

IMAGES

4

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IFF SPECIAL ISSUE

# MEET THE MASTERS

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FASHION THOUGHT LEADERS

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

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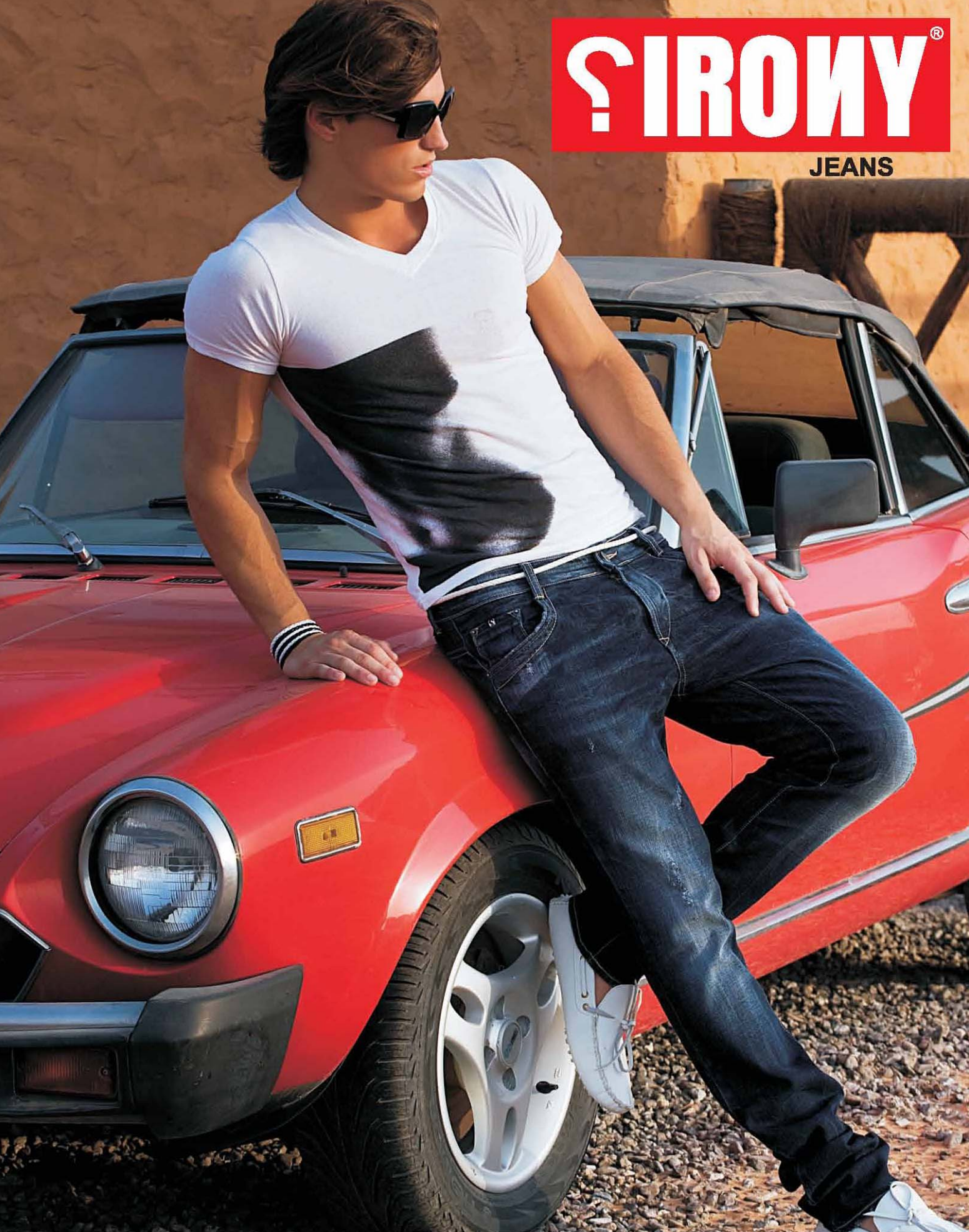
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Dear Readers,

It's been a high adrenaline month for all of us at the IMAGES Group. And, even as I write this, our team is busy putting all efforts together towards a bigger and better 17th annual congregation of the India Fashion Forum (IFF). And while the central focus is on the activities that will happen on the ground at IFF'17, the Images BoF editorial team has also attempted something very important and timely.

As, you are aware, the magazine always focusses on a single fashion category in every issue however this time we went chasing the greatest fashion leaders of our time. The Fashion CEOs and Directors, as the fountainheads of the fashion industry thought, are the ones that will shape the fashion vision of the nation. And as the industry is poised for quantum growth, it was critical to hear them out.

The principal feature of this issue, "Meet the Masters", comprehensively picks their minds on some of the most critical decisions that lie upon us. It is a small and distinguished group of visionary stalwarts that will drive the fashion revolution in India. These leaders are all also extremely hands-on and the ones that not only had the audacity to dream big, but also the perseverance to see it through to reality. I am sure, this synergic juxtapositioning of their thoughts will prove to be knowledge laden for you all, with plentiful insights to aid you re-evaluate and reshape your fashion retail aspirations and pave the next way forward.

The Indian fashion retail market is moving progressively, driven by increased presence of organised retail, which in turn rides the rising disposable incomes, changing demographics, increasing brand consciousness, and the e-commerce boom.

And, it is now a place of high interest for global brands as well. In this issue, we scan the news-waves and present a report on the major international brands that were launched in India in 2016-17.

Do go through the articles on character licensing in kidswear and women's jewellery in India and our features on retail and brand excellence. The Sportswear International section is a great curation and presentation on the buzziest buzz in 2016 from across the globe.

I look forward to seeing you all at the India Fashion Forum 2017, Renaissance, Mumbai on the 12th and 13th of April 2017. Also, a final word of gratitude to all the fashion leaders who spared their valuable time to share their inputs is in order. Thank you so much, dear Masters of Fashion.

Cheers !



**Amitabh Taneja**

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## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

The magazine has the credibility of issuing strong content. The Images BoF March issue was particularly good as a round-up of new launches and brand extension that happen in the past years in the retail fraternity was captured aptly.

- **Alok Dubey, Corporate Manager - Retail, Jhansi**

A great issue once again and a good comprehensive coverage of the 'trousers market' in Images BoF March issue. I request you to provide more information on how to open a fashion retail store and what brands should one keep to become successful and about the latest technologies and innovations. Also tips from successful entrepreneurs will be of great help. Hope to see such article in your magazine.

- **Mihir Mehta, Retailer, Baroda**

The Images BoF is a trade magazine and should address more issues pertaining to the industry and also show the flip side. The editorial should help retailers make more informed decision.

- **Rakesh Desai, Businessman, Pondicherry**

The Images BoF March issue is good with relevant information for fashion industry. Some of the stories in the current issue provide relevant tips for product expansion and extension. We look forward to such inputs from the industry in the magazine.

- **Mithun Bannerjee, Entrepreneur, Kolkata**

The quality and the layout of the magazine makes it stand out in the market. The strong editorial content and consistent number of business insights makes it an important monthly for me to have on my shelf!

- **Sumedha Sagar, Entrepreneur, Surat**

### Corrigendum:

Readers are requested to note an error in the March issue of IMAGES Business of Fashion (Volume XVIII | Issue No. 3) Page 118: Cambridge Apparels' company name was incorrectly printed as Siddhi Vinayak Clothing instead of Cambridge Apparels LLP. The error is deeply regretted.

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# FASHION *BUSINESS*

>> NEW LAUNCHES:  
GLOBAL BRANDS IN INDIA

>> WOMEN'S JEWELLERY IN INDIA

>> CHARACTER LICENSING

STORES | LAUNCHES

Stores



**Da Milano Opens First Global Store in Dubai**

High-end leather accessories brand Da Milano has launched its exclusive store in Dubai's Ibn Battuta Mall.

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INITIATIVE

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Tailorman, a bespoke men's wear chain, is a sophisticated, progressive fashion and accessories brand. Co-Founders, Vidya Nataraj and Gautam Golcha, talk about their quest for an entirely new market in men's fashion.

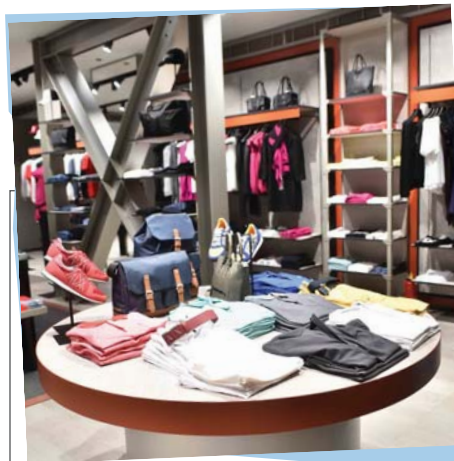
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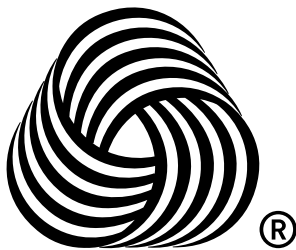
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# THE WOOLMARK COMPANY ANNOUNCES **SHRAVAN REDDY** **AS ITS INDIAN** **AMBASSADOR**



THE  
WOOLMARK  
COMPANY

The global authority on wool, The Woolmark Company proudly announced renowned actor Shравan Reddy as its ambassador for Australian wool in India. The company made the announcement at the prestigious India Fashion Forum 2017 in Renaissance, Mumbai. The television actor will now play a key role in representing the global authority on wool as it champions the fibre's place in the activewear market.

Reddy's strong fan and digital following in conjunction with his youth appeal led The Woolmark Company to decide on the brand's perfect Indian face. The actor has won many hearts for his varied portrayals on the small screen in daily soaps like, Dosti - Yaariyan - Manmarziyan and Krishnadasi.

An exciting new digital campaign has already kicked off, with conversations trending using the hashtag #DareShравanTo, with fans from across the world daring the actor to perform a series of fitness



***“It is an honour and I am overwhelmed to begin this journey with a trusted not-for-profit enterprise like The Woolmark Company,”***

challenges, dressed top-to-toe in activewear made from Merino wool. “It is an honour and I am overwhelmed to begin this journey with a trusted not-for-profit enterprise like The Woolmark Company,” said Reddy. “The brand has always introduced path-breaking innovations and campaigns that have influenced youth who believe in socio-economic change. An advocate for sustainable fashion, the company is a befitting representation of the striving wool growers that form the very core of this iconic brand. Identifying with a brand has never been easier for me and therefore my association with The Woolmark Company has stemmed almost naturally,” he added.

The Woolmark Company and Reddy’s mutual passion for the sportswear and athleisure markets form the perfect foundation to educate consumers on the versatility of Merino wool. A technical fibre, its unique natural benefits include breathability, temperature control, moisture management, elasticity and resistance to odour, making it perfect for the Indian market. The Woolmark Company’s approach into cutting-edge activewear will bring to the forefront innovative and commercially available Merino wool fabrics.

“Shravan Reddy personifies the brand’s appeal and we are confident that he will be relevant to our target market,” explained Arti Gudal, Country Manager- India, The Woolmark Company. “His commitment to The Woolmark Company’s values reinforce why he will be the right fit to take on this responsibility and carve out new avenues that will majorly be youth-centric. The company is currently working on new innovations as we continue to make our mark in the athleisure and sportswear market using Merino wool, she confirmed.

The Woolmark Company is the global authority on wool which through its extensive network of relationships spanning the international textile and fashion industries, highlight Australian wool’s position as the ultimate natural fibre and premier ingredient in luxury apparel.





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# DA MILANO

## Opens its first Global Store in Dubai



***“Not only will we endear them with the renowned Da Milano quality, we will serve them with a sublime retail experience,”***

**Sahil Malik,**  
Managing Director, Da Milano Group

Nearly three-decade Indian high-end leather accessories brand Da Milano has launched its first exclusive store in Dubai's Ibn Battuta Mall. Spread across an area of 2,500 sq.ft. at the world's most coveted shopping destination, the boutique has been custom designed keeping in mind Da Milano's unique style and creative aesthetics with the latest technical know-hows and an ambience that exudes luxury. The store will retail both Da Milano and Rosso Brunello (a subsidiary brand from Da Milano Group) products.

Talking about the expansion, Sahil Malik, Managing Director, Da Milano Group, said, “It was just a matter of time. Clients from across continents have been yearning for the brand's presence in global retail destinations. The Middle East is a fast growing and emerging market and we are aiming to open 5-7 more stores by end of 2017 in U.A.E through company owned and franchising model. The brand is also planning to expand in Singapore by marking presence at the Changi Airport and two standalone stores in high streets/mall facilities.”

Opening its horizons further to elite and cosmopolitan consumers who appreciate fine craftsmanship, the group will launch another exclusive store in Dubai at Burjman Mall. “Not only will we endear them with the renowned Da Milano quality, we will serve them with a sublime retail experience,” assured Malik.

Asked how an expansion in Dubai would help the leather accessories and home furnishings brand, Malik maintained, “With the rise of modern shopping malls,



increasing space for entertainment, Dubai has become a regional hotspot in the retail sector fostering footfalls from across the globe. Our extensive research concluded that there is a huge demand for luxury accessories in the region; hence we steered the gears of our expansion into the U.A.E market.”

Currently, Da Milano has 63 company operated showrooms including 11 stores at leading airports, showcasing hi-quality leather accessories for men, women and for the elite travel customers.



#### **COLLECTION:**

Holding a signature medallion of Da Milano, the boutique offers the latest Spring/Summer '17 collection along with the brand's signature styles. From handbags, travel, and business essentials to footwear - a complete range of lifestyle products is on display. An extensive collection of small leather goods is also showcased including wallets and belts.

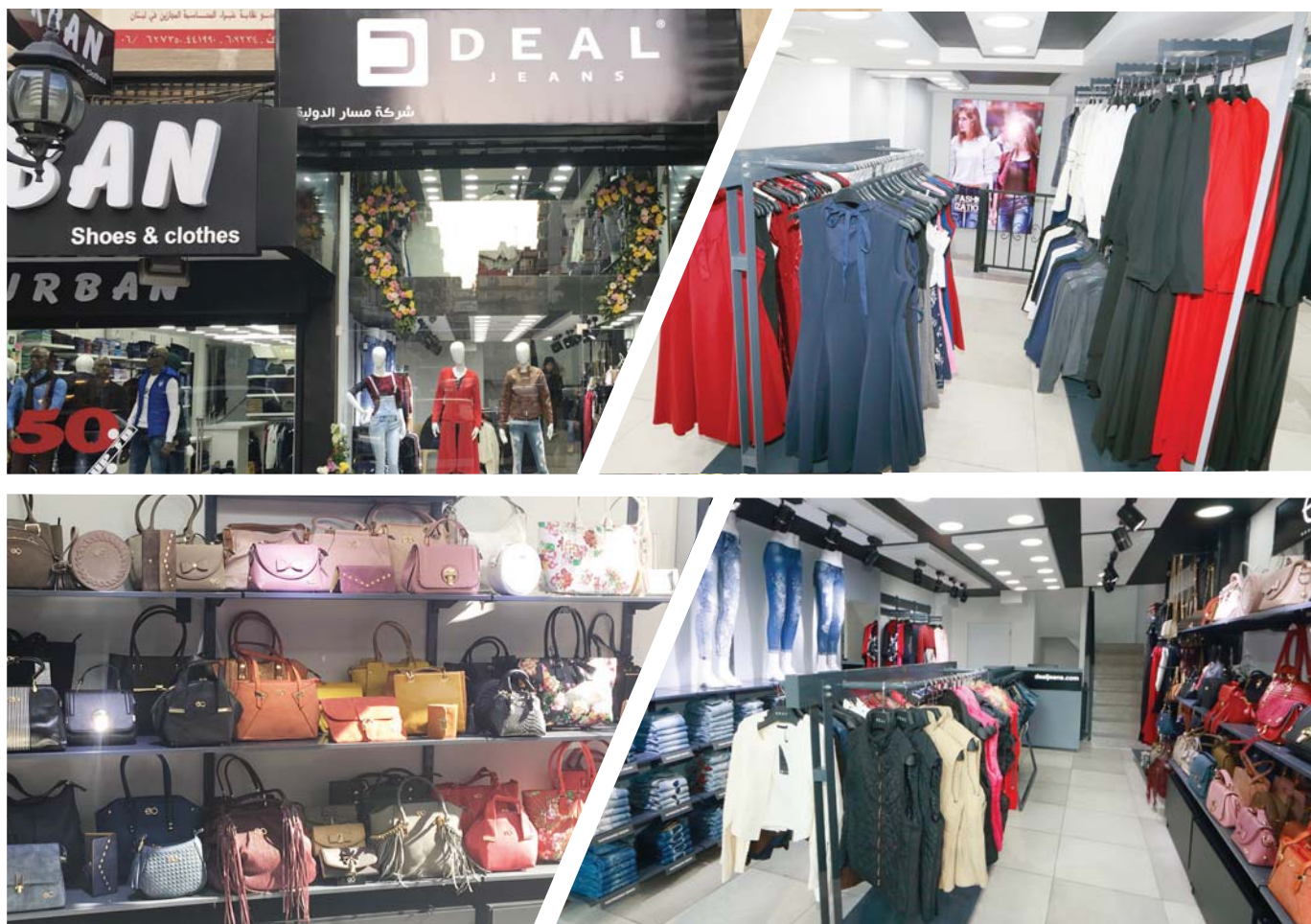
#### **STORE THEME:**

The boutique has been custom designed keeping in mind Da Milano's unique style and creative aesthetics with the latest technical know-hows and an ambience that exudes luxury. The look and feel of the store is at par with leading international brands furnished with high quality Italian tiles, lighting and fixtures. The newly opened store promises to offer a shopping experience like never before with the classy range of accessories set against the backdrop of carefully thought store layout.

#### **STORE INTERIOR:**

The interior is bright and fuss-free with light fixtures to draw shoppers' attention to the products on display. The visual display of the store aims to make the store self-inviting yet minimal with a luxuriously sophisticated feel to catch attention. Wall finishing are in a combination of modern grey and white. The lightings installed are from the Italian lighting company, iGuzzini while the flooring is from the Spanish tiles and flooring company White Horse. The placement of products on the shelves are effective with separate display structures made for different categories of products. These structures are like niches. Various niches are created and every niche has one product so that each product is focused and highlighted. The display of the collection is as per the leather and design type. An array of colour is presented on the shelves and the customer is permitted to make a choice independently.





# DEAL JEANS

**BRAND:**  
Deal Jeans

**PROMOTER:**  
Deal Global Fashion  
Pvt. Ltd.

**LOCATION:**  
Lebanon

**SIZE OF THE STORE:**  
982 sq.ft.

**Collection:**

The collection at the flagship outlet is a blend of fresh pastel hues and trendy patterns crafted in 14 categories ranging from leather jackets to cardigans in top wear and studded denims to comfy culottes in bottom wear accompanied by Spring/Summer collection including cropped tops, off shoulder, cold shoulders, printed tops, denim dresses and denim shorts. The store also offers premium designer handbags from E2O Accessories, a sister brand of Deal Jeans.

**Store theme:**

With music, screens, projections, modern graphics and fashionable colours, Deal Jeans's exclusive store in Lebanon imposes a well-detailed architecture. The store has separate space intended for the various different product lines that Deal Jeans offers to its customers. In each section, the products are placed according to their style, creating a wide spectrum ranging from casual wear to party wear.

**Store interior:**

The store is a spacious trend-setting showcase with a carefully thought through image extending from the window to the arrangement of the merchandise inside. The white and black colour scheme on walls and ceilings lends a dynamic touch and draws attention to the products. White lighting and vast open space throughout the store redefines the ambiance. The shelves are designed to make a memorable visual impression on shoppers.

**Store designer:**

The store has been designed by the in-house design team of Deal Jeans.





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## JHARCRAFT PROPOSES INITIATIVES TO PROMOTE LIVELIHOODS OF CRAFTSPERSONS

Jharcraft, is setting an example by creating new opportunities and making it profitable for weavers, giving them a definitive source of employment, while making the best use of available resources. The state is mulling aggressive initiatives to promote and market its ethnic textile and handloom products in a bid to help its large indigenous community of craftspersons grab a major pie of the rapidly growing national and global textile market.

The state government's efforts, led by Jharkhand Silk Textile and Handicraft Development Corporation Ltd., were discussed along with emerging opportunities in the textile, apparel, footwear and fashion sector at a seminar on "Opportunities in the Textiles, Apparel, Footwear & Fashion" held in Delhi. The event brought together stakeholders across the industry to discuss the emerging opportunities in the sector, during the Amazon India Fashion Week 2017. Jharcraft is a government of Jharkhand undertaking formed to initiate steps to provide sustainable livelihood opportunities in the rural areas, based on sericulture, handloom, handicraft and other allied activities.

Subsequently, a first-of-its-kind Business to Government (B2G) meeting was also held at Jharkhand Bhavan, New Delhi with senior officials from the government including Raj Bala Verma, Chief Secretary, Government of Jharkhand; Sunil Barnwal, Secretary-Industries, Government of Jharkhand; and other senior government officials. The event witnessed government bureaucrats interacting on a one-to-one basis with prospective investors in the state to discuss the way forward for a golden investment opportunity in Jharkhand, focusing on the key pillars of flexible policy making and enhancing ease of doing business. During the meeting, Pavel Sukoybeda, First Secretary, Embassy of Republic of Belarus exclusively met the secretariat team of Jharkhand government and expressed their interest in investing in the state. On the other hand, various other investors also showed interest in endorsing various public projects such as techno parks, upcoming skyway project, metro projects, and so on.



“The major benefits of policies for Jharkhand in the textile industry is that the state is offering major incentives for the investors and providing 50 percent of rebate for land acquisition tax,” said Raj Bala Verma.

“Our state has huge natural resources and wide range of industry-ready raw materials. While the existing resources have already aided in creation of many primary industries in the state, the best is yet to come. Within a short span of one year, we have moved from the 29th position to 3rd on the ease of doing business scale. Skilling of existing manpower has led to its fullest use in various sectors, and of late, we have

their own products, through the maximum utilization of resources and manpower of Jharkhand. The artisans producing silk are largely poor tribals from the state who have no means to promote or market their incredible works. At Jharcraft, we are driven by a quest to improve sources of livelihood for these artisans by providing them platforms to showcase their wondrous works and find market opportunities in the international arena.”

Sunil Sethi, President, Fashion Design Council of India said that Jharkhand is an undiscovered treasure, with an enormous potential for industrialization, especially in the smaller sectors like textile, apparel, and footwear, adding that ‘Momentum Jharkhand’ had already taken India by storm. “Fashion

Tunisia who was present as a special guest, said that there was tremendous scope for Indo-Tunisian collaboration in the apparel sector. “In Tunisia, the textile and apparel sector holds a prominent place in the national economy. Approximately 1,400 foreign countries, many of them from the European markets, hold a favourable geographical proximity and the country acts as a gateway in production, manufacturing and marketing of textile and similar products. On the other hand, Jharkhand is still a developing state and needs a lot of investment to realize the huge potential in these sectors. Through this platform, Tunisia would like to build a win-win partnership with the state government and the government of India to respond to emerging opportunities,” he said.

While Pradeep Bhandari, CEO, Reliance Textiles, pointed out towards the lack of skill development initiatives and the need to change the mindset and outlook for the value chains of textile and apparel sectors, Gautam Nair, Managing Director, Matrix Clothing pointed out that lack of skilled resource raises concerns on employability.

Connecting the dots between e-commerce and the fashion and textile sectors, “Abhijit Kamra, Head, Amazon Global Sales, said, “E-commerce sector can catalyze and synergize the efforts of the Indian government and Jharkhand government, especially when it comes to small-scale industry sectors. At Amazon Global Selling, we empower micro-level entrepreneurs to reach millions of new online customers who visit our international marketplaces and offer them best-in-class fulfillment solutions. Together, the small and large actions can leverage never-seen-before opportunities in terms of product placement in the international markets and provide them the most beneficial deals.”



started framing exclusive policies for almost 20 sectors like tourism, films, IT, apparel, textile, and so on. In my opinion, if ‘Make in India’ has to succeed, ‘Make in Jharkhand’ is the stepping stone,” said Sunil Barnwal, who was present as the guest of honour at the event.

K Ravi Kumar, Managing Director, Jharcraft, while delivering his welcome address at the seminar said, “Jharcraft hopes to provide a platform to the artisans and weavers to merchandise

is the greatest eyeball-catcher across the world. Appreciation of the natural fabric of Jharkhand can not only enrich the culture, but also lives of thousands of rural people living in the state. This is indeed a great platform to showcase the artisans’ incredible works at the doorstep of investors, and grow from strength to strength,” said acclaimed Fashion designer Rina Dhaka.

His Excellency Nejmeddine Lakhel, Indian Ambassador of the Republic of



# WOMEN'S JEWELLERY IN INDIA

From its auspicious slant to becoming a fashion statement, the significance of jewellery has evolved with time. Veteran luxury retail and lifestyle professional and independent consultant Anil Prabhakar sketches out the history of jewellery in India and shares his outlook of the industry in India.

- By Anil Prabhakar

Since time immemorial, jewellery in India has been an integral part of women's lifestyle. Women from different economic strata have different lifestyles. Their jewellery choices therefore differ. In a diverse country like India, jewellery also has a cultural connect. Occasions such as festivals and weddings have religious significance that differs from region to region. Jewellery usage is thus rooted in geographical traditions.

Despite the fast spreading westernisation trend in the country, 85 percent still adhere to the wedding customs strictly. In Hindu marriages, wearing a mangalsutra is mandatory. Yet, the design and materials differ from region to region. While Gujaratis and Marwaris often go for diamond pendants and Maharashtrians wear a pendant of one or two vatis, Bengalis often have corals added to the design. In South India, the variation in the mangalsutra and the way it is arranged varies from region to region.



**-Twinkle Khanna and Dimple Kapadia**  
Brand Ambassadors of Ranka Jewellers



**- Princess Mriganka Singh,**  
Brand Ambassador of Dia Color

With the passage of time, a shift in the significance and preference of jewellery was apparent. Today, with global exposure and more educated women joining the workforce, jewellery has evolved to become a fashion accessory.

***The Indian gems and jewellery market is robust. With a market size estimate of ₹3 lakh crores per annum, the sector is the second highest employer after the IT industry, employing roughly 2.5 million people and contributing to about 7 percent of India's GDP.***

#### **Historical background**

Indian royalty's affair with luxury is well documented. The Nizams of Hyderabad, Wodeyars of Mysore, Gaekwads of Baroda and royal families of Patiala and Kapurthala were purveyors of luxury. They were big customers of international jewellers such as Cartier, Boucheron and Harry Winston. While gold has always been very popular, India is also the birth place of the world's most famous

diamond, Kohinoor. The Maharajas' love also extended to natural coloured gemstones such as emeralds, rubies and sapphires. The positive outcome of the royalty's fetish with gemstones led to the development of a rich skilled base and jewellery making traditions.

While Surat is well known for diamond cutting and polishing, Jaipur is known as the gemstone capital of the world. For centuries, Jaipur attracted the world's best gems to be cut, polished and mounted, a tradition that dates back to the early 18th century when the ruling Maharaja Sawai Jai Singh II founded the city as the capital of Rajasthan.

Some of the rich jewellery traditions in India are kundan, polki and meenakari from Rajasthan, filigree from Odisha and pachi kaam from Gujarat. While Kolkata is famous for gold jewellery, Hyderabad is known for pearl jewellery and Banaras for its unique pink meena.

As a whole, the Indian subcontinent has a long continuous legacy of jewellery making with a history that claims to be of over 5,000 years.

#### **Market size**

The Indian gems and jewellery market is robust. With a market size estimate of ₹3 lakh crores per annum, the sector is the second highest employer after the IT industry, employing roughly 2.5 million people and contributing to about 7 percent of India's GDP. Also, India is the largest



Ganjam Flagship Store, Bengaluru



1. ORRA Ghungroo Bangles 2. ORRA Platinum Necklace 3. The Forevermark Artemis Collection 4. Vivacious Dia Color Ring 5. Forevermark Pink Haze Pendant

consumer of gold in the world and the fourth largest consumer of platinum jewellery after China, Japan and the US. It is also the largest exporter for diamonds.

The jewellery retail landscape has changed dramatically over the past 15 years. The market though robust, is fragmented and largely unorganised. There are approximately 5,00,000 jewellery stores comprising mainly of small family run independent jewellers. The retail revolution started approximately a decade and a half ago and has gained momentum since then. Corporates such as Tata with Tanishq and Reliance have set up stores across the country. Jewellers such as Senco Gold, TBZ, Orra also have a sound national presence. Traditional South Indian jewellers such as Kalyan Jewellers, Malabar and Joy Alukkas also have a national footprint. Regional jewellers such as PNG, Ranka Jewellers and WHP from Maharashtra have a strong presence in their states and have ambitious expansion plans.

### Jewellery as fashion, art & investment

Jewellery buying in India is an emotional process and the product category is associated with glamour and fashion. At the higher end, jewellery is also associated with art and investment.

In a cinema crazy country, the choice of Bollywood brand ambassadors is very

common. Pune based Ranka Jewellers have appointed the mother-daughter duo Dimple and Twinkle Khanna as their brand ambassadors. In addition to the glamour quotient, the campaign has cleverly capitalised on the emotional bond that a mother shares with her daughter.

Dia Color, a high end jewellery brand, appointed Princess Mriganka Singh as their brand ambassador. Mriganka is the granddaughter of Dr. Karan Singh, the son of the last ruler of the erstwhile princely state of Jammu and Kashmir. Her royal lineage rubs off very well on the brand. Yesterday's Maharajas are today's industrialists and politicians. This connection has helped the brand attract the attention of the elite. When Mriganka married Nirvan Singh, the grandson of Amarinder Singh, the ex-chief minister of Punjab belonging to the royal household of Patiala, it was a bonus for the brand.

### Jewellery as an art

Jewellery making is an art that requires skills ranging from gemmology, design, manufacturing and craftsmanship. When it is associated with arts and artists, the creations become classic heirloom pieces that command prices much above their intrinsic value.

