*

Priority 8: Embrace the Cloud and Cloud services

Depending on the size and maturity of the organisation, the cost-effectiveness of Cloud makes it a boon for retailers who would like to 'Try Fast, Fail Fast and Learn Fast'. New business start-ups are already operating out of the Cloud, enabling them with competitive advantage against the traditional setups.

Priority 9: Reducing costs

It is encouraging to note that cost reduction features as the last priority. Today, retailers need more integrated and reliable strategies and solutions in order to remain competitive, and optimizing cost of operation is key to enjoying this advantage. Information technology as a domain, with its tools for modern retailing can improve retailer, supplier, and customer activities and experiences and provide an opportunity for retailers to control their operations resulting in cost optimization.

Priority 10: The Internet of Things

The Internet of Things (IoT) is regarded as a major driver of the third Industrial Revolution. IoT will be a disruptive force in retail operations and companies devising an IoT strategy should put one question at the forefront: Do you want to be a disrupter or the disrupted? Ⓡ

THE MAN BEHIND THE TECHNOLOGY: MEET THE CIO

ABEL A. CORREA
Head IT Strategy and Governance, Arvind Limited

Abel has spent over a quarter of a century in IT, having held a multitude of influential positions like Country Manager for Red Prairie Technologies and JDA Software Inc. as well as CIO for Piramal Group. His deep knowledge in the field has enabled him to single-handedly drive Operational Excellence through IT and Process Innovations as well as Build and Manage Profitable CoE.

TOP 5 priorities for Abel for 2016-2018:

> Build a single customer experience across channels
> Integration methodologies to manage co-existence of multiple disparate systems used in retail
> Build/Enhance the mobile strategy
> Building alignment of IT with other functions
> Embrace the Cloud and Cloud Services

TOP 3 challenges retailers will face from a Tech POV:

1. Vendors lacking domain expertise in retail, which hinders the delivery of tech solutions
2. Changing the perception of tech solutions into business solutions
3. Adopting the "Fail Fast, Learn Fast and Evolve fast" mantra to overcome challenges pertaining to obsolescence and the pressure it creates.

↳ I own (laptop/tablet brand): Lenovo
↳ I own (mobile phone brand): Samsung S6
↳ My favourite podcast: Ted Talks while driving
↳ My blog or my twitter handle is: Coming Soon!
↳ My most memorable tech disaster: My laptop refusing to connect to projector on one of the key presentation
↳ An app that I cannot manage without: Google and Outlook
↳ Most creative way to deal with password management: Wife's name and birthday
↳ A website I most refer to: TEDX.com, Harvard Business Review
↳ On my day off: Family, Family, Family
↳ Tech of the future is: Internet of Things
↳ IT leader I look up to (role model): Mr. Arun Gupta

ABHIJEET KARMARKAR
Head IT, Godrej Nature's Basket Ltd.

Abhijeet has 12 years experience in the area of technology, across sectors such as retail, real estate and manufacturing. After successful stints with Provogue India Limited, Equinox Realty and Infrastructure Pvt. Ltd. (ESSAR), he is currently the Head of IT at Godrej Nature's Basket. Some of his key achievements at Godrej Nature's Basket are: streamlining the backend process mapping in SAP, upgrading the POS software and initiation of Business Analytics Tools for supply chain-logistics.

TOP 5 priorities for Abhijeet for 2016-2018:
> Build a single customer experience across channels
> Integration methodologies to manage co-existence of multiple disparate systems used in retail
> Data Security and Fraud Protection
> Up-skilling People and getting organizations digitally savvy
> Embrace the Cloud and Cloud Services

TOP 3 challenges retailers will face from a Tech POV:
1. The challenge is to get more and more value out of technologies ensuring we are spending our limited resources in the ways that improve overall offer to the consumers.
2. Keeping pace with new technology evolution in order to provide the customer with cutting edge shopping experience.
3. Retailers will have to undergo accelerated technological innovation in order to achieve profitable differentiation

→ I own (laptop/tablet brand): **HP**
→ I own (mobile phone brand): **iPhone**
→ My most memorable tech disaster: **Data transfer from old device to iPhone**
→ Most creative way to deal with password management: **Keep on changing with the seasons**
→ A website I most refer to: **Google**
→ On my day off: **Enjoy time with my family. Travelling & Trekking**
→ Tech of the future is: **Change is constant, keep assessing emerging tech from time to time**
→ IT leader I look up to (role model): **There are many. I really look up to the best in each individual I work with. Steve Jobs biography inspires me**

ANIL SHANKAR
Customer Care Associate & VP, Shoppers Stop Ltd.

Anil's foray into IT began when he assumed the role of IT Manager with Sterling Holidays India Ltd. His journey into the Retail sector took flight when he joined Shoppers Stop and set up its IT processes and data networks. In 2006, he took his work a notch higher by setting up technology shared services for every format in the group, which culminated in his appointment as CIO in 2014.

TOP 5 priorities for Anil for 2016-2018:
> Build a single customer experience across channels
> Integration methodologies to manage co-existence of multiple disparate systems used in retail
> Build / Enhance the mobile strategy
> Big Data Strategy: Storage and Analysis
> Data Security and Fraud Protection

TOP 3 challenges retailers will face from a Tech POV:
1. Achieving a balance between strategy and tactical gains from technology
2. Convergence
3. Providing differentiated, unique and personalized experiences

→ I own (laptop/tablet brand): **Dell/Apple**
→ I own (mobile phone brand): **Apple**
→ My favourite podcast: **TedX**
→ An app that I cannot manage without: **Flipboard**
→ Most creative way to deal with password management: **establish a personal algorithm**
→ A website I most refer to: **Retail Week, Gartner**
→ On my day off: **Music, photography**
→ Tech of the future is: **More wearables**
→ IT leader I look up to (role model): **Steve Jobs, Jeff Bezos**

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CHETAN CHATURVEDI
CIO, Head-Business Process Architecture & Technology, Reliance Digital Retail Ltd

With 20 of the 25 years of his professional life having been spent in USA, Chetan has worked for global giants like Cisco Systems, Price Waterhouse Coopers (PWC) LLP, Quantum Corp, Digital Equipment Corporation and Unisys Corp. prior to joining Reliance. He has successfully built Enterprise Architecture and cross-functional business solutions for a global roll-out, directed teams to deliver Business Intelligence Systems leveraging Enterprise Data Warehouse solutions and lead teams in the implementation of Oracle 11i TCA and custom solutions to support Manufacturing, Sales-Finance.

TOP 5 priorities for Chetan for 2016-2018:
> Build a single customer experience across channels
> Build / Enhance the mobile strategy
> Big Data Strategy: Storage and Analysis
> Data Security and Fraud Protection

TOP 3 challenges retailers will face from a Tech POV:
1. How to better acquire and retain customers
2. Offer tech solutions at competitive prices; going beyond transactional interaction
3. Provide Omni-channel customer experience and "personalized service"

↪ I own (mobile phone brand): Moto X Play, Google Nexus
↪ My most memorable tech disaster: when stores cannot bill the customer
↪ An app that I cannot manage without: Whatsapp!
↪ Most creative way to deal with password management: password corral or suffix incremental
↪ A website I most refer to: Yahoo Mail
↪ On my day off: household errands & business urgencies
↪ Tech of the future is: Mobility, Cloud
↪ IT leader I look up to (role model): John Chambers, Chairman Cisco. He is not in IT though

GOVIND SINGH
Director IT, Levi Strauss & Co.

Govind is a business-savvy IT person, helping & supporting the business to grow with the help of his global IT experience in various domains like Apparel Retail, Retail, Automobiles and Consumer Goods. His speciality is working & communicating closely with business teams, using a common language called "Business" and contributing to the growth of business.

TOP 5 priorities for Govind for 2016-2018:
> Build a single customer experience across channels
> Build/ Enhance the mobile strategy
> Big Data Strategy: Storage and Analysis
> Building alignment of IT with other functions
> Reducing Costs

TOP 3 challenges retailers will face from a Tech POV:
1. Accurate data analysis (both from conventional and social media input points) to suggest actionable items
2. Thinning line between brick 'n mortar and e-outlets
3. Adoption to advance technologies at a very fast rate by competition

→ I own (laptop/tablet brand): Lenovo
→ I own (mobile phone brand): Nexus
→ My most memorable tech disaster: SAP server crash
→ An app that I cannot manage without: Mobile, e-mail
→ Most creative way to deal with password management: Using a seemingly complex algorithm
→ A website I most refer to: Google
→ On my day off: Photography
→ Tech of the future is: Internet of things
→ IT leader I look up to (role model): My Group CIO

INDRESH PRADHAN
Head – IT, Kaya Limited

With 14+ years of experience in leading teams on tech-enabled business transformation projects for Reliance Brands (Luxury Retail Unit of Reliance Industries), Future Group, Venture Infotek, Susquehanna International and Synygy, Indresh is adept at Program and Project Management, Technology Strategy, Solution Design, Partner Engagement, Client Management and setting up and managing PMO. A deep understanding of Customer Engagement Programs and Retail Analytics has enabled him to successfully implement the Follow-the-Sun Support Strategy between USA, Romania and India; managing teams across continents. What's more, he was awarded the Dean's Fellowship at Drexel University for Academic Excellence.

TOP 5 priorities for Indresh for 2016-2018:
> Build a single customer experience across channels
> Build / Enhance the mobile strategy
> Big Data Strategy: Storage and Analysis
> Data Security and Fraud Protection

TOP 3 challenges retailers will face from a Tech POV:
1. Personalization expectations from Customers
2. Ever growing data and analysis; taking inferences from data
3. Business Team expectations for a seamless experience across channels or touch points with customers

→ I own (laptop/tablet brand): HP
→ I own (mobile phone brand): iPhone
→ My favourite podcast: TED
→ My most memorable tech disaster: Blackberry outage
→ An app that I cannot manage without: Ola
→ Most creative way to deal with password management: Anagrams
→ A website I most refer to: cnet
→ On my day off: Read and walk
→ Tech of the future is: IOT
→ IT leader I look up to (role model): Jeff Bezos

KIRAN KOMATLA
Associate VP-IT, Burger King India Pvt. Ltd.

In the 14 years he's spent in IT, Kiran has made pioneering contributions towards various aspects of the field. His experience is varied, spanning myriad functional domains, management functions and technical roles. His deep understanding of the Retail Business, Information Technology & Project Management is evidenced by the numerous awards he has won, namely, "Most Promising CISO" in 2015 and 2016 along with "Most Promising CIO" in 2015, among others.

TOP 5 priorities for Kiran for 2016-2018:
> Build a single customer experience across channels
> Build/ Enhance the mobile strategy
> Data Security and Fraud Protection
> Up-skilling People and getting organizations digitally savvy
> Building alignment of IT with other functions

TOP 3 challenges retailers will face from a Tech POV:
1. Omni-channel Dilemma
2. Data management from Digital Platform
3. Secure mobile technology

→ I own (laptop/tablet brand): Dell Laptop & Apple tablet
→ I own (mobile phone brand): Samsung
→ My favourite podcast: How to Do Everything
→ My blog or my twitter handle is: www.edifyminds.com
→ My most memorable tech disaster: Bug in POS App
→ An app that I cannot manage without: WhatsApp
→ Most creative way to deal with password management: Password Algorithm
→ A website I most refer to: Wikipedia
→ On my day off: spend time with family
→ Tech of the future is: Zero-size intelligence
→ IT leader I look up to (role model): Steve Jobs

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LOGIC

KUNAL MEHTA
GM IT - Lifestyle business, Raymond Ltd.