Orra has always believed in treating jewellery as an art with curated designs. They have also collaborated with



— Farah Khan, Designer

Farah Khan Store





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1. ORRA Bel Booti Bracelet 2. Sutra Brooch from Ganjam - Art Filigree Work from Odisha 3. Mia by Tanishq  
4. Manifest Design - Sirena 5. The Poonam Soni Flagship Store in Mumbai

renowned artists like Anjali Ela Menon and late S H Raza to launch some very unique collections. These turned out to be very positive for the brand adding to its stunning legacy.

The Bengaluru based jeweller Ganjam has taken the association with art to a different level altogether. The design of their 15,000 sq.ft. iconic flagship store is inspired by traditional Indian vignettes - the five elements of earth, that is, fire, air, water and ether, the ancient kingdom of Hampi, the peacock, the banyan tree and the Gandeberunda, a two-headed mythological bird, which symbolises the brand - the essence of which was captured and translated to create a highly elegant setting for Ganjam's bespoke jewels. The store also houses an art gallery and won an award at the Prix Versailles 2016, held at the UNESCO headquarters in Paris. The store has been rewarded for interior store design by a jury of international architects and cultural experts.

### Jewellery as fashion

Ironically, the biggest market for fashion designers and jewellers is the bridal market. Jewellery and apparel complement each other as both are lifestyle categories.

Weddings offer unique opportunities to synergise and spark new ideas. Indian weddings are incomplete without jewellery and clothes.

Fashion designers and jewellers have collaborated on the ramp for a long time. The former have dabbled into jewellery designing courtesy Forevermark. The brand partnered with Bibhu Mohapatra to debut an Artemis collection exclusive to India. A central Forevermark diamond emerges as the definitive element in each design. Bibhu has combined the surreal forms of the sun, moon and stars to create sensual, romantic jewellery. The central thought behind the Artemis collection was inner balance and outer strength, making it a very special collaboration for him.

Forevermark have also partnered with India's ace designer Sabyasachi Mukherjee who has designed diamond jewellery collection Zayna exclusively for the brand. His line is fusion of Sicilian and Bengali jewellery made by Bengali craftsmen.

In addition to designing jewellery, Sabyasachi also retails jewellery from his boutiques in Mumbai and Delhi.

### The evolution of an Indian jewellery consumer

Vipin Sharma, the CEO of Azva has articulated the evolution very well. According to him, young Indian woman has evolved into a powerful persona who has her views on what she wants when it comes to her jewellery and personal style. Women today are well travelled, are more exposed to Indian as well as international trends and innovations, and have therefore developed an innate sense of luxury and style. While they appreciate and respect tradition, they also have an extremely keen eye on design and craftsmanship with personalisation and versatility being key to their decision making process when it comes to jewellery. Women are now looking for pieces that can be styled in a traditional as well as contemporary manner - Azva creations have jewellery pieces that have a longer shelf life beyond the wedding day and can be used for a host of occasions across their life span.

The reputed jewellery designer Farah Khan who has a large Bollywood clientele, opines that new age bridal wear is getting slimmer and less fussy. A young bride doesn't want to invest in one large set that will find its way into locker once the occasion is over. Women today want statement pieces that are more

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Poonam Soni

***Among the younger women, there is a very distinct shift in the preference for jewellery. They only want chic, light flowing pieces which accessorise their favourite ensemble, shoes and bags. Jewellery is secondary to their branded apparel. So, long necklaces, sautoirs, brooches, hairclips and stacked rings are popular with them.***

fun to wear, but also have the ability to become heirloom pieces. Khan loves coloured gemstones and her collection makes an effort to revive traditional designs in a contemporary way.

According to Sachin Jain, President, Forevermark, Indian women with their high disposal income are now purchasing their own jewellery as a fashion statement. They prefer reliable brands with stylish, subtle designs, highlighting the sparkle of the diamond.

Reputed jewellery designer Poonam Soni makes an interesting point. According to her, the Indian woman holds a dual jewellery wardrobe—stylish designer pieces and larger opulent ones which are price friendly. A third important emerging style in her wardrobe is the branded fashion jewellery. Wedding jewellery is still opulent, larger than life, but tilted towards vintage looks.

Among the younger women, there is a very distinct shift in the preference for jewellery. They only want chic, light flowing pieces which accessorise their favourite ensemble, shoes and bags. Jewellery is secondary to their branded apparel. So, long necklaces, sautoirs, brooches, hairclips and stacked rings are popular with them.

#### **Importance of the Millennials**

Millennials or Generation-Y are consumers in the age group of 16 to 35 years and born between the years 1982 to 2001. India had 450 million millennials in the year 2015 up from 298 million in 1991. According to the 2013-14 Economic

Survey, India will become the youngest country by 2021, with 64 percent of its population in the working age group of 20-35 years. De Beers Diamond Insight Report 2016 states that Indian millennials are earning more than their parents and have high disposal incomes. Among all ages in the elite segment, 75 percent of women place diamonds as their first preference in fine jewellery, with only 6 percent preferring gold. This is especially positive, given the aspirational nature of diamonds in this market.

The report further says that self-expression and personal achievement are important life values for them. This could be achieved through individualisation of designs, branding and appropriate shopping experiences to fit the occasions and motivations for diamond acquisition. As in other luxury categories, brands are important for millennials.

Sharing his strategy to tap this lucrative segment, Jain says, “We at Forevermark, forecast trends each year based on insight and research. Keeping a strong focus on the beauty of the diamond, we create designs which appeal to our consumers. Capricci, the nose pin collection was launched keeping in mind the sentiments of the Indian woman. After a ring, nose pins are the most popular form of jewellery worn by women across the country. Our design team created a classic diamond nose pin, stud earrings and a charm bracelet with seven interchangeable jackets to appeal to the younger generation. The concept focused on ‘Wear What You Feel’. The idea of a single piece worn in multiple ways has even extended to the Pink Haze collection which entails Forevermark diamonds encased in rose gold, with detachable variations. We also believe in classic designs like the diamond bangle which we term as ‘The Circle of Trust’ which consists of 58 Forevermark diamonds in each bangle. The response for this bangle across segments has been phenomenal.”

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**BODY**

MEN'S INNERWEAR

For millennials, experiment is the key element of self-expression. They are not averse to mix-and-match precious and non-precious jewellery. In the absence of strong Indian brands in the fashion jewellery segment, an international brand Swarovski is the leader. It has 42 exclusive boutiques and is also available in reputed departmental stores such as Shoppers Stop.

To cater to this segment, proactive players such as Tanishq have already launched new sub-brands such as 'Iva' and 'Mia' collections for the fashion forward consumer. Mia jewellery is made of 14 kt gold and starts at a price of ₹10,000. Iva, on the other hand, has created a new fine fashion jewellery category. Iva jewellery uses white topaz and other non-precious coloured gemstones to keep the price points affordable. Soni has also launched unique fusion designs cleverly mixing precious and non-precious elements.

### Going digital

Digital media is the essential channel through which young people share information and influence each other. Their levels of digital interaction are much higher than among the older age groups. When it comes to shopping, millennials use online methods alongside visiting traditional brick-and-mortar stores. They will often compare prices online, search for product information and look for discount coupons and promotions online. Omni-channel shopping experiences are now the norm for younger consumers. Retailers who are not equipped for this will lose out among this client base.



IMAGES Business of Fashion



Ira Dubey in Poonam Soni collection



Manreet Deol

Social media plays an important role in product promotions. Sabyasachi launched his latest Firdaus collection on Instagram and not on the ramp. Khan has close to a million followers on twitter. She retails her creations from her own website and her own flagship store in Bandra. She has also collaborated with Caratlane and Tanishq to design exclusive collections for them.

Manifest Design, a company formed by siblings Manreet Deol and Samraat launched contemporary sculptural jewellery in India for the first time in India. The brand believes that

jewellery is a mélange of art, fashion and everything handmade. Thus, they create timeless pieces that are thoughtfully handcrafted and possess a soul that transcends style and cultural boundaries. "Every day wearable art, is the guiding style mantra behind these gorgeous handmade ornaments whose inspirations are varied and eccentric. The indelible touch of the sculptor and the metal-smith are intrinsic to the pieces and add an additional layer of intrigue. Unconventional metals such as brass and aluminium are used with gold plating. Their jewellery is exclusively available on the company's online store.

### Current scenario

In the last one year, the Indian Government have brought the jewellery industry under the ambit of excise duty. It has become mandatory for all consumers to furnish pan card details for jewellery purchases of ₹2 lakhs and above. Demonetisation of ₹500 and ₹1,000 notes has also impacted the fortunes of the industry adversely.

Most stakeholders have welcomed these initiatives. However as articulated by Sharma, immediate effect of demonetisation will result in softening of demand in the short run, cash flows that value chains have planned considering the start of the wedding season will get affected and pose challenges of planning and execution. Structurally, with GST round the corner, these policy changes will force businesses to get more organised and transparent, which is positive for the long-term growth and modernisation of the industry.



### ABOUT ANIL PRABHAKAR

Anil Prabhakar is a well-known luxury retail and lifestyle professional. He is an independent consultant with domain expertise in watches and jewellery. He has worked for luxury watch brands such as Rado and Dunhill. In the gems and jewellery industry, he has handled B2B and B2C assignments across product categories such as gold, diamond, fashion jewellery, Zambian emeralds and solitaires.



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# CHARACTER LICENSING IN KIDSWEAR

Although the market for character licensing is not as developed in India as in the western countries, there is little wonder why the marketplace is brimming with merchandise related to cartoon characters. IMAGES BoF takes a look at the potential in the market for character licensing for kidswear.

By Manisha Bapna with inputs from Rosy Sharma

Character and entertainment licensing is one of the largest segments of the licensing business, and is probably the part most recognized by the general public. This category of licensing encompasses properties springing primarily from feature films, television shows, videogames and online entertainment. For brands, it aids in enhancing the image of a product line and generate interest in it due to its association with a said character. It has also proven to be a powerful instrument for growth, as it helps tapping into new geographic markets and new market categories thereby increasing revenue and profit. “Whether it’s Mowgli for a child or Charlie Brown for a grown-up, it is a character one identifies with, and through licensing, we have successfully combined the individualities of these characters to give our valued customers products that not only spell functionality and quality but

also something that they can flaunt as a personal style statement” Lubeina Shahpurwala, Director, Mustang Socks and Accessories.

The concept of character licensing in India, although not in its teething stage, is not as widely evolved as it has in the US and Europe. Abhishek Maheshwari, VP and Head - Consumer Products, Disney India, points out that globally, licensing and merchandising (L&M) is a sizeable business. The Walt Disney Company is the largest character licensor in the world with USD 45 billion in character merchandising retail sales in 2013. India’s L&M industry is still in a nascent stage but the segment is poised to grow significantly in the coming years, especially as the nation is home to one of the largest population of children in the world. “We started the business unit in 2005, and since then have expanded our categories to the existing six right now, which include toys, fashion, stationery, home solutions, publishing and food health and beauty,” he adds.

Character licensing is now taking a leap in India. “Almost all reputed brands are using licensing to create products which consumers’ demand,” says Subita Chaddha, General Manager-Licensing, AI Licensing India Pvt. Ltd. “The characters are brands that capture the imagination of the target group of customers. The quick recognition and affinity provides a ready platform for monetization,” says Nanette D’Sa, Independent Brand Consultant, Brandz Café. Character licensing business exists on the foundation of emotions that a fan associates with their favorite character and their attributes. “These emotions lead them to owning each and every aspect of their favourite character and create a pull for the same. Brands across categories like FMCG, apparel, stationary, etc., try to monetize this pull by associating these characters on their product and services,” says Bhavik Vora, Founder and CEO, Black White Orange Brands Pvt. Ltd.

Although the category also features adult-targeted characters, primarily, it’s a sector driven buy children. The International Licensing Industry Merchandisers’ Association claims that globally, the largest portion of the entertainment and character licensing business is aimed at children through a broad range of merchandise categories such as toys, apparel, publishing, food and beverages, videogames and electronics, among many others. Infact, the whole idea of character merchandising sprang from Walt Disney Studios, which created a separate department to license the rights to use its popular toon characters such as Mickey Mouse, Minnie and Donald on various consumer products. Today, industry veterans swear by the importance of licensing in kidswear. “Kids’ category licensing has grown over the last few years and now brand licensing has become the key driver for a lot of products and we can clearly see the impact in product awareness and sales,”





**“Currently, Motu-Patlu has got the highest TRP rating among kids cartoon and is the number-one in licensing. It is being followed by Ben 10 at number-two.”**

**Ansul Agarwal,**  
Managing Director, Eteenz

says Samir Jain, COO and Executive Director, Green Gold Licensing and Merchandising (I) Pvt. Ltd.

Along with the evolution of the market in India, an inevitable change in trends has also been witnessed. Till two to three years back it was only international characters that were in prominence but now, Indian characters seem to top the popularity charts. “Currently, Motu-Patlu has got the highest TRP rating among kids cartoon and is the number-one in licensing. It is being followed by Ben 10 at number-two. All the remaining characters are yet to achieve a rating position in Indian licensing,” Eteenz.

Another popular character in this segment is Chhota Bheem, which has pushed Green Gold Animation’s brand value to ₹300 crores plus in a short span of time. Green Gold, that set up its licensing and merchandising division in 2008 witnessed a massive year on year growth rate of about 200 percent.

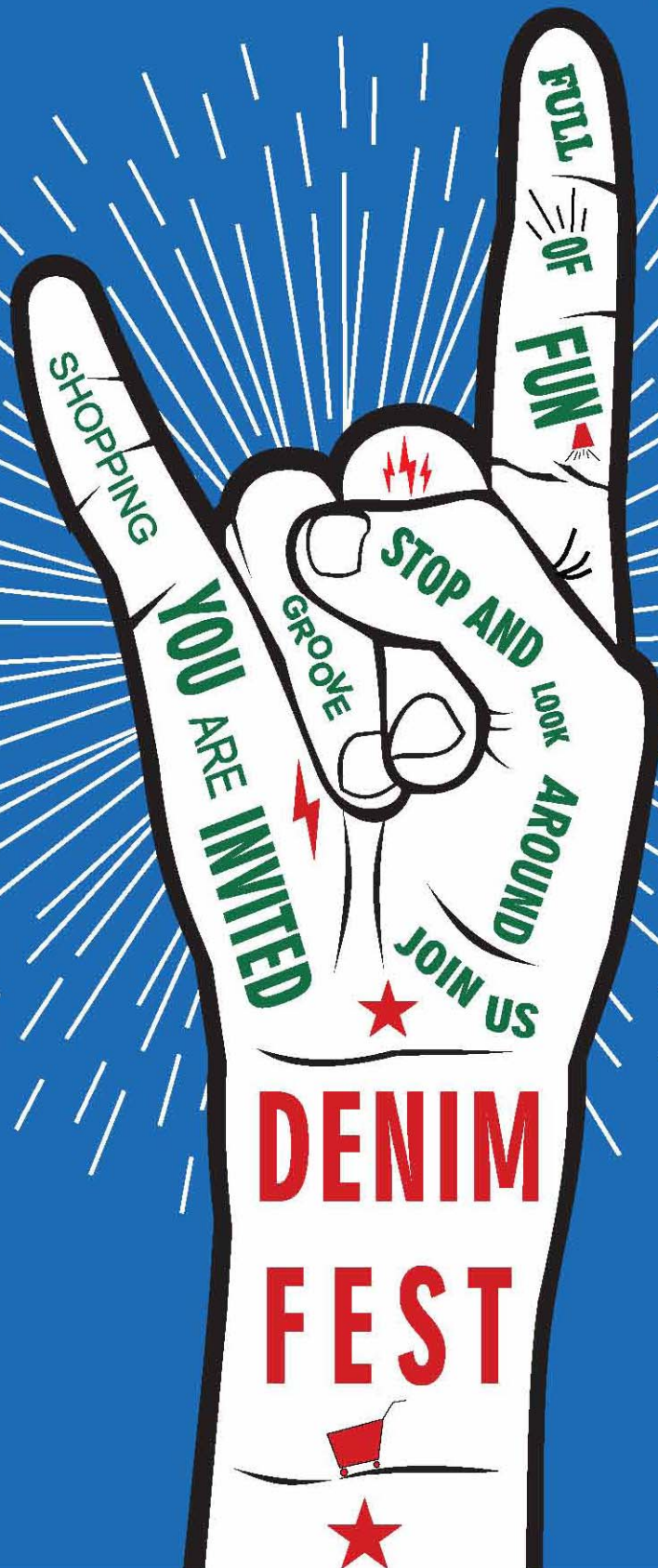
#### Licensing in different genres

Tying up with popular properties allow brands to map and reinforce their brand DNA. It also allows them to increase their product portfolio and opens up

more opportunities and partners for them to increase their product presence. A plethora of licensed brands like Arvind Mills, Reliance brands and Madura have entered into licensing/joint venture model. “The fact that many of these brands have been dubbed in regional languages across India adds to the level of relevance for a larger diaspora of the society. We have had a tremendous success rate with regards to selling licensed merchandise, which is one of the reasons why we have opted for multiple licensing,” says Lubeina Shahpurwala.

Shemaroo Entertainment took a small start with merchandising, encapsulating iconic Bollywood dialogues (like “excuse me please” by Amitabh Bacchan’s character Anthony from the movie Amar Akbar Anthony) on cushions, badges and T-shirts, etc. The sales were record breaking. Even retail chains like H&M, Target in the West do round the year entertainment licensing tie-ups with brands to improve visibility. Considering the exceptional reach of these characters, licensing is also has also been instrumental in communicating social and health messages among masses. Diamond Toons has launched a comic book in collaboration California Walnut







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**Samir Jain,**  
COO and Executive Director, Green  
Gold Licensing and Merchandising(I)  
Pvt. Ltd.

Commission where Chacha Chaudhary and Sabu along with the official mascot of California Walnut Commission, Twiggy, the squirrel spoke to children to make them understand the nutritional benefits of walnuts. But Angry Birds has been an aberration, being built out of the digital games world. There is also a thrust on franchise building with Disney via the Marvel and Star Wars franchise and Warner Bros with DC franchise. Sports are seeing a huge surge in interest on football, soccer and more, which is translating into business on the licensing side. Brands like FIFA, Real Madrid, Barcelona FC are all available via licensing in India.

The celebrity licensing side is also seeing a big growth with Being Human, Wrogn and a host of other extensions via sports and movie stars. “What is encouraging is that, today we have more

businesses than ever by participating in the licensing business in India. So both established brands as well as emerging brands are leveraging licensing to grow their business, extend their product footprint, become available on more retail platforms, collaborate on marketing and increase their bottom lines – all basis licensing,” says Jiggy George, Founder and CEO, Dream Theatre.

“Co-branding brings in credibility. It subtly plays on the minds of the consumers,” believes Subita Chaddha. It not only brings in awareness proportionate to the appeal of the brand thereby increasing the chances of sale, it also helps create a demand and works as a great pull mechanism.

### **Managing Intellectual Property Rights Issues**

Compared to organized retail which is process driven and brand conscious, the unorganized retail thrives on piracy, spurious products with inferior quality, which not only dents a brand but also becomes hazardous at times. “We, as brand custodians of Chhota Bheem, have been doing anti-piracy drives across the country and at the same time have been trying to educate







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**“AI Licensing would probably be the only licensing agency in India which has a full time legal resource on board. This helps us in solving issues real time.”**

**Subita Chaddha**  
General Manager- Licensing, AI  
Licensing India Pvt. Ltd



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**George Jiggy,**  
Founder & CEO, Dream Theatre



**“There will be more than 15 categories in kids’ space which will be active with Minions this summer and with the movie release in June, consumers will see a lot of this character in the market in 2017.”**

**Bhavik Vora,**  
Founder and CEO, Black White  
Orange Brands Pvt. Ltd.



consumers on the importance of using original company approved products. It’s a long fight and it will require larger collaborations to nail in the importance of intellectual property rights,” states Samir Jain.

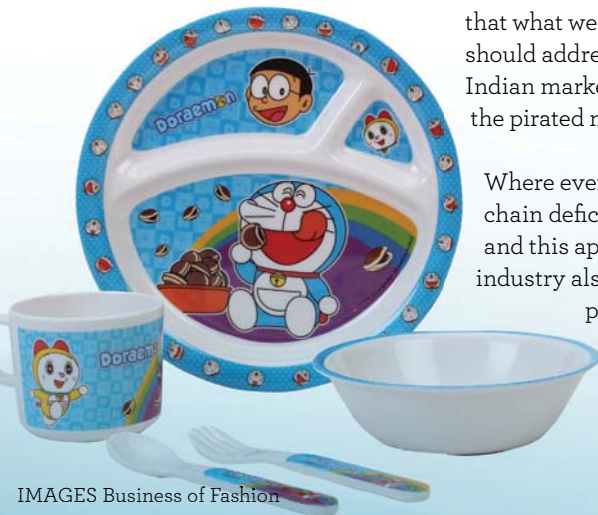
“We have had a lot of success in clamping down in the organized space, but we see a huge challenge in both unorganized and the online space which needs concrete steps. What’s encouraging is that we have seen a genuine demand for licensed products and our portfolio has profited from making the right mix of products, pricing and ease of availability. We work with licensees very closely to ensure that what we have on trend designs should address the sensibilities of the Indian market to stay a step ahead of the pirated market,” says Jiggy George.

Where ever there is a demand-supply chain deficit, piracy is bound to exist and this applies to the licensing industry also. “AI Licensing would probably be the only licensing agency in India

which has a full time legal resource on board. This helps us in solving issues real time. While it is not possible to completely eradicate piracy we are happy to say that in the last quarter we had a 53 percent success ratio,” says Subita Chaddha. Along with an in-house design and packaging solutions support, a licensor can also ensure that the products are available at the price points the consumer desires.

### Trends 2017

The major season in India starts with back to school and witnesses a complete new range of products and designs in all these categories inspired from the international color palette, premium looks, and priced reasonably across segments. “Our first such offering will be a complete table ware range for kids branded with Doraemon. Considering demonetization and the current economic scenario, our focus area is to help our licensees sell and we are taking many diverse steps in this direction. We are very happy to be working with some of the best brands across the globe including Doraemon, Shinchan, Archie Comics, Garfield, Hallmark Design Collection, Albert Einstein,



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***“We started the business unit in 2005, and since then have expanded our categories to the existing six right now, which include toys, fashion, stationery, home solutions, publishing and food health and beauty.”***

**-Abhishek Maheshwari,**  
VP and Head - Consumer Products,  
Disney India



Withit Studios, Happily Unmarried and Cut the Rope to name a few,” says Subita Chaddha. “In 2016, our most popular licensed products were Jungle Book (especially the movie), Winx, and Motu Patlu. Going forward, we look to continue to understand the pulse of our consumers, the characters that attract them, and acquire the licenses for the same,” Lubeina Shahpurwala.

According to Nanette D’Sa, the chief categories will be apparel and accessories, back to school, toys and activities and of course consumer promotions. “We have seen demand of licensing in food, education and toys categories. The year 2017 will see us focusing on new exciting content for

television in India and a few markets around the globe, developing exciting merchandise especially in apparels, toys and games and release the fourth movie of Chhota Bheem titled *Chhota Bheem Kungfu Dhamaka* in 3D,” says Samir Jain.

According to Jiggy George, 2016 saw a great surge in sports and entertainment brands, especially brands like Pokémon, Angry Birds, Simpsons, and Kung Fu Panda saw a great deal of traction. “On sports, we stay focused on football and there will be multiple category launches with Real Madrid apparel and new acquisitions. On the fashion side, the Femina licensing program with Shoppers Stop will continue with new brand tie-ups like Smiley and Von Dutch. In the entertainment space we will be speaking to masses via brands like Angry Birds, Pokémon, Simpsons, and Hello Kitty among others. We are planning to go global this year with our tie-up with ChuChu TV and will be launching ChuChu TV’s licensing programme internationally,” says Jiggy George.

Minions as a character has seen massive growth in popularity over last year and continues to attract major interest from buyers, retailers and consumers. “There will be more than 15 categories in kids’ space which will be active with Minions this summer and with the movie release in June, consumers will see a lot of this character in the market in 2017,” believes Bhavik Vora.



***“We have had a tremendous success rate with regards to selling licensed merchandise, which is one of the reasons why we have opted for multiple licensing.”***

**-Lubeina Shahpurwala,**  
Director, Mustang Socks and  
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# TAILORMAN



## CUTTING OUT A NICHE

By Namita Bhagat



– Vidya Nataraj and Gautam Golcha,  
Co-Founders, Tailorman

**Tell us a little bit about yourself and your entrepreneurial journey.**

**Gautam Golcha (GG):** I hold an Apparel Manufacturing Management degree from Fashion Institute of Technology, New York and have been in the global retail, international sourcing and fashion, for over two decades now. I founded, Silver Crest Clothing, a company which has grown to become South Asia's largest manufacturer of formal clothing catering to luxury brands such as Ralph Lauren, DKNY, Hugo Boss as well as high-end ateliers on Saville Row with exports to seventeen different countries.

**Vidya Nataraj (VN):** I come from a retail background. I worked with Landmark, a family business, before we sold it to Tata Trent. Post this, I went on to do my MBA from Insead, France. In 2011, I co-founded online jewellery store BlueStone which has received funding of more than \$30 million from investors, including Accel Partners, Kalaari Capital and Ratan Tata. I then started Tailorman with Gautam. Both startups were a result of my passion for retail.

**Brief us on the history and concept of Tailorman.**

**VN:** We founded Tailorman in early 2013. The first store, along with the web store [www.tailorman.com](http://www.tailorman.com), opened in Bengaluru the same year. Tailorman was created to make high quality, great fitting and trendy men's wear easily accessible. The idea was to



Tailorman, a bespoke men's wear chain, has come to be known as a sophisticated, progressive fashion and accessories brand. It has nine stores spread across key Indian cities like Bengaluru, Chennai, Hyderabad and Kolkata. The brand now adds another dimension to itself, with its all new private label, Revelry. In a candid interaction with BoF, Co-Founders, Vidya Nataraj and Gautam Golcha, tell how they sought to create an entirely new market in men's fashion. The ultimate goal is to make Tailorman India's largest premium men's wear clothing brand, they say.



create an entirely new market in men's fashion – a combination of craftsmanship with the use of the finest fabrics, European style, unbeatable in-store service, 3D online shopping experience and an attainable price bracket, something which the current market did not possess. We moved very quickly on the opportunity, an opportunity which other brands are now catching up with.

#### What led you to enter the bespoke men's wear segment?

**GG:** In our view, there was a clear gap in the market space for affordable, trendy and good-fitting clothes for men. Ready-to-wear clothes are a big compromise for them. In the made-to-measure segment, there were either clothes designed by local tailors where quality suffered due to sub-par fabric and interlining, while the evolved brands do provide great quality, but at ridiculous prices.

#### What is your business model?

**Share current presence across sales channels, and define your positioning, target audience.**

**VN:** Tailorman delivers a seamless omni-channel approach through 9 stores across Chennai (3), Bengaluru,

(4), Hyderabad (1), Kolkata (1). We also provide 3D online shopping at tailorman.com and a fine Travelling Tailor service experience, as well. Our revenues continue to come predominantly from physical stores.

**GG:** The positioning has always been for luxury to be accessible at affordable price brackets and multiple channels. Our biggest market is young professionals who want great fitting custom clothing without the unaffordable price tag. We also cater to young educated men on way to turning affluent, sophisticated grown-ups; both with an eye for style and fit. We have an unlimited appeal amongst the techies, consultants, industrialists and expats.

#### What kind of opportunity and challenges does the Indian market have for an upmarket bespoke menswear company like yours?

**GG:** We have an opportunity to address the gap between the local tailoring and made-to-measure brands and increasing awareness of the Indian man in terms of style. Men have started taking themselves seriously and want the top of the line products with distinctive styling; companies have come up with special products for their grooming. However, getting customers to be comfortable enough to measure themselves is one

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challenge. We need to invest more in technology and help a customer measure himself accurate enough to give a well-fitting garment. The ever-shortening delivery time that customers demand is another.

**What can you say about the customer evolution, present demand landscape?**

**VN:** Since the days of the royals, made-to-measure clothing for men has been in vogue. Recently, this trend has been adopted by many Indians who are embracing it for many occasions, marriage being the most important one. This coupled with increasing preference for customised formal and semi-formal wear, is emerging as a fast-growing business that Tailorman, like others, wants to be a part of.

Many of our customers are those who are about to get married and looking for style or those whose body shape doesn't suit ready-to-wear garments and therefore had to compromise. About 80 percent of our customers are those who could have gone for ready-to-wear but opted for Tailorman due to the variety we offer. So, it is a mix of both, the marriage wear segment and the formals and semi-formals.

**What makes your brand different? What is the product mix: made-to-measure to ready-to-wear?**

**GG:** Our offerings comprise shirts, suits, jackets, trousers and ethnic wear – casual, formal, semi-formal. We have made-to-measure; personalized approach with 1,000s fabrics and styles and 100's of sizes and fits; access to the fabrics from the best international mills, including Zegna, Loro Piana, Scabal and VBC besides Indian and Asian mills; stylists-recommend lightweight linens, exquisite velvets, and handsomely textured wool and silk summer tweeds that result in uniquely

refined looks; Ready-to-Wear Collection; "Light as a feather", deconstructed linen sport coats; eye-catching party wear; Travelflex suits with breathable stretch fabric which is wrinkle-shedding – they have multiple hidden pockets and gussets for extra comfort. What's more, we also have designer collaborations.

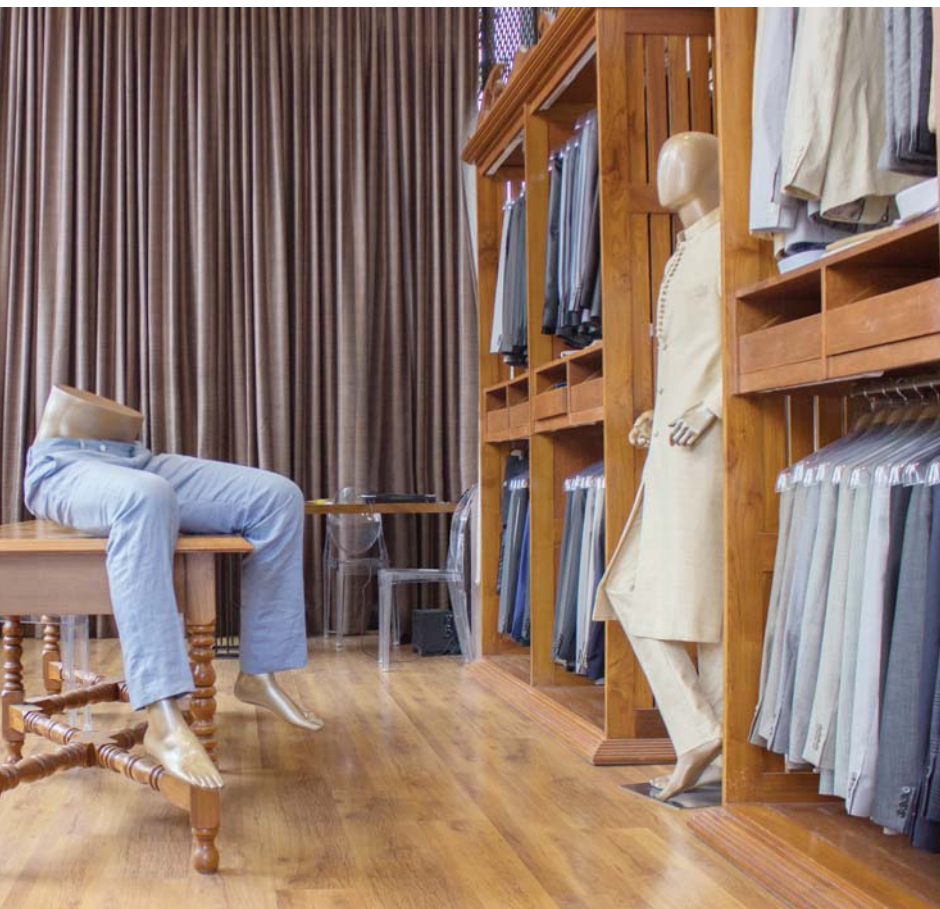
We are still highly concentrated towards our core which is made-to-measure. The product mix of made-to-measure to ready-to-wear (RTW) would be 80:20. Though, we are set to launch RTW in a big way in the coming months.

**Elaborate on your efforts to introduce well-crafted, quality products.**

**GG:** We offer the highest quality – crafted on the same production lines as \$500 shirts and \$2000 suits you see in high-end boutiques all around the world. We offer perfect fit and easy re-order through state-of-the-art automation, ensuring that the errors rife in manual processes are minimised. State-of-the-art manufacturing and cutting technology allow us to generate and store a customer's individual patterns in order to re-create the exact fit each time they make a purchase.







**Tell us about your newly launched private label, Revelry. What is its USP?**

**VN:** The growing demand for designer wedding/ ceremonial wear coupled with bringing out the talent of niche designers is what gave birth to Revelry. In the literal sense it means celebration, celebrating the modern man who has Indian roots but an international taste.

It suits every palate – ranging from innovative and modern designs to elegant, timeless couture - using only the finest fabrics and materials. Owing to this, the collection is a composite of bandhgalas, Nehru jackets, achkans, kurtas, pathanis and breeches that are high on style and relevance. Revelry will encompass collections by Tailorman’s in-house designers, as well as novel designers like Sounak Sen Bharat and Rohit Kamra. This confluence of creative styles will look to bring couture into each Tailorman retail store, whilst making luxury more accessible. From soiree’s to the red carpet to festivities, Revelry caters all.

**Walk us through the Tailorman store, how is the ambience like?**

**VN:** We have a simplistic and sophisticated approach towards the look and feel of our stores. You may find some jazz classics playing when you enter, it adds to the overall aura. Attention to detail is always our high priority.

**How are you creating synergy between online and offline channels, and leveraging technology in retail operations?**

**GG:** Our online-offline sales ratio is 20:80. However, with our further investment in technology and new website coming up, we are looking to ramp up sales through the online platform. Our online presence along with the offline one, we are able to cater to different customers in different cities across the globe.

We are investing significantly in technology to strengthen our back-end processes. The website is already attracting customers far and wide, from

both tier-II and -III cities like Mysore and Surat, and international markets like the US, France and Australia. We plan to streamline and automate the order taking process in terms of the accuracy of fits made by our masters, inputs given by the store managers and implementing feedback from customers. Revamped website will be launched soon.

**What about the marketing approach? How are you engaging with the customers?**

**VN:** Up till now, we have not heavily invested in marketing. Our core offering is of so much value to the customers that it draws their attention automatically. Word of mouth has been one of the most efficient tools that helped us increase our customer base. For our customers to experience made-to-measure themselves and increase awareness in the menswear category across different markets, we do intend to invest in marketing further.

**Please share your key learnings so far and the plans for the coming future.**

**VN:** We have learnt that staying close to the customer is all that matters. Men value “Fit and Time” and by meeting the need for clothes that fit well with a fast and easy buying process, we have built very strong brand loyalty. The success of Tailorman indicates that Indian men were waiting for quality products, which are also trendy, fun and unorthodox.

We aim to make Tailorman India’s largest premium menswear clothing brand and have 30 stores by 2018. We also believe that growing our online channel will be the key to achieving this goal.





# TIME TO CONSOLIDATE

Guess, one of the world's most recognised fashion watch brands, is admired for look and functionality alike! The brand entered India in 2006 and today has affirmed itself as the leader and pioneer in the watch industry. In an open dialogue with BoF, Ivana Perovic Shah, CEO, AP Group, the Distributors & Retailers for Guess Accessories for India, discusses the brand's decade-long presence in India and the way forward.

By Namita Bhagat



– Ivana Perovic Shah,  
CEO, AP Group

**Guess Watches has completed 10 years in India. Can you summarize its journey?**

**Ivana Perovic Shah (IPS):** Guess watches was launched in India in 2006 and over the course of the last 10 years, has firmly established itself as the leader and pioneer in the watch industry. Launched exclusively in the country with Watches of Switzerland; today it has its retail presence across 17 standalone Guess stores, 107 shop-in-shops in leading department stores (such as Lifestyle, Shoppers Stop, Ethos), online portals, and all leading multi-brand watch retailers. The brand is also poised to launch its e-tail platform for Indian consumers soon.

Over the years, Guess watches has seen some major creative milestones in the country with the launch of its best-selling timepieces like the Blue Rigor and the animal print collection. Most recently, the brand released their first ever smart watch Guess Connect in 2015.

### Elaborate on the evolution of creative direction for the brand.

**IPS:** Evolution of creative direction for Guess watches is closely linked with the Guess brand. As the Guess brand stands for all things young, sexy and adventurous, it evolves year on year, season to season as the leader in fashion. The brand evolves with its customers. As the frontrunner of fashion, Guess watches introduced animal prints to the fashionistas. It was also the first in making blue the new black. It patented Indigo Blue and created the Blue Streak collection. Of late, Guess watches introduced athleisure looks with splashes of colour, keeping the brand hot and fun.

### Which are the designs/watches you reckon as the best-sellers?

**IPS:** Guess watches is known for fashion forward designs. Every season we have a best seller; Guess Animal Print Gold watch for ladies and Guess Blue/Rose Gold Rigor for men have been the top-selling timepieces of all time.

### What is your favourite, stand out Guess watch/collection, and why?

**IPS:** It's difficult to choose! I personally love wearing the Guess men's watch collection – anything from the Rigor to a Chaser in hues of blue and silver. What I love about Guess is their stand-out prints and watches that no other manufacturer of fashion watches can do – the blue imprints on straps. Baroque with its dimensional florals and brocade patterns in shades of marbelized sky blue is close to my heart.



### Tell us about the latest and upcoming additions to the brand portfolio.

**IPS:** We continue to launch the ladies collection of Guess watches and have already identified our new trends until May. We have recently launched a very exciting Christmas, Valentine and Holi collection that we are very excited about. Of course, fashion additions of the Guess smart watch are also expected. They have received tremendous interest from our uber fashion conscious consumers.

### What is your impression of the current state of Indian watch market? How is the brand evolving its strategy for further growth?

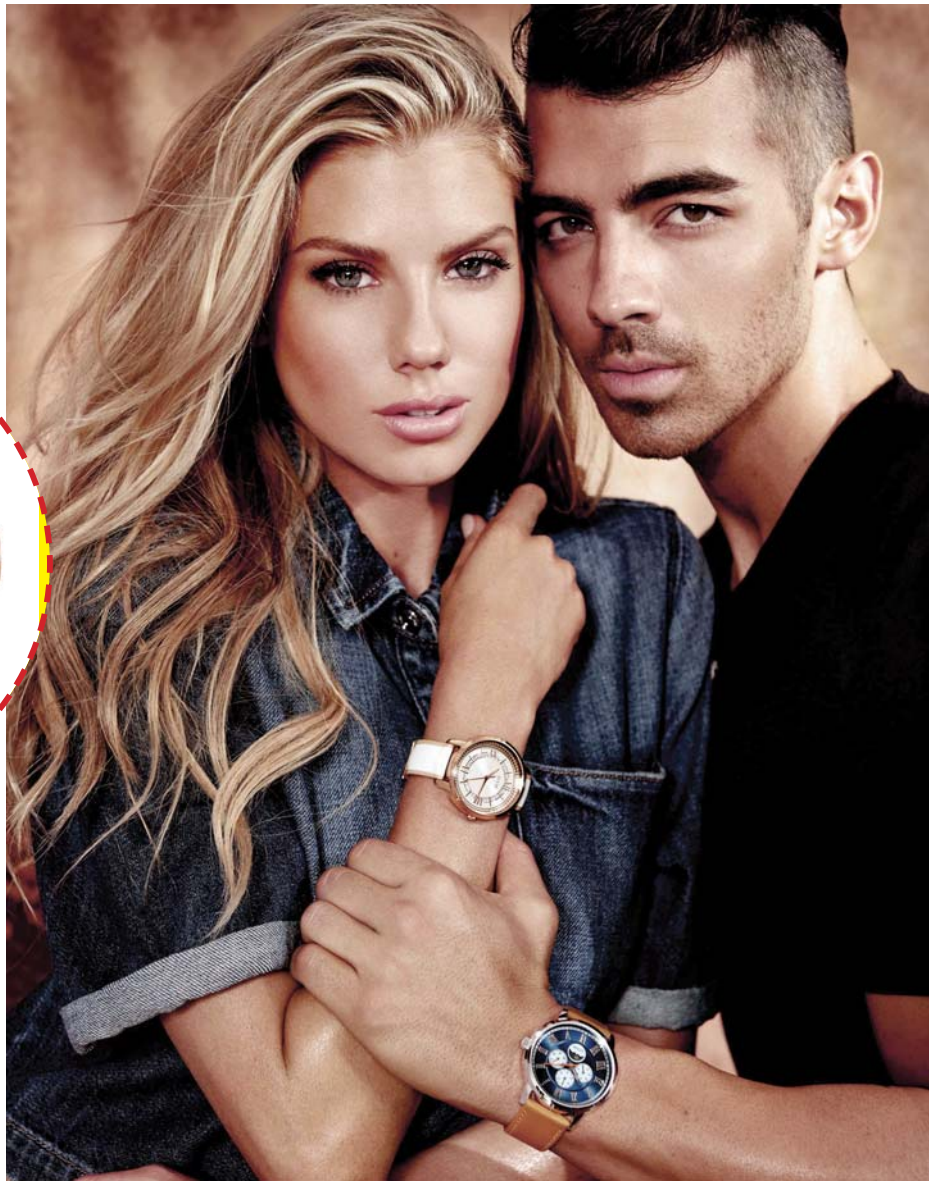
**IPS:** Indian consumers are increasingly showing interest in fashion watches. Urban dwellers, particularly from smart cities are aspiring and acquiring fashion watches, thus, helping in registering an overall growth of 17 percent in the sector. India has one of the largest

youth markets which is only expected to grow and we foresee excellent results in the future. Future strategy involves getting closer with our consumers and speaking to them through media they support such as social media, phone applications and being highly visible thorough POS as well as the internet where the ever evolving fashion consumer is waiting for us.

### How do you plan to increase your customer base and loyalty?

**IPS:** We have big plans for building our own customer base and we are investing money in technology. We understand the potential of a customer loyalty program and also the importance of having one for our brands.





**What about optimizing the customer experience and using technology for it?**

**IPS:** We are looking at technology to build our customer experience to the next level, very soon we will have a mobile app which will help the customer in getting details about upcoming styles and product features. We plan on getting the customer loyalty program also incorporated in the same software. We have already developed a portal for the online shopping base where they register themselves and can get their warranty online. We are looking at several other options for our customers from retail stores and other channels.

**Share your strategy as regards growing the distribution and sales channels.**

**IPS:** We are a fashion brand which focuses on the latest fashion trends from across the globe. As far as our plans in distribution go, we are present in all the tier-I cities and metros in the country, however saying that, we are also very aware of the fashion quotient amongst the tier-II and tier-III cities in India, in some cases they are way ahead of metros in terms of fashion,

look at Siliguri for example. The opportunity lies in the developed as well as developing parts of the country and we aim to tap it through our retail presence via distribution, online or the omni-channel model. Online and omni marketplaces are two channels which we are looking at tapping very aggressively.

**How do you view competition from other watch brands?**

**IPS:** We have always been the leader in getting fashion watches in India. For us competition is not defined by price but with the fashion element various brands get to the table. A lot of brands have started manufacturing in India and are retailing at reduced prices to attract customers. But what the customer in today's market wants is to be unique,

to be in trend and to be different, that's what we offer. The quality of the watches is also something that we give utmost priority to. We have been the number 1 fashion watch brand for over 10 years now and we intend to go ahead with the same principles that we started the business with - Fashion and Quality.

**Finally, share your thoughts on you being a successful female CEO in the retail and distribution industry.**

**IPS:** Organization is the key, you have to be able to be organized and keep a calm head. Setting, implementing and ensuring that systems are being followed are also really important. Additionally, being able to predict trends as much as possible is the key to sustaining in this industry.



# LAUNCH PAD REPORT 2016-17

## GLOBAL FASHION BRANDS ENTERING INDIA

India is becoming a hot bed for international brands and over the past few years. The fact that India is now among the the fastest growing and highly competitive fashion markets in the world is fairly clear by the interest that the global brands have shown in the last few years. A legion of fabled international fashion brands entered the Indian soil in this fiscal – Armani Exchange, Muji, Innamorata, North Face, Massimo Dutti, Cath Kidston, etc., to name a few. On the other hand, a whole line of brands like like Hermes, Louis Vuitton, Gucci, Chanel, Jimmy Choo, Burberry, Dior, Bvlgari, etc., are expanding business rapidly, after having successfully established a stronghold in the yesteryears.

India is among the largest markets of the world in terms of its sheer size which account for an approximate 14.2 percent of the overall global population. It also is one of the most promising and progressively growing economies in the world, and houses a huge populations with considerable spending power. So naturally, with increasing globalization and international trade, the nation has emerged as a land of opportunities for numerous global brands. Over the years, although, a large number of international brands have ventured into the Indian markets, not all were able to crack the success mantra for the mysterious, complex and a diversified market where the tastes and preferences of customers change after a few kilometers.need to adapt to the local market conditions in order to attract the customers towards their brands. Moreover, what poses as a serious obstacle in India is the wide rural and urban divide that creates another challenge in front of companies while establishing an effective distribution network.

On the other hand, there are success stories too. As reported in a feature by Fashion United, British fashion accessories retailer Accessorize's store at Ambience Mall in Gurgaon is the company's second biggest revenue earner. Two US Polo's stores, one in Delhi and the other in Bangalore, rank among their top 10 stores globally. Women's fashion brand Promod's store in Delhi reports the highest sales per sq. ft. in Asia,

In the last couple of years, a new trend has also been witnessed. Several high fashion brands are taking the online only route to enter India, taking advantage of the absence of regulations around selling through third party portals and owing to factors like lack of quality infrastructure and high real estate costs. Under current regulations, the global brands do not require a licence to sell in India through online portals if they do not have operations here.

To sum up, the Indian market is becoming a major attraction for big brands. Those already present, are adopting newer strategies to grow while many others are considering entry. In the next few pages, we feature the latest list of new international fashion brands that entered India in 2016-17.





## >AIGNER<

**F**ounded by Etienne Aigner in 1965 in Munich, Aigner is a cult German brand known for its brilliant combination of German precision and Tuscan tradition. The leather hand bag classics that were designed in the 70s made Aigner world famous and the brand has retained its claim to creating true classics to this day. The brand introduced its line of luxury leather handbags exclusively on Myntra in November 2016. At present the collection includes a variety of saddle bags, sling bags, wallets, shoulder bags, hand bags, hobo bags and clutches. The Munich label promises timeless design paired with well thought functionality and finished with high quality leather. The bags are available in black, beige, navy and chianti red. It is en vogue and epitomizes modern lifestyle and elegance. Aigner is available on Myntra with 150 unique designs from a price point starting at ₹19,000 to ₹55,000. With the addition of Aigner, Myntra has further strengthened its portfolio of international brands which houses over 30 top global brands.



## >ARMANI EXCHANGE<

**T**hanks to Genesis Colors Private Limited, Italian apparels and accessories brand Armani Exchange has marked its foray into the Indian market with its first store in Select Citywalk, Saket, New Delhi. Targeted as the more accessible Armani brand, Armani Exchange was launched in 1991, the result of Giorgio Armani's pioneering idea to target the new generation of fast-fashion consumers. Inspired by the laid-back, modern approach to dressing he observed in the downtown scenes of his favourite cities (Milan, New York, London, Tokyo), the designer created a collection of un-basic 'basics' that embodied the understated sophistication of a new generation. Its approach was refreshing, unexpected and in line with the energy of youth. AIX Armani Exchange offers a complete lifestyle wardrobe through an accessible, versatile range of youthful urban clothing and accessories. The label's products are available exclusively in 270 stores in 31 countries and on the brand's website.



## >BJÖRN BORG<

**B**jörn Borg, a Swedish brand that has stores in seven European countries, has marked its India entry in an exclusive deal with Amazon. Björn Borg AB is a Swedish apparel fashion brand named after the former professional tennis player of the same name. The Björn Borg brand was established in the Swedish fashion market in the first half of the 1990s and today has a strong position in its established markets, particularly in the largest product group, underwear. The brand is distinguished by creative products with the brand's typically sporty identity – products that make customers feel active and attractive. A passion for sports fashion and willingness to challenge the industry shine through in our marketing communications and product development. The brand has on offer a selective collection of undergarments and footwear, including the brand's latest leather sneakers' selection ranging from ₹5,999- ₹7,999.



## >CATH KIDSTON<

**C**ath Kidston is a global lifestyle brand which has recently launched in India with Planet Retail Holdings Private Limited as its franchise partner. Founded in 1993 with a single shop in London's Holland Park, Cath Kidston Ltd is today a fast-growing global lifestyle brand with stores in 18 countries including China, France, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Philippines, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Singapore, Spain, Taiwan, Thailand and the UK. In India, the brand has presence in both the online and offline channels. The first Cath Kidston store was opened in Ambience Mall, Delhi on 28th October, followed by Grand Galleria in Mumbai on 14th November, and a third store opened at Select City Walk, Delhi in December 2016. In line with its name "home of modern vintage", the brand offers a range of products from accessories and women's wear to kidswear and home furnishings. Bags and accessories being the brand's strongest product line in India, it targets the female segment of the market.

## >INNAMORATA<

**I**nnamorata is a European fashion house founded by three close friends and fashion enthusiasts, Rahul, Rishi and Vivek. The brand, that launched its flagship store in Mumbai in October, is one of the first company in India to manufacture and import European fashion from EU hubs like Milan, Barcelona, Paris, London, Lisbon. The flagship store is located in one of the most fashion tangled areas, Linking Road in Bandra West. Innamorata embraces elegant and gentle colours with the aims to launch styles that completely embody feminine graceful figures and deliver unique and pure glamour like never before. Manufactured from France, UK, Italy, Turkey, Spain and Portuguese markets, the brand's collections are bold, vivid distinctive, crazy, hot, sophisticated, dynamic, creative, amazing and ambitious. Innamorata plans to change their collection every 15-20 days to always stay ahead in fashion and remain trend setters.



## >LOVE MOSCHINO<

**F**ounded in 1983 by Italian designer Franco Moschino, brand MOSCHINO is acclaimed internationally for their innovative and colorful designs that challenge contemporary conventions in fashion. LOVE MOSCHINO is the brand's younger counterpart and features a line that reflects the stylistic philosophy and the iconic motifs. Different lines of accessories complete the label's ready-to-wear collections including, bags, shoes, charms, eyewear, watches and small leather goods have become must-have items and details of style in the wardrobe of both men and women. In March 2014, the label debuted in the retail area with the opening of its first flagship store in Milan, at Corso Venezia. In India, Myntra houses a variety of handbags, backpacks, sling-bags, clutches and wallets from LOVE MOSCHINO. Merging pop culture with high fashion, the collection comprises a range of quilted bags and iconic patchwork tote to geometric cut and studded box clutch. The hot off the press collection is priced between ₹7,999 and ₹24,999. Shoppers on Myntra can choose from among shades of red, black, ivory and beige.



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IMAGES Business of Fashion



## >LONGCHAMP<

**F**rench label Longchamp finally made its way to India, and launched their first flagship store at the DLF Emporio, New Delhi in association with DOIT Retail Brands. The 1,000 square foot store stocks some of Longchamp's most loved products, like the Le Pliage Heritage, Penelope, Roaseau and Le Pliage Cuir bags, along with an assortment of accessories. Founded in Paris in 1948 by Jean Cassegrain, Longchamp is a family-owned brand. Its handbags, mostly made from stylish nylon canvas with leather trims, luggage and accessories, have a global reputation for craftsmanship and quality. Over time, the brand extended to shoes and ready-to-wear collections. Fans of these products include major Hollywood royalty, and well, real royalty as well: Kate Middleton, Duchess of Cambridge, has been seen sporting the brand many a time. Presently, the brand owns more than 300 exclusive stores globally and retails from another 1,500 points of sales.



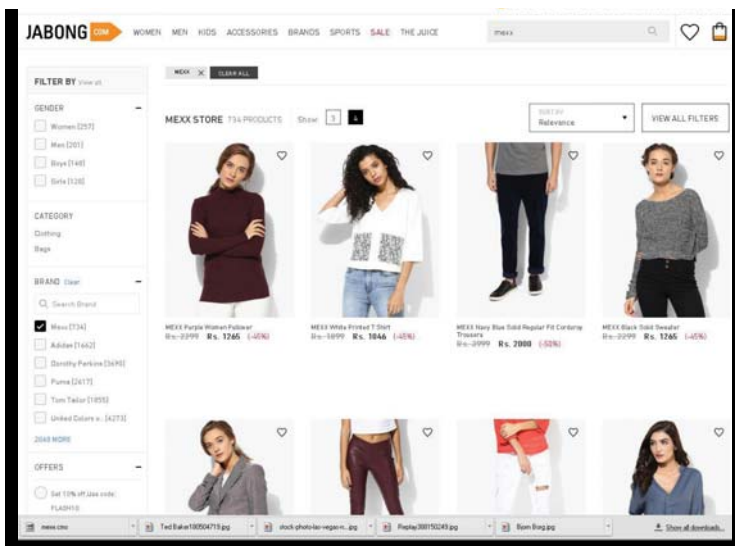
## >MASSIMO DUTTI<

**S**panish premium fashion brand, Massimo Dutti will open doors to its first in India at New Delhi's Select Citywalk mall on May 2016 in association with the Inditex Group. The store is spread across 5,027 sq. ft. of retail space and offers a vast collection across women's wear, men's wear, footwear, accessories and personal tailoring. While men's t-shirts start at ₹1,990, the highest priced jacket is ₹24,990. Accessories like socks are at ₹490, while women's tops start from ₹1,590. Massimo Dutti has been trying to come to India since 2012 but its initial investment proposal was rejected by the Foreign Investment Promotion Board on account of issues around the ownership of brand. The Indian law states that the investor should also be the owner of the brand. Apart from Select City Walk, the brand has also launched a store Globally, Massimo Dutti operates 755 stores across 73 countries between Europe, America and Asia.



## >MEXX<

**M**exx, the iconic Dutch fashion brand launched entered India in association with fashion retailer Jabong. Mexx was started in 1986 by a Delhi born visionary named Rattan Chadha in Amsterdam. He took his two brands, Moustache, his men's brand (M), and Emanuelle, his women's brand (E), and joined them to create a Mexx. Since then the brand has been designing quality fashion and accessories that take inspiration from the energy and buzz of the city of Amsterdam. Apart from its collection for women, men, kids and accessories, the brand also licenses its name for fragrance, and eye wear. Over time, Mexx has grown to become an international brand with over 800 stores in 55 countries and more than 10,000 points of sales. It has grown rapidly and is now an internationally prominent company, employing over 6,000 people worldwide. Mexx's Spring-Summer'16 collection available in Jabong takes inspiration from the following trends: Street, Collection and Atelier.



## >MIZUNO<

**A**pril 2016 In April last year, Myntra announced the launch of yet another top global sportswear brand, Mizuno, on its platform. Founded in Osaka in 1906 by Rihanchi Mizuno, Mizuno is a Japanese sportswear brand that has established itself as one of the world's top manufacturers of sportswear and sports equipment, especially golf clubs and accessories. Stag International serves as the distributor for Mizuno in India. Products of Mizuno



available on Myntra include footwear and sports apparel with over 140 unique styles, to suit the requirements of men and women across age groups. Sports shoes from Mizuno's patented 'WAVE' technology is core strength of the brand. It is a unique midsole technology that provides both, cushioning and stability on every step, resulting in a smoother and comfortable run. This state-of-the-art range of footwear is now available on Myntra & Flipkart from a price point starting at ₹1,299 up to ₹13,999.

## >METERS/BONWE<

**T**he Meters/bonwe group has established itself as a premium high street fashion retailer, full of vitality and vigor to meet the style requirements of today's youth. Founded in 1995, the Chinese brand has over 24 branch offices and has more than 4,000 stores and over 13,000 employees nationwide. It focuses on dressing young men and women in clothes that are fashion forward, elegant and chic. In, India the group came in with an exclusive partnership with Myntra and has on offer a stylish collection of men's polo t-shirts, t-shirts, blazers, sweatshirts, sweaters, denim and shirts. For women, it brings trendy and chic jeans, dresses, skirts, winterwear, coats and t-shirts that are sewn to perfection. In addition, a range of handbags and bags are also available. Myntra's business experts believe that it will be a preferred brand for their customer base, which is dominated by mass-premium across town categories.





## >MUJI<

**T**he international lifestyle retail brand MUJI opened its doors in Bangalore in September as part of Japan's Ryohin Keikaku Co., Ltd., through a joint venture with Reliance Brands Ltd., a part of the Reliance Industries Group. MUJI, which started as a private brand of The Seiyu, Ltd. in December 1980 with only 40 products, has grown and now offers about 7,000 products. Ryohin Keikaku was spun off from Seiyu in 1989 and became a manufacturer/retailer for the planning, development, production, distribution and sale of MUJI products, which include diverse necessities such as clothes, household articles and food. MUJI's first store opened in Palladium Mumbai, followed by another in Greater Bengaluru's VR Bengaluru, popularly known as Black Box. Their extensive range in India includes men's, women's and children's apparel, bags, shoes and accessories, furniture, homeware, beauty products, stationery, electronics, bedding and travel goods. The company has over 700 stores in 27 countries and areas, including Japan

## >NEIL BARRETT<

**I**talian fashion brand Neil Barrett forayed into the Indian market with an exclusive partnership with Fervour, a multi-brand boutique that stocks international designer brands such as Dsquared2, Marc Jacobs, Nina Ricci, Missoni, and Jil Sander. The eponymous label was established in 1999 by designer Neil Barrett, who has previously worked as creative director for luxury houses such as Gucci and Prada. The designer was instrumental in establishing a blueprint of minimal men's wear in Prada that combined luxurious fabrics and unparalleled Italian craftsmanship with high-tech sportswear and a forward-thinking approach to the modern man's wardrobe. Neil Barret collections are exclusively made in Italy, which has further helped the company to maintain its presence as an international brand in the fashion market. Since the inception of the company, its products are endorsed by famous celebrities across the globe including Ewan McGregor, Mark Ruffalo, Orlando Bloom, Colin Firth, Jake Gyllenhaal and Justin Timberlaker.



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## REPLAY

**R**eplay's parent company, Fashion Box S.p.A. is now one of the leading international companies in the denim sector. The Italian Group which is based in Asolo (Treviso) creates, promotes and distributes men's, women's and children's casual wear, accessories and footwear. Other brand extension projects like EYEWEAR and the Replay PERFUME lines are assigned to License partners. At present, Fashion Box operates in all European markets and in the Middle East, Asia America and Africa in over 50 countries, with the wholesale distribution network having 5,000 sales outlets and 220 retail stores. Replay forayed into the Indian soil in an exclusive deal with Amazon. The brand's product basket in India concentrates on denims, footwear and casual wear for both men and women.

## >ROADSTER MOTOGP<

**W**ith more than 60 years of history, MotoGP™ is the pinnacle of motorcycle racing. Over the years, the company's eponymous motorcycling apparel brand, that complements the true spirit of the FIM MotoGP World Championship with its focus on functional design and affordability, has become a hallmark in its own segment. On August 16 2016, Dorna Sports, an international sports management, marketing and media company that has held exclusive commercial and television rights for the FIM Road Racing World Championship Grand Prix MotoGP, partnered with Myntra's private label lifestyle brand Roadstar to launch Moto GP in India.