Kunal has over 15 years of experience across a wide range of organizations in leadership capacities and has been primarily responsible for Enterprise IT Operations. He was adjudged one of the "50 Most Influential Technology Leaders" at the Retail Technology Conference & Awards in Feb '16 as well as "100 Most Innovative CIO of India" by World Sustainability Congress in June'16.

TOP 5 priorities for Kunal for 2016-2018:
> Build a single customer experience across channels
> Integration methodologies to manage co-existence of multiple disparate systems used in retail
> Big Data Strategy: Storage and Analysis
> Building alignment of IT with other functions
> Reducing Costs

TOP 3 challenges retailers will face from a Tech POV:
1. Cost of implementing new technology remains the biggest challenge for any technology retailer
2. The dilemma of running legacy systems which are either obsolete or towards ends of life can be a major challenge for the business especially when business processes and organization size change drastically and want to move at a different speed without investing in IT systems
3. Preserving the core of the brand and keeping in touch with customers in the face of disruption of e-commerce and new digital technologies, social media

→ I own (laptop/tablet brand): Lenovo
→ I own (mobile phone brand): Samsung
→ My favourite podcast: Benjamen Walker's Theory of Everything
→ My blog or my twitter handle is: https://twitter.com/kunalm77
→ My most memorable tech disaster: Can't afford to mention that :)
→ An app that I cannot manage without: Google Maps
→ Most creative way to deal with password management: Don't give away a secret
→ A website I most refer to: Facebook
→ On my day off: It's all about my family.. Actually my 3 year old son!!
→ Tech of the future is: SmartThings
→ IT leader I look up to (role model): Bill Gates

MEHERIAR PATEL
CTO & VP-IT, The Mobile Store, Essar Retail

With over 22 years of Core Business IT experience, Meheriar is adept at successfully delivering organizational Information Technology and change management solutions. His responsibilities include IT leadership, innovation and adoption across multiple technologies with planned business benefits. From heading IT set-ups for multinationals and Indian conglomerates to implementing large IT projects in Transforming Business and ERPs in Various Industry Domains to formulating Digital Strategies within the realm of retail as well as for airline, pharmaceutical, banking, finance, logistics service sectors, his expertise spans the entire IT spectrum.

TOP 5 priorities for Meheriar for 2016-2018:
> Build a single customer experience across channels
> Integration methodologies to manage co-existence of multiple disparate systems used in retail
> Build / Enhance the mobile strategy
> Data Security and Fraud Protection,
> Building alignment of IT with other functions

TOP 3 challenges retailers will face from a Tech POV:
1. Inventory visibility and serviceability
2. SCM and harnessing its full potential
3. Delivery standards

→ I own (laptop/tablet brand): Lenovo ThinkPad X250, iPad
→ I own (mobile phone brand): iPhone
→ My blog or my twitter handle is: @Meheriar
→ An app that I cannot manage without: Mail, Whatsapp
→ A website I most refer to: Google, economictimes.com
→ On my day off: Relax and Family
→ Tech of the future is: One Window to Transact
→ IT leader I look up to (role model): Mark Zuckerberg, CEO Facebook, Larry Page, Founder Google, Elon Musk, CEO Tesla Motors

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NIRAV PARIKH

Assistant VP and Head – IT, Aditya Birla Retail Limited Mumbai

Nirav's expertise lies in envisioning and implementing technology based multi-million rupee growth initiatives grounded solidly on business and economic value. He successfully solves business issues with IT while managing costs and risks and has successfully implemented leading retail ERPs and optimization solutions like Oracle Retail, JDA and Navision. Professionally qualified in engineering and management, Nirav's 21 years of invaluable experience comes from working with leading organisations such as Oracle, HCL, Shoppers Stop to name a few.

TOP 5 priorities for Niravfor 2016-2018:

> Build a single customer experience across channels
> Build / Enhance the mobile strategy
> Big Data Strategy: Storage and Analysis
> Data Security and Fraud Protection
> Embrace the Cloud and Cloud Services

TOP 3 challenges retailers will face from a Tech POV:

1. Cutting Edge technology and application have to talk to legacy system
2. Managing Data Security
3. Data security

→ I own (laptop/tablet brand):Lenovo ThinkPad
→ I own (mobile phone brand):iPhone
→ My favourite podcast:HBR Ideacast
→ An app that I cannot manage without:Google Maps
→ Most creative way to deal with password management:By storing an encrypted list behind a password you have committed to memory
→ A website I most refer to:Google
→ On my day off:Watch Movies and read
→ Tech of the future is:Artificial Intelligence
→ IT leader I look up to (role model):N.R. Narayana Murthy

PANKAJ MORE

CIO, Walmart India

20+ years of experience in technology development, project management, driving IT strategy for business, leading operations and providing leadership to cross-functional, diverse and global teams is what it takes to become the CIO of Walmart India. Having joined Walmart in 2013, Pankaj led tech strategy for Asian markets and in 2015, assumed the role of CIO Walmart India, spearheading their Omni-channel B2B Cash & Carry business in country. Prior to setting foot into Retail, Pankaj has worked in the telecom, financial services and energy sectors.

TOP 5 priorities for Pankaj for 2016-2018:

> Build a single customer experience across channels
> Build / Enhance the mobile strategy
> Big Data Strategy: Storage and Analysis
> Data Security and Fraud Protection
> Up-skilling People and getting organizations digitally savvy
> Embrace the Cloud and Cloud Services

TOP 3 challenges retailers will face from a Tech POV:

1. Speed to decision and responsiveness
2. Integrated view of customer, associates and suppliers
3. Digital skills

→ I own (laptop/tablet brand): Sony
→ I own (mobile phone brand): Samsung
→ My favourite podcast: Exponential wisdom
→ My blog or my twitter handle is: @pankajmore1
→ My most memorable tech disaster: Network failure across multiple customers
→ An app that I cannot manage without: Twitter, Coursera
→ Most creative way to deal with password management: Change regularly and keep native
→ A website I most refer to: Couple of them
→ On my day off: Digital Sabbatical
→ Tech of the future is: Blockchain
→ IT leader I look up to (role model): Karenann Terrell

POORAAN JAISWAL
CTO, Globus Stores Pvt. Ltd.

Pooraan is an accomplished IT professional having more than 17+ years of experience defining, prioritizing, planning, and driving the execution of existing and future product lines, development and maintenance of Fleet Services (Transportation), E-commerce, E-learning, Mobile applications & ERP using Agile, SDLC process/ methodology. Some of his accomplishments include successfully setting up Cloud Data centers, Portals, Product groups and building teams from scratch in various organizations, with minimal attrition.

TOP 5 priorities for Pooraan for 2016-2018:
> Build a single customer experience across channels,
> Integration methodologies to manage co-existence of multiple disparate systems used in retail,
> Build / Enhance the mobile strategy,
> Data Security and Fraud Protection,
> Up-skilling People and getting organizations digitally savvy

TOP 3 challenges retailers will face from a Tech POV:
1. Constant Innovation
2. Data Security
3. Adopting new technological solutions

↪ I own (laptop/tablet brand): Dell
↪ I own (mobile phone brand): Samsung
↪ My most memorable tech disaster: Data center downtime due to email virus
↪ Most creative way to deal with password management: keeping random password for different solutions/ services
↪ A website I most refer to: techcrunch.com
↪ Tech of the future is: Wireless/ Hidden Technologies
↪ IT leader I look up to (role model): Steve Jobs

PRASHANT BOKIL
Head IT, Mandhana Retail Ventures Ltd.

Prashant has successfully handled diversified activities like IT Infrastructure Management, Marketing, Sales, Pre Sales, Customer Support, Service Delivery, Man Management, Inventory Management, Service Desk Operations, Service Request Management and Software Implementation. He has been instrumental in the implementation of various softwares including Oracle based ERP. He has also implemented modules like Inventory, Procurement, Production, Sales & Distribution, Finance & Retail and Implementation of SAP B1.

TOP 5 priorities for Prashant for 2016-2018:
> Build a single customer experience across channels
> Integration methodologies to manage co-existence of multiple disparate systems used in retail
> Build/ Enhance the mobile strategy
> Data Security and Fraud Protection
> Building alignment of IT with other functions

TOP 3 challenges retailers will face from a Tech POV:
1. New and emerging technologies such as digital signage, kiosks and mobility are challenging retailers' infrastructures
2. Retailers collect and store massive amounts of customer, product and transactional data, which is meaningless unless it can be mined for actionable intelligence
3. Performance bottlenecks which may emerge from managing a large number of simultaneous customer transactions. This can slow applications to a crawl and potentially impact sales and customer experience.

→ I own (laptop/tablet brand): Dell laptop and Apple Tablet
→ I own (mobile phone brand): iPhone/Samsung
→ My favourite podcast: Nothing specific. Depends upon my mood
→ My blog or my twitter handle is: pbokil
→ My most memorable tech disaster: Y2K
→ Most creative way to deal with password management: Can't disclose
→ A website I most refer to: Google
→ On my day off: Various Apps
→ Tech of the future is: Virtual Concepts
→ IT leader I look up to (role model): No one person can do it all

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Queue-busting Mobile Checkout

Stock Taking

Order Taking

Wireless Printing

PUNEET KAUSHIK
Sr. Manager, Savemax Wholesale Club Pvt. Ltd.

A SAP ABAP Certified IT Operations Professional, Puneet has over 10 years of experience in ERP Implementations (SAP B1, SAP ByD, RetailWiz, COMSS), Strategy Planning, Software Development, Website Development, IT Infrastructure Management, IT Operations Project Management, System Administration, Service Delivery MIS Management and Team Management. He is credited with the distinction of driving new IT initiatives and managing complete IT Infrastructure.

TOP 5 priorities for Puneetfor 2016-2018:
> Build a single customer experience across channels
> Build / Enhance the mobile strategy
> Building alignment of IT with other functions
> Reducing Costs
> Reevaluate new ERP and Front software for Retail

TOP 3 challenges retailers will face from a Tech POV:
1. Due to competition, dynamic requirement of schemes in system
2. Due to uncertainty of Omni -channel, decision on budgeting of IT will be slightly difficult
3. With the heavy use of technology, customers will become more smarter for benchmarking of the product

→ I own (laptop/tablet brand): **Lenovo ThinkPad**
→ I own (mobile phone brand): **iPhone**
→ My most memorable tech disaster: **Store down for 4 hours**
→ An app that I cannot manage without: **Google Maps**
→ Most creative way to deal with password management: **Series**
→ A website I most refer to: **Yahoo**
→ On my day off: **Relax**
→ Tech of the future is: **Cloud**
→ IT leader I look up to (role model): **Mr. Arvind Kumar**

RAHUL PURI
VP – IT, Jubilant FoodWorks Ltd.