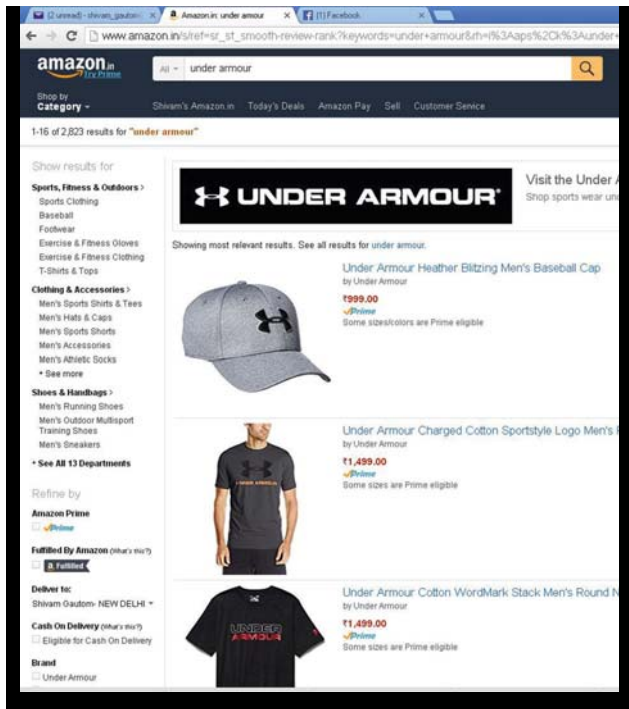
The Roadster MotoGP collection currently includes an inspirational and functional range of jackets, denims and t-shirts that delivers exceptional style and protection for the 'unstoppable' biker. The abrasion-resistant jackets skillfully incorporate air vents and accordion panels to provide maximum freedom of movement and a detachable thermal lining has been included in the product range - making it a versatile fit for all weather conditions. The riding jackets are priced at ₹10,000 and the shirts and t-shirts cost ₹1,000 and ₹900 respectively.



## >TOMS<



**M**yntra today announced the launch of TOMS on its platform in August 2016. The US brand is known internationally for its One for One® promise, where for every pair of shoes you purchase, TOMS will give a pair of new shoes to a child in need. Launched in 2006 with the iconic canvas slip-on called the Alpargata, Tom's has rapidly expanded into new shoe silhouettes and product categories. Today, the brand is present in more than 500 stores nationwide and internationally. In addition to its classic Alpargata, TOMS offers a variety of footwear styles for men and women, from everyday-wear Paseo sneakers to fun and flirty strappy wedges, in unique textiles and patterns often inspired by the countries around the globe where it gives. TOMS also launched other products including TOMS Eyewear in 2011, TOMS Roasting Co. in 2014, and TOMS Bags and TOMS High Road Backpack Collection in 2015. The Indian collection, as of now, encompasses only footwear within the price bracket of ₹2,000- ₹6,000.



## >UNDER ARMOUR<

**A**merica's second largest sportswear brand, Under Armour, entered India through Amazon Fashion. Specializing in men's, women's and youth apparel, footwear and equipment, the Under Armour brand has launched a range of products for running and training on Amazon Fashion for Indian consumers. Under Armour signature products on Amazon Fashion include premium apparel technology, such as Threadborne and Charged Cotton, designed to keep athletes cooler, dryer and lighter throughout the course of a game, practice or workout. Premium footwear innovations include UA SpeedForm for precision fit, Charged Cushioning for responsiveness, durability, optimal cushioning and energy return, and Micro G for increased protection and stabilization. Price range for Under Armour apparel starts from ₹1,299 to ₹3,999, footwear from ₹4,499 to ₹12,999 and accessories from ₹499 to ₹4,999. The products are targeted at people aged between 25 to 34 pursuing active sports and fitness regimes.

## >VISMAYA<

**V**ismaya was established by a multi-talented & committed brother-sister duo of Yatin Narula and Shivani Mehrotra, out of a sheer desire to offer to the world something unique and creative. Based in Los Angeles, Vismaya is popular in various parts of Europe, Japan and North America for its seasonal collections of gorgeous accessories in vibrant colors, rhythmic patterns, and sumptuous fabrics including silk, linen, wool, cotton, cashmere, modal and a variety of blends. It also has had experience working with some of the big names in the fashion industry including Neiman Marcus, Gap, Lucky Brand Jeans, BCBG and Calypso St Barth. In India, Vismaya will offer a collection of genuine cashmere and pashmina embroidered stoles as well as elegantly crafted heirloom shawls including antique jamvars, kalamkaari, kaanis, soznis, and papier mache. The collection is retailed on the brand's own site.



*This piece has been compiled by Team Images Business of Fashion, and is based on both received and public sources of information. Due to the dynamic nature of the market and media, some information may have changed since the time of the original research.*

# DUKE LAUNCHES ITS ALL NEW

## “CANVAS SHOES”

# COLLECTION



Duke Fashions (India) Ltd. proudly presented its high profile and extensive collection of Duke canvas shoes, recently. These canvas shoes instantly boost any casual ensemble and add a spark of style in the overall appearance. The entire range is perfect for any weekend getaways as these are high on style and also gives extreme comfort to the wearer.

The newly launched collection has mixed colour patterns which are created on cotton fabric. The in-sole and out-sole of these shoes are made with rubber are non-slippery, wear resistant, light weight, and are easy to clean and highly comfortable.

Duke prides in offering the latest fashion trends as well as the classic charms in men's shoes. Made from durable, long-lasting material, this collection offers a distinctly relaxed appeal. Style wise, the range incorporates smart, comfortable and design features like vulcanized construction to bond the upper and out-sole, padded tongues and collars. The collection also features detailed branding.

Talking about the new collection, Kuntal Raj Jain, Director, Duke Fashions (India) Ltd., said, “With the needs of the fashion industry changing constantly, we are always looking towards products that can deliver a high degree of style and quality. We work to develop quality that challenge industry standards in sustainability, performance and feel. The way we do business is a way of redefining what business can mean and the effect it can have.”

The canvas shoes are available in multiple sizes and attractive colours and are priced between ₹499- ₹1,499 at select Duke store, MBOs and various online portals. Duke has an unbeatable marketing network comprising of over 4000 multi-brand outlets and over 360 exclusive stores across major cities in India. Moreover, the products are also exclusively placed at major large format stores like Central, Reliance, Hypercity, etc. and are available at online portals like Myntra, Snapdeal, Jabong, Flipkart, Fashionara, Amazon and [www.dukeindia.com](http://www.dukeindia.com).

The brand had previously launched its premium footwear collection, ‘Step Ahead’.



**IFF** INDIA FASHION FORUM 2017

**CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE FORUM**

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# INDIA FASHION FORUM (IFF) 2017, RENAISSANCE, MUMBAI

## AGENDA - 12TH & 13TH APRIL, 2017

### IFF Day 1 12th April

#### CURTAIN RAISER & KNOWLEDGE SERIES

##### [ GRAND BALL ROOM ]

10 am to 12.05 pm

10.00 am - 10.45 am

FASHION IN THE ERA OF CONNECTED CONSUMERS

► **Pulkit Trivedi**, Director Industry Verticals (India), Facebook

10.45 am - 11.05 am

INDIAN FASHION MARKET

► **Saloni Nangia**, President, Technopak Advisors

11.05 am - 11.25 am

FASHION INTELLIGENCE

► **Vineet Satija**, Associate Director, PwC

11.25 am - 11.45 am

THE CHANGING CONSUMER & HOW THE INDUSTRY CAN KEEP PACE WITH HIM

► **Hemant Mehta**, Managing Director - Media, Digital & Chief Strategy Officer, Kantar IMRB

11.45 am - 12.05 pm

DRIVING GROWTH IN THE DIGITAL ERA

► **Neelesh Hundekari**, Partner - Consumer & Retail Practice, AT Kearney

#### THE GRAND INAUGURAL

##### [ GRAND BALL ROOM ]

12:05 to 1:30 pm

12.05 pm - 12.15 pm

IFF CHAIRMAN'S WELCOME ADDRESS & INTRODUCTION TO 17th EDITION OF IFF

► **Suresh J.**, Chairman IFF 2017, MD & CEO, Arvind Lifestyle Brands

12.15 pm - 01.30 pm

IFF INAUGURAL - BRINGING ALIVE THE FUTURE OF FASHION THROUGH INNOVATION, CONSUMER INSIGHTS, AND RETAIL DIFFERENTIATION

► **Moderator :**

► **B S Nagesh**, Founder, TRRAIN

► **Suresh J.**, Chairman IFF 2017, MD & CEO, Arvind Lifestyle Brands

► **Dilip Kapur**, President, Hidesign

► **Govind Shrikhande**, MD, Shoppers Stop

► **Prashant Gupta**, President & CEO, abof.com - all about fashion

► **Tushar Ved**, President, Major Brands

► **Bijou Kurien**, Board Member, L Capital (LVMH Group)

#### EDITORIAL MEET

##### [ SPEAKERS LOUNGE ]

1.30 pm - 3.00 pm

// DESIGN AND CONSUMER ENGAGEMENT

// IN-STORE AMBIENCE STRATEGIES

### PHILIPS

- **Anand Aiyer**, Senior Vice President and Business Head - Easybuy (Max Retail), Lifestyle International
- **Animesh Ikshit**, Head - Projects & VM, Benetton India
- **Darshana Srivastava**, Head of VM, Gap Arvind Lifestyle Brands
- **Deepak Chakravarty**, Head VM, Retail Marketing, Bata India
- **Nagendra Pratap Singh**, Head - VM, Raymond
- **Rajesh Jain**, MD & CEO, Lacoste
- **Sanjay Choudhury**, Creative Director, TARGET
- **Rajesh Kadam**, COO, INC 5
- **Sandeep Mistry**, IT Head, Aditya Birla - Pantaloons
- **Santosh Dubey**, Head - Projects, Bestseller
- **Vardan Sharma**, Head of Marketing, Retail B2B Business, Philips South Asia

#### TRENDS

[ HALL A ]

02.30 pm - 03.30 pm

RETAIL TRENDS & MARKET INTELLIGENCE

**WGSN**

Insights: Store Design & VM Trends

► **Erica NG**, Senior Editor, WGSN  
Insight APAC

03.30 pm - 04.30 pm

SPORTSWEAR TRENDS

► **Brian Tam**, Design and Marketing Consultant, The Woolmark Company



1.30 pm - 2.30 pm

**Lunch Meet:** Project/ VM Heads/ Store & Shop fit Design Professionals  
@ Grand Ballroom 3

**Lunch Meet:** Speakers and CEOs  
@ Speakers Lounge hosted by Arvind

## VIRTUALIZATION

02.30 pm - 03.30 pm [ HALL Z ]

### THE INTERNET OF THINGS AND VIRTUALIZATION OF RETAIL

– POWERED BY ACCENTURE

- ▶ **Prashant Gupta**, President & CEO, abof.com - all about fashion
- ▶ **Anuradha Madhusudan**, Director Marketing, TARGET
- ▶ **Ena Bansal**, Chief Digital Strategist, Vajor.com
- ▶ **Karan Behal**, Founder and CEO, PrettySecrets.com
- ▶ **Manoj Krishnan**, Senior Vice President, Information Technology, Landmark Group
- ▶ **Sachin Oswal**, Omnichannel Head, Shoppers Stop
- ▶ **Santosh Dubey**, Head – Projects, Bestseller
- ▶ **Sudhir Soundalgekar**, Director – Projects, Raymond
- ▶ **Vishal Kapil**, Director IT, adidas Group

#### Co-Chairs:

- ▶ **Sandeep Rai Sharma**, Managing Director, Accenture
- ▶ **Manish Nadir**, Retail Capability Lead, Accenture

## EXPERIENTIAL

03.30 pm - 04.30 pm [ HALL Z ]

### CX (CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE) FORUM: ENHANCING SUPPLY CHAIN CAPABILITIES FOR A GREAT CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE

– POWERED BY GATI

- ▶ **Atul Bajaj**, Executive Director – Product, Merchandising & Supply Chain, Puma Sports India
- ▶ **C Devadas Nair**, Customer Care Associate & Head Supply Chain & Mission Control, Shoppers Stop
- ▶ **Darshana Srivastava**, Head of VM, Gap Arvind Lifestyle Brands
- ▶ **Deepak Chakravarty**, Head VM and Retail Marketing, Bata India
- ▶ **Aqeel Ahmed**, MD, Florence Shoes (Launching the French brand – GUY Laroche in India)
- ▶ **Ishaan Sachdeva**, Director, Alberto Toressi
- ▶ **Mahesh Khetan**, AVP - Supply Chain Management, Aditya Birla Fashion & Retail
- ▶ **Rajesh Kadam**, COO, Inc 5
- ▶ **Ranjan Sharma**, Head IT, Bestseller Retail (Jack & Jones, Vero Moda, ONLY)
- ▶ **Srikanth R**, Head - Innerwear & Accessories, Supply Chain, Raymond
- ▶ **Sudhir Gupta**, Head, ITC Lifestyle Retailing Business
- ▶ **Dhruv Agarwal**, Chief Strategy Officer, GATI
- ▶ **Kundan Chauhan**, Head - Supply Chain Operations, GATI

## MARKETING LIFESTYLE

04.30 pm – 05.00 pm

[ HALL Z ]

### ‘DON’T SELL A PRODUCT – MARKET A LIFESTYLE’ – HARLEY-DAVIDSON

A case study of collaboration and shared values between brand and its partners

- ▶ **Pallavi Singh**, Director Marketing, **Harley-Davidson**
- ▶ Along with an actual bike customer and a dealer partner

## BUYERS BRIEF

05.00 pm - 06.00 pm

[ HALL A ]

### BUYERS BRIEFING WGSN - A/W 17/18

- ▶ **Priya Sachdeva**, Business Director – South Asia, WGSN
- ▶ *Engagement Facilitator:*  
**Prem Sadhwani**, Business Development Partner, Consolidate Pathways Inc

## EXPERIENTIAL

05.00 pm - 06.00 pm

[ HALL Z ]

### BUILDING A TRULY SYNERGISTIC AND POWERFUL OMNICHANNEL STRATEGY

- ▶ **Moderator: Vinay Bhatia**, CEO - Loyalty & Analytics, Future Group
- ▶ **Alexander Köth**, Managing Director & Founder, Minodes GmbH (Germany)
- ▶ **Anil Shankar**, CCA & VP – IT, Shoppers Stop
- ▶ **Anand Aiyer**, Senior Vice President and Business Head – Easybuy (Max Retail), Lifestyle International
- ▶ **Animesh Ikshith**, Head - Projects & VM, Benetton India
- ▶ **Dhruv Agarwal**, Chief Strategy Officer, GATI
- ▶ **Mridumesh Rai**, Brand Director – Park Avenue, Raymond
- ▶ **Shivanandan Pare**, Head - New Digital Businesses, Aditya Birla Fashion and Retail

## OMNI-CHANNEL

05.00 pm - 06.00 pm [ HALL Z ]

### BUILDING A TRULY SYNERGISTIC AND POWERFUL OMNICHANNEL STRATEGY

- ▶ **Moderator: Vinay Bhatia**, CEO - Loyalty & Analytics, Future Group
- ▶ **Alexander Köth**, Managing Director & Founder, Minodes GmbH (Germany)
- ▶ **Anil Shankar**, CCA & VP – IT, Shoppers Stop
- ▶ **Anand Aiyer**, Senior Vice President and Business Head – Easybuy (Max Retail), Lifestyle International
- ▶ **Animesh Ikshith**, Head - Projects & VM, Benetton India
- ▶ **Dhruv Agarwal**, Chief Strategy Officer, GATI
- ▶ **Mridumesh Rai**, Brand Director – Park Avenue, Raymond
- ▶ **Shivanandan Pare**, Head - New Digital Businesses, Aditya Birla Fashion and Retail

## BRAND FINANCE

06.00 pm - 07.00 pm [ HALL Z ]

### BRAND VALUATION & VALUE CREATION

- ▶ **Ajimon Francis**, Managing Director (India), Brand Finance

## FASHION SHOW

07.00 pm onwards



THE WOOLMARK COMPANY  
presents  
INDIA BRAND SHOW

- ▶ FOLLOWED BY DINNER
- ▶ TREND-AHEAD CATWALK PRESENTATIONS FROM LEADING NAMES IN FASHION

Participating Designers:

**Dhruv // Nachiket Barve // Omar**

Participating Brands:

**Van Heusen // Louis Philippe // Mexico Jeans // Celio // Tommy Hilfger // Raymond // Venturini**

## IFF Day 2: 13th April

### DIGITAL & EXPERIENTIAL

#### [GRAND BALL ROOM]

10.00 am - 11.00 am

**"DIGITAL OR DIE" : GOING BEYOND INFLUENCE AND E-COMMERCE – HOW CAN TECHNOLOGY RESHAPE YOUR BUSINESS**

- ▶ **Lead Presenter & Moderator : Abheek Singhi**, Senior Partner and Director, BCG
- ▶ **Atul Bajaj**, Executive Director, Puma Sports India
- ▶ **Benu Sehgal**, CEO, Vegas Mall
- ▶ **Kavindra Mishra**, MD & CEO, Pepe
- ▶ **Krishna Kumar**, Founder & MD, Simbus Technologies
- ▶ **Rajesh Jain**, Managing Director & CEO, Lacoste
- ▶ **Sumeet Soni**, Director - Commercial, Benetton Group
- ▶ **Sunil Bansal**, Chief Financial Strategy Officer, Kazo Fashion
- ▶ **Vijay Jain**, CEO & Founder, Orna Fine Jewellery

11.00 am - 12.00 pm

**HOW CAN A FASHION BRAND GROW FAST IN THE DIGITAL WORLD**

- Moderator: Siddharth Jain**, Principal, AT Kearney
- ▶ **Anuraag Singhal**, Group VM-Creative Lead, Madura Fashion & Lifestyle
  - ▶ **G S Bhati**, MD, Infinitas Technology Solutions
  - ▶ **Gaurav Agarwal**, Managing Partner, Rider Footwear LLP
  - ▶ **Kamal Khushlani**, MD, Mufti
  - ▶ **Kinjal Shah**, Customer Care Associate & CEO, Crossword Bookstores
  - ▶ **Manjula Tiwari**, CEO, Future Style Lab (Cover Story)
  - ▶ **Shantiswarup Panda**, Chief Marketing Officer, Raymond Lifestyle
  - ▶ **Vivek Gaur**, CEO and Co-founder, Yepme.com

12.00 pm - 01.30 pm

**CX (CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE) FORUM**

- ▶ **Lead Presentation:** Vikram Idnani, Head IT, Trent
- ▶ **Moderator: Vishal Kapil**, Director IT, adidas Group
- ▶ **Bhavik Jhaveri**, CEO and Founder, Pretr
- ▶ **Kunal Mehta**, Head - IT, Lifestyle Business, Raymond
- ▶ **Nathasha Kumar**, Founder and

Creative Director, Vajor.com

- ▶ **Preeti Sukhtankar**, Founder, TheLabelLife.com (Curated collection of Sussanne Khan, Malaika Arora Khan & Bipasha Basu)
- ▶ **Rakesh Mishra**, VP and Head of Digital and Marketing, Target
- ▶ **Sandeep Mistry**, IT Head, Aditya Birla Fashion & Retail – Pantaloons
- ▶ **Vishakha Singh**, Founder, RedPolka.com

1.30 pm - 2.30 pm

**Lunch Meet:** CIOs/ CTOs/ CXOs

@ Grand Ballroom 3

**Lunch Meet:** Speakers and CEOs

@ Speakers Lounge hosted by Arvind

### GLOBAL BRANDS

#### [GRAND BALL ROOM]

02.30 pm - 03.30 pm

**INDIA THE PROMISED LAND FOR FOREIGN BRANDS**

- ▶ **Research Presenter and Moderator: Devangshu Dutta**, Chief Executive, Third Eyesight
- ▶ **Oliver Kaye**, India CEO, Gap
- ▶ **R Satyajit**, International Brands & Chief Omni-Channel Officer, Aditya Birla Retail
- ▶ **Vivek Bali**, India Head, Sephora
- ▶ **Darshan Mehta**, President, Reliance Brands\*
- ▶ **Rakesh Mishra**, VP and Head of Marketing, Target
- ▶ **Bijou Kurien**, Board Member, L Capital (LVMH Group)

### MALL & RETAILERS

#### [ GRAND BALL ROOM ]

03.30 pm - 05.00 pm

**7 SUCCESS STORIES OF MALLS & RETAILER COLLABORATIONS**

- ▶ **Moderators :**
- **B S Nagesh**, Founder, TRRAIN
- **Pankaj Renjhen**, MD - Retail Services, JLL India
- ▶ DLF Mall of India and Calvin Klein
- ▶ High Street Phoenix and Genesis Group
- ▶ The Great India Place
- ▶ Infinity and Best Seller
- ▶ Prestige Malls and Soch
- ▶ Select CITYWALK
- ▶ Gardens Galleria

### STAND-UP EXCELLENCE

#### [GRAND BALL ROOM]

05.00 pm - 07.00 pm

**SOLO EXPRESS PRESENTATIONS (5 MINUTES EACH) BY VIBRANT FASHION CEOS**

**Anchors:**

- **Bijou Kurien**, Board Member, L Capital (LVMH Group)
- **Harish Mehta**, Motivational Speaker. Mentor, Teacher & Trainer
- ▶ **Abhishek Ganguly**, MD, Puma
- ▶ **Alok Dubey**, CEO, Arvind Lifestyle Brands
- ▶ **Anant Daga**, CEO, W
- ▶ **Apeksha Patel**, CEO, Deal women's wear & and E2O Bags
- ▶ **Avnish Kumar**, Director, Neeru's Ensembles
- ▶ **Ganesh Subramanian**, Founder & CEO, Stylumia (Ex COO Myntra)
- ▶ **Gaurav Mahajan**, President-Group Apparel, Raymond
- ▶ **Lalit Agarwal**, CMD, V-Mart
- ▶ **Manish Mandhana**, CEO, Mandhana Retail Ventures
- ▶ **Manjula Tiwari**, CEO, Cover Story
- ▶ **Manoviraj Khosla**, Designer
- ▶ **Mohita Indrayan**, Director, 612 League and Manu Indrayan, MD, 612 League (Duet)
- ▶ **Pradeep Hirani**, Chairman, Kimaya
- ▶ **Priyadarshani Rao**, Creative Director, Minerals and Jaydeep Shetty, CEO, Minerals (Duet)
- ▶ **Rahul Jashnani**, MD, Jashn
- ▶ **Shailesh Chaturvedi**, MD & CEO, Tommy Hilfiger Apparels India
- ▶ **Sharmila Nadkarni**, Owner, Desibelle
- ▶ **Vineet Gautam**, CEO & Country Head, Bestseller India (Jack & Jones, Vero Moda, ONLY)
- ▶ **Vijay Jain**, CEO & Founder, Orna Fine Jewellery
- ▶ **Yashika Punjabee**, Creative Director & Co Founder, TheLabelLife.com



### GRAND FINALE

07.00 pm onwards

- ▶ **IMAGES FASHION AWARDS**
- ▶ **ENTERTAINMENT**
- ▶ **COCKTAILS & DINNER**





# MEET THE MASTERS

VISION AND VIEWS OF  
FASHION THOUGHT LEADERS



# MEET THE MASTERS

VISION AND VIEWS OF FASHION THOUGHT LEADERS

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# MACHO

*Bade aaram se*



# MEET THE MASTERS

VISION AND VIEWS OF FASHION THOUGHT LEADERS

India is poised for a great growth. Indeed, we sit at the cusp of a fashion revolution in India. As per a research in the India Business of Fashion Report 2017, the domestic apparel market will expand from approximately ₹3 lakh crores in 2016 to approximately ₹7.5 lakh crores by the year 2026. With all booming indicators projecting great days for the fashion market, it is also our conviction that it is our finest fashion leaders who will take the lead in driving the market to its full potential. In this special feature, we speak to some of India's finest fashion leaders and present their vision and views on taking the market forward.

While we present the vision and views of fashion leaders in the pages that follow, as a prologue, Harminder Sahni, Founder & CEO, Wazir Advisors, who has vast experience of working with fashion leaders, shares his thoughts on what makes a great fashion leader.



**-Harminder Sahni,**  
Founder & MD, Wazir Advisors

## PROLOGUE

### THE WAYS OF A MASTER

On the face of it, a fashion business CEO should be no different from a CEO of any other business, or at least, any consumer business. But nothing could be farther from truth. Fashion business is really a unique business with its own fundamentally different characteristics. And that's the reason that fashion business CEO needs to be a very different professional.

So when I was asked to write about the traits of a fashion CEO, I decided to not talk about the general traits of a CEO and chose to focus on the additional or unique characteristics that will define a "Fashion CEO".

I believe there are 3 key traits that are absolutely necessary for succeeding as a fashion CEO.

The first and foremost is having an *acute appreciation of fashion*. While a CEO of an FMCG company may not be deeply engaged with all its products, but can be quite successful focusing on other aspects like distribution and marketing. However, a fashion CEO must understand fashion and be sensitive to its subtle nuances. Consumers are attracted to fashion brands mostly on emotional grounds and aren't rational in their choices. If CEO doesn't understand that how fashion works, he may become too focused on the rational elements and miss out on the emotional aspect completely. We have seen this happen to many leading brands globally and those finally disappeared or were later restored by a real fashion CEO.

The second trait is *to be a destroyer rather than a creator*. It may sound counter intuitive because fashion is a business of creating something new all the time. But, I reckon that to create something new it is most important to destroy the old. Most consumer businesses CEOs look for winners that can last forever. Everyone is searching for next Corolla or a Surf Excel type of product. But in fashion, if a CEO tries to discover products that can be winners and be sold longer, she would be writing an epitaph for the brand.

The third but equally important trait is *understanding of materials* i.e. textiles and accessories. Fashion consumers care about materials in their clothing much more than they care about ingredients in their food. Having a deep understanding of variety of fabrics and its interplay with other materials is the basis of appreciating fashion beyond colors and styling. Fashion CEOs must accept that the fashion business is like a restaurant business where one can learn the recipe to reproduce something that looks same as the picture in the book. But the real magic differentiator is in the choice of ingredients and sleight of hand. CEO must learn about materials and be involved in the process of creation to keep its brand relevant, desirable and unique.

To sum it up, a fashion CEO must be fashionable (not necessarily overtly), should never look for core products or long tail and must understand the materials that make fashion.



### LEADER TALK:

# WHAT IS FASHION?

First up, Images BoF asks the fashion leaders the basic fundamental question....

In an increasingly VUCA world, fashion helps us look good and feel good. It's the red lipstick that I put on to give me the confidence to face the world. In the Age of You, of social media, of connectedness, not through letters and e-mails but through Facebook and Instagram, where images flow more than words—fashion becomes the pivot. Fashion therefore reflects in the sense, the mood, the culture, the lifestyle of people and of India as a nation - especially its youth.

**-Rachna Aggarwal,**  
CEO, Future Lifestyle Fashion

For an individual, fashion is an expression of one's personality. But as an industry in a developing nation, especially a diverse one like ours - not only does fashion make a big contribution to employment and economy but it also bridges the gap between rural and urban India.

**- Anita Dongre,**  
Chief Creative Officer -  
Design, House of Anita  
Dongre Ltd.

Fashion is the style of an individual, in which he or she is comfortable in. It's about how you carry yourself, and in the end your fashion/style reflects you. Fashion is important because it adds to your self image and confidence. You have to be dressed well to make that good first impression! As for India as a nation, consumers today are very fashionable and always on the lookout for new trends to add to their wardrobe.

**- Kavindra Mishra,**  
Managing Director, Pepe Jeans  
India Ltd.

I think fashion is something of a basic commodity. It's something which you are wearing and is an expression of oneself. It is getting extremely important at least for the millennial generation. Fashion is no more an individual activity, it is a unanimous culmination of different people and different religions and castes, etc. So it can't be restricted to one person, it has to be a combination of society at a larger scale.

**- Manish Mandhana,**  
Chief Executive Officer, The  
Mandhana Retail Vent

Fashion is how you want to convey yourself to others. Fashion gives you a distinct look and appeal. According to me, attiring gives you confidence and helps you to command respect among peers.

**- Sandeep Jain,**  
Executive Director,  
Monte Carlo Fashions Ltd.

Fashion to me is more than clothes and accessories, it is about wearing your confidence. It's a fantastic way to express your personality and let people know who you are. You can change your fashion according to different situations. And just because you look different you are perceived differently.

**- Sahil Malik,**  
Managing Director,  
Da Milano Leathers Pvt. Ltd.

## WHAT IS FASHION

To me, fashion is not just adhering to a template. It's a personal statement of who you are as a person and means of self-expression. I believe fashion is an integral part of any society that gives an opportunity to its members to explore their creative side and a chance to create a distinct identity.

**- Ananta Daga,**  
Managing Director, TCNS Clothing Company Pvt. Ltd.

Gone are the days, when fashion was defined by an elite group and others were expected to follow. Fashion was earlier considered "expensive", "meant only for a particular class of the society", "aspirational", in contrast, its a personal statement for everyone now. For me, something one can carry with ease is fashion. However, "elegance" and "comfort" are very important factors while deciding on what to wear and what fashion to choose.

**- Rajesh Jain,**  
Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer, Sports And Leisure Apparel Ltd.

Fashion is something that is extremely personal and individual. I strongly believe that fashion is determined by your own sense of style and not governed by trends. The product range available in the Indian market is inspired keeping the international trends in mind, while also ensuring that the Indian taste and ethos are intact.

**- Sundeep K Chugh,**  
Managing Director & Chief Executive Officer, Benetton India Pvt. Ltd.

Fashion is an individual's character reflected in his attire. Fashion is something that one is comfortable in and wants to be known for. The very reason why it is important for an individual. And when it comes to a larger platform, the fashion or style quotient of every individual becomes the reflection of the style quotient of a nation, and hence fashion is very important to India.

**- Avnish Kumar,**  
Director, Neeru's Ensembles Pvt. Ltd.

Fashion is what makes one feel good about oneself. Its a medium through which a person expresses his/her individuality. India's fashion sense is varied across its length and breath. Be it the rich Banarasis from Banaras or the Bengal cotton sarees or Oddisi ikkats or the Kanjeevarams of Tamil Nadu, each region of India has always been distinctly different than the other. Thus it can be aptly said that India has always been a treasure trove for the fashion industry and will remain the same in the years to come.