With hands-on work in technology and other process aspects of F&B, Retail and Hospitality including Operations and Supply Chain serving as a foundation, Rahul has amassed over 20 years of experience in IT with a focus on Food Retail Sector. His key achievements include the launch of the National Single Number for Ordering and Launching; the country's first National Online Ordering System in Food Services. He has also spearheaded Greenfield projects for Corporate Offices and Distribution Centers as well as the migration of existing and new projects on Cloud Infrastructure, both for private and public sectors. His strong change and team management skills have enabled him to manage large networks with failover for over 1200 locations and handle Information Security in the capacity of CISO.

TOP 5 priorities for Rahul for 2016-2018:
> Build a single customer experience across channels
> Build / Enhance the mobile strategy
> Big Data Strategy: Storage and Analysis
> Data Security and Fraud Protection
> Up-skilling People and getting organizations digitally savvy

TOP 3 challenges retailers will face from a Tech POV:
1. Delivering consistent Omni-channel experiences
2. Differentiating Products from Services in the digital age
3. Payment Options and Security

→ I own (laptop/tablet brand): **Macbook Air and iPad**
→ I own (mobile phone brand): **Samsung**
→ My blog or my twitter handle is: **@rahul_puri**
→ An app that I cannot manage without: **Calendar and Evernote**
→ Most creative way to deal with password management: **eVault**
→ A website I most refer to: **Google**
→ On my day off: **Relax**
→ Tech of the future is: **Wearables**
→ IT leader I look up to (role model): **Bill Gates**

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RENAISSANCE HOTEL, MUMBAI, INDIA

Call for Entry:
The nomination process commences from 1st May 2016 and the last date for nomination is 15th July 2016

For more information, contact
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RAJESH SABOO
VP-IT, Bombay Dyeing

Rajesh is a business friendly technocrat with 29 years of experience. He has strong domain knowledge in IT, Retail, Manufacturing & Supply Chain Management. He was responsible for the transformation of the software landscape in Raymond Apparel Limited in the year 2000. Today at Bombay Dyeing he is responsible for Technology Transformation for Retail, Realty, Chemicals Business & Integrated Support Services.

TOP 5 priorities for Rajesh for 2016-2018:

> Build a single customer experience across channels,
> Build/ Enhance the mobile strategy,
> Big Data Strategy: Storage and Analysis,
> Up-skilling People and getting organizations digitally savvy,
> Embrace the Cloud and Cloud Services

TOP 3 challenges retailers will face from a Tech POV:

1. Finding people who not only understand technology but also business.
2. Plethora of options in technology which makes it difficult to choose the right solutions
3. Cost of adoption of technology

→ I own (laptop/tablet brand): **Apple and HP**
→ I own (mobile phone brand): **Apple**
→ My blog or my twitter handle is: **rajesh260665**
→ My most memorable tech disaster: **Software solution changeover where the debtors increased multifold leading to huge cash flow crunch**
→ An app that I cannot manage without: **ola and Uber**
→ Most creative way to deal with password management: **keep the password as simple as possible**
→ A website I most refer to: **Google**
→ On my day off: **Morning walk on hills, afternoon nap after hefty meals, evening @ the lake side, night Comedy Show / Movie**
→ Tech of the future is: **A BLACK HOLE... however best you think you know there is more to discover**
→ IT leader I look up to (role model): **Nandan Nilekani**

RAJESH VERMA
Head IT, Blackberrys

Rajesh has a rich experience spanning more than 14 years in developing Business-IT strategy and ensuring its implementation. Experienced in identifying complex business solutions and providing acceptable business solutions. Some of his career highlights include: automation of Blackberrys Trade show/ Booking data which was earlier captured in excel and took many more days to compile before releasing to product; launch of Blackberrys Digital- an internal Employee Service & Information platform for Blackberrys employees; interactive touch tables for customers of CCD; consolidation of Infrastructure by reducing numbers of physical servers at CCD, with help of virtualization. 16 physical servers were reduced to 6.

TOP 5 priorities for Rajesh for 2016-2018:

> Build a single customer experience across channels,
> Integration methodologies to manage co-existence of multiple, disparate systems used in retail
> Building alignment of IT with other functions
> Reducing Costs
> Introducing Collobration tool to increase collobration among departments

→ I own (laptop/tablet brand): **iPad**
→ I own (mobile phone brand): **Samsung**
→ My favourite podcast: **Codebreaker- The decisive machine**
→ My blog or my twitter handle is: **@rajeh_ve**
→ My most memorable tech disaster: **Nothing which had enough impact to make it memorable**
→ An app that I cannot manage without: **Evernote**
→ Most creative way to deal with password management: **You should be able to recollect when you are required to use it**
→ A website I most refer to: **cio.com and cio.in**
→ On my day off: **Watch TV**
→ Tech of the future is: **Internet for everyone**
→ IT leader I look up to (role model): **Myself**

RAKESH KALRA
Sr. Vice President - Digital Initiatives, Vmart Retail Ltd.

A distinguished leader of Information Technologies, Project and Executive Management with a rich varied experience of more than 17 years Rakesh's expertise covers diverse range of technologies within multiple industry settings. He is a winner of the Backend Solution of the Year Award at the Retailer Technology Awards 2013 which is just one of the many he has received in his illustrious career.

TOP 5 priorities for Rakesh for 2016-2018:
> Build a single customer experience across channels
> Integration methodologies to manage co-existence of multiple disparate systems used in retail
> Build/ Enhance the mobile strategy
> Up-skilling People and getting organizations digitally savvy
> Internet of Things

TOP 3 challenges retailers will face from a Tech POV:
1. Customer Data Science
2. Omni- channel Business Readiness - a Single Resource Omni- channel 360' Solution.
3. Integrations among implemented Technologies

→ I own (laptop/tablet brand): Apple
→ I own (mobile phone brand): Apple
→ My favourite podcast: Apple
→ My blog or my twitter handle is: @mailtokalra
→ My most memorable tech disaster: Failure of Cisco Backbone Switch of 4500 Series
→ An app that I cannot manage without: iWatch
→ Most creative way to deal with password management: Yubico
→ A website I most refer to: PepperFry
→ On my day off: I watch movies
→ Tech of the future is: IoT
→ IT leader I look up to (role model): Mark Zuckerberg

RANJAN SHARMA
Head IT & SCM, Bestseller

Ranjan's 20+ year career began as a store manager with Vishal retail where he was in charge of store growth and profitability. He was later appointed as SCM and Logistics Manager with Vishal Retail. It was this time in his life that contributed towards his deep understanding of retail processes and how to create effective solutions for the same. Today, as Head of IT and Supply Chain Management for Bestseller retail India, he is pivotal in building IT roadmaps for the company, business process design, system and process implementation, roll-out, review, maintenance and Warehousing & Logistics.

TOP 5 priorities for Ranjan for 2016-2018:
> Build a single customer experience across channels
> Build / Enhance the mobile strategy
> Big Data Strategy: Storage and Analysis
> Reducing Costs
> Internet of Things

TOP 3 challenges retailers will face from a Tech POV:
1. Obsolescence of existing technologies without consistent innovation
2. Digital disruption
3. Being agile while maintaining high levels of security and scalability

→ I own (laptop/tablet brand): Lenovo and iPad
→ I own (mobile phone brand): iPhone
→ My blog or my twitter handle is:@ranjansharma256
→ My most memorable tech disaster: Planning solution
→ Most creative way to deal with password management: SSO
→ On my day off: listening to music, reading and relaxing
→ Tech of the future is: IoT
→ IT leader I look up to (role model): Steve Jobs

RANJIT SATYANATH
Head – Technology, Infiniti Retail Ltd.

Ranjit's career progression in the world of IT and Retail began in the early 90s as an Asst. General Manager, Information Systems at Asian Sky Shop. This was followed by work in the Financial Services sector with Birla Sun life Insurance and ICICI Bank ltd. 2006 saw him setting foot into Retail at Shoppers Stop Limited. Over the years, he has been instrumental in creating some impactful tech solutions, from building a strong outsourcing model for Application Development and End User Support to creating Shoppers Stop's online shopping channel with one of the largest product catalogues on Magento Enterprise to developing mobile apps for Shoppers Stop and Crossword Bookstores. He also played a key role in the implementation of retail's first vendor collaboration application for EDI. At Croma, he is spearheading the company's migration from Brick & Mortar to Omni-channel Retailing.

TOP 5 priorities for Ranjit for 2016-2018:
> Build a single customer experience across channels
> Integration methodologies to manage co-existence of multiple disparate systems used in retail
> Data Security and Fraud Protection
> Up-skilling People and getting organizations digitally savvy
> Building alignment of IT with other functions

TOP 3 challenges retailers will face from a Tech POV:
1. Re-architect business systems from ground up to keep up with the expectations of today's digitally connected customer
2. Harvesting and drawing insights from Data
3. Data Security

→ I own (laptop/tablet brand): Macbook Pro
→ I own (mobile phone brand): iPhone
→ My favourite podcast: Ted Talks
→ My blog or my twitter handle is: @ranjitsatyanath
→ My most memorable tech disaster: System Crash, No Backup - luckily not my fault :-)
→ An app that I cannot manage without: Whatsapp, Google Maps, IMDB, True Caller
→ Most creative way to deal with password management: Password Wallets
→ A website I most refer to: Wired, Business Insider, LinkedIn
→ On my day off: I binge watch stuff on my laptop
→ Tech of the future is: IoT, Drones, Wearables, Tech Miniaturization
→ IT leader I look up to (role model): Mark Zuckerberg, Steve Jobs, Pravir Vohra (ex-CIO, ICICI Bank), Gopichand Katragadda (Tata Group CTO)

SANDEEP KOTHARI
VP - IT, Travel Food Services Pvt. Ltd.

A postgraduate in Retail with experience in handling 320+ POS and 260+ stores across airports, railways, highways and land-side, Sandeep's expertise lies in multiple tools & technologies, Ecommerce, ERP on cloud implementation and network/applications. In his current role, he focuses on driving innovation with the objective of increasing customer satisfaction. Sandeep's success mantra lies in a team based approach along with having the right interpersonal and communication skills.-

TOP 5 priorities for Sandeep for 2016-2018:
> Build a single customer experience across channels
> Build / Enhance the mobile strategy
> Up-skilling People and getting organizations digitally savvy
> Embrace the Cloud and Cloud Services
> Internet of Things

TOP 3 challenges retailers will face from a Tech POV:
1. Omni-channel Dilemma
2. Constantly Evolving Customer Profile
3. Customer Acquisition

→ I own (laptop/tablet brand): iPad
→ I own (mobile phone brand): iPhone
→ A website I most refer to: Google
→ On my day off: Read books and spend time with my daughter
→ Tech of the future is: Mobility
→ IT leader I look up to (role model): Steve Jobs

SATYENDRA K DWIVEDI
CTO & VP, Mahindra Retail

Satyendra has been working in the IT and Retail space for 19 years, beginning his career at Infosys. He then moved to Oracle and secured extensive experience in product releases, product management and quality control. His specialization includes software services and product development for both Enterprise and Web Products. The milestone of his career was building a scalable and secure - web & mobile platform to serve 4 X users in a short time frame of six months.

TOP 5 priorities for Satyendra for 2016-2018:
> Build a single customer experience across channels
> Integration methodologies to manage co-existence of multiple disparate systems used in retail
> Build / Enhance the mobile strategy
> Big Data Strategy: Storage and Analysis
> Embrace the Cloud and Cloud Services

TOP 3 challenges retailers will face from a Tech POV:
1. Transitioning from 2nd Platform (Client server) to 3rd Platform (mobile, social, big data and cloud services & possibly usage of IOT)
2. Omni- channel - Challenging to build & integrate systems and processes to provide Omni-channel experience to customers
3. Managing Customer Expectations – The Customer expects a seamless experience everywhere, all the time and at very high speed. 100% availability of systems, high performance, fast delivery of merchandising, instant communication, discounts are going to create both challenges and opportunities for Retailers

→ I own (laptop/tablet brand): Macbook
→ I own (mobile phone brand): OnePlus
→ My favourite podcast: http://www.se-radio.net/
→ My blog or my twitter handle is: @satyendrakd
→ An app that I cannot manage without: Gmail
→ Most creative way to deal with password management: Google Bookmarks
→ A website I most refer to: Google
→ On my day off: Relax
→ Tech of the future is: Hybrid Clouds
→ IT leader I look up to (role model): Sunder Pichai

SUNIL NAIR
VP IT & Business Solutions, Spar Hypermarket India

From Apparel, Electronics and Home Furnishings to Hypermarkets and Supermarkets, there isn't a retail format Sunil hasn't explored. He's gained a global perspective on the evolution of retail from brick and mortar to today's Omni- channel approach. Besides keen insight, he has a flair for innovation within everything retail. A case in point would be the web + mobile Quote & Order Management system he helped create for Farm to Fork, which helps commodity buyers better connect with their respective farmers.

TOP 5 priorities for Sunil for 2016-2018:
> Build a single customer experience across channels
> Build/ Enhance the mobile strategy
> Big Data Strategy: Storage and Analysis
> Reducing Costs
> Internet of Things

TOP 3 challenges retailers will face from a Tech POV:
1. Optimization of multi-channel supply and fulfillment chains
2. Better demand forecasting
3. Rapidly Changing Customer Preferences
4. Cutting back on lead times and inventory holding
5. Multi-system Integration with Applications

→ I own (laptop/tablet brand): Dell
→ I own (mobile phone brand): Samsung
→ My most memorable tech disaster: None whatsoever every failure is a recipe for success
→ An app that I cannot manage without: iTunes
→ Most creative way to deal with password management: we're good at remembering meaningful phrases. Associative memory works much better than "random" memory
→ A website I most refer to: NDTV
→ On my day off: Reading and Music
→ Tech of the future is: IoT
→ IT leader I look up to (role model): Narayana Murthy

SUSHIL AGARWAL
VP, Vedant Fashions Pvt. Ltd

In his journey of around 10 years, Sushil has evolved along with Manyavar which stands as a significant player in the Menswear category. Some of his major technology contributions in the company's growth journey have been the implementation of ERP across all stores in a decentralised mode with auto sync, setting up an automated replenishment planning module for all stores, devising a dynamic store order fulfilling application on PHP along with structured inventory search options, deployment of an e-com site for Manyavar.

TOP 5 priorities for Sushil for 2016-2018:
> Build a single customer experience across channels,
> Integration methodologies to manage co-existence of multiple disparate systems used in retail,
> Big Data Strategy: Storage and Analysis,
> Data Security and Fraud Protection
> Building alignment of IT with other functions

TOP 3 challenges retailers will face from a Tech POV:
1. Customer Retention
2. Database Management including collection of qualified customer data and its analysis to understand the trends and patterns of each customer.
3. Inventory Management systems .

→ I own (laptop/tablet brand): Dell
→ I own (mobile phone brand): iPhone
→ My favourite podcast: Indicast
→ An app that I cannot manage without: Sampark
→ Most creative way to deal with password management: Creating a job in server with scheduler which automatically expires the password after defined days thereby eliminating the need to remember to change passwords.
→ A website I most refer to: www.technet.com
→ On my day off: Relax with friends and family
→ Tech of the future is: Mobility
→ IT leader I look up to (role model): N. R. Narayana Murthy

UZWAL KUMAR CHATTERJEE
VP & Head IT, Shop CJ Network Pvt. Ltd.

Within the realm of IT, Uzwal, who is an MBA and MCA, is also so much more. From MRP, Y2K, ERP and Logistics & SCM to BI Analytics, CRM, Virtualization, Web, Ecommerce and Cloud & Mobility, he's worked across the spectrum in the 2+ decades he's spent in IT. He specializes in super-powering startups, using his expertise to enable key business initiatives through technology selection, implementation, and change management, cost and risk reduction strategies. As CIO and technologist, Uzwal thrives on the challenges inherent to today's dynamic, digital and customer-driven market.

TOP 5 priorities for Uzwal for 2016-2018:
> Build a single customer experience across channels
> Build/Enhance the mobile strategy
> Big Data Strategy: Storage and Analysis
> Data Security and Fraud Protection
> Embrace the Cloud and Cloud Services

TOP 3 challenges retailers will face from a Tech POV:
1. Adapting to the Cloud
2. Creating seamless Omni-commerce solutions
3. Data Analytics

→ I own (laptop/tablet brand): Dell Inspiron 2-1 laptop cum tablet
→ I own (mobile phone brand): iPhone6 and Samsung S7
→ My favourite podcast: YouTube
→ My most memorable tech disaster: Yet to happen
→ An app that I cannot manage without: WhatsApp and Password Keeper
→ Most creative way to deal with password management: Password Keeper
→ A website I most refer to: Google
→ On my day off: I chat and browse
→ Tech of the future is: IoT
→ IT leader I look up to (role model): V S Parthasarathy CIO M&M

VIKRAM IDNANI
Head-IT, Trent Ltd.

As the Head of IT, Vikram boosts performance of businesses via systematic technology investment and the measurement of ROI. By sharply focusing on IT strategy, he drives growth through IT transformation, simplicity of operations and customer satisfaction. His strong program and change management skills, honed as a technology consultant in the US/India and as retail CIO, bring a team-based and process-oriented outlook to new technology adoption. It was his experience in developing Omni-channel retail strategies on a global stage that made adoption of mobility at Trent seamless. Aside from retail his career spans sectors like health care, pharmaceuticals, financial services, airlines and home-building. He also frequently speaks about and moderates topics pertaining to the use of technology in retail.

TOP 5 priorities for Vikram for 2016-2018:
> Build a single customer experience across channels
> Big Data Strategy: Storage and Analysis
> Data Security and Fraud Protection
> Building alignment of IT with other functions
> Reducing Costs

TOP 3 challenges retailers will face from a Tech POV:
1. Where to use which technology
2. What to do with the data being generated
3. How to create a seamless customer experience

→ My blog or my twitter handle is: @vikramidnani
→ My most memorable tech disaster: When the Primark DC burned down several years back
→ An app that I cannot manage without: Social media apps
→ Most creative way to deal with password management: Educate and use technology to control
→ A website I most refer to: Various, depending on occasion
→ On my day off: I follow my passions - Time with my family, Running, Writing, Music etc.
→ Tech of the future is: IoT and Big data
→ IT leader I look up to (role model): Steve Jobs

VINOD BIDARKOPPA
Group CIO, Future Group

Vinod's achievements over the years are as a result of his deep understanding of the different dimensions of the Business-Technology canvas, having been in Executive leadership roles with Technology powerhouse (HP), Travel Software Product Platform pioneer (Sabre/American Airlines) and with leading principal businesses (Tesco). His success in realizing business outcomes is the result of his customer centricity, risk taking, collaborative and data driven style of operation, whether it is growing-scaling existing footprints or incubating-accelerating new initiatives.

TOP 5 priorities for Vinod for 2016-2018:
> Build a single customer experience across channels
> Build/ Enhance the mobile strategy
> Data Security and Fraud Protection
> Up-skilling People and getting organizations digitally savvy
> Building alignment of IT with other functions

TOP 3 challenges retailers will face from a Tech POV:
1. Enterprise Technology Adoption Lag relative to Consumer Adoption of Technology
2. Security
3. True Omni- channel Implementation

→ I own (laptop/tablet brand): MacBook/iPad
↳ I own (mobile phone brand): iPhone 6+
→ My favourite podcast: McKinsey
↳ My blog or my twitter handle is: @vinod.bidarkoppa
↳ My most memorable tech disaster: Flights unable to depart
→ An app that I cannot manage without: WhatsApp
↳ Most creative way to deal with password management: write it down
→ A website I most refer to: Yahoo Finance
→ On my day off: Hike the mountains
→ Tech of the future is: Unknown
→ IT leader I look up to (role model): Steve Jobs

VISHAL KAPIL
IT Director - Emerging Market India, Adidas Group

Vishal is a veteran in the space of Product Management and IT Project Management specific to retail & media. He is a skilled manager, having led high-performing engineering and management teams in Omni- channel Businesses. Additionally, he spearheaded the launch of a mobile site instead of an App, for UK market, with multiple delivery options. In a mere year and a half, the net sales figures of the site tripled. It comes as no surprise then that his team has had the lowest attrition rates for 3 years in a row, and counting.

TOP 5 priorities for Vishal for 2016-2018:
> Build a single customer experience across channels
> Big Data Strategy: Storage and Analysis
> Data Security and Fraud Protection
> Up-skilling People and getting organizations digitally savvy
> Embrace the Cloud and Cloud Services

TOP 3 challenges retailers will face from a Tech POV:
1. Cloud Migration, Cloud Access Security and high availability
2. Talent/IT skills development and training
3. Big data, Data localization, archival and retention
4. API management and component driven architecture

→ I own (laptop/tablet brand): Dell
→ I own (mobile phone brand): iPhone
→ My favourite podcast: TED
→ My blog or my twitter handle is:@VishalKapil
→ My most memorable tech disaster: Data Batch for big sale didn't complete on major Sale day. Thus delaying the Sale Launch by 7 hours
→ An app that I cannot manage without: Twitter
→ Most creative way to deal with password management: Be secretive and use more than 7 complex pointers
→ A website I most refer to:http://wsj.com/
→ On my day off: spend time with family
→ Tech of the future is: Very personal
→ IT leader I look up to (role model): David A. Bray

YAKEEN GAZI
Sr. VP IT & Supply Chain, Hypercity Retail India Ltd.

Yakeen's 26 year-long journey in IT, the past decade of which was spent in Retail, began at the young age of 17 when he was offered a project during his summer holidays. Fast forward from that moment and Yakeen has done big things, from helping Standard Chartered Bank, Dubai adopt the new Y2K compliant systems to setting up the whole IT infrastructure and International Systems for Mattel India. Even though he was appointed Head of Technology at Hypercity Retail India in 2006, he is not one to settle. This is why he pursued an MBA in 2009 to upgrade his knowledge and achieve new heightsof excellence.