**- Sandeep Goenka,**  
Chief Operating Officer, Bagzone Lifestyles Pvt. Ltd.

Today fashion is driven by personal choice but the fashion ecosystem is built largely by country's taste and preferences, etc. So when the industry looks up to the trends, it is more at macro levels, to which industry tunes in.

**- Raghul Sikka,**  
Director, Dixcy Textiles Pvt. Ltd.

Fashion to me is anything that makes you feel good about yourself. What makes you feel good about yourself? Being comfortable, being confident and being smart. If one accepts that definition, it is obvious why it is important for any person, including Indians (who need something else than cricket, bollywood, and the current Prime Minister to feel good about!).

**- Rahul Mehta,**  
Managing Director, Creative Lifestyles Pvt. Ltd.

Fashion is an expression of one's inner personality and a way of realising one's self-worth. The global Indian is conscious about his looks and wants to wear clothes and use accessories that reflect his personality. Fashion in my book is not restricted to clothing; its about the communication of one's personality to one's peer group.

**- Kamal Khushlani,**  
Managing Director & Founder, Credo Brands Marketing Pvt. Ltd.

Fashion is all about attitude wearing your inner self on your sleeve, feel relaxed and look confident. Fashion can be an identity to a person or to an entire nation. Besides being a multi-crore industry and source of income to lakhs of people, fashion represents our rich heritage of customs and fabric to the whole world.

**- Vinod Kumar Gupta,**  
Managing Director, Dollar Industries Ltd.

Fashion is being appropriate. It reflects its persona in all kinds of things and ways in clothing, lifestyle, behaviour and attitude. You are in fashion if you are relevant to times. Beyond this I feel it becomes very individualistic and that's the beauty in expression of one self in many ways. To be in fashion means to live in the present state and while you are at it you can be inspired by history and culture which is steeped in tradition.

**- Sanjay Vakharia,**  
Director and Chief Operating Officer, Spykar Lifestyle Pvt. Ltd.

Fashion is an individual statement and cumulatively it turns into a trend. Fashion adds to an attitude and defines the culture, lifestyle and the way of working for the society. India is a youth centric country, the aspirations of its youth have to reflect in his or her fashion statement and style. At the same time it has to depict its legacy, culture and heritage.

**- Sharad Venkta,**  
Managing Director, Toonz Retail India Pvt. Ltd.

Fashion is to look good and feel great about what you wear. KKCL is a trendsetter. We create distinctive concepts each time and set the look for the season. This gives us a great fan following in the fashion industry. Dressing up according to the changing seasons is important for our nation.

**- Kewalchand P Jain,**  
Chairman and Managing Director, Kewal Kiran Clothing Ltd.

Fashion is the reflection of a given time on how a person carries himself making a statement of his or her way of living. Fashion can also mean a language of style and behaviour. India is a vast country geographically from East to West and North to South with different cultures, language, behaviours and weather conditions. What is fashion in North may not be for East or South and vice versa.

**- Sunil J Pathare,**  
Chairman and Managing Director, VIP Clothing Ltd.

Fashion depends on several factors, including culture and traditions. Nearly every culture and religion has its own style of dress which sets it apart from others. Fashion plays an important role in establishing identity, beliefs and thoughts throughout the world. Fashion also enables people to display personality and personal preferences. Feeling comfortable in certain clothing or fashion pieces also helps to boost confidence and self-esteem.

**- Shitanshu Jhunjunwalla,**  
Director, Turtle Ltd.

Fashion is about expressing your identity by the way you dress and carry yourself. It's not only about choosing the right garment; but also carrying your personality with it. Fashion comes naturally.

**- Deepak Aggarwal,**  
Managing Director, Kazo Fashion Pvt. Ltd.

The definition of fashion is very relative. To me fashion is simply a style or a practice that is popular. However, with the relativity and the abundance of options that are constantly in style or in trend, people can essentially use fashion to express themselves aesthetically. At an individual level this is what makes fashion important and relevant to us. On a more national level fashion can bring people of different types together.

**- Manohar D Chatlani,**  
Managing Director, MD Retail India Pvt. Ltd.

Fashion is a language which tells a story about the person who wears it. It's a state of mind, a spirit, an extension of one's self. Fashion talks, it can be an understated whisper, a high-energy scream or an all knowing wink and a smile.

**- Apeksha Patel,**  
Chief Executive Officer, Deal Global Fashion Pvt. Ltd.

**Dear Readers,  
What do You think fashion is?**

# MEET THE MASTERS

VISION AND VIEWS OF  
FASHION THOUGHT LEADERS



## ANANT DAGA

**MANAGING DIRECTOR  
TCNS CLOTHING COMPANY  
PVT. LTD.**

With his vast experience in the retail industry, Anant Daga, Managing Director of TCNS Clothing Company has been successful in creating one of the largest women's wear platforms for his fast growing brands in India – W and Aurelia. Spearheading the epic journey of TCNS Clothing Company, Daga has made a visible impact across various verticals including business, consumers, industry, employees, investors and community as a whole. He has over 15 years of experience across finance, planning, sales and retail functions. He has held pivotal positions at ICICI Bank and in Reebok India. Pursuing an aggressive expansion spree his brands already have 350+ stand alone stores across India, Mauritius, Sri Lanka and Nepal, and 2,000+ point-of-sale.

**Why are you working in the fashion industry? What excites you here?**

**Anant Daga (AD):** Having started as a banker, fashion was an unlikely place to finally land at. What got me to this industry and keeps me going are the sheer creativity, energy, pace and a measurable impact one gets to experience. This industry gives a unique opportunity to work with creative minds and analytical thinkers, bringing together art and science. Above all, it is the outstanding team at TCNS Clothing Company that is the real driving force behind my long lasting survival in this exciting space.

**Do you feel that the Indian fashion market is changing from a seller-led market to a buyer-led one? And if yes, what will be the implication of this in changing the way fashion business has been done in the past as compared to how they are done now?**

**AD:** Plethora of choices and unprecedented information flow has definitely made the consumer more discerning than ever. The implication is clear that only those who are able to deliver an optimal product or service will be able to survive. We all will have to be at par or better than anyone else around the globe when it comes to bringing relevant fashion forward, ensuring a great value equation and delivering great service experience. The focus has to move from being product or process centric to being customer centric. And this is the approach that we have always taken, bringing the best of global fashion customised to suit the needs of the Indian women.

**How is technology changing the way companies do fashion business in India?**

**AD:** Technology has completely changed the notion of time and space in our industry bringing down all conventional boundaries. From product conceptualisation to manufacturing to distribution to marketing and finally delivery, all areas are undergoing unprecedented changes. It is not unusual to find use of machine learning and AI in product creation process. E-commerce presence and omni-channel are must haves. We are also in midst of navigating the technology maze and are investing in domain people and processes to create a tech-enabled business.

**How is the customer of today different from the one 10 years ago?**

**AD:** The customer today is highly discerning, well informed and demanding than ever before. She is more open to experimentation, understands fashion obsolescence and wants something new every time. Talking specifically of women's wear, she is



also extremely conscious about the fit of the garment.

**How has the fashion product of today changed from 20 years ago? How have priorities of product mix and theme planning changed?**

**AD:** Fashion has seen a complete transformation especially in the context of Indian wear in the last two decades. The entire concept of fusion wear has evolved over the last 10-15 years. Traditional salwar-kameez-dupatta is gradually getting replaced with kurtis being teamed with trousers and denims to palazzos and skirts, changing the entire look of the ensemble.

**Designers claim that the most important thing in fashion is a great product. Do you agree or not?**

**AD:** Definitely yes. The only qualifying remark is that it has to have a great value equation as well. In a fashion business like ours, we have to create products which are not only aesthetically great but also commercially viable.

**What should be the focus of the “Make in India” vision for Fashion, in perspective of what is India’s greatest core competencies/strengths within the global fashion arena? Can India be a value manufacturing hub, design centric hub, or a fashion tech/IT hub, etc.?**

**AD:** India has the potential to be all of these and more. India is not only a great source of inspiration for many fashion leaders of the world, Indian craftsmanship of unique embroideries and weaves has its own authentic exclusivity and cannot be replaced by any other country in the world. I think there is a great opportunity today in creating mega ‘Indian Wear Brands’. There is a fashion sensibility that’s unique to the country and can find relevance even beyond borders.

**It’s said that India’s greatest asset are its demographics, and it is going to be a huge market. But then the fashion consumers will also need to be earning**



*The ever evolving fusion wear fashion has lately brought in a lot of focus to bottom wear and consumers want to experiment with their look from top to toe.*

**money to make purchases. What is the potential of fashion as an employment and income generator?**

**AD:** Fashion across the value chain is already a huge employment generator. Just at our organisation, we already directly or indirectly provide employment to over 30,000 families.

**Which skill sets in fashion will have maximum demand for manpower in the future?**

**AD:** The real sought after talent pool would be that of fashion designers, data scientists and people specialised in digital domain. The focus will shift to create the best in class products and

mass customisation of communication and experience. Some of the skills we have never been taught in schools in our times have become bare essentials and that is where organisations are looking to build competencies.

**We are looking at quantum growth in fashion. What factors do you think can accelerate this growth and what might act as roadblocks?**

**AD:** On demand side - increase in disposable income, rise in fashion relevance, media exposure and increase in working women population - all these should lead to accelerated growth. On supply side - investments, organized retail distribution, quality retail space and technology can accelerate the pace. However the biggest accelerator or roadblock could be policy frameworks including labour laws, taxation and investment guidelines.

**The profits in fashion often came from cutting costs, lean management, economies of scale, etc. Will this continue or if not where do you think the profits will come from in the future?**

**AD:** While all these avenues could continue to generate profits, the real kicker will come from four factors - same store sales growth, full price sell through, technology deployment and the ability to charge a design premium. I believe as progressive fashion businesses, we should focus on these positive profit generating sources than just getting into a cost cutting mode which beyond a point could be detrimental for the business.

**How important is “good” fashion going to be in the future?**

**AD:** Any attempt to create ‘good’ fashion should be done only when an organization really believes in the cause. The gain should not be just valued in monetary terms or PR mileage but should be reflected in the pride of the people involved with it.



# MEET THE MASTERS

VISION AND VIEWS OF  
FASHION THOUGHT LEADERS



Anita Dongre is a celebrated fashion designer who founded the 'House of Anita Dongre Ltd.' with her sister Meena Sehra and brother Mukesh Sawlani in 1995. Her brands include - AND, Global Desi, Label Anita Dongre, Pinkcity and Grassroot. Today, the 'House of Anita Dongre' is recognised as one of India's leading fashion houses reaching out to over 1,150 point-of-sale with more than 260 EBOs, over 900 MBOs in more than 110 cities across India; and two stores in Mauritius. Dongre has been featured amongst the most powerful women in business by 'Fortune' and 'Business Today'. She was recently covered as a significant contributor in the Growing India series by CNN.

#### ...on why working in the fashion industry is exciting

**Anita Dongre (AD):** The most exciting thing about working in fashion is setting trends for the seasons to come. The industry is frequently and forever changing. There is an element of foresightedness needed to be a successful designer. I enjoy creating styles that soon become popular trends.

#### ...on the paradigm shift from a seller to buyer led market

**AD:** I have always felt the market should be buyer-led. We are creating lines season after season for the ultimate consumer to wear it. When I started AND, it was entirely driven by the fact that there was a need for an affordable western wear for women. Today, people have a lot more options than they had before. International brands and Indian labels co-exist in the same markets. It is a competitive space so being consumer-driven is natural.

#### ...on how technology is changing the business

**AD:** Technology gives a huge boost to design. From the point of ideating for a new collection to the ultimate look on the runways, we need the tools of technology to work as a catalyst. I personally believe that when skilled hands and latest technology come together, the product is unique, luxurious and of fine quality that meets the global standards.

#### ...on the changing fashion consumer

**AD:** Today's consumer is more aware of global trends. She knows fashion, trends and has curated her own unique style with it. Since she is well read and well travelled she makes informed choices. There is a sense of traditional values and culture that mix with her sense of modern outlook and independence that influence her style. And she has a huge market that caters to her today.

#### ...on the changing fashion products

**AD:** Change is the first rule of fashion. In fact, a lot of styles from 20 years ago are re-invented to make a comeback. When I started two decades ago, more women had started making their mark in the workspaces. Western work formals and evening wear outfits were becoming popular. Back then couture meant heavy bridal outfits. Today, couture has a new language.

# ANITA DONGRE

**CHIEF CREATIVE OFFICER- DESIGN  
HOUSE OF ANITA DONGRE LTD.**



*Technology gives a huge boost to design. From the point of ideating for a new collection to the ultimate look on the runways, we need the tools of technology to work as a catalyst. I personally believe that when skilled hands and latest technology come together, the product is unique, luxurious and of fine quality that meets the global standards.*



Brides are more outgoing and they are very involved in planning their wedding wear.

**...on if the product is the most important aspect in fashion**

**AD:** Yes. Your product is your brand's communication with the consumer. A quality, luxurious and unique piece makes for a great product.

**...on the 'Make in India' vision for the fashion industry**

**AD:** The focus must remain on bringing skilled India from the interiors of rural India onto a global platform to make India proud.

**...on the employment and income generation potential of fashion**

**AD:** According to the government of India, Ministry of Textiles, there are over 43 lakh artisans engaged in weaving and allied activities—majority of them being women in rural India. Hence, fashion as an employment has already left its mark in our country, and is only going to grow in the future. Coming to the fashion consumers in urban cities, young girls and guys are slowly starting to work and earn their own income, which is increasing their purchasing power. It's a win-win scenario.

**...on the fashion skills that will matter**

**AD:** People with skills to create handcrafted, sustainable creations will be much valued.

**...on driving growth: accelerators & decelerators**

**AD:** Technology can accelerate growth. I think it is finally the time that the whole industry is coming together to overcome the roadblocks. There is a great potential on the global front for the Indian fashion industry.

**...on where the profits in fashion will now come from**

**AD:** The profits will come in the long-term when our country is advancing in its growth in the handloom sector. Till then, we will focus on creating more employment opportunities for the skilled as well as unskilled artisans.

**...on why being "good" does and will matter a lot**

**AD:** A lot of big brands are creating conscious lines. There are so many designers and brands, which are entirely sustainable. This isn't a trend but a way of life for the future.



# MEET THE MASTERS

VISION AND VIEWS OF  
FASHION THOUGHT LEADERS



## APEKSHA PATEL

**CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER  
DEAL GLOBAL FASHIONS  
PVT. LTD.**

**Apeksha Patel, Chief Executive Officer of Deal Global Fashions Pvt. Ltd., comes from a design background and commands a deep understanding of Indian women's wear and the fashion industry. Patel is a part of the core team instrumental in growing the brand 'Deal Jeans' over the past decade. With an aim to style the fashionable women of today, she also launched, E2O Accessories. After catching the pulse of the market with the phenomenal success in the women's segment, she moved forward to launching a kidswear brand. She gained success by not just dreaming big but being determined and self-assured in her every decision.**

### **...on why working in the fashion industry is exciting**

**AP:** The fashion industry has plenty of room for progression. Fashion is certainly an industry where it's necessary to start at the bottom and work your way to the top. The world of fashion is an incredibly competitive place and we are proud of empowering this achievement. New designs are abundant, and today's in-demand style will be tomorrow's forgotten look. To be in this space, we take initiative in forecasting the future trends and bringing in the best fast-fashion products for our target audience. And this dynamic aspect excites us to be a player in the fashion industry.

### **...on the paradigm shift from a seller to buyer led market**

**AP:** Yes, India has witnessed a huge transformation in the consumer lifestyle which has been influenced by the geo-demographic, socio-cultural factors, psychographics, preferences, norms and behaviour. Rising disposable incomes continue to drive increased spending and generate consumer demand for new trends. Rise in brand awareness and educated consumers accessing internet to follow global trends has brought fast fashion to the Indian markets. The growing fashion consciousness through western culture among Indian consumers have turned the Indian fashion market into a lucrative and highly evolved one, which is also more buyers centric.

The fashion business from the past to the present has evolved considering consumers' exposure to fashion. There is a need to understand future trends and implement them in the production process to meet consumers' demands and formulate the business undertakings accordingly.

### **...on how technology is changing the business**

**AP:** The use of real-time data technology towards inventory management followed by social media marketing for brand promotion and internet technology facilitates selling through online in a better manner. It helps to establish the brand much faster. There is no geographical boundary anymore. The use of technology for superior customer experience and sophisticated CRM is a great opportunity for the brand.

### **...on the changing fashion consumer**

**AP:** The customers 10 years ago, had minimal exposure to fashion as compared to the present scenario. Also, the accessibility of internet lacked,

which today plays a crucial role in bringing fashion trends across the globe with ease. Today, fashion influencers have risen to prominence, the amount of apps in our social media rotation has quadrupled, the way consumers make purchasing decisions has dramatically altered. They stand in stores, using their smart phones to compare prices and product reviews, all these aspects have created an impact on the fashion orbit.

**...on the changing fashion product**

**AP:** The fashion product has significantly evolved, particularly over the last 20 years when the boundaries of the industry started to expand. The changing dynamics of the fashion industry has forced brands to desire low cost and flexibility in design, quality and speed to market, key strategies to maintain a profitable position in the increasingly demanding market.

Today's fashion market is highly competitive and the constant need to 'refresh' product range means that there is an inevitable move by many brands to extend the number of 'seasons'. With the emergence of small collections of merchandise, brands are encouraging consumers to visit their stores more frequently with the idea of 'Here Today, Gone Tomorrow'. In addition, desire to have variety and instant gratification in product mix with price manoeuvrism is motivating consumers.

**...on if the product is the most important aspect in fashion**

**AP:** Yes, I certainly agree with the product being a crucial part of any fashion houses. Product is the lifeblood of any company. Without them, the firm withers on the vine and either dies or is absorbed by another firm. Good product also needs to be backed with an efficient marketing campaign, which creates a demand for the product.



***The accessibility of internet lacked which today plays a crucial role in bringing fashion trends across the globe with ease. Today, fashion influencers rose to prominence, the amount of apps in our social media rotation has quadrupled, the way consumers make purchasing decisions has dramatically altered. They stand in stores, using their smartphones to compare prices and product reviews, all these aspects have created an impact on the fashion orbit.***

**...on the 'Make in India' vision for the fashion industry**

**AP:** The 'Make in India' initiative which is brought by the government a couple of years ago will be very helpful for brands like us as there will be a lot of enhancement towards product development, which will reduce the lead time of finished product. Also, there will be a lot of technology exposure, which will ease development process and will lead to increase in employment. Yes, I agree India has a lot of potential towards becoming a valued manufacturing hub, design centric hub, or a fashion tech/IT hub.

**...on the employment and income generation potential of fashion**

**AP:** The young, working population is the biggest strength of India and its growth in the coming years. This aspect is going to prove pivotal in making India the world leader in the coming years. Rising disposable incomes of consumers continue to drive increased spending which would suffice their wants. Fashion is a serious business everywhere. This is testified through the escalating figures of the garment market as also by the growing tally of fashion brands and retailers who have occupied substantial share of the country's fashion space.



Spending well on brands is no longer an improbability, with shoppers willing to pay for quality and premium products. This sector, being one of the largest industrial sectors of the country, is the major propellant of the economy's growth. The rapid increase in job opportunities and expanding earning capabilities has resulted in the inculcation of a brand new mindset amongst Indian customers.

#### ...on the fashion skills that will matter

**AP:** The job outlook of one who is involved in fashion designing is good for the future. Styles change with the seasons so there is always a demand for new designs and designers to create or copy them. This skill set in fashion has several different job options to choose from, which further helps the job outlook to be bright for the future. Although most start out as assistants, with a few years' experience, doors will begin to open up and the climb up the career ladder will begin with a promotion to head designer along with a pay raise.

#### ...on driving growth: accelerators and decelerators

**AP:** Growth in apparel industry in India is increasing manifold with the change in lifestyle, earnings and urbanisation of the customers. The Indian consumers are adopting fashionable items quickly and conveniently with the rise in competition. Apparel industry in India poses an opportunity of tremendous economic growth. The emergence of branded apparel outlets, shopping malls are also increasing rapidly all over India. The change in lifestyle of the Indian consumer, increasing working class, higher disposable income, dual career families, and many other social



*The 'Make in India' initiative which is brought by the government a couple of years ago will be very helpful for brands like us as there will be a lot of enhancement towards product development which will reduce the lead time of finished product. Also, there will be a lot of technology exposure which will ease development process and will lead to increase in employment.*

and economic changes offer a wide array of opportunities, and contribute in accelerating the pace of growth of all. The challenges associated with these changes need to be addressed in the most efficient and prudent manner in order to harness the concomitant benefits.

#### ...on where the profits in fashion will now come from

**AP:** Cutting costs, lean management, economies of scale all these aspects are essential towards profitability of a brand and consideration of these key factors will always continue in future towards shaping stronger base of a brand. However, the benefits of dynamic pricing methods have long been known. In recent years, there has been an increasing adoption of dynamic pricing policies in fashion industry. Three factors contributed to this phenomenon: (1) the increased availability of demand data, (2) the ease of changing prices due to new technologies, and (3) the availability of decision-support tools for analysing demand data and for dynamic pricing. Economies of scale will help producers to lower their cost by producing the next unit of output at lower costs. This will positively affect mass fashion industry and make a significant impact.

#### ...on why being "good" does and will matter a lot

**AP:** Ethical companies must recognise this and focus on innovation to make sustainability a trend. These aspects will be inspiring, commercially viable, and bang on-trend. There is a potential to lead a revolution in the way the fashion industry is run for the brands who support sustainable and eco-friendly processes. Doing this, we also need to go one step further for sustainable fashion to enter the mainstream and that is to drop the idea altogether of being worthy and instead concentrate on innovation because eco-conscious shoppers might be driven by more ethical considerations when making purchases.



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# MEET THE MASTERS

VISION AND VIEWS OF  
FASHION THOUGHT LEADERS



## AVNISH KUMAR

**DIRECTOR  
NEERU'S**

Avnish Kumar, Director, Neeru's, started his journey in retail at an early age. He joined his parents business at Neeru's (launched in 1971) to provide superior tailoring and intricate embroidery services for women's apparel in Hyderabad. Employing excellent marketing and operational initiatives, Avnish has taken Neeru's onto an altogether higher growth trajectory. Laying emphasis on the franchise route, Neeru's is today present in over 15 cities pan India and also in Dubai. In 2013 Avnish introduced a menswear label. He also launched a casual wear brand "Be Desi by Neerus" to make ethnic fashion available to women of all age groups. Avnish believes that challenges in retail erupt every minute of the day. The need is to stay updated with the latest information, do quick replenishments and adopt a fast-fashion route.

### ...on why working in the fashion industry is exciting

**Avnish Kumar (AK):** Fashion is my passion. That's the best way I can put it. Since I come from a family that has been a part of Hyderabad's fashion legacy, I have always been inspired to create something unique in this industry. And this is what excites me. Creating something that showcases my passion, my skill and exploring various possibilities in this field.

### ...on the paradigm shift from a seller to buyer led market

**AK:** Of course India is becoming a buyer-led market, because of the exposure we are getting of international brands, style statements and trends. In a way, it is good because it keeps us at par with the trends across the world.

### ...on how technology is changing the business

Technology is becoming an integral part of fashion. Right from designing, to manufacturing, to sales and even marketing, everything is led by technology and there is an online shopping boom in our country. We have to be where our customer is, and right now they are online.

### ...on the changing fashion consumer

**AK:** Ten years back, there was no e-commerce, where people had options to choose from two different brands at one time. The interaction too was very personal. But yes, the customer today is evolved, which makes it exciting for us too. To woo them and become their preferred choice. They love to be pampered with options, and we are loving the challenge.

### ...on the changing fashion product

**AK:** As I mentioned before, because of the exposure of international brands and trends, the customer wants more. So, we too have to give them what they desire, which involves product extensions, design innovations and a whole lot of creativity.

### ...on if the product is the most important aspect in fashion

**AK:** I do agree to this to a large extent. If you don't have a good product, you are not even considered. But if you have a great product, you will atleast get to the stage of comparison when it comes to decision making while buying. In today's times when you have thousands of brands and products to choose from, and





*India is a youthful country and fashion has become an integral part of every Indian citizen. Fashion inspired from our ethnicity or from the west, provides vast opportunities. We definitely need a great pool of talent in the fashion field to take it further.*

at similar price points, the customer is spoiled for choice. But at the end, the customer wants value for money. And if you have a real good product offering, then your chance of being picked just increases.

#### **...on the 'Make in India' vision for the fashion industry**

**AK:** India's strength is its rich and diverse culture which brings along with it its craft. Something that the whole world is crazy about. It's time that the people of our country take pride in our art and heritage, especially in fashion.

#### **...on the employment and income generation potential of fashion**

**AK:** Look at the number of fashion universities and fashion courses that are now available in India as compared to those ten years back. The median age of people in India is 27-28. India is a youthful country and fashion has become an integral part of every Indian citizen. Fashion inspired from our ethnicity or from the west, provides vast opportunities. We definitely need a great pool of talent in the fashion field to take it further. We hear terms like 'Fast Fashion', and in order to make the fashion come fast, we need the right people who understand fashion and can help bring it to the end-consumer.



#### **...on driving growth accelerators and decelerators**

**AK:** Its the era of "See now and buy now". This is a small phrase but with a great meaning wherein people/consumers do not have patience and want it ASAP...what they have seen maybe through mediums of social media. Such instant and impulse nature of the new consumers will always help in accelerating the growth of fashion business. Roadblocks are none. Competition was seen as a roadblock earlier but now competition is healthy as it creates a market and people are more aware of that particular fashion category and aspire to buy more.

#### **...on where the profits in fashion will now come from**

**AK:** 'Profits equal monopoly'. That's the mantra for the future. A monopolised product or the product with an edge will always enjoy greater margins and profits. It's the tech era and people are getting more and more tech savvy. So the mediums for sale and POS have increased. Being omni channel is the perfect way of accelerating growth of the brands and businesses.

#### **...on why being "good" does and will matter a lot**

**AK:** India is known for its craft, artisans and their arts. It's a luxury for the Indian fashion companies to enjoy such an art form and their unique techniques. We at Neeru's offer many such garments and revolutions in fashion that are born out of such innovations, created by the artisans in Banaras to Kanchipuram to uppadas and more. The weavers have spent generations to continue this art and have been a great asset to the fashion industry not only in India but worldwide. From farmers producing cotton, linen yarns, or weavers weaving sarees and exquisite handmade carpets - all contribute to this natural eco-friendly environment and brands hence turn this into a fashion eco-product available to the end users.



# MEET THE MASTERS

VISION AND VIEWS OF  
FASHION THOUGHT LEADERS



Deepak Aggarwal, Managing Director of Kazo Fashion Pvt. Ltd., has been instrumental in positioning Kazo as one of the finest market leaders in women fashion apparel. Aggarwal's move of ensuring backward and forward integration to have a control over the entire supply chain for Kazo has helped to carve out a niche as an international brand within a short span. He holds a degree in Bachelor of Commerce in Retail. Deepak has been conferred the "Outstanding Performer as a Young Entrepreneur" at the AEPC Achievement Awards.

## DEEPAK AGGARWAL

**MANAGING DIRECTOR  
KAZO FASHION PVT. LTD.**

### ...on why working in the fashion industry is exciting

**Deepak Aggarwal (DA):** For me fashion is passion. Working in the fashion industry is always exciting and keeps you on your toes 365 days in a year. Fashion knows no boundaries and sets new trends in every season which is never ending.

### ...on the paradigm shift from a seller to buyer led market

**DA:** I feel that the Indian fashion market is still a seller-led market and is moving towards becoming a buyer-led one gradually. The conversion will take time. The brand has to be very strong to be followed and that's what we aim for.

### ...on how technology is changing the business

**DA:** Fashion is becoming more digitally centric. The offline retailers have started their journey of omni-channel retailing by setting up their e-commerce portals which is a digital version of their stores. The integration of payment gateways and offering efficient delivery of goods, technology is playing a lead role in the whole chain. Fashion is at its best with virtual fitting rooms, which make it easy for the customers to select the right fit of the garment also along with its style.

### ...on the changing fashion consumer

**DA:** Today's customer is more connected than she was before. She is well versed with fashion trends and has a clear thought process of what she wishes to buy. Smartphones too have made a big change in consumers' perception and ease. She can review products, check prices and purchase products. She has the option to shop round-the-clock by just being at one place. The relevance of social media on retail is still untapped and is growing rapidly. Customers today are influenced by



*India should focus to be a 'design centric hub' since the cultural diversity in the country provides humongous opportunities to understand and adopt international fashion. Also being design centric gives an advantage of earning margins.*



**...on the fashion skills that will matter**

**DA:** Independent designers, buyers and people from fashion marketing and branding would be in great demand.

**...on driving growth: accelerators & decelerators**

**DA:** The availability of organised markets will impact getting a quantum growth. E-commerce will always remain as a value retail channel which will never bring benefits in bottom lines for a company. Also, the logistics and infrastructure development will act as a roadblock to efficient supply chain.

**...on where the profits will now come from**

**DA:** I agree that cost control is important and in addition to it there is lot of focus required in brand positioning. Building brand differentiation in the product and its offering would help command a premium over other players in the markets which would reap profits.

**...on why being "good" does & will matter a lot**

**DA:** Right fashion at the right time is very important. Supporting causes would be the attributes and traits of a good fashion brand. A fashion brand would be looked in a holistic manner along with these characteristics. India will still take 5-10 years to build that kind of support from such causes.



the reviews and trends in their social groups, which was not the same 10 years back.

**...on the changing fashion product**

**DA:** Though fashion repeats over a period of time but the customers of today have become more conscious about the latest in vogue. The approach has become more professional. At Kazo, we focus more and more on architecting the collection for the next season.

**...on if the product is the most important aspect in fashion**

**DA:** Yes, It's all about product, product and product.

**...on the 'Make in India' vision for the fashion industry**

**DA:** India should focus to be a 'design centric hub' since the cultural diversity in the country provides humongous

opportunities to understand and adopt international fashion. Also being design centric gives an advantage of earning margins and competing with other manufacturing hubs. India's manufacturers are very vice-versa linked with fashion and give faster turn-arounds.