TOP 5 priorities for Yakeen for 2016-2018:
> Build a single customer experience across channels
> Integration methodologies to manage co-existence of multiple disparate systems used in retail
> Build/ Enhance the mobile strategy
> Building alignment of IT with other functions
> Embrace the Cloud and Cloud Services

TOP 3 challenges retailers will face from a Tech POV:
1. Omni- channel - 1 view of the customer and 1 view for the customer.
2. Social Marketing - The making or breaking of the brand
3. Analytics - Understanding the millennial customers

→ I own (laptop/tablet brand): Microsoft Pro4
→ I own (mobile phone brand): Samsung Note
→ My blog or my twitter handle is:@yakeengazi
→ My most memorable tech disaster: Y2K
→ An app that I cannot manage without: Twitter
→ Most creative way to deal with password management: OTP
→ A website I most refer to: Flipboard
→ On my day off: TED
→ Tech of the future is: Already here
→ IT leader I look up to (role model): Bill Gates

Anjan Chatterjee
Director
Mainland China

GINESYS
RETELLING RETAIL

RETAILERS BENEFITTING VIA
COMPREHENSIVE ERP SOLUTIONS

Ginesys, a comprehensive Retail ERP is specifically designed and developed for the Indian Retail industry. It is a complete solution from manufacturing to point-of-sales, including replenishment, distribution, loyalty along with excellent reporting and business intelligence. The software is backed up by a solid implementation, account management and support team which ensures that the software is actually used.

Give us a brief on your services specific to Indian retailers. Also, throw light on your journey to Indian retail space.
We have started our journey way back in 1999 when organized retail was starting with custom solutions. With time we developed a generic solution keeping in mind Indian retailers and brands. This philosophy has allowed us to incorporate the best practices of retail industry into the solution we have. We have grown from a customer base of single retailer, four people and one small office in 1999 to 500 + big retailers, 125 + people and 6 offices including 10K sq ft centre of excellence at Kolkata & corporate office at Gurgaon.

Kindly mention your clientele in India specific to retail. Please provide us your best case study of any Indian retailer.
Our clientele includes brands and MBO retail chains with no of stores vary from single to 400 + and size of the store from 90K sq ft to 700 sq ft. Verticals we mainly cater to are Apparel, Lifestyle and FMCG. A case in point is V-Mart with 100 + hypermarketstores and distribution. They are using every aspect of the solution intensively. We have partnered with them from their first store and we believe our contribution in their growth has been positive.

How are your experience working with Indian retailers? What sort of challenges you face while working with them?
Our experience working with Indian Retailer was very exciting and challenging. As it is a fast evolving space. We see new challenges every year in terms of technology adoption, new feature requirements. Thus we have opened up development to our customers by publishing our road map for the quarter (an industry first!) and allowing people to publicly post new requests. Another common issue is low awareness of existing features for which we undertake visits and e-mailers to encourage use of new features and ensure the software is completely utilized to give maximum benefit.

What are the latest trends when it comes to POS technology?
POS Technology has not been limited to just billing and discounting operations these days. It has evolved into a complete interactive medium between the customers and the salesmen. It gives a comprehensive information about the customer buying behavior, his likes dislikes, past purchases while billing. This helps him treating the customers in a customized and more effective manner. Rising popularity of new payment options such as E-wallets and compatibility of POS with Tablets and Mobile are the latest trends in the POS Technology

What is the cost bracket to avail your services?
It starts from 4-5 Lacs and may go up depending upon the scale of business, the functionality customers are looking at and the number of users.

What is the ideal size of retailer to avail your services? Is stand alone / mid sized retailer is equally benefited from your services or it is only meant for big retail chains?
Our solution will be most beneficial to retail chains having three stores or more as these companies require the control features we offer. Large stand-alone stores also are using Ginesys as these too have a huge inventory cost and processes which they want to track.

What are your growth plans?
We are aiming to be at least twice of our current customer base in coming two years. IR

DIGITAL COMMERCE:
FOUR WAYS BEACONS CAN TRANSFORM RETAIL

This small, button like device can generate a mobile commerce platform

For the last several years, with all the excitement surrounding e-commerce, mobile has contributed to the continued decline of brick-and-mortar sales, while online shopping is steadily growing.

But, as much as we would like to believe that everything will move digital, it is important to understand that even in the US where most retailers are omni-channel, 95 per cent of retail business still happens at the physical store.

We see an emerging trend, a world where online and offline shopping coexists rather than compete. If technology were to be blamed for the online vs. offline divide, it is now bringing the consumer and retailer together like never before.

Welcome to the world of beacons. Beacons are small, battery-operated, low-cost wireless devices that continuously transmit a simple low-energy Bluetooth signal saying,"Hello, this is me, here is my ID." Apps on smart phones can pick up these signals, and create rich personalized experiences.

1. Identify and connect: Imagine a world where you could identify a potential customer among-st the hundreds of people who walk by your store; greet them, say hello and invite them over to your store.

2. Engage based on consumers taste and preferences: Advertise relevant information on products, special offers and deals.
3. Delightful in-store experiences: Assist customers in finding specific items with in-store navigation. Beacons save time, energy and resources by helping consumers find relevant information quickly
4. Drive insights: Get insights into customer behaviour and feed them back into CRM. Understand footfall patterns, entry and exit data, amount of time spent, visited locations, heatmaps, trends, repeat visits, and purchase history all in real time.

Beacons open up a world of new possibilities, and it is quite natural that it will be widely used and implemented by all types of businesses, big or small. One thing to remember is that no one likes a pest, either in the retail world or online.

Mobmerry is a lifestyle product discovery and mobile commerce platform for consumers and offline retailers. Mobmerry also uses Beacon technology to give the user an enhanced experience.

For consumers, there is no personalized way for consumers to discover and buy lifestyle products from multiple offline retailers in an easy and friction less manner.

Mobmerry aggregates and curates lifestyle products from offline retailers & creates a personalized mobile commerce experience based on an individual's taste and preferences.

Mobmerry have installed these beacons at all retail destinations who have partnered with the brand.

Celio's store at Indiranagar, was one of the first few stores that we on-boarded. It is one of the top brands with respect to Walk-ins and Sales enabled by Mobmerry and it continues to be so. IR

About the author:

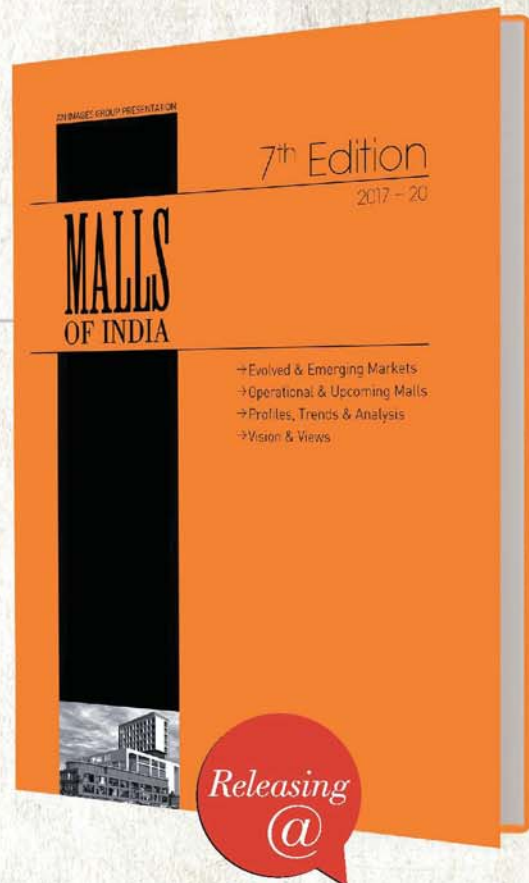*Krishna Prasad, CEO and Co-founder of Interaction One/Mobmerry, is a Digital Experiences Architect*

https://www.mobmerry.com/

YOU ARE STUDYING TO BE A TAILOR?!!!

She has 20 years of in-depth experience of working with innumerable global luxury brands. Swarovski's Managing Director for Consumer Goods Business Sukanya Dutta Roy pens down her professional journey, key learning and vision for jewellery retailing in India.

This was my mom's crestfallen reaction on her first visit to NIFT campus in Delhi, seeing the stalwarts, but then student Manish Arora, Rajesh PratapSingh and us walking around with measuring tapes around their neck. Coming from a traditional Bengali family of engineers and doctors, I could understand her pain.

Cut to twenty years ahead she is able to effortless explain to her friends that her daughter is in the retail industry. That for me signifies the biggest change that the country has seen in this segment.

Retail over the last decades has shown tremendous change not just in financial parameters and we can reel off the numbers from the lasts studies of the big four on the size of the organized retail sector, but also in bringing a change in the mindset of people and giving consumerism the right place in the Indian economy.

There are a few early pilgrims like me who started on the path of the retail when the path was yet to be paved. We have a few stalwarts and visionaries in this line and it has been my pleasure to work closely with some. The common drivers for most that I remember is a strong vision, 'roll up' sleeves kind of work ethic and a quirky sense of humor allowing them to follow an untread path. One of the favorite dialogues which I use often with my team comes my second boss was "no one dies in retail if we make a mistake….so take the chance and try some thing new".

Sukanya Dutta Roy,
MD, Swarovski Consumer
Goods Business

In a sense, the access to personal consumption goods' brands is a trigger that develops the economy and drives aspirations. This behavior of consumption in the present is actually very essential to drive the younger generations to become productive members of the task force. The tremendous growth in the services sector and IT sector was a fantastic boost for the Indian economy, but as retailers we should also credit ourselves a as we provided the triggers and attractions by bringing a whole range of goods and services to this population driving them to become independent income generators driven by consumption desires.

There was ofcourse always a culture of consumerism in India and the rich had access to international brands, trends and products via their private channels from Nepal or relatives abroad. But the beauty of organized retail is the ability to make the offering classless and democratic. This impact in terms of defining the society will allow a much faster assimilation and democratization of the Indian youth.

The other value I see now more and more clearly is in the fact that these international brands have actually been the seeds to some Indian entrepreneurs who are playing the game, sometimes even better than brands which have been around for years. I soon envisage a situation where these brands will make a journey to the shores across the seas and become the brands of the season. We already have some our designers who are seen accessorizing famous personalities on the red carpet of Oscars or Cannes but that is just the tip of the iceberg and I see a movement where we will soon have very strong Indian brands in the retail scape of international markets. For me personally and as a proud Indian, having introduced international brands in my home market, the reverse journey will be a very exciting phase.

For the Indian retail industry, this is a maturity phase that we are all stepping into. Technology and leveraging technology to meet consumer expectations vs demand will define the winners. Brands which do not have multi channel approach based on consumer convenience as well a drive for economic efficiencies will be able to grow spread and sustain.

Maturity of the retail industry is also an indicator of the social development of the country as we can see from most of our successful far eastneighbors. I personally believe that retail gives an advantage to women and we will find a lot of successful women in this sector across all sectors and levels. The very base of merchandising and customer service are strong areas where women excel, as this needs not just a grasp on numbers but aligned with the basic instinct of what consumer wants. Hence even with all the complex 3 dimensional excel sheets on merchandising and other big data analytical tools which are excellent for support, but winning in retail needs that human touch which relates to market trends as well as the trending consumer needs.