**...on the employment & income generation potential of fashion**

**DA:** India has a huge population and a big section of them are youth, which provides huge opportunity for consumption of fashion. With per capita income growing fast and GDP growth of 6-7 percent consistently, it's evident that the purchasers will have money in their pockets to consume fashion.

Fashion as an employment and income generator has not even hit the tip of the iceberg, since 92 percent of the retail in India is still unorganised. With the growth of e-commerce the consumption would change.

# MEET THE MASTERS

VISION AND VIEWS OF  
FASHION THOUGHT LEADERS

**Janne Einola, Country Manager of H&M Hennes & Mauritz Retail Pvt. Ltd., foresees a great potential for H&M in the Indian market. H&M is driven by a desire to always create the best offering and the best experience for its customers and to do so in a sustainable way. With a vision to lead the change towards a circular, fair and equal fashion industry, the company uses its size and position to drive positive change for people and the environment throughout the value chain. With 4,351 stores in 64 markets and e-commerce in 35 markets, it has a huge global store network as well as strong digital presence. H&M group's shared values have existed ever since the very first store opened in 1947.**



## JANNE EINOLA

**COUNTRY MANAGER**

**H&M - HENNES & MAURITZ RETAIL  
PVT. LTD.**

### **...on if the product is the most important aspect in fashion**

**Janne Einola (JE):** At H&M we believe the right mix of fashion quality and price is important, as well as the critical fact that the garment has been produced in a sustainable way. With our brands we want to inspire fashion fans around the world to dress their own personal style. We are driven by a desire to always create the best offering for our customers - and to do so in a sustainable way.

### **...on the employment and income generation potential of fashion**

**JE:** We see immense potential to open many more stores in India, which will lead to a large generation of employment in this sector. Additionally H&M works with around 800 independent suppliers, primarily in Asia and Europe. H&M's business helps create more than a million jobs, not least for women, and largely in the textile industry in Asia, which is home to many of H&M's sourcing markets. More than 1,880 factories that deliver products to us employ 1.6 million people.

### **...on the fashion skills that will matter**

**JE:** At H&M we hire for the attitude and train for the skills, the right attitude is crucial for success at H&M. We look for highly motivated, hard-working, outgoing team players who are seeking personal growth and possess an entrepreneurial spirit.

### **...on driving growth accelerators and decelerators**

**JE:** Aspects such as economic growth, political stability, customs and import restrictions and high quality infrastructure will accelerate the growth of the fashion industry.

### **...on where the profits in fashion will now come from**

**JE:** H&M acts on long-term basis and is guided by strong values. In order to make a positive contribution to the world, we work for social improvements and reduced environmental impact through the entire life cycle of our products.

### **...on why being "good" does & will matter a lot**

**JE:** H&M's operations must be run in a way that is economically, environmentally and socially sustainable. Sustainability is an integral part of H&M's operations. We want to use our size and scale to lead the change towards circular and renewable fashion while making our company even more fair and equal. We want to lead by example, pave the way and try new things - both when it comes to the environmental and social side - to ultimately make fashion sustainable and sustainability fashionable.



*"We love fashion and design. Our unique brands make us one of the world's leading fashion companies. We are driven by a desire to always create the best offering and the best experience for our customers. I consider India as an integral part of H&M's global expansion plan and H&M aims to grow in India, with its business concept of 'Fashion and Quality at the Best Price' in a sustainable way."*

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# MEET THE MASTERS

VISION AND VIEWS OF  
FASHION THOUGHT LEADERS



**Jaydeep Shetty, Founder and Chief Executive Officer, Mineral Fashions Pvt. Ltd., is the pillar behind the women's western wear brand, Mineral, that sells from over 120 locations in 36 cities in India. Shetty is a startup specialist who has set up large consumer service businesses. He was a part of the startup management team of Shoppers Stop, BBC Worldwide and Inox Cinemas. Shetty was also the start up business head for the department store chain, Central. He helped set up three international joint ventures at Future Group and has also been an advisor to Everstone Capital, a private equity firm and to a US based venture capital firm. He hold an MBA degree from Jamnalal Bajaj Institute of Management Studies.**

### **...on why working in the fashion industry is exciting**

**Jaydeep Shetty (JS):** I moved into fashion business accidentally with my first job with Shoppers Stop's marketing department after being unhappy with an advertising job which I was doing. During that time Shoppers Stop was a small two floor department store at Andheri, Mumbai but it showed me an immense amount of promise.

Fashion is like movie business. No one can predict the outcome of a new product or a movie until it's exposed to the consumer, and every Friday is a reality check in these businesses. There is an inexplicable high, and there is much emphasis on data and information. I really feel one should have guts to be in this business.

### **...on the paradigm shift from a seller to buyer led market**

**JS:** I feel the demand and supply situation has always been in favour of the buyer and do not witness any change in any major way. However I do see the market being stratified into layers that perceive and consume fashion differently based upon their tastes, geography and their buying power.

### **...on how technology is changing the business**

**JS:** We have had ERPs and data mining in retail for almost two decades now. India is fabulous with early adoption of technology. So at the retail end it continues. I think the analytics play an important role to get speed in throughputs at the store and for better merchandising at stores.

On the fashion product end, there are newer processes and fabrics developed virtually every day and a lot of this development is at competitive costs. On the product front, I find a bigger change when it comes to artificial fibers in comparison with natural ones, which may not be a good thing for the planet. Machinery that is used in apparel production has also improved considerably. India has been slower than China in this area and we have to do a lot to improve.

### **...on the changing fashion consumer**

**JS:** The new customers are self aware, more experimental and not easily swayed by advertising. They can also differentiate between Bollywood inspired and everyday fashion. They also understand formal clothing from business casual, smart casual from casual, and day wear from evening wear, and evening wear from club wear. They are not likely to buy all their clothing from one or two

# JAYDEEP SHETTY

**FOUNDER &  
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER  
MINERAL FASHIONS PVT. LTD.**

brands, but choose from a plethora of brands. There is a segment that buys only quality clothing while at the other end there is other segment that buys cheap quality as long as the colour and silhouettes are good.

#### ...on the changing fashion product

**JS:** There are no customers without a good product. We as marketers have spent more time in developing products than simply marketing it which may gain long term loyalty. This is something we can learn from Europe. I have no fascination for seasons and I think it's an obsolete idea that the fashion cycle must be planned by season. Just because the early retail ERPs was configured by season, we adopted this concept in India.

The product mix in women's wear brands has changed to create tighter narrower lines than before, rather than focus simply on width and an array of options. Visual merchandising is getting better by the week in India, and that helps in selling more products.

#### ...on if the product is the most important aspect in fashion

**JS:** Always agree. Product and location are the most important elements in retail. Everything else is support.

#### ...on the 'Make in India' vision for the fashion industry

**JS:** The fashion industry doesn't exist in India with its true spirit of an industry; it's a sad fact. On the other hand if we look at the textile industry, the apparel industry is the one which exists. Retail industry which is an important element in the chain is not even considered an industry by the government. And these three industries do not talk to each other much other than on a transactional basis. Once we start speaking to the whole chain which makes fashion successful is where you can realistically expect a unified vision for 'Make in

*The fashion industry doesn't exist in India with its true spirit of an industry; it's a sad fact. On the other hand if we look at the textile industry, the apparel industry is the one which exists. Retail industry which is an important element in the chain is not even considered an industry by the government. And these three industries do not talk to each other much other than on a transactional basis. Once we start speaking to the whole chain which makes fashion successful is where you can realistically expect a unified vision for 'Make in India'.*



India'. India's core strengths are clearly its large customer base and its ability to produce economically priced products.

#### ...on the employment & income generation potential of fashion

**JS:** We have a large population base and amongst this not less than 50 percent have bought branded clothing. The fortune lies at the bottom of the pyramid. Today no one is satisfying that customer, or attracting her to come into the fold of brands. Fashion is a high employment generator; being manufacturing intensive, all levels of the supply chain from yarn to retail, generating substantial employment opportunities.

#### ...on the fashion skills that will matter

**JS:** I don't think there is any skill set in the fashion business that will not be in demand.

#### ...on driving growth: accelerators & decelerators

**JS:** India has huge supply chain issues and multiple taxation policies. The GST will hopefully resolve it. Much of the sector is still unorganised. Many large manufacturers still focus on unprofitable exports and will resist supplying profitably to the local market. There are few large manufacturing units in India of the scale that of China. Bank debts are hard to deserve in India. These are large roadblocks that need to be sorted.

#### ...on where the profits will now come from

**JS:** Customers want to see better quality; better environments and even the peripherals need to be swishier, right from the staff to the hangtags. The customer is willing to pay more. That's where profits are going to come from. Every brand is working hard to trade up, with the exception of the discounters. The long tail of unsold merchandise has found a new lease of life online and in the discount chains. That improves profitability too. Two types of marketers will survive, the high margin high priced or the low margin large scale operators.

#### ...on why being "good" does & will matter a lot

**JS:** I have seen absolutely nothing that suggests to me that customers care about the costs of fast fashion and cheap production techniques in making the decision to choose a brand. We are just deluding ourselves to believing otherwise. I only hope that this will change. Brands which were delivering cheap fast fashion in western markets are now focusing on India and other developing countries where the conscience is still agnostic to the methods and the process of manufacture and delivery.



# MEET THE MASTERS

VISION AND VIEWS OF  
FASHION THOUGHT LEADERS



**Kamal Khushlani, Founder and Managing Director of Credo Brands Marketing Pvt. Ltd., aims to make Mufti India's first international fashion brand. It is this vision that has always kept the brand ahead of times and competition.**

**He is possibly the least-visible personality in the fashion fraternity and has influenced more new fashion than one could imagine. His knowledge about the industry and its requirements ensures that he is always the first with new fashion and trends that later get adopted by the industry, sometimes a season later, sometimes a year later. He can aptly be described as a self-taught fashion designer, brand strategist and futurologist.**

## KAMAL KHUSHLANI

**FOUNDER &  
MANAGING DIRECTOR  
CREDO BRANDS MARKETING  
PVT. LTD.**

### **...on why working in the fashion industry is exciting**

**Kamal Khushlani (KK):** I lost my dad at 19 and I couldn't pursue further studies. I always wanted to do something big in life; however I worked with a videocassette recording company for a few years. I had no money but I always had a flair for fashion and a passion to make it big in life. I felt that there was a huge gap for fashionable clothing in menswear at that time. So I borrowed ₹10,000 from my aunty and took the plunge. The trade and consumers have rewarded me by loving whatever I have proposed and this is what has kept me motivated and excited me to do nothing else but this business all my life.

### **...on the paradigm shift from a seller to buyer led market**

**KK:** As India develops into a more self-confident nation, the fashion business will naturally become a buyer-led market. However the role of fashion leaders and role models will also increase. The fashion business will have to cater to the consumer trends and be responsive to fashion changes across the world and that too quickly.

### **...on how technology is changing the business**

**KK:** Technology in production, designing and retailing is enabling companies to adjust quickly and to deliver better than ever before. The technology for fabric manufacturing being used is the best. This is evident from the fact that stretch jeans today have become the norm for men and they have evolved to look exactly like authentic denim with comfort properties of stretch. Technology has also helped us improve consistency in manufacturing of our garments.

As far as IT is concerned we are real time connected right from procurement of yarn to weaving, processing and finishing and then onto the cutting of garments to





*The customer of today responds more to his peer groups than to his elders or accepted leaders. The customer was never easy to handle and if anything is an even greater enigma today. Having said that, we believe we have 'measured' our customer and achieved the ability to satisfy him despite the plethora of choices that he is faced with.*

manufacturing and so on. There are 40 to 50 stages in production depending on the type of garment which are monitored effectively through modern technology.

**...on the changing fashion consumer**

**KK:** The customer of today responds more to his peer group than to his elders or accepted leaders. The customer was never easy to handle and if anything is an even greater enigma today. We believe we have 'measured' our customer and achieved the ability to satisfy him despite the plethora of choices he is faced with.

**...on the changing fashion product**

**KK:** Since disposable incomes of younger people have grown, the products have to provide a greater element of fashion than mere utility. We cater to this demanding fashionista and strive to give him a little more than what he expects. We believe in adding the Mufti touch or added value in everything we do, we love to surprise our consumers and that is what drives the creative team at Mufti.

**...on if the product is the most important aspect in fashion**

**KK:** Naturally a great product is the most important thing in fashion but, there is no clear definition of what a great product is. In our view a great product has to have an element of vision, contemporariness and individuality.

There's a lot of research that goes into creating fresh fashion with every season. There are sources that forecast global trends to the fashion world and every designer interprets these trends in his own way and takes cues to create his own fashion statement for the new season. Then the trends get validated on the catwalk.

**...on the 'Make in India' vision for the fashion industry**

**KK:** India has the capabilities of becoming great in multiple facets and different companies will achieve value differently. Thus, there will be value created in manufacturing hubs, design centric hubs, fashion tech hubs and certainly IT hubs. India has been a manufacturing hub for international brands for the last 50 years. Mufti has used this manufacturing base to create a design-led Indian brand that is standing shoulder to shoulder with the big boys in the Indian market.

**...on the employment and income generation potential of fashion**

**KK:** The relatively younger population of India will see a rapid rise in per capita income and we are looking at disposable incomes in the hands of the fashion consumers being at a much higher level than today. Fashion as an industry is as much a service as a manufacturing activity and being a high margin generator it will create many skilled jobs as well as low salary manufacturing jobs.

**...on the fashion skills that will matter**

**KK:** The fashion industry in India will grow on the basis of internal demand as well as export possibilities. Thus a whole range of skill sets required will always be in demand.

**...on driving growth: accelerators & decelerators**

**KK:** The major factors to accelerate growth in this sector will be income levels in India for consumption growth, friendly labour laws and government support for export growth, and ease of transport and movement of goods for retailing. The negative factors will revolve around high interest rates and consequent high rents in India vis-a-vis the rest of the world.

**...on where the profits will now come from**

**KK:** The profits in fashion have traditionally come from efficiencies in production and efficiencies in retailing but the future will see increased importance of value creation through design and branding. Finally, profits will emerge from the creation of a value proposition that is loved by the customers and is acceptable to the accountants of your company.

**...on why being "good" does and will matter a lot**

**KK:** Any company which makes a significant contribution to environmentally friendly processes will find that it's connect with its consumers will become stronger and the minor costs incurred will be amply rewarded by its customers.



# MEET THE MASTERS

VISION AND VIEWS OF  
FASHION THOUGHT LEADERS



## KAVINDRA MISHRA

**MANAGING DIRECTOR  
PEPE JEANS INDIA LTD.**

**Kavindra Mishra, Managing Director of Pepe Jeans India Ltd., is responsible for the growth of the existing business portfolio and designing effective strategies for Pepe Jeans India that are aligned with the broader global strategy. Mishra started his retail career in 1999 as Area Sales Manager at Madura Coats and continued his career at Madura Garments as Brand Manager for Allen Solly. In 2006, he joined Tommy Hilfiger as Vice President and was responsible for the brand's rapid growth and expansion by increasing the number of exclusive brand outlets and department stores in the country. In 2009, Mishra joined United Colors of Benetton (UCB) as their Commercial Director and in 2011, he became part of the founding team of India's first online apparel and lifestyle portal, Zovi.com. With his deep industry insight and an enormous amount of retail experience, Mishra has been able to develop a thoroughly unique approach for Pepe Jeans India.**

### **...on why working in the fashion industry is exciting**

**Kavindra Mishra (KM):** I like working in the fashion industry because I am passionate about it and I love my job. It's a dynamic industry and there is always constant change. I really like the planning, innovation and strategising; this really excites me. I also feel this profession gives you a lot of opportunities to grow as an industry specialist.

### **...on the paradigm shift from a seller to buyer led market**

**KM:** Yes, Indian fashion market is changing from a seller-led market to a buyer-led market. Buyers now have a lot more choices and in this scenario there is huge emphasis on product quality, fashion, the right cost; also the e-commerce platform is now being considered as a fast and acceptable medium. So all these factors resonate very well in the new buyer led space. Even in tier -III and -IV cities and since customers have a lot of options and there is no longer a situation wherein there is only one store in the town and everybody has to go there and buy. The small towns now have international brands, departmental stores, e-commerce services, brand stores, MBO's, thereby giving a lot of choices to customers. Implication is very simple, brands now cannot just rely on their past strategies. They need to constantly innovate and also provide value in product offerings. So, value is the key function. It doesn't mean that you have to provide low priced merchandise to your consumers, you have to provide a valuable mix of your product quality and price and once you do, you will be able to strengthen product portfolio and also retain market share.

### **...on how technology is changing the business**

**KM:** I think technology is helping in a lot of ways, both in terms of front-end and back-end. While reviewing the front end, there is customisation, where consumers now are more open to adding a little bit of their own creativity to the garments. In October 2015, Pepe Jeans was the first brand in India to introduce a denim customisation service. Pepe Jeans Custom Studio allows customers to step into the design seat and customise their denim in a few easy steps. Pepe Jeans's customisation service empowers the customer with the opportunity for personalisation; and therein lays a powerful tool that will revolutionise denim

fashion in India. In terms of back-end, a very crucial element is that we have the ability to predict the fashion. We have tied up with Style Lumia which is a fashion analytics site that goes to all the websites and gathers data on which styles are considered 'in' at the moment, and what colours are selling well. This helps in decoding the consumer buying needs. With this tool, we are able to tap crucial information to predict current fashion in a better way, to get the right

can now communicate directly with our target audience and also get feedback through social media.

**...on the changing fashion product**

**KM:** There has been a new wave, a new era, in which the fashion industry has evolved to new heights. Earlier, new clothing was only bought for functional use or birthday parties/weddings. Now, every day is a shopping adventure. The amount of styles, the brands, the

trends, and social media are some of the contributors to this burgeoning market. The product mix now consists of key elements that obviously consider growth in various aspects and evolving customer preferences. Take for example, smaller towns and cities, strategies have to be planned accordingly, one cannot treat these markets as an extension of the tier-I markets. Companies that used to earlier rely only on traditional mediums to communicate need to gracefully adapt and adopt the digital era now. Customers prefer brands who communicate their messages in a unique manner. This interaction between the brand and consumers has prompted businesses to provide an enhanced consumer experience in the digital space. We involve our global team with our India team when it comes to designing, its important to understand that the shopper of now is looking for international trends. Expanding in smaller cities through the franchisee root has changed the way merchandise organisation operates and there is now a lot of micro-management, to ascertain what styles should be in stock. When it comes to planning, we work a year in advance. So right now, we are working for the next year's spring summer collection.



kind of merchandise, and understand the global trends. All these factors really help in moving from art to art - and-science, and with this mixture of art and science, it helps the brand to become more productive.

**...on the changing fashion consumer**

**KM:** If we have to compare the retail scenario now to what it was about a decade ago, the industry has undergone a vast amount of change. There is a huge transformation of the retail dynamics due to several factors. The major ones include - several new players entering into the market and changing customer preferences. The idea of shopping is different now as compared to the yester years. Due to the digital medium we

*The fashion industry has evolved to new heights. Now, every day is a shopping adventure. The amount of styles, trends, and social media are some of the contributors to this burgeoning market. Take for example, smaller towns and cities, strategies have to be planned accordingly, one cannot treat these markets as an extension of the tier-I markets.*

**...on if the product is the most important aspect in fashion**

**KM:** Yes, fashion is about a great product, it's about value and aspiration because by nature this category is about desire. Consider Maslow's hierarchy, which says there are different levels of consumer's aspirations - basic, psychological and self actualisation. So, clothing is actually a basic need to cover yourself but if you want to look good in this, it becomes the psychological need and somewhere connects you to your self-imagery. That is why a great product is definitely important but you should have skill set to market it and to make consumers feel that they will look good in this. It is a category which is a mixture of both aspiration and great product.

>

### ...on the 'Make in India' vision for the fashion industry

**KM:** We have a manufacturing hub as well as a global sourcing team. We also have certain cases where our designs are picked up by global teams. So, I think India can grow in men's and ladies wear category. According to industry reports, India is the fifth largest destination in the global retail space. We are a source of fashion and a design hub for the global market and with manufacturing shirts and t-shirts in men's and women's casual wear segment; we are on the way to becoming a design/manufacturing/fashion hub.

### ...on the employment and income generating potential of fashion

**KM:** Over the past few years, the Indian retail industry has developed to be one of the most dynamic and fast-paced industries due to several new factors. According to industry reports, it accounts for over 10 percent of the country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and around 8 percent of the employment. India is one of the biggest textile manufacturers and exporters and is on the brink of becoming the third largest by 2030. One of the factors, is the ease in norms of the Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) regime, the objective is to provide a major boost towards employment and job creation in India.

India's consumer market has seen exceptional growth in the last decade. A favourable demographic profile and rising income levels will be the key drivers of future growth. As a result, the USD 500 billion Indian retail market is expected to grow at a Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) of 12 percent to reach a value of USD 900 billion by 2017 thereby fueling both the elements – job creation and salary increase.



### ...on the fashion skills that will matter

**KM:** Designing, buying and consumer insight jobs will increase. Consumer insight is interdependent on buying and design.

### ...on driving growth: accelerators and decelerators

**KM:** India is moving away from saving economy to a spending economy. The accelerating factors will be the rapid diffusion of fashion through e-commerce, changes in lifestyle/rising income, and our young demographics where people like to experiment

### ...on where the profits will now come from

**KM:** Profits in fashion come from not only cutting costs but also from increase in sales, introduction of new categories, growing the market, for e.g., expansion in tier-II and -III markets. In a span of 18 months coupled with market insight we managed to build the kidswear category where half a million pieces were sourced. So, it's not just about cutting costs always. It's about throwing the

right product in a right way, but also focusing on innovation.

### ...on why being "good" does and will matter a lot

**KM:** This is 100 percent important, sustainability is the future of fashion! One of the biggest macro trends followed globally and you see India picking up on this. We have incorporated the sustainability element in our latest SS'17 collection: Our denims have been made with these 2 properties:-

*True Fresh* : This uses a revolutionary technology that neutralises odour-causing bacteria, on contact, in turn keeping denims fresh for longer. Denims treated with this technology can be worn more often without washing. Even after days of continuous use, the denim retains its freshness.

*True-Blue* : This is a pioneering denim collection with zero chemical washes that radically reduce water consumption. This sustainable production process includes natural ozone gas treatments and sophisticated new three-dimensional lasers to create astonishing departments of indigo contrasts on jeans.

We also have included the Athleisure trend in the SS'17 collection. Athleisure blurs the lines between functional and causal, comfortable clothing. It combines both the practical aspect as well as wearability. Athleisure marks the change in lifestyle, moving towards health consciousness, with relaxed and comfortable outfits.





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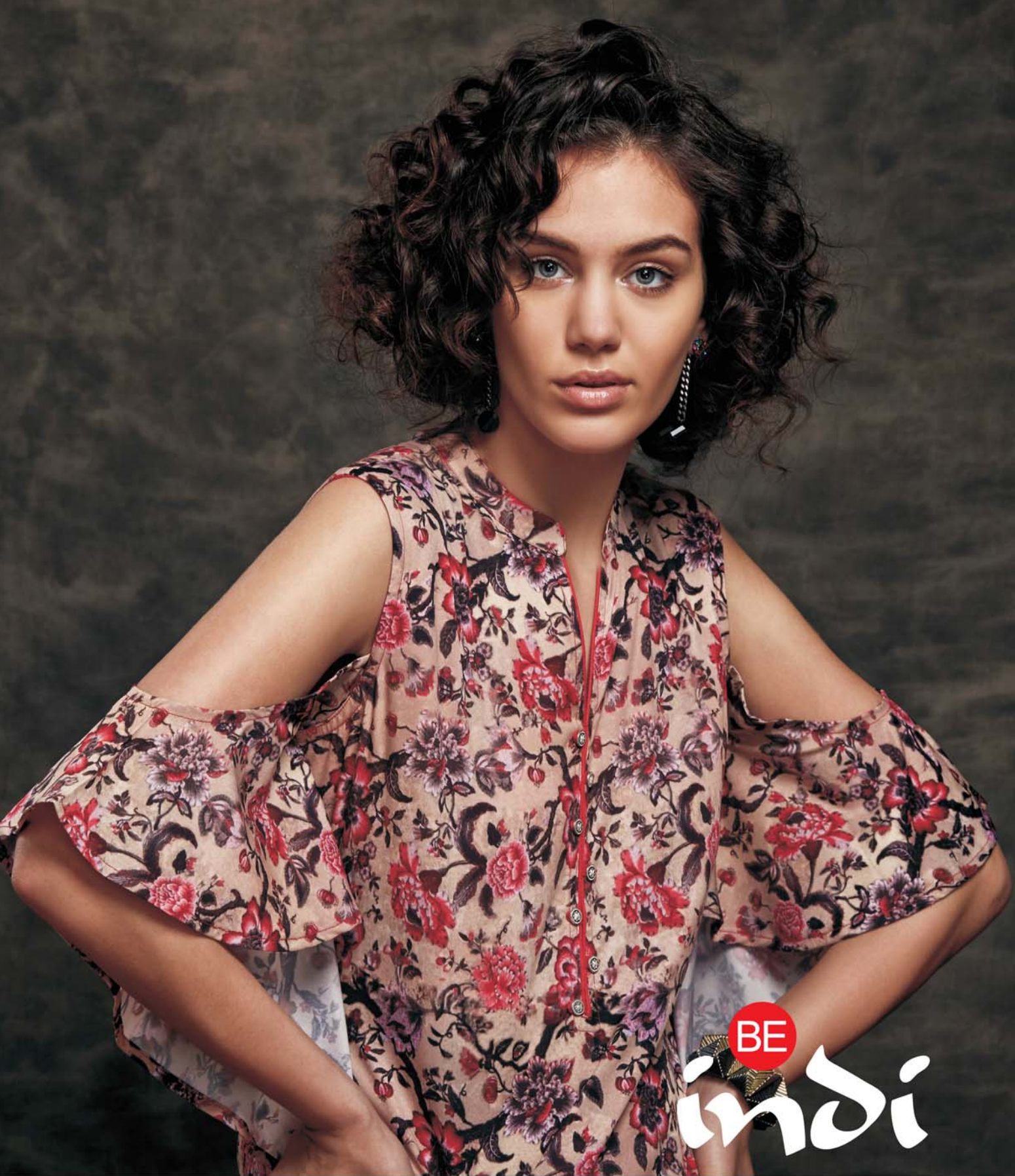
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# MEET THE MASTERS

VISION AND VIEWS OF FASHION THOUGHT LEADERS

Kewalchand P Jain, Chairman and Managing Director of Kewal Kiran Clothing Ltd., along with his brothers entered the apparel manufacturing business through a partnership firm called Kewal Kiran & Company. Over a period of time, Kewal Kiran group comprised various companies and firms. Later, the business was consolidated under a single corporate umbrella to achieve the benefits of marketing and manufacturing operations. Hence, the partnership firm was converted into a private limited company. Today, Kewal Kiran Clothing Ltd., is an integrated apparel manufacturer with capability of designing, manufacturing process encompassing cutting, body stitching, washing, ironing, finishing and marketing of branded men's wear. The company ventured into organised retail in 2005.

# KEWAL CHAND P JAIN

**CHAIRMAN  
& MANAGING DIRECTOR  
KEWAL KIRAN CLOTHING LTD.**

### ...on why working in the fashion industry is exciting

#### **Kewal Chand P Jain (KCPJ):**

Creativity is the driving force for the fashion industry; customer gratification is of utmost importance to us. We seek to provide happiness to our customers. It's a challenging job and we love that challenge, which makes it exciting for us.

### ...on the paradigm shift from a seller to buyer led market

**KCPJ:** That's the law of nature, change is the only constant thing. We are in the process of adapting to the changes and are matured enough to handle the changing scenario effectively.

### ...on how technology is changing the business

**KCPJ:** With new technologies effecting each of the areas of fashion business, we use the analytics to a great extent to forecast the behavioural patterns of our existing and potential customers and manufacture and retail as per the forecasts.

### ...on the changing fashion consumer

**KCPJ:** With advancements globally, the world today is at the fingertips. The styles are available almost instantly on our mobile phones as soon as they hit Milan fashion. That makes our customers completely attuned to international fashion and we in turn have to not only keep pace with this but be a little ahead of the competition.

### ...on if the product is the most important aspect in fashion

**KCPJ:** Absolutely, a great product of unmatched quality and fashion is always ahead of the curve.

### ...on the employment and income generation potential of fashion

**KCPJ:** India has more than 50 percent of its population below the age of 25 and more than 65 percent below the age of 35 years. It is expected that by 2020, the average age of an Indian will



*With the technological advancements globally, the world today is at the fingertips. The styles are available almost instantly on our mobile phones as soon as they hit Milan fashion. That makes our customers completely attuned to international fashion and we in turn have to not only keep pace with this but be a little ahead of the competition.*

be 29 years and with these projections India is surely going to be shining. And employment and income will be in abundance. Fashion obviously will be a front-runner.

### ...on the fashion skills that will matter

**KCPJ:** Fashion forecasts and fashion retail based on analytics will be the key areas for manpower demand in fashion business.

### ...on where the profits will now come from

**KCPJ:** As we leapfrog into the future we take our learning's along with us and the experience we gain now will hold us in good stead in the future as well.

### ...on why being "good" does and will matter a lot

**KCPJ:** Innovations, research and development in the areas of sustainable and environment friendly processes will be the order of the day, we will have to take the responsibility and find ways of maintaining a balance in the ecosystem.



# MEET THE MASTERS

VISION AND VIEWS OF  
FASHION THOUGHT LEADERS



Manish Mandhana is the Chief Executive Officer of The Mandhana Retail Ventures Ltd., which is a company that has the global license to design, market and distribute the clothing brand for celebrity Salman Khan and his charity 'Being Human - The Salman Khan Foundation'. It is a brand, where charity and cutting edge fashion have a symbiotic relationship. Manish has already witnessed successful international launches with over 500 point-of-sale in France, India, Mauritius, the Middle East and Nepal. Formerly, Manish was heading Mandhana Industries Ltd., a vertically integrated company pioneering textiles and garments. With a degree in commerce and textiles, Manish led the 6,000-plus member organisation for over 20 years. Under his leadership, Mandhana Industries Ltd., became a pioneer in the Indian textile and apparel industry, and achieved a market cap of over ₹9,000 million and was also listed in the 'Fortune 500 Companies'.

## MANISH MANDHANA

**CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER  
THE MANDHANA RETAIL  
VENTURES LTD.**

### ...on why working in the fashion industry is exciting

**Manish Mandhana (MM):** The whole point of being in the industry is that it is ever growing and changing, it's never constant. One can keep exploring and enjoying the fact that it is never going to repeat itself and that you can mix different cultures. What keeps me plugged with this industry is the fact that fashion has become a global phenomenon and a manufacturer has to keep in mind both the diversity of the regions in India and the changes in the international trends.

### ...on the paradigm shift from a seller to buyer led market

**MM:** The Indian fashion market has undergone a big transformation and it's all because of the influx of digital technology. This has become a tremendous source in connecting with the audience and engaging with them in a conversation. Customers are today influenced by trendsetters who showcase the latest in fashion. The retail industry is working today for these customers in providing what they want, with good quality and affordable pricing.

### ...on how technology is changing the business

**MM:** I think technology has become the essence of any business functioning and even fashion. Retailers are using technology to understand customer profiles and their journey to the point-of-sale. This helps companies to capture the data at POS level and bring it back to the head office to crunch, analyse and predict the customer behaviour and preferences.



### ...on the changing fashion consumer

**MM:** The customer today is well educated and well aware of the choices around him. He is like an explorer who looks at both physical and online retail to see what is the latest in trend and where should he buy from. The companies too are looking at the shopping preferences and conveniences and are trying to be omni-present with their products. The digital media is the new avatar of this modern trade and is directly influencing the millennial and the generation-Y, which was not evident 10 years back.

The physical stores also have undergone a big transformation where visual merchandising and store ambience plays a key role in influencing the decision making for a customer.

### ...on if the product is the most important aspect in fashion

**MM:** For me, a great product must include quality, pricing and more importantly fit. This is what makes you competitive enough in the market with multiple brands.

### ...on the 'Make in India' vision for the fashion industry

**MM:** India is a well known manufacturing destination due to its cost effective labour and highly skilled handloom industry. Due to which the fashion industry at the global level has made inroads into the market where Indian designers and their design sensibilities have been appreciated.

India excels in IT technology and if this is integrated with fashion along with the cost effective labour, it will prove to be a great combination for growth. The country can become a good option for brands to choose their production capabilities which will boost up our employment.

### ...on the employment and income generation potential of fashion

**MM:** Textile industry is the largest



employer in India. With organised retailing taking a big leap in India, it will generate good employment avenues for the consumers in the fashion sector. The crux on both sides of this industry are the youth - not only the back office employment including IT, marketing and designing but also well-groomed and well-educated fashion consultants and managers at the store level.

### ...on the fashion skills that will matter

**MM:** Skill sets such as design, innovation with research and development, supply chain improvisation will be in demand.

### ...on driving growth: accelerators & decelerators

**MM:** Political scenario, digitalisation, information exchange and use of big data could accelerate the demand. Lack of skilled labour force might act as roadblocks.

*India is a well known manufacturing destination due to its cost effective labour and highly skilled handloom industry. Due to which the fashion industry at the global level has made inroads into the market where Indian designers and their design sensibilities have been appreciated.*

### ...on where the profits in fashion will now come from

**MM:** These are basic growth drivers and will remain but digitalisation will contribute further. Moreover, the Internet of Things and opening of new trajectories such as the union of fashion and technology will be the factors in cutting cost as well.

### ...on why being "good" does and will matter a lot

**MM:** "Good" fashion is where people want to be associated with not just buying clothes but at the same time being associated with something good. I strongly believe business based on sustainability factors such social, economic and environmental impacts will always have more share of respect in the long run as it will earn them more goodwill and credibility from its core customers. Being Human is working on this model where every customer contributes to the twin causes of education and healthcare with every purchase he makes.



# MEET THE MASTERS

VISION AND VIEWS OF  
FASHION THOUGHT LEADERS



**Manohar D Chatlani, Managing Director, MD Retail India Pvt. Ltd., is the man behind a revolution in the ethnic fast fashion category in the retail market in India. With immense passion for retail and experience of more than 40 years in the retail sector, business development and leadership roles, Chatlani has grown the brand 'Soch' from being a single 800 sq.ft. store to an enormous chain. With 86 stores spread across India, Soch today is one of the most loved women's ethnic wear brands in the country. He is also a man of many firsts. He was the first to have launched a departmental store (multi-brand) in Bengaluru catering to the entire family. He was also the first to manufacture fiber glass mannequins in India.**

## MANOHAR D. CHATLANI

**MANAGING DIRECTOR  
M D RETAIL INDIA PVT. LTD.**

### **...on why working in the fashion industry is exciting**

**Manohar D Chatlani: (MDC):** My family has been in the fashion retail industry since three generations now, starting with my father who entered it right after partition in the 1950's. It gave me immense pleasure to work under him and then take over and grow the business. My two sons joined me later and have picked up my passion for fashion retail but within their own rights. Fashion by definition means constant change, and this fluidity requires the industry to be in constant change too. Nothing is static and evolution is the name of the game, which excites me the most.

### **...on the paradigm shift from a seller to buyer led market**

**MDC:** The Indian fashion market, much like the rest of the world, is definitely seeing a shift from being seller to buyer led. To begin with, the widespread availability of the internet is making the consumer a lot more discerning. There used to be a time when the supply was the only thing that influenced the demand. Now people are spoiled for choice, and the lines between influencers and buyers blur and many times the people who buy/use are also the people who influence, such as bloggers and celebrities. I think it has forced the industry to be a lot more nimble and keep our head to the ground. There will soon be a point when the relationship between supply and consumption will have to be a lot more holistic than simply a transactional one, and morph into one of synergy between desire and design.

### **...on how technology is changing the business**

**MDC:** The fashion industry has to now be available across channels. The consumers are used to being able to access information and products both offline and online, and brands have to adapt to being able to offer the consumers a



seamless experience. Omni-channel seems to be something that is thrown around a lot these days in the fashion retail industry. But if effectively used by each brand in the way in which it should benefit that particular brand's consumers, omni-channel can greatly enhance the brand and purchase experience, create loyalty and eventually lead to a stronger bottom line for the company.

**...on the changing fashion consumer**

**MDC:** Customers of today have a plethora of choices. They have a higher disposable income and also spend a larger part of it on apparel than those of ten years ago. They tend to know what they want most of the times before even entering a store. Web rooming and show rooming are part of their purchasing process, and they utilise the internet to support their buying like never before. They are price aware but also brand conscious.

**...on the changing fashion product**

**MDC:** Fashion today, especially ethnic, is a blend of the East and the West. Due to the penetration of TV and Bollywood, the product mix has become more important due to the huge number of options available and the intense competition.

**...on if the product is the most important aspect in fashion**

**MDC:** Yes, I do agree. As far as fashion



*E-commerce has opened our eyes to how far reaching fashion demand really is. People in the most remote regions previously thought of as unreachable or not even viable markets are suddenly relevant. Remote work will also slowly allow us to harness talent across a large country such as ours. Like mentioned before, the pure awareness growth and rising disposable incomes will make the potential for fashion as an employment and income generator incredibly large.*

goes, a great product is paramount to a designer, however we are in the fashion retail space so all other aspects that lead to a successful retail brand also come into play. Placement, pricing, packaging, location and marketing are all pillars of success but obviously they all come in second to having a great product.

**...on the 'Make in India' vision for the fashion industry**

**MDC:** A decade ago I would have said manufacturing is our greatest strength, followed in some time by technology. However, you are now seeing the design competency of our designers that meets the international standards. Designers have already shown us that



*Our government of late has been very supportive of the industry and hopefully will continue to do so. The more the bureaucratic and legal roadblocks are removed, smoother the growth will be.*



they can compete with the best on the world stage and I see no reason why we cannot be seen as a complete fashion powerhouse. The sheer variety in terms of colours, tastes, cuts, types of embroideries are not found anywhere else in the world.

**...on the employment and income generation potential of fashion**

**MDC:** I think fashion is seeing a huge growth across the country. To a large extent, e-commerce has opened our eyes to how far reaching fashion demand really is. People in the most remote regions previously thought of as unreachable or not even viable markets are suddenly relevant. Remote work will also slowly allow us to harness talent across a large country such as ours. Like mentioned before, the pure awareness growth and rising disposable incomes will make the potential for fashion as an employment and income generator incredibly large.

**...on the fashion skills that will matter**

**MDC:** For the foreseeable future I look at both the creative side (design and marketing) coupled with the science side (data analytics and forecasting) to be the two pillars of growth for fashion in india, and these are the two areas in which demand for manpower will be the highest.



**...on driving growth: accelerators and decelerators**

**MDC:** At the end of the day, our country is really seen as a group of countries put together. When you take into account regional seasons, languages and even slight changes in taste, it does make rapid national growth trickier than it would be in some other large countries. Our government of late has been very supportive of the industry and hopefully will continue to do so. The more the bureaucratic and legal roadblocks are removed, smoother the growth will be. Technology of course will be used as our greatest tool both in rolling out across the country and understanding our consumer and thereby being able to adapt to their needs via data.

**...on where the profits in fashion will now come from**

**MDC:** I think all companies should run

a lean system as far as possible. Rising brand consciousness and receptiveness to higher price points and premium brands will always enable firms to be able to avoid the need for a lean system and at times even work on smaller models that don't need economies of scale to succeed. I strongly feel that this should in no way make us complacent. It simply gives us more breathing room but isn't an excuse to not look at keeping things like costs and stock levels in check.

**...on why being "good" does and will matter a lot**

**MDC:** I think "good" fashion and sustainable business practices are simply things on our industry's part to undertake. And in a more collective role that mankind has to take, in order to fix our planet.





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# MEET THE MASTERS

VISION AND VIEWS OF  
FASHION THOUGHT LEADERS



## RACHNA AGGARWAL

**CEO**

**FUTURE LIFESTYLE FASHION**

Rachna Aggarwal Sirdeshmukh, an MBA from IIM, Ahmedabad started her career with Coats Viyella Plc. During her stint at the iconic Madura Garments, she worked on Van Heusen and then launched Allen Solly in 1993, where she was instrumental in introducing the revolutionary 'Friday Dressing' concept to the country. In 1999 Rachna, along with seven other colleagues, promoted a VC funded brand-marketing company, Indus-League Clothing Limited (ILCL). In 2005 the company was acquired by the Future Group, and Rachna subsequently took over as the CEO. She continues to lead the brand business of Future Lifestyle Fashion and her brand portfolio includes diverse apparel brands such as Scullers, Indigo Nation, Jealous 21, Bare, Rig, UMM, John Miller, Urban Yoga, Urbana, Lombard, Privilege Club, Mother Earth, Giovanni and Converse.

**...on why working in the fashion industry is exciting.**

**Rachna Aggarwal (RA):** I joined the fashion Industry in the bygone days when sales staff stood behind counters and opened shirt boxes for men to select from! And, even though the world has changed since then, every day is still a new day in fashion! It is this excitement that keeps me here. The fashion industry is as much about trend and data analysis, as much as about gut and instinct. It is about exciting the young girl with the latest in fashion as much as about improving the core white shirt for the corporate executive. It is as much about conversations between fabric and colour, as much as about EBITDA and ROCE. In fact, all that chaos and creativity do is that they make for *Just Another Day in Paradise* for me! Personally, I consider myself lucky to be involved with a portfolio of brands as rich and diverse as Scullers, Jealous 21, Converse, Indigo Nation, Rig, Giovanni, etc., wherein each has a unique attitude and brand experience to offer.

**...on the paradigm shift from a seller to buyer led market**

**RA:** Yes, the fashion market is changing and changing very fast. The consumer/the girl is now at the centre of the whirlpool - it's her interaction with different brands and her experiences that define how we operate and how business is being done. Her world is her screen and all the information she consumes flows on this screen. Her No. 1 source of information of what's in fashion is Instagram. She doesn't understand offline and online...it's all one simple continuum for her. Information is available instantly at her fingertips, and as such, the 9 to ten-month supply chain the fashion industry worked with is no longer a viable option. Getting orders in advance and then producing is no longer a safe option. Working with 2 seasons in

the year is no longer viable. Fashion as a business has to work with speed and imagination. To be able to quickly pick up trends, to identify top sellers and reproduce, to identify slow movers in weeks and solve to liquidate, to sell looks and experiences seamlessly.

**...on how technology is changing the business.**

**RA:** Technology is available to both of us as well as to our customers. It is helping us to move the needle significantly on business metrics as well as enabling great consumer connect. It is empowering us by throwing up data and analytics for quick decision making by connecting us to the customers, vendors and partners seamlessly, by allowing us to reach out to our fans in cost effective ways on social media and to participate in conversations. On the other side, it is empowering our customers by making so much more information available to them, allowing them to compare and even get peer inputs.

**...on the changing fashion consumer.**

**RA:** Technology has placed the power in the customers' hands with the internet enabled smartphone and tablets. In today's technology-driven markets, the customer is more aware of the global fashion market. She sees how the world is dressing every day. She is more exposed to the latest trends in fashion. How she thinks visually and processes images is an amazing change. Overall, be it price, new products, trends and processes, I find today's customer to be more fashion-savvy, tech-savvy, more deeply involved and connected at every level, and much more impatient too.



**...on the changing fashion product.**

**RA:** I went for a friend's 50th birthday party recently and 80 percent of women present were wearing dresses in bright colours and prints, off shoulders and cold shoulders, Grecian silhouettes and bell sleeves, minis and maxis! Isn't this a sea change from 20 years ago when the fashion industry primarily sold men's shirts and we all experimented with shades of whites, blues and blacks, and the only visual decision to take was the thickness of and the distance between the stripes?

**...on if the product is the most important aspect in fashion.**

**RA:** Yes, a great product is at the very

*The fashion industry is as much about trend and data analysis, as much as about gut and instinct. It is about exciting the young girl with the latest in fashion as much as about improving the core white shirt for the corporate executive. It is as much about conversations between fabric and colour, as much as about EBITDA and ROCE.*



heart of fashion, but it also needs to be surrounded by an immersive brand experience. However, we should look deeper into what makes a great product in a revised context. Is it the best ingredient quality? Or is it simply the latest of what is trending? Is it about the best craftsmanship? Of the latest fashion? And it may also be about the lowest price? The equation is no longer simple.

**...on the 'Make in India' vision for the fashion industry.**

**RA:** In India, we do have the raw materials, fibres, weaving, processing, garmenting, as well as the creativity, the technology, etc. We now need to stitch them all together, scale up from the current fragmented state by creating the right infrastructure and environment to make the vision happen. The government has, in fact, identified India's garment and textile industry as one of the 25 sectors in which we are capable of becoming world leaders. We also need to recreate and build on our rich history of textiles and our natural advantage of cotton production, of the silk route, and of the handlooms. The awesome opportunity is that fashion is one of those industries that allows us to preserve our culture and heritage, truly celebrating the colours and textures of India.

**...on the employment and income generation potential of fashion.**

**RA:** India is the world's second largest textile manufacturer. The textile industry is the country's second largest employer after agriculture. As fashion as an industry grows, so also will its



***Fashion industry requires creativity and control, art and science, left brain and right brain. It is an industry that needs passion and skill. Fashion allows us to preserve our culture and heritage, truly celebrating the colours and textures of India.***

ability to become an income generator, not just through employment but through the rents it pays, the factories it keeps running, the shops it sets up that need managing, operating, fixtures and mannequins and hangers, the technology it uses both at the back-end and to interact with its consumers and so on.

**...on the fashion skills that will matter.**

**RA:** We need skilled manpower in across every function. Fashion industry requires creativity and control, art and science, left brain and right brain. It is an industry that needs passion and skill.

**...on driving growth: accelerators and decelerators.**

**RA:** I feel that the accelerating factors for growth in the fashion industry are - right priced product the first time, omni-channel and seamless flow of experience across both physical and virtual worlds and creating the right economic environment for capital inflow. The roadblocks can be - cost of customer servicing (occupancy cost/ last mile delivery), fragmented value chain, frequent policy/ tax regime changes, etc.

**...on where the profits in fashion will now come from.**

**RA:** The profits in our business will come by using data to minimise lost sales and maximise full sell through velocity. And, by creating innovative and flexible supply chains.

**...on why being "good" does and will matter a lot.**

**RA:** Today's consumer is becoming more and more concerned about sustainability. Organic/green and environment friendly fashion does create empathy and connect with a growing circle of customers. The textile industry is one of the biggest pollutants of our rivers and there is a dire need to develop sustainable processes. Several labels are taking an initiative to end waste. There are so many things we need to support. Our brand, Mother Earth, is a grass-roots development brand where production happens with women self-help groups. They are supported with design inputs and market access by us resulting in grass root socio economic impact, and, also in preserving centuries old art and craft.



# MEET THE MASTERS

VISION AND VIEWS OF  
FASHION THOUGHT LEADERS

Raghul Sikka, Director of Dixcy Textiles Pvt. Ltd., has been instrumental in developing its business to a mid corporate company. With over eight years of experience in the hosiery industry, Sikka's highly developed product competence, distribution, branding and excellent logistics, powered by a comprehensive knowledge of the markets and the consumers, has led to the brand's continuous success. A firm believer of team work by collaboration, he lays great emphasis on branding, product development, business strategies, advertisements, marketing, sales, digital marketing and product design aspects.



# RAGHUL SIKKA

**DIRECTOR**  
**DICXY TEXTILES PVT. LTD.**

#### ...on why working in the fashion industry is exciting

**RS:** It's been a passion for me since my younger days. I have grown up in midst of garment clusters and somehow it came just naturally to me. Excitement is always there when you get to do new things and with the fast changing trends I think it's the best place we can experiment in and get opportunities to do new things by design.

#### ...on the paradigm shift from a seller to buyer led market

**RS:** It's happening because of the competition and going forward the seller who innovates more and is refined in his approach will win.

#### ...on how technology is changing the business

**RS:** Today's world is relying a lot on technology. I hear of a mobile fashion business in the US, which offers hi-tech measurements taken through lasers, suits are then sewn and customised in Bangkok and then shipped back. This is an example of the extent of technology being used in fashion nowadays.

#### ...on the changing fashion consumer

**RS:** Today the customer is decisive and design led. He is smart enough to know where to get his requirements met.

#### ...on if the product is the most important aspect in fashion

**RS:** Product is the most important thing that customers look for. The core of any consumer business is product and good people. They go hand in hand. Customers will only come back to you if you give them a good product.

#### ...on the employment and income generation potential of fashion

**RS:** With fast fashion kicking in, the consumption of clothing is increasing and so are the allied fields. They are directly proportional.

#### ...on the fashion skills that will matter

**RS:** Knowledge of materials and innovative creative thinking are the skills to look out for.

#### ...on driving growth: accelerators and decelerators

**RS:** Today's need for fast fashion is a clear indicator of growth that will drive the demand for clothing. I don't see any major road blocks for this industry domestically but for export pricing it is quite a challenge.

#### ...on where the profits in fashion will now come from

**RS:** A new dimension of design will play a very crucial role.

#### ...on why being "good" does and will matter a lot

**RS:** Industry should not be developed at the cost of environment. We are a green company where 80 percent of our power requirements are met through renewable sources. We also run our establishment in a zero discharge chemical processing eco system in Tirupur, which reinforces the fact that we are environment conscious.

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*"Today's world is relying a lot on technology. I hear of a mobile fashion business in the US, which offers hi-tech measurements taken through lasers, suits are then sewn and customised in Bangkok and then shipped back. This is an example of the extent of technology being used in fashion nowadays."*

# MEET THE MASTERS

VISION AND VIEWS OF  
FASHION THOUGHT LEADERS



## RAHUL MEHTA

**MANAGING DIRECTOR  
CREATIVE LIFESTYLES PVT. LTD.**

Rahul Mehta, Managing Director of Creative Lifestyle Pvt. Ltd., joined the Creative Group as their Partner and Managing Director in 1982, and launched, UFO Jeans, one of the earliest international brands to come to India. Today, he oversees most of the domestic business of the group, such as 109F, Fusion Beats, Urban Republic Jeans, Portico, etc. He is an independent Director to several other companies including Gini & Jony, Kamadgiri Fashions and Chermas Exquisite Pvt. Ltd.

Mehta is widely acknowledged as one of the thought leaders of the domestic garment industry. He is the President of the Clothing Manufacturers Association of India (CMAI), and a member of the Managing Committee of the Apparel Export Promotion Council. Till recently, he was also the President of International Apparel Federation (IAF), which is based out of Netherlands.

### ...on why working in the fashion industry is exciting

**Rahul Mehta (RM):** I came to the industry under pressure. I was happily working in a multi-national firm, progressing rapidly to the highest echelons of management. But my wife was far more ambitious for me, and felt I am capable of much more than what I was doing in my job. So in 1982, I joined my friend Vijay Agarwal to launch UFO Jeans in the domestic market. It's been 35 years working with Vijay and he still is one of my best mates. But I have to admit, the joy of creating, the satisfaction of seeing your creation on the street, and the inherent fun of the rags trade, is now the driver of my existence!

### ...on the paradigm shift from a seller to buyer led market

**RM:** Most certainly! Today the consumer determines at what price he/she will buy your product at; where he/she will buy it from; from whom he/she will buy. In reality, consumer is king today! Frankly, the whole business has changed and along with it there is a need to bring in change in the manufacturing strategies, the marketing strategies, HR policies, and even financial models.

### ...on how technology is changing the business

**RM:** Technology is becoming the backbone of doing business today – from forecasting, to automation in manufacturing, to MIS in business analytics, and to consumer behaviour understanding and feedback, it is all encompassing.

### ...on the changing fashion consumer

**RM:** Today's consumer is more knowledgeable, more evolved, more calculative, and more exposed to fashion and trends.

### ...on the changing fashion product

**RM:** I guess earlier consumers bought products. Today they buy a concept. They go for an idea.

### ...on if the product is the most important aspect in fashion

**RM:** It's a 50-50 scenario. You cannot sell a bad product with the best of marketing, and you cannot sell a great product without communication.





*Today India is trying to position itself as a 'value manufacturing hub'. I think this is a mistake. If not today, tomorrow - India is going to be a high cost economy. High costs, high aspirations and low productivity are a deadly mixture for trying to be a value based hub. India has no option but to be a fashion or an IT led hub.*

**...on the 'Make in India' vision for the fashion industry**

**RM:** Today India is trying to position itself as a 'value manufacturing hub'. I think this is a mistake. If not today, tomorrow - India is going to be a high cost economy. High costs, high aspirations and low productivity are a deadly mixture for trying to be a value based hub. India has no option but to be a fashion or an IT led hub.



**...on the employment and income generation potential of fashion**

**RM:** India's demographics have nothing to do with fashion. It is their preoccupation with other activities, which have led to the current demographics.

However, having got here, they will need to wear clothes, and the growing GDP, rising incomes and overall prosperity are in fact providing the driving force for the growth of the fashion industry. And if we consider the entire value chain of textiles as also being part of the fashion industry, it is the largest employer in the country after agriculture.

**...on the fashion skills that will matter**

**RM:** Going by the current gloomy scenario in the fashion industry, the person having the skill set of "how to survive" will be in great demand. But seriously, going forward, experts in productivity will be the most sought after in the industry.

**...on driving growth: accelerators and decelerators**

**RM:** As said earlier, the over all prosperity of the country, the growing exposure of Indians to international fashion, the growing urbanisation of India, and the changing demographics will drive the growth of the Industry. Limitation of mindset can be the only roadblock!

**...on where the profits in fashion often will now come from**

**RM:** Whether now or in the future, profits will only come from productivity, innovation and adaptability!

**...on why being "good" does and will matter a lot**

**RM:** Let's face it. If the world is not going to pay heed to sustainability and environment, there is going to be no world left for us! Yes, it is difficult for an industry whose foundation is based on excess, on waste, and on chemicals to think about sustainability. But we must think and take whatever steps are required to foster growth and bring changes in the in the ntire industry philosophy.



# MEET THE MASTERS

VISION AND VIEWS OF  
FASHION THOUGHT LEADERS



## RAJESH JAIN

**MANAGING DIRECTOR  
& CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER  
SPORTS AND LEISURE  
APPAREL LTD.**

**Rajesh Jain, Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer of Sports And Leisure Apparel Ltd., a Lacoste licensee in India has been constantly nurturing the brand since October 2009. With persistent efforts and focused vision, he has built and propagated Lacoste in India as a complete lifestyle brand, offering unique and original universe for different verticals including clothing, shoes, leather goods, watches, etc., for men, women and children. From a financial background, analysing and evolving company strategies into details comes easy to him. Jain's inclination towards retail industry was an opportunity to adapt to an industry, which was characterised by ever changing demands and varied preferences. A persona of high spirit, he is always open to experimentation and taking calculated risks. His vast knowledge and unique perspective towards the retail industry has enabled the brand to reach out to every major city of the country.**

### **...on why working in the fashion industry is exciting**

**Rajesh Jain (RJ):** Winning alone is not sufficient. It's "winning with style" that matters and fashion industry provides the opportunity to bring the "style" quotient to winning. Additionally, the fashion industry is ever changing. The excitement to step out of your comfort zone on daily basis really keeps me perpetually excited to work in the fashion industry.

### **...on the paradigm shift from a seller to buyer led market**

**RJ:** Every market has always been led by the buyers and fashion is no exception. What has changed in India is that the Indian customer is now well travelled and is also exposed to international markets through internet and media. Today's Indian customer is an informed customer. With the emergence of multiple fashion brands and e-commerce in India, consumers have far more choices now. Consumers are not looking for products alone. What attracts them is the ambience, consistency, visual appeal and above-all, customer service. The customer delight comes when the customer gets an overall good experience along with a great quality product. The short-term sale efforts, such as, discount/promotional offers resulting in savings for the customer could be a way of enticing customers to buy more but would not necessarily bring customer delight and is surely a short-term tactic. The strategy here needs to be the best possible customer service.

### **...on how technology is changing the business**

**RJ:** Technology has played a phenomenon role in the fashion industry for both the customers as well as sellers. With the emergence of online podium, the industry has provided convenient shopping and a less time-consuming experience to the customers. On the other hand, omni-channel has really reduced the transition time for the buyers as all the services are provided under one roof. Data availability and analysis ensure understanding of customers' buying patterns and future forecast is relatively better planned. However, in my view, technology as a word has also been blown out of proportions. It is



being seen as an end in itself instead of being a means to the end. The age-old principles of good quality product, great customer service assisted by new technological tools provide a perfect blend to bring smile to the customers' and sellers' face.

#### ...on the changing fashion consumer

**RJ:** What has changed in India is that the Indian customer is now well travelled and is also exposed to international markets through internet and media. Today's Indian customer is an informed customer. With the emergence of multiple fashion brands and e-commerce in India, consumers have far more choices now. Nowadays with the help of internet, consumers are able to get all the information on a single click or touch anywhere, anytime. Today's customer is well versed even with the minute details of the products, which they wish to buy, as compared to a decade back.

#### ...on the changing fashion product

**RJ:** When we entered India about 25 years ago, we were seen as a "Polo Centric Brand". Our hero product was our all-time favourite "L1212 - Classic plain solid Polo". While that classic



solid polo continues to contribute a significant contribution to our sales, what the customer wants now is a complete range of solid polo in different fits and colours. Stripers, fancy polo, shirts, trousers, footwear, leather goods, wrist watches, fragrances, sunglasses et all. In short, the customers today prefer a complete lifestyle brand over a mono

category brand to complement their lifestyle. Theme planning has changed and emphasis is more on having a beautiful visual appeal and hence visual merchandising is very important.

#### ...on if the product is the most important aspect in fashion

**RJ:** In fashion, the most important thing is your self-confidence, your ability to carry what you wear with ease and confidence. Not every good product will make every person look phenomenal but it's your confidence that will help you carry any product.

#### ...on the 'Make in India' vision for the fashion industry

**RJ:** India has enriched traditional history in garment designing and manufacturing. Brands need to capitalise on the unique fashion sense from different regions of India. This in turn will enable India to showcase its unique and diversified fashion designs on a global platform. India can boast to be mix of talent from all walks of life, be it manufacturing, designing or IT/technology. However, given the way the things are, it appears





that India would emerge as a strong global manufacturing hub driven by technological advancement on the front end.

**...on the employment and income generation potential of fashion**

**RJ:** India has a diversified fashion skill set coming from different parts of the country. Government and brands need to provide a platform to these skilled workers that can help them to provide ample employment opportunities and income generation. With the growth of organised retail in the country, the employment opportunities, both in the front end and back end, are increasing day by day and will continue to grow in future. The disposable income and affinity towards discretionary purchase by the consumer has also been consistently increasing, providing the much-needed flip to the fashion industry.

**...on the fashion skills that will matter**

**RJ:** Fashion industry provides a broad range of job opportunities to people. No one skill set can be singled out to have a maximum demand rather all the skill sets, for e.g., fashion designing, production, analytics, sales and marketing, etc., need to go hand in hand for achieving the economies of scale and customer delight.



*Technology has played a phenomenon role in the fashion industry for both the customers as well as sellers. With the emergence of online podium, the industry has provided a convenient shopping and less time-consuming experience to the customers. On the other hand, omni-channel has really reduced the transition time for the buyers as all the services are provided under one roof. Data availability and analysis ensure understanding of customers' buying patterns and future forecast is relatively better planned.*

**...on driving growth: accelerators and decelerators**

**RJ:** On the factors that will accelerate growth, I feel the overall economic growth results will translate into high spending power and technology makes brand information available that in turn results in high spending habits in the fashion industry.

Some of the road blocks are – short term tactics, such as capitalising on price differentials, unfriendly taxation structures and manner of regulatory implementation.