My journey in retail has played a strong role in my evolution as a person as well as a social citizen. The exposure to brands across all sectors from the now defunct The Home Stores to the home grown beloved Good Earth, and now to the global icon Swarovski had shaped me. For all those young professionals entering this sector, it is a great ride, there is a lot to learn and in no other industry is the line "Change is the only constant" so valid than retail. ▮

CARL'S JR.
WANTS TO TAKE OVER INDIA

Carl's Jr. is America based quick-service restaurant chain operated by CKE Restaurants Holdings, Inc. The brand has recently forayed Indian market. In an exclusive conversation, Sana Chopra, Executive Director, Carl's Jr highlights brand's growth strategy for Indian market.

By Shipra Srivastava

The Indian QSR market is growing exponentially. We've seen numerous international QSR chains enter the Indian market over the past 2 years as well as home-grown brands develop as "fast-food" chains. The industry is growing as an increasing number of people are shelling out more money while eating out. The increase in the number of nuclear families, rise in women entering the workforce and technological innovations have started have increased the number of meals which are prepared outside of a family's kitchen. The industry is going to keep growing over the next 5 years.

"When we were looking to bring a food & beverage brand through CybizCorp into India, we looked at several different food & beverage chains. We travelled to the Headquarters of different brands across the globe, met their international company figure heads, learnt about the different brands, visited their kitchens etc. At the end of all the research, the Carl's Jr. brand just stood out to us, and in many different ways. The focus of premium quality ingredients and food, the strong Quality Assurance team, the brand mottos, ethos and of course, the quirky advertising, etc," says Sana Chopra, Executive Director, Cybiz Bright Star Restaurants Pvt. Ltd(Carl's Jr. India)

Carl's Jr. is a pioneer in the burger industry with it's many "firsts" like first burger chain to have Real Ice-Cream Milkshakes, serve Jalapeno burgers or low0carb lettuce wrap burgers. We loved how Carl's Jr. was innovative and continuously striving to make the experience a healthy one.

The First Store

Carl's Jr. is in operation in India since August 8th, 2015. The brand is performing pretty decent in Delhi/NCR market. "The market response has truly been extremely overwhelming. The city has noticed that we live up to our motto of serving hot, fresh, big and juicy burgers along with superstar service. Guests appreciate the size of our portions and find it to be value for money offerings, they like the options of having their burgers chargrilled, and like the choice of having beer in our restaurants.," informs Chopra.

Sana Chopra, Executive Director, Cybiz Bright Star Restaurants Pvt. Ltd(Carl's Jr. India)

Key Differentiator

Carl's Jr. is unique in many ways but the like the name suggests, the brand is especially known for our chargrilled burgers. "Chargrilling or Charbroiling is a process in which our burgers are grilled over an open flame for a unique and distinctive taste thus allowing them to cook in their own juices without using oils. So the patties and fillets are juicier and definitely healthier! Even with our other products - we make our milkshakes with real ice cream, we hand-bread and batter our fried chicken items at the restaurant and always make all of our products fresh-to-order, because everybody knows fresh ingredients and preparations just taste better!" says, Chopra.

Till now the brand has opened three restaurants in Delhi/NCR i.e Behind Select CITYWALK in Saket, Pacific Mall, Tagore Garden and DLF Mall of India, Noida. The brand is still in process of expansion are are opening more restaurants in Delhi NCR before heading to other arts of the country.

Innovations

The brand had done some product innovations to popularize the brand in India. In fact, the brand has created a special menu keeping all possible types of Indian consumers in mind, those with a vegetarian, classic or experimental palate.

Name of the QSR Chain	India Launch year
Mcdonalds	1996
Dominos	1996
Subway	2001
Pizzahut	1996
KFC	2009
Taco Bell	2010
Burger King	2013
Fatburger	2014
Dunkin Donuts	2012
Wendy's	2015
Carls Jr.	2015

OUTLET KEY FACTS

Size	2000 sq feet
Covers	70-95 covers in each restaurant
Theme	American, specifically a very Californian feel.
Concept	Premium QSR / Restaurant
Design	High chairs, community tables, some private booths. We have different types of seatings. There is a a sports bar-esque feel with the grey and red undertones, which are refreshing, inviting and more modern as compared to the traditional red and yellow QSR look and feel

As per Chopra, "On one side we have a Chargrilled Tandoori Pepper Chicken Filet Burger or a Chargrilled Paneer Tikka Burger which are spicy and have very authentic Indian flavors, on the other side we have a Mango Jalapeño Pepper Chicken Fillet Burger which is a new product, not just in any burger restaurant in India but also for Carl's Jr. globally. Specially developed for the Indian palate but a completely non-Indian flavor, this is definitely unique and flavorful. Similarly, we serve Wasabi Fries on our menu. This Japanese mustard flavor adds a punch to the fries that so different from a regular "masala", yet satisfying that need for a hot accompaniment to the fries. We especially developed this seasoning to introduce our guests to a whole new concept and way of eating their fries. Even with our Hand-Scooped Ice-cream Milkshakes that are made with real ice cream, and not powdered, pre-mixes, we've got new and exciting flavors like Tiramisu and Piña Colada that are unique to the Indian market."

Growth Plans

"We will be opening a minimum of 100 restaurants in India over the next 10 years. Intitally, we are expanding in Delhi/NCR region and then other metros, gradually we will move into tier II and tier III locations as well.

At first, we will work on the COCO (Company Owned, Company Operated) model but later on, we may look at operating on the FOCO (Franchise Owned, Company Operated) model as well. We will also eventually award the right for FOFO model restaurants to large, multi-unit sub franchisees," Chopra informs. IR

MAX INDIA
DEMOCRATIZING FASHION
THE FASHIONABLE EVERY DAY

Value consciousness drives the shopping habits of an Indian shopper. Max India, a division of Lifestyle International (P) Ltd., which pioneered the concept of 'value fashion' in India in its 10-year journey has had a remarkable journey growing at the rate of 38 per cent per annum.

By Zainab S Kazi

Ramanathan, director of the Landmark Group conceptualized MAX and the journey for the brand began in 2004 with their first store opening in Dubai. MAX worldwide is present in 16 countries. Growing at the rate of 20 per cent per annum, it is a $1.6 billion brand. India journey for Max started in 2005 is when the brand decided to launch itself in India. Vasanth Kumar was given charge to carry forth the mission and in 2006, the first Max store opened its door in India in Indore; sticking to its core mission – to democratize fashion in the country making looking good and feeling good integral to the customer experience.

The pricing model involves an in-house design team, large purchasing volumes, efficient logistics and cost efficient retailing system in the organization which helps the brand to adapt to changing consumer needs.

Vasanth Kumar, executive director at Lifestyle International – Max Retail Division shares, "When we launched Max in 2004 in Dubai, we could see that it was hitting this sweet spot of urban middle class catchment who are globally aware/connected but there is certain value consciousness that drives their shopping habits. They want certain price points and they want it in a certain manner where they can shop easily for their entire family. Internationally, it is a proven model. When you look in UK there is Primark, in US there is Target. It is a proven format where value fashion has succeeded very well. What we did is that we added a little bit of presentation. We stuck to the format where it is meant for the middle and upper middle class. This clicked very well in Dubai. Within a year we decided to launch the brand in India."

The team for India was put in place in 2005 itself. Kumar adds, "I was the first employee to be recruited and then I started recruiting my team. In 2005, we undertook ground work to understand the shopping habits of the consumers. We visited families in India, we found their wardrobe habits. Dresses back then were

we have booked 45 stores out of which 20 are standalone stores."
Investment per store: ₹ 2.5 Crore
Total number of Employees: 7000
Floor staff per store: Approximate 45

The 10 year journey

Kumar shares, "I can divide this 10 year journey into three phases. One is the initial formation of Max India when the malls were settling down and people were getting used to organized retail and mall environment. This is when we grew – between 2006 – 2010. Market was pretty conservative. People bought garments but the consumption was moderate. We also had fashion that was moderate. Western wear was not much. Ethnic wear dominated women's wear and western wear was more restricted to the youth. People in Mumbai were used to Western wear but rest of India was not as evolved hence penetration was limited. Second phase was when we saw penetration of western wear with the revolution in the IT industry where a lot of women employment was taking place. Women started traveling abroad for work. They got exposure to international trends and began experimenting with their wardrobe. 2010-2013 saw a rapid growth of women's western wear. Kids wear and men's wear was doing well always.

Ethic wear in women was conservative and western wear was less. These two changed between this period. Ethnic wear became more trendy as a lot of fashion shows started happening in cities as well and designers came out with fusion collection. IT led the growth of Western wear, especially in South India and Delhi."

Kumar goes on to elaborate on the third phase, "The real boom happened 2013 onwards thanks to e-commerce. They opened the entire market. They went ahead with massive advertisement campaigns and exposure of fashion trends. They bought in international brands and through digital catalogue communicated all this. The India consumer who was not used to all this suddenly got bombarded with trends that actually led to the change of fashion scenario in India. Consumption was up. Women started opting for dresses. Unlike

considered too fashionable. Men's wear in India is more dominated by Indian brands. We had to make it more colorful. We studied all these things and opened our first store in Indore in March 2006."

The Growth Story

In the first year, MAX India spread itself to Indore, Hyderabad, Lucknow, Bangalore and Delhi and Noida. Talking about the current dynamics, Kumar shares, "Our store count as of today stands at 145 and 98 per cent of our stores are profitable. We were clear that we did not want to expand for the sake of expansion. We decide within two years whether or not to run the store. When we find that customer profile is miss-match then we know there is no point in pursuing. It has been a conscious decision not to enter the tier 3 markets with Max."

Max India plans to open one store every week and by the end of this financial year (2016-17) the store count is expected to reach 190. With a turnover of ₹1800 crores at present, by

the end of financial year 2017-18, the targeted turnover is ₹3000 crore.

Elaborating on the growth of the stores, Kumar talks about it being simultaneous with the growth of malls in India. He explains, "70 per cent of our stores are in malls and 30 per cent are stand alone because there are markets where malls will not be there and we do not want to be dependent on that. Because of the balance we have between the standalone and stores in malls, a slow down in the opening of malls will not really affect us. This year,

earlier, today, women wear dresses without leggings. Social media too has added to this. We have witnessed a complete transformation in India in the last three years. Women bloggers too have led to a change in a huge way.

Key HR Initiatives carried out in 2015 include

People Pulse - Employee Engagement Survey

MAX India has been the proud recipient of the GPTW (Great Place to Work) award for three consecutive years. People Pulse is an employee engagement survey which helps the brand to understand the engagement levels of employees and employee satisfiers. The feedback that is shared by employees is consolidated to arrive at a manager-wise scorecard which is shared with respective teams. Based on this scorecard, employees participate in improving the areas of concern by coming up with action plans which are reviewed on a periodic basis.

The People survey is:

- Administered through an online survey to the employees who have access to computers and paper and pencil survey for the front-end staff.
- Administered by the third-party to ensure integrity, fairness and anonymity
- Covers areas such as people management, communication with senior leadership, work environment, team dynamics and so on
- Popularly accepted as an important channel of feedback with over 95 per cent of employees responding to the survey

Connect over Coffee - Skip Level Meetings

It is important to foster two-way communications in a team and ensure that everyone follows an open-door policy to enable the employees to speak. To encourage this culture within teams, skip-level meetings are organized every quarter at the Corporate office.

Whistle Blower Policy - Ensuring the highest standards of openness and integrity

This initiative has its root with a commitment to the highest possible

"STANDING UP FOR QUALITY" IS KEY TO SUCCESS

>> **EDUCATION JOURNEY**
B. E. (College of Engineering Guindy Chennai).

>> **THE FIRST JOB**
Post my M.Tech, I began working at HAL Aircraft division, Bangalore. Post my MBA, I then became a part of TTK Prestige followed by being a part of HUL – Beverage Division, Bangalore.

>> **NUMBER OF YEARS IN THE INDUSTRY**
It has been 21 years since I have been a part of the Apparel Fashion Industry. The journey began with being the Brand Head of Van Heusen in 1995. Besides

Van Heusen, I also handled other fashion brands at Madura Garments before moving to head the launch team at Peter England.
My journey with Landmark Group began in 2005 wherein I was entrusted to spearhead Max Fashions entry to India. The brand was established as the largest brand in the value segment by 2004.

>> **ENDURING MEMORY FROM EARLY CAREER DAYS**
Working in rural / semi urban markets in HUL gave me a good

standards of openness, integrity and accountability. In line with that commitment, this policy was introduced to create a fearless environment for the employees wherein they can report any instance of unethical / improper practices whilst maintaining their confidentiality. The policy educates employees on the various situations under which they can raise a red flag to the Audit committee.

I- connect : Landmark Group's intranet
i-connect is Landmark Group's intranet which provides all the information and announcements that enable employees to work seamlessly in the organization. The discussion board on i-connect enables employees to ask questions, which can be answered by anyone in the organization, breaking the location barrier and enabling collaboration across the country. Basecamp is a web-based project-management tool that offers to-do lists, milestone management, file sharing, time tracking, task assignment and a messaging system. Retail Strategy

Meet is a regular feature that brings all the thought leaders from various functions together to embark on new milestones every year and to celebrate the previous year's achievements with utmost zeal and enthusiasm.

Quality Control
Keeping the Landmark standards in mind, a lot of attention is given to quality at Max. The buying team works in close collaboration with the vendors. Kumar shares, "It is a very large team of about 50 people in our buying team. They work with the vendors to maintain and ensure consistency in quality. We go into depth of everything and ensure our production lots are consistent and of good quality."

National Brands and Max Private Label
Given the size of their stores and the target audience and category they cater to, there is no other brand in the country that can claim to come anywhere close to them. With store sizes ranging from 8, 000 to 12,000 sq.ft. (their smallest store is 8,000 sq.ft. which has been recently opened at Panvel), the 95 per cent of the available merchandize at the store is Max. Men's and women's wear have a national brand each but apart from that, in kid's wear, they have no national brand. Kumar elaborates, "In 2011 we broke even. We went into a typical model that is a close to hundred percent private label. Majority of the players in the market do a 50:50 ratio of private label and national brands because managing fashion and customer taste is very difficult. In each category there is just one outside brand. For e.g. in women's wear we have W. In men's wear, we have Peter England. These brands come at higher price point." **IR**

understanding of the Indian consumer. Subsequently while being a part of the fashion industry, I understood the criticality of brand positioning in an aspirational segment like apparel – which I leveraged through targeted Consumer Engagement events such as Seminars by Jack Trout and Philips Kotler in building Van Heusen as a Corporate Brand.

>> **FAVOURITE BUSINESS ICON**
Undoubtedly it would be Andy Grove and Steve Jobs.

>> **FAVOURITE BUSINESS PHILOSOPHY**
It would be Apple's core philosophy i.e. Excellence in Design, creating great products and building it with superior user experience thereby ensuring customer loyalty.

>> **COMPANY YOU ADMIRE MOST**
Two of them – Intel and Apple for delivering great user experience.

>> **KEY LEARNING BASED ON YOUR CAREER SO FAR**
It is important to attain excellence in whatever task you undertake and pursue it till the end.

>> **FAVOURITE BOOK**
"Only the Paranoid Survive" by Andy Grove and "Jugaad Innovation" by Navi Radjou

>> **FAVOURITE FASHION BRANDS**
It has to be Philip Kotler which is still the hallmark with regards to design aesthetics and Primark for setting new benchmarks in value fashion.

>> **FAVOURITE SHOPPING DESTINATION**
Oxford Street in London and Times Square in New York.

>> **BUCKET LIST**
Holidaying at South American Antartica, European Alps and African Savanna

>> **Vision for India**
I aspire to witness India steadily progressing towards realizing its vision of becoming a developed country by 2050.

>> **THING YOU VALUE MOST IN YOUR LIFE**
Inspiring people to lead great teams and building lasting relationships in both corporate and personal life.

>> **Key Learning's**
Before you enter the segment – you should be clear on what is the difference you want to make. Once you are clear about the mission, then you get your team to agree and vouch of the mission and irrespective of the market changes, stick on to it and do not deviate. If you deviate, returning to the mission is costly. When we came across product failures, we put them back on track along the mission and undertook course correction.

March Marcho / Shutterstock.com

UNIQLO
JET-SETTING FROM JAPAN

With a presence in 18 countries, Japanese brand Uniqlo has been one of the most awaited brands in India. The brand's launch in India is yet to see light of the day but that does not stop it from winning patronage from people in India who have had a chance to experience it during their travel abroad. The Japanese brand has gone on to redefine casual clothing and as its brand message says Ð Inspires the world to dress casual.

By Zainab S Kazi

According to an article in The Wall Street Journal, Uniqlo aspires to be the leader in retail worldwide. Going by its presence and performance in Asia, this feat does not seem unachievable. In the past decade, the company has earned itself the tag of becoming Asia's biggest clothing retailer. A division of Japanese retail holding company – Fast Retailing, Uniqlo was started by Tadashi Yanai.

Fast Retailing owns UNIQLO, GU, Theory, Comptoir des Cotonniers, Princesse tam.tam and J Brand. The first Uniqlo store was opened in Hiroshima, Japan in 1984. The company originally called itself 'Unique Clothing Warehouse'. By joining these words together, Uniqlo was born. It was in 1998 that they began to open stores in urban locations and ran a fleece campaign that ignited a UNIQLO boom across Japan.

The founder – Yanai is believed to have intensely studied GAP and according to a news report in the Wall Street Journal, he called former GAP chief executive officer – Mickey Dressler "professor" when the pair first met because he held him in such high esteem.

The first UNIQLO International store opened in the United Kingdom in 2001. By August 2015, UNIQLO International constituted approximately 44 per cent of total UNIQLO sales, with 798 stores (versus 841 stores in Japan). China, Hong Kong, Taiwan, South Korea and other parts of Asia are generating strong growth.

Holding it High

Nothing better to explain the adage – Where there is a will, there is Way; than talking about Uniqlo's constant efforts to beat all the odds that came their way. During mid 1990 when the brand was facing a slowdown, they went ahead to reorganize themselves and strengthened their women's line thus giving a strong pick-up to the brand.

The brand has found innovative means to overcome challenges like for e.g. to tackle Japan's high cost of labor and space, they went ahead to open their first 'self service' shop in Tokyo way back in 2007!

What makes Uniqlo successful is their mass production of designs in multiple colors. The focus is on designs and styles that would not go out of fashion soon and this also gives them a longer shelf life at the stores. In an interview in Forbes, Yanai mentioned that Uniqlo sets itself apart by not chasing trends. Rather, they focus on basics and make them more affordable.

Maintaining Freshness along with Pricing and Quality Consistency

UNIQLO negotiates directly with materials suppliers around the world, placing large orders to ensure steady access to world-class natural materials. They also work with top synthetic fiber manufacturers to develop new functional materials. UNIQLO is known and loved by consumers worldwide for its ability to challenge the conventional wisdom of clothing.

Getting it Right

UNIQLO's research and design (R&D) centers continually research analyze the latest fashions and lifestyles from around the world as well as look for new materials. Concept meetings are held roughly one year before a product's intended launch. On these occasions, designers meet with representatives from the merchandising, marketing, materials development and production departments to discuss and finalize concepts for upcoming seasons.

During mid 1990 when the brand was facing a slowdown, **they went ahead to reorganize themselves and strengthened their women's line thus giving a strong pick-up to the brand.**

Crazy about Quality

UNIQLO deploys about 400 staff and textile takumi (skilled artisans) to offices in Shanghai, Ho Chi Minh City, Dhaka, Jakarta and Istanbul. Production managers visit partner factories each week to resolve outstanding issues. Customer concerns regarding quality are communicated immediately to production departments, and then improvements are made.

Tadashi Yanai's Message

With a complete hands-on approach that Yanai executes over the brand, it is not difficult to see why the brand has always been surging ahead irrespective of global slowdowns. As shared on the company website, Tadashi Yanai, chairman, president and CEO says, "Fast Retailing enjoyed strong growth in recent years as we continued our drive towards true globalization. That vigorous performance was sharply curtailed in the first half of fiscal 2016, or the six months to February 2016, when our profits contracted. In a nutshell, the first half was not about true, sustainable growth but about bloated operations. We were lulled into complacency by our strong growth. We took our eye off the pursuit of low-cost operations, and our products lacked the fresh, revolutionary features that customers demand. However, I see this period of lackluster growth as an opportunity to learn precious lessons and grasp business opportunities that might not present themselves in more buoyant times."

He goes on to talk about a tweak in the pricing, "From spring 2016, we began introducing simpler UNIQLO pricing bands (1,990 yen and 2,990 yen) that are easily recognizable to customers." On the spread and popularity of having an omni channel experience, he shares, "Fast Retailing is also keen to capitalize on the rapid spread of the internet among business and individual users to create a new industry to help fuel future growth. In fact, I want to create an entirely new business model by merging our physical stores and e-commerce operations. I intend to transform our current SPA-style business model, which progresses systematically from planning to production to marketing and retail, into a fresh business model that enables UNIQLO to communicate directly with customers, and swiftly create and commercialize the exact products that customers want." **IR**

TIMELINE OF UNIQLO SUCCESS STORY	
1st Oct, 1984	Started journey at Hiroshima, Japan
30th Jan, 1998	Opened its 300th store in Japan
31st Dec, 2001	Launched 1st store in UK
26th May, 2005	Yani changed strategy
19th July, 2006	Started opening large stores in major cities around the world
26th Nov, 2006	Re-launch of the brand
27th Aug, 2008	Number of International Stores increased from 54 to 92
29th Sept 2013	Announced the plan of opening 500 stores in China by next 5 years
27th Oct, 2014	Declare plan to launch in India and Brazil
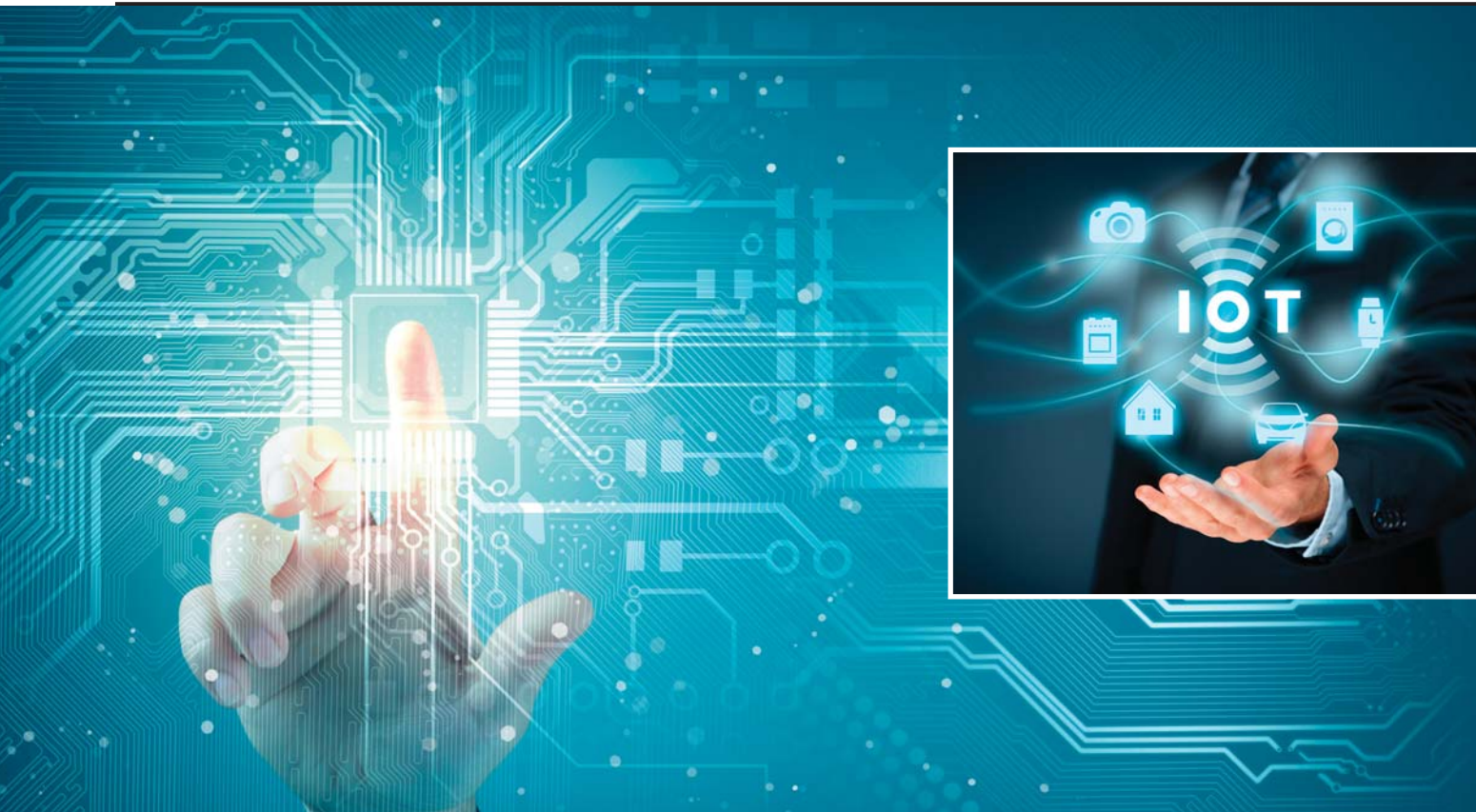
RESHAPING MODERN RETAIL IN THE
"TECHNOLOGY"CAL WAY

From IoT to Omni-channel, SMAC to Big Data, retail industry are trying hard to cope up to the technological advances. Today it might be a choice, but in not so far future, it will become a must for the retailers to adopt these technologies to satisfy and engage their consumers.

By Sunil Nair

In a hyper connected and mobile age, retailers have to deal with highly informed and demanding consumers who have a whole world of information available to them. Faced with the growing importance of the online channel, coupled with the rise of mobile devices and social media, it's not surprising that the need to embrace change is uppermost in the minds of retailers. Today it might be a choice, but in not so far future, it will become a must for the retailers to adopt these technologies to satisfy and engage their consumers.

Over the past few years, a number of technology trends have evolved and dramatically altered the retail industry. The emergence and the transformational growth of the new economy has unleashed powerful forces which are eventually and successfully reshaping the retail industry at a transformational speed. In order to succeed, today's retailers have to offer a seamless shopping experience across all channels – and should not lose track of their customers. Some of the trends given below are going to reshape the way modern retail is defined today.

IoT (Internet of Things)
IoT has big implications for the in-store marketing efforts of retailers and brands. Connected devices aren't just changing

the way consumers live, work and play — they're dramatically reshaping the entire industry. The IOT movement offers retailers opportunities in three critical areas: customer experience, supply chain and new channels-revenue streams.

Leading retailers across the globe are already investing heavily in the IOT. They are beginning to transform their business practices and recognize that, in time, the IOT will touch nearly every area of retail operations and customer engagement. In the IOT of today, everything has the potential of being an IOT thing. From the lighting system in the store, the POS (Point of Sales) system, to the electric switches and even garbage disposal units.IOT is at the heart of this transformation. It connects people, machines, items, and services to streamline the flow of information, enable real-time decisions, and heighten consumer experiences.

While the IOT may still seem like science fiction, it is becoming reality faster than most of us can comprehend. Retailers that hesitate to develop and execute an IOT strategy will open the door for competitors — old and new alike — to swoop in and capture early IOT mind share and market share.

SMAC (social, mobile, analytics and cloud)
The relationship between consumers and enterprises has never been as intrigued as in the 21st century. As digital technologies augmented by SMAC are creating new touch points for enterprises to awe their consumers, we are witnessing the evolution in consumer experiences. Social, mobile, analytics and cloud or SMAC are the nexus of forces, which will reshape how consumers experience a brand.

SMAC are currently driving business innovation. It creates an ecosystem that allows a business to improve its operations and get closer to the customer with minimal overhead and maximum reach. Digital is now an essential part of the whole shopping experience and the entire business of retail, inside as well as outside the store. You don't need to leave a physical store

to get your digital fix. Instead, retailers are leveraging a wide array of in-store technologies meant to draw consumers in the door. As the impact continues to increase, the way retailers think of digital and invest in it, besides addressing the digital wants and needs of their customers is changing dramatically.

Big Data
Today, retailers are constantly finding innovative ways to draw insights from the ever-increasing amount of structured and unstructured information available about their customers' behaviour.

Data gathering and analytics will play a key role in evolving business models in retail. Usage of data and analytics to better understand consumers in the form of branding, product management, leveraging loyalty card information to tracking customer buying behaviour and making better pricing decisions will be the key factors. Collecting and leveraging customer information to provide personalized recommendations will be the norm going forward.

Retailers, large and small, have been reaping the benefits of analyzing structured data for years, but are only just starting to get to grips with unstructured data. There is undoubtedly still a great deal of untapped potential in social media, customer feedback comments, video footage, recorded telephone conversations and locational GPS data. Great benefits will come to those who put it to best work, and the best solutions will more likely come from innovative thinking and approaches to analytics, rather than those who simply try to collect as much data as possible and then see what it does.

Omni-channel retail adaptation
"Omni-channel" is a term that extends and supersedes multichannel. Multichannel (or cross-channel) refers to delivering content and considering consumer experience on more than one channel. Omni-channel is about understanding and optimizing for the entire journey across all channels.

Omni-channel today is a necessity. Brick-and-mortar retailers have been

In order to succeed, today's retailers have adopted a strategy to offer a seamless **shopping experience across all channels – and should not lose track of their customers.**

SPAR'S JOURNEY

Customers tend to shop more from hypermarkets on weekends, on days when promotions are run & typically towards month beginnings & month ends. Hypermarkets are not a preferred destination for mid month top-up shopping. And again, customers who visit hypermarkets are averse to heavy shopping bags and bulky purchases like rice bags. Max Hypermarket (SPAR) recognized these challenges and the pain points associated with it. SPAR had to find answers on how to connect with potential customers beyond immediate catchment, satisfy their monthly & top-up shopping needs and yet, deliver on all SPAR promises of Freshness, Value, Choice and Service. This had to be achieved using existing infrastructure and in a cost optimal way.

Objective is to make the shopping process as easy as possible, and it's targeted at customers who still do the bulk of their shopping in stores. But it also takes aim at shoppers looking to buy their groceries with a click and those who are hesitant to try online grocery shopping at all.

We plan to get into these two fulfilment service lines:
‣ Buy Online and pick at stores (Click and Collect)
‣ Buy Online and delivery to Home

Business & Technology team at SPAR along with the support of our leadership team collaborated to develop a unique online Omni-channel business model that facilitates customers within defined geographies to shop from their nearest SPAR store. It requires minimal investments in backend infra, works with store inventory, orders can be quickly serviced from stores and therefore, meets objective of both maintaining freshness of items & same day home delivery (a necessity in food & grocery). Optionally, customers can pick up their purchases from store (click & collect).

An important feature of this model is the end to end enterprise class technology landscape put in place without upfront heavy investments. A technology that seamlessly integrates & displays online "real time inventory" of thousands of SKUs by store, good customer friendly website (UI/UX), accurate price & promotion information, mobile app based automated picking solution, fully integrated last mile delivery solution to meet delivery time slots & real time tracking of orders, convenient payment options with payment gateway integration, content management system & product management system.

We have already initiated multiple pilots to see which models work best and expect to scale up accordingly in the coming months...

left with no option but to add online channel to their offline operations in a bid to reach as many customers as possible, and quickly. Omni-channel retailing creates benefits for consumers and opportunities for retailers. For consumers, it empowers connected consumers by making it easier for them to access information and compare product details; by increasing choice; and by increasing convenience and the range of options for shopping. For Retailers, Omni-channel creates opportunities, ranging from potential extension of sales and increasing brand awareness and loyalty. Finally Technology allows us to connect a lot better with our customers and to take a true Omni-channel approach to meet their ever-changing needs.

A poorly executed omni-channel or personalization strategy, however, can do more harm than good. Handling one or two channels discretely but satisfying expectations is better than disappointing your consumers when you fail to deliver added value — or worse still, confuse or frustrate — while tackling all channels. Personalization can be even more dangerous because of very real risks that your brand can be given the dreaded "creepy" label.

To be successful at delivering a personalized experience in Omni-channel marketplace, adaptive content is a requirement. It is content that is designed for both personalization and delivery across many channels.

Strategy for Omni-Channel: Retail Adaptation:
‣ Retailers need to promote a culture across the organization that embraces Omni-channel retailing.
‣ Retailers should incentivize staff for sales that happen in their stores, and attribute costs and revenues on this basis, rather than by channel.
‣ Retailers need to be prepared to align their entire operations with Omni-channel retailing.
‣ Over time retailers may need to move to an integrated IT platform from where all channels are run.

Given the changing and challenging retail landscape, the critical thing is to leverage these multiple platforms of consumer engagement in a holistic manner and create an overall engaging and enriching experience for the consumer. IR

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