**...on where the profits in fashion will now come from**

**RJ:** Providing a great customer experience needs to be the key mantra for every fashion brand as this will help them to convert new prospects into their loyal customers. As a result, they will be able to achieve the ROI more effectively and efficiently without cutting on other things. At the same time, cost control rather than cost cutting would continue to remain a better strategy.

**...on why being “good” does and will matter a lot**

**RJ:** It's not a gain or loss that one should see from these factors. This is our duty to ensure social compliance, environment friendly process, support some causes, whether financially or otherwise. While these factors may not have any direct or indirect impact on sales/business, these are our responsibilities to future and to society at large.





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# MEET THE MASTERS

VISION AND VIEWS OF  
FASHION THOUGHT LEADERS



## SAHIL MALIK

**MANAGING DIRECTOR  
DA MILANO LEATHERS PVT. LTD.**

Sahil Malik, Managing Director of Da Milano Leathers Pvt. Ltd., has elevated the brand, Da Milano from a family-run business to an international podium. Connoisseur of fashion luxury and travelling, he has complimented the balance between heritage collection and multiple launches. Malik aimed not only to cater to the affluent, but also to create a sense of brand among the growing bourgeoisie then, and the elite now. He has elevated the experience of the customer expectations. With designs from Italian state-of-art studio, Sahil has enacted the blend of intensive traditional methods with latest technology. Today, Da Milano is one of the most aspiring brands, producing the maximum range in leather.

### **...on why working in the fashion industry is exciting**

**Sahil Malik (SM):** It's fun, fierce and fast paced. If you're someone who enjoys a challenge, the fashion industry provides the ideal environment for you to thrive. With trends rotating and fading in and out swiftly, the industry is ever changing and one needs to be prepared for that constant change.

### **...on the paradigm shift from a seller to buyer led market**

**SM:** The Indian fashion retail market has witnessed countless changes and challenges in recent years, which are indicators of the country's evolving fashion retail market. The Indian consumer is experiencing an evolution and is rapidly adapting to international fashion statements. Rise in disposable incomes, exposure to international events and fashion icons and rising confidence levels are driving the changes in the consumer purchase behaviour. There was a time when fashion accessories were being purchased as and when required. Now-a-days, fashion is more than a basic need; it is a reflection of aspiration, personality, and one of the biggest status symbols.

### **...on how technology is changing the business**

**SM:** Technology has become an inevitable part of consumer lifestyles. The increasing access to the internet devices has influenced consumers' buying patterns substantially. They now have greater access to fashion products through the internet and digital devices. They compare products, prices, brand offerings, service levels, and the feedback/opinions of fellow consumers before making any purchase decisions.

### **...on the changing fashion consumer**

**SM:** With the advent of social media, internet, advanced payment methods, and dozens of new ways to engage with the customers have made them spend more than ever. Few years ago, people came to the stores with little to no knowledge and relied on a salesperson to advise them on what to buy. Today's shoppers have become accustomed to doing their own research to get the maximum value out of every money they spend, and to feel secure about the purchases they're making.



**...on the changing fashion product**

**SM:** Products are now designed keeping the customers and their diversity of preferences in mind. The product mix is now more customised unlike before.

**...on if the product is the most important aspect in fashion**

**SM:** Definitely yes, no matter how aggressive you are in marketing, if the product doesn't speak for itself all efforts go in vain.

**...on the 'Make in India' vision for the fashion industry**

**SM:** India is a land of great potential in every field, be it manufacturing, design or technical for the fact that now a lot of international investors consider doing business in India.

**...on the employment and income generation potential of fashion**

**SM:** Despite demographic boundaries, a constant trend is that all consumers are cautious spenders.

*With the advent of social media, internet, advanced payment methods, and dozens of new ways to engage with the customers have made them spend more than ever. Few years ago, people came to the stores with little to no knowledge and relied on a salesperson to advise them on what to buy. Today's shoppers have become accustomed to doing their own research to get the maximum value out of every money they spend, and to feel secure about the purchases they're making.*



According to a study, India is expected to become the world's youngest emerging economy by 2020, with around 64 percent of its population in the working age group. This young consuming class has new aspirations and is more open to experimenting with fashion brands and modern designs.



**...on the fashion skills that will matter**

**SM:** Creative aesthetics, although we have lots of creative talent booming but there shouldn't be any limit to the demand for people good in it.

**...on driving growth: accelerators and decelerators**

**SM:** From a retailer's perspective, it requires a thorough understanding of consumer preferences across the country and of the similarity and differences in consumer buying patterns. Evolving customer needs are a challenge as it requires continuously rediscovering the customer within a short time span and then rearranging the organisation's structure, retail formats, and product portfolios accordingly. Real estate rents and space availability and leasing is also a considerable roadblock in expansion.



# MEET THE MASTERS

VISION AND VIEWS OF  
FASHION THOUGHT LEADERS



**Sundeep K Chugh, Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer of Benetton India Pvt. Ltd., has been a catalyst in developing Benetton's distribution strategy in India, moving the company to a more balanced retail model. Chugh has been serving as Commercial Director of Benetton India since 2011. He has been successfully in attracting new partners and expanded the sales network, creating the largest network of stores and retail space in India. Prior to joining Benetton, Chugh has held positions in Adidas India Marketing and LG Electronics India. Throughout his career, he has won several performance-related awards for sales, regional management, team performance and business management.**

## SUNDEEP K CHUGH

**MANAGING DIRECTOR &  
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER  
BENETTON INDIA PVT. LTD.**

### **...on why working in the fashion industry is exciting**

**Sundeep K Chugh (SKC):** The fashion industry is an extremely stimulating place to work because of its ever-changing dynamics and environment. There is so much to learn as there are always multiple activities going on within a fashion house. Decisions are made keeping in mind both creative expression as well as business profitability which makes it very exciting. Working as the CEO of Benetton India is a matter of great pride. Today, India is one of the top markets outside Italy for the brand. The Benetton Group's ethos has always been to combine business growth with social commitment, competitiveness, care for the environment and ethics.

### **...on the paradigm shift from a seller to buyer led market**

**SKC:** The overall market has taken an upward shift. With the retail market evolving at a rapid pace and new brands entering the Indian market with innovation and strategies; there has been a lot of change that we have noted. India is developing as a mature market when it comes to fashion trends and retail experience.

From the consumer profiles, to buying behaviour, to the demand and supply ratio; every facet has seen major development in these years, which is leading to a tremendous increase in India's share in global consumption. The Indian market is at par with the international fashion trend cycle. Lot of new brands have made an entry in India and with the launch of these brands they are also opening up the market with their own USPs and offerings. The customers have already experienced these brands internationally and thus the fashion retail landscape is currently in a highly dynamic state.





**...on how technology is changing the business**

**SKC:** The rising internet penetration plays a vital role in shaping and changing the dynamics of the market. With e-commerce boom in the past few years; products and brands are more accessible to the consumers. The rise of internet shopping and growth of off-price retailing are mega-trends reshaping the retail industry. Internet sales are booming at the cost of direct store purchases. The growth in the retail sector is being majorly fuelled by both organised brick-and-mortar stores and e-commerce.

The significance of online sales cannot be ignored and United Colors of Benetton strongly puts emphasis on its online presence. We have associated with leading e-tailers in India and the brand is available across all key

e-commerce sites. Also, the product range available in the Indian market is inspired by international trends keeping the Indian taste and ethos intact.

**...on the changing fashion consumer**

**SKC:** The new age consumer is digitally more active, more experimental, evolved and aware about global trends and thus very clear on what they are looking for. It is an interesting challenge to understand their expectations and deliver accordingly to live up to their expectations.

**...on the changing fashion product**

**SKC:** Today, the emerging trend forecasts define the product themes which are a mix of creative inputs and the evolved consumer behavioural changes and demand.

In terms of product priorities; when western high street retail was emerging, menswear was a big focus but now there is a major shift and rapid growth

in womenswear. Fashion is now expanding into different categories of formal wear, casuals, special occasions, holiday, outdoor, undergarments, etc. Accessories and footwear also hold a larger percentage of the product portfolio with the consumers reaching out for more options beyond apparel.

Theme planning has moved to shorter cycles, which are now more defined and region specific. A product mix and merchandising as per location and climatic conditions is the key focus for retailers. We have moved beyond Spring-Summer/ Autumn-Winter to increase drops in-stores as per occasions, region specific requirements and seasonal calendars.

**...on if the product is the most important aspect in fashion**

**SKC:** Yes, I definitely agree. Without a great product a brand is not left with any options to attract consumers. Good design is about using materials that are fit for the purpose and that makes a great product. This has to be aesthetically pleasing and functional in design. When you deliver a good product to consumer, he remembers and comes back to you.

**...on the 'Make in India' vision for the fashion industry**

**SKC:** In my opinion one of India's greatest strength is manufacturing. The country can deliver good quality products at a competitive price. This should be the main focus of the 'Make in India' vision for fashion. India can become a "Global Manufacturing Destination" with increased penetration of organised retail, favourable demographics and rising income levels to drive textile demand.





#### ...on the employment & income generation potential of fashion

**SKC:** I think India is a huge market already. Middle class in this country is escalating at a quick pace in terms of disposable income. They are purchasing fashion merchandise at an exceptional rate and increasing their investment in fashion with each passing day.

At present fashion is creating a great number of unique opportunities in India in each and every sector. Be it manufacturing, entertainment, journalism, IT or even hospitality for that matter. It is making its presence felt everywhere and will be growing more in the coming years.

#### ...on the fashion skills that will matter

**SKC:** The driving force in the industry I believe would be telling stories and connecting with consumers. The demand will be of people with story-telling abilities for e.g., as a polo with a story will sell more than just a polo.

*The driving force in the industry I believe would be telling stories and connecting with consumers. The demand will be of people with story-telling abilities for e.g., as a polo with a story will sell more than just a polo.*

#### ...on driving growth: accelerators & decelerators

**SKC:** The biggest factor to drive up this growth is digital and social media. We are living in a world where information is exchanged all across the globe in seconds. This allows the consumers to know what is happening in the world in terms of latest fashion trends and new products.

#### ...on where the profits in fashion will now come from

**SKC:** Fashion is changing at a tremendous pace where more and more collections are coming in a year as compared to just two seasons from the

past. Newness in the stores and retail experience will be the key drivers here.

The future of retail will be focussed more on providing consumers with experiences than just a product. This has already started happening. This begins with a beautiful window, which is the first point of interaction with the audience in the retail environment followed by stories told to the consumer once he is inside the store.

#### ...on why being “good” does & will matter a lot

**SKC:** With the constant change in the climatic conditions of the world it is extremely important for a brand to be sustainable and environment friendly. Global fashion industry has bitterly evidenced the social and environmental implications associated with fast production cycles, over-use of resources, waste generation, environmental pollution and unethical labour conditions. Growing consumer awareness regarding social and environmental impacts of fashion products has led to create a new marketplace for most of the companies which foster sustainable and environment friendly processes.

As a brand, we continue to support sustainability and social causes contributing to the growth of the society. Our marketing campaigns and CSR initiatives are a clear reflection of this core philosophy.





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# MEET THE MASTERS

VISION AND VIEWS OF  
FASHION THOUGHT LEADERS



**Sandeep Goenka, Chief Operating Officer of Bagzone Lifestyles Pvt. Ltd., launched the renowned fashion accessories brand Lavie in 2010. The brand is today present across major cities of India. Goenka after promoting several chemical factories, joined the premium luggage brand Samsonite in 1997. Since then his life has been all about retail growth, demystifying retail trajectories, launching new categories and driving the brand to cater to today's consumers needs. He is also known as a power-house of knowledge, a forward thinker with a creative mind. Using his expertise in consumer insights and India's retail scenario, he is bridging the gap between lifestyle brands and consumer demands.**

## SANDEEP GOENKA

**CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER  
BAGZONE LIFESTYLES PVT. LTD.**

### **...on why working in the fashion industry is exciting**

**Sandeep Goenka (SG):** The fashion industry is dynamic and fast paced. No two days are the same, which makes it challenging and exciting. Fashion in all its glory is glamorous and always will be. The industry has scope for changes, which breaks the monotony. For a fashion brand like Lavie, the entire process of finding inspiration, analysing trends, selecting colour palettes, silhouettes and fabric for the bags to getting it manufactured, planning and allocating, to develop the final product and to bring it to the consumers is an exciting process and a fulfilling and holistic journey.

### **...on the paradigm shift from a seller to buyer led market**

**SG:** Indians have been travelling like never before. They are exposed to the fashion trends across the world. We as sellers have to keep that in mind and plan the collection, which suits the taste preference of the well-travelled fashion-conscious buyers.

### **...on how technology is changing the business**

**SG:** Retail technology has seen an upswing in the recent years. For example, one of the latest trends is the beacon. A beacon engages the customers by informing and updating them about the latest promotions, discounts, new collection arrivals through a message on their phone. This technology can be groundbreaking for the brick and mortar store concepts. Another boon for the retail stores is the varied payment options available nowadays with a buyer. The digitisation has helped and will smoothen transactions for both the buyers and the sellers. On the other hand, the online shopping apps, has also made shopping available quite literally at fingertips.

### **...on the changing fashion consumers**

**SG:** The Indian customers have always been particular about their choice in fashion but were less experimental. Fashion was a secondary need. In today's time, with a rise in disposable income, fashion has become



*In today's time, with a rise in disposable income, fashion has become an integral part of the lifestyle. Now, the customer is open to splurging but still looks for value pricing. Another major difference is that today's customers are aware about the global trends. Owing to online media, all the information is at their fingertips. This has become a strong influence in the purchasing decisions of the customers.*

an integral part of the lifestyle. Now, the customer is open to splurging but still looks for value pricing. Another major difference is that today's customers are aware about the global trends. Owing to online media, all the information is at their fingertips. This has become a strong influence in the purchasing decisions of the customers.

**...on if the product is the most important aspect in fashion**

**SG:** Yes, I agree completely! As a brand Lavie takes its products very seriously, focusing on the smallest of details such as buckle detailing, lining, logo, etc., to ensure each style has something unique to offer. Each bag is created keeping the global trends and quality delivery in mind.

**...on the employment and income generation potential of fashion**

**SG:** More than 65 percent of India's population is under 35 years of age group and with a booming economy, purchasing power of Indians has been on a rise. With a demographic, which primarily comprises youth, the rise in demands in terms of fashion has also seen an upsurge. Customers are buying like never before. Be it international or home brands, all are thriving in an extremely competitive market. This has also led to an increase in demands for job roles in the retail segment.

**...on where the profits in fashion will now come from**

**SG:** The profits will come from streamlined planning and smarter allocation of products to various platforms. E-commerce is booming now and the industry is projected to touch USD 100 billion by 2020. With growth in the e-commerce industry, online retail is estimated to reach USD 70 billion by 2020 from USD 3 billion in 2014\*\*.

(\*\* Source <https://www.ibef.org/industry/retail-india.aspx>)

**...on why being "good" does and will matter a lot**

**SG:** Corporates have a responsibility towards protecting the environment and thus I feel that companies should foster the idea of "good" fashion.



*Retail technology has seen an upswing in the recent years. For example, one of the latest trends is the beacon. A beacon engages the customers by informing and updating them about the latest promotions, discounts, new collection arrivals through a message on their phone. This technology can be groundbreaking for the brick and mortar store concepts.*

# MEET THE MASTERS

VISION AND VIEWS OF  
FASHION THOUGHT LEADERS



## SANDEEP JAIN

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR  
MONTE CARLO FASHIONS LTD.**

**Sandeep Jain, Executive Director of Monte Carlo Fashions Ltd., handles the entire administration of the company. Jain has been elected as the Chairman of CII Punjab state council to focus on ease of doing business and strengthening policy framework in Punjab. While already a powerhouse in fashion, under his strong vision the company has taken steps of growth to put up a 10MW solar power project in Rajasthan and 5MW wind power projects in Tamil Nadu and Karnataka thus foraying into renewable energy sector.**

### **...on why working in the fashion industry is exciting**

**Sandeep Jain (SJ):** From my student days I have been passionate about fashion business. What excites me is the opening up of Indian market to international brands and its exposure to international fashion trends which have gained big acceptance with the Indian youth. Today it's an organised industry which is not only growing rapidly but also following and giving the latest concepts and trends to its discerning consumers.

### **...on the paradigm shift from a seller to buyer led market**

**SJ:** Yes, Indian fashion market is changing from a seller market to a buyer-led one. Since the focus is more towards a buyer-led market, service make up a key to stay ahead of the competition and catering to the specific customer requirements instead of just trying to sell what you make. This is also happened due to the advent of international brands.

### **...on how technology is changing the business**

**SJ:** Technology is responsible for changing the business module. Today's success is based on understanding the customer (retail insights) and efficient operations and servicing. Logistics and professional warehouse management has acquired immense importance.

### **...on the changing fashion consumer**

**SJ:** The customer is totally different from what he was 10 years back. His understanding of fashion, quality and product has changed tremendously which in result has led to an increase in his expectations.

### **...on the changing fashion product**

**SJ:** If we look back 20 years ago, the change in fashion was very gradual and took place over a long period of time. Today fashion is fast and is changing from season to season. So to survive in this fast moving cycle one has to make the right product mix at the right time keeping the customer's requirements in consideration.

Theme planning also has changed what it used to be 20 years back. Earlier the company used to sell a product and today they have to sell a look. Theme is important to create a look of which a garment is only a part.

### **...on if the product is the most important aspect in fashion**

**SJ:** Yes, I agree. At the end of the day it's the most important element in fashion





*It's said that India's greatest asset are its demographics, and it is going to be a huge market. But then the fashion consumers will also need to be earning money to make purchases.*

aspects. Starting from the product to sales, to marketing which in turn will generate maximum demand.

is a great product. If we as brands are selling a particular product, which is not good in terms of quality; in spite of its appeal and look it can generate a negative recall and repurchase value.

**...on the 'Make in India' vision for the fashion industry**

**SJ:** All the accessories being used in apparels should be manufactured in India as they are currently sourced from China. It will help the designers to focus on design elements and India can become a value manufacturing hub.

**...on the employment & income generation potential of fashion**

**SJ:** It's said that India's greatest asset are its demographics, and it is going to be a huge market. But then the fashion consumers will also need to be earning money to make purchases.

The consumers are growing very fashion conscious and with the growth of the affluent middle class it is pushing more purchases and the credit will go to the branded sector to address this increasing demand. If this happens it will automatically reflect in a positive way in terms of employment and income generation for this sector.

**...on the fashion skills that will matter**

**SJ:** We have to look at an overall understanding of the industry in all its

**...on driving growth: accelerators and decelerators**

**SJ:** For future growth in fashion we need to increase our penetration into the market, improve our logistics so that execution from purchase to delivery can be met within the least possible time. In short we need to understand fashion at the right time and that will be the key for growth today.

Government policies and trade intermediaries who affect professional working are the biggest hurdles to the industry's growth.

**...on where the profits in fashion will come from**

**SJ:** Increase in profitability through the control and scale parameters will continue to be the most important factor. At the same time, increased penetration and increase in volume sales will trigger multiplication of growth in the near future.

**...on why being "good" does and will matter a lot**

**SJ:** Sustainable and environment friendly processes and support for some cause are important both for creating a certain image of the brand and giving it a distinct identity.



*All the accessories being used in apparels should be manufactured in India as they are currently sourced from China. It will help the designers to focus on design elements and India can become a value manufacturing hub.*



# MEET THE MASTERS

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FASHION THOUGHT LEADERS



Sanjay Vakharia, Director and Chief Operating Officer of Spykar Lifestyle Pvt. Ltd., has been associated with the brand Spykar since its inception in 1992. Vakharia's sharp business acumen saw him rise from the position of Manager Marketing to Marketing Director. He is responsible for the great image that Spykar enjoys today. In his present capacity, Sanjay is responsible for the overall marketing and communication strategies of the brand.

Prior to joining Spykar, Sanjay worked with Magna Publications as their Export Manager (Garments) wherein he was responsible for setting up the marketing network in the US & UK.

## SANJAY VAKHARIA

**DIRECTOR &  
CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER  
SPYKAR LIFESTYLE PVT. LTD**

### ...on why working in the fashion industry is exciting

**Sanjay Vakharia (SV):** Fashion is ever evolving and is never static. So is this industry. The constant action in this industry keeps you pleasantly engaged in your vocation. Besides, it stays young and keeps you on your toes. It's also the most challenging one as you constantly question and change the norms. There is no constant and that is what keeps your adrenaline rushing every time.

### ...on the paradigm shift from a seller to buyer led market

**SV:** Like everything else, markets will change and so will the Indian consumers with exposure and education. India is becoming a buyer economy from being seller-led one. This also highlights the fact that it is becoming democratic wherein the consumers are continuously demanding what they identify and aspire. This also means that the consumers are maturing and that's a sign of growth waiting just round the corner. I would clearly identify an opportunity as one has to have their ears on the ground and listen to these changes and stay relevant.

### ...on how technology is changing the business

**SV:** Technology I believe can help create mass fashion by using machine intelligence. But on the contrary to create the first ground breaking thought, you can't outsource it to the technology. Human interface and sensibilities will always be needed to innovate and invent.

### ...on the changing fashion consumer

**SV:** The consumer of today is extremely well versed with the latest trends and is a lot more demanding than what he was 10 years ago.



**...on the changing fashion product**

**SV:** Fashion, as we all know, follows a cyclic pattern. It comes back at certain intervals in a new avatar. Fashion has become more pronounced and profound. It has now been accepted by a wider set of people with its product mix changing at the basis of genre, seasons and demographics.

**...on if the product is the most important aspect in fashion**

**SV:** That's true about everything I guess, as you don't have a proposition if the product or service is not right.

**...on the 'Make in India' vision for the fashion industry**

**SV:** India is meritorious to be the leading force in so many aspects. It has always been a great destination for manufacturing, and since a while it has been leading in technology which is defining India's future growth story. Very soon it will become a powerhouse in building brands and creating world class designs.

*Like everything else, markets will change and so will the Indian consumers with exposure and education. India is becoming a buyer economy from being seller-led one. This also highlights on a fact that it is becoming democratic wherein the consumers are continuously demanding what they identify and aspire. This also means that the consumers are maturing and that's a sign of growth waiting just round the corner.*

We are at that inflection point from where there will be no boundaries. The awareness of brands and the latest design trend is increasing rapidly in the consumers mind.

Spykar and many more brands in the industry are moving in this direction from the last few years. Soon there will be a surge of similar businesses which will emerge from the country.

**...on the employment and income generation potential of fashion**

**SV:** India fashion industry is giving good employment opportunities and has become a source of income for many.

**...on the fashion skills that will matter**

**SV:** Everything needs to come together to create a magic. No single skill set will deliver the dreams until every aspect of the business develops to its fullest skill set. The demand will automatically register across the entire spectrum.

**...on driving growth: accelerators and decelerators**

**SV:** Government is on a roadmap of complete will and willingness in giving ease of doing business in the country. The recognition of the industry challenges will help this it to grow further and fuel the growth of retail in the country.

**...on where the profits in fashion will now come from**

**SV:** Profits are still coming by following lean management and cutting cost with economies of scale. There is no running away from these simple business principles.

**...on why being "good" does and will matter a lot**

**SV:** Being a good performer is always better than being no good. It's got to be practical and should come from the heart. It only happens out of a voluntary sense and can never be enforced in a permanent manner.



# MEET THE MASTERS

VISION AND VIEWS OF  
FASHION THOUGHT LEADERS



## SHARAD VENKTA

**MANAGING DIRECTOR  
TOONZ RETAIL INDIA PVT. LTD.**

Sharad Venkta, Managing Director of Toonz Retail India Pvt. Ltd., joined the company in 2012 and since then has turned around the company by strengthening its retail and brand portfolio. Prior to joining the company, Venkta has held several senior positions. He was in Future Group for 13 years as their Business Head for West zone, where he was responsible for fbb, Big Bazaar and Food Bazaar retail formats. He has worked extensively in Pantaloons and Central during their initial days. An IIM-Kolkata alumni and a Chartered Accountant, Sharad is also the Executive Director for Crystal Crop Protection Pvt. Ltd.

### ...on why working in the fashion industry is exciting

**SV:** My journey in retail business started around 20 years ago and since then my love has been growing for fashion. The dynamics of this industry have been continuously evolving from stand-alone (high-street) stores to malls to concept stores, from online and now to omni-channel retailing. There's so much action happening in improvising the customer experience, product enhancement, styling, packaging etc., so that one can discover newness every single day.

### ...on the paradigm shift from a seller to buyer led market

**SV:** Indian fashion industry is a mix of both. We see a lot of experimentation and innovation happening. It has two primary drivers: Digitalisation – it has exposed the buyer to the world in a click. The consumers keep themselves updated on the latest happening in the fashion and demand the same. Globalisation – business is going global and it makes the market more competitive. The seller has to hear the buyer's needs and also look forward for a path breaking products which can become a trend.

### ...on how technology is changing the business

**SV:** India has seen a huge boom in technology during the last decade. It has changed the way people shop. Technology is changing the way the face of exposure to the latest trends, shopping preferences and habits, garmenting technology advancements and the way products are being made available to the end customer. The overall scenario has undergone a transitional change with technology and I expect it to change further and more rapidly.

### ...on the changing fashion consumer

**SV:** Consumption patterns have changed from then and now. The life cycle of fashion has gotten shorter. Customer is willing to experiment and spend more on innovative products.

### ...on the changing fashion product

**SV:** Focus is more on sharp styling, differentiated fabrics and treatments. Use of technology has shortened the entire life cycle of a garment. From traditional seasonal planning (Autumn-Winter/Spring-Summer) things have moved to being fast fashion. Focus is more on designing and replacing the old with the new so width is going up than the depth.

**...on if the product is the most important aspect in fashion**

**SV:** Product plays a very vital role in the entire value chain from 'concept to sales'. One can't build a strong story without a great product. Apart from having a great product, other factors that are equally important are its right communication to the customer matched with timely availability at the store.

**...on the 'Make in India' vision for the fashion industry**

**SV:** Looking at the Indian demographics and its varied specialties, each region carries full potential to become the most powerful manufacturing hub for fashion in the world.

Government has created a right business atmosphere under 'Make in India' campaign. It must be followed by investments in infrastructure for seamless movement of products. Nevertheless the coming of GST will take care of lot of tax hurdles in the industry.

Our IT/Technology strength is not being leveraged for the fashion industry and there's a lot of scope to leverage its potential in the near future. We have large industry set ups in the country with the right awareness with good resources which only show us a way forward. The fashion industry has to be encouraged more on the usage of technology. The government should promote and back this up with lot more new schemes and incentives which can make it affordable. This will help the manufacturers to increase their production capacity and promote Indian as the next gen manufacturing hub.

**...on the employment and income generation potential of fashion**

**SV:** I just mentioned about the



***Government has created a right business atmosphere under 'Make in India' campaign. It must be followed by investment in infrastructure for seamless movement of products. Nevertheless the coming of GST will take care of lot of tax hurdles in the industry.***

opportunity in India for fashion and campaigns like "Make in India" are real motivators for driving the growth of business and generating employment. Apart from tapping the huge domestic market the industry is geared up to for international markets in taking lead in design concepts, technology and manufacturing techniques.

**...on the fashion skills that will matter**

**SV:** Employment opportunities and supply chain will take lead. Apart from this a lot of niche opportunities will be

created for design, consumer research and technology.

**...on driving growth: accelerators and decelerators**

**SV:** Some of the roadblocks which were impacting the business adversely are being addressed through GST. Investment in basic infrastructure will fuel further growth. It's a capital intensive industry and it's important to see how funds are available competitively.

**...on where the profits in fashion will now come from**

**SV:** Lean management and the economies of scale which can gain low pricing are the ways for effective cost management and are here to stay. Technology advancement in production and distribution

will also help in reducing the overall cost. However the larger profitability will improve with the sale of products through newer channels of retail.

**...on why being "good" does and will matter a lot**

**SV:** Only the company's doing a responsible business will survive in the near future. We need to fulfill our obligation to the environment. We strongly believe in reduce, reuse and recycle. We have started using reusable process in our entire chain. Starting from good dye practices to recyclable packaging we are doing our own bit for the nature.





Shitanshu Jhunjunwalla, Director of Turtle Ltd., is the young lead behind the exceptional success and growth of the company today. Jhunjunwalla is a supply chain engineer from Georgia Institute of Technology, USA. He joined Turtle in 2009 and since then the brand under his leadership has been growing with youthful vibrancy. Acclaimed for bringing international fashion trends to India, Shitanshu is an active member of Retailers Association of India, Entrepreneur's Organisation, Georgia Entrepreneurs Society, Alumnorum Societas (St. Xavier's School, Kolkata), and many more.

# SHITANSHU JHUNJHUNWALLA

**DIRECTOR  
TURTLE LTD.**

## ...on why working in the fashion industry is exciting

**SJ:** We are in the fashion business since long. Earlier we were into selling fabrics through our outlet and we saw an opportunity in readymades, which made us jump into the manufacturing end. Since then, there has been no looking back. The excitement in a fashion industry is the wow factor of creating a design/fashion which is worn by a consumer and one which makes him feel excited.

## ...on the paradigm shift a seller to buyer led market

**SJ:** No, I do not think that the Indian fashion market is changing from seller to buyer market.

## ...on how technology is changing the business

**SJ:** Technology plays an important role. The whole supply chain management along with order indent depends on technology. Today there are means to predict if the customer at store is a buyer or just a casual viewer. Technology helps both in predicting fashion, getting higher footfalls and managing the supply chain.

## ...on the changing fashion consumer

**SJ:** Consumers are very different and experiment a lot in comparison 10 years ago. Earlier choices were limited and shopping was limited to few markets in the city as compared to various mall and high street shops available. Secondly, today lot more brands are available and consumers are not loyal to all. They have to be pampered in order to make them loyal in comparison to earlier times.



**...on if the product is the most important aspect in fashion**

**SJ:** I strongly agree with the same. A great product can make a brand and consumers shall be loyal towards the same.

**...on the 'Make in India' vision for the fashion industry**

**SJ:** The focus of 'Make in India' vision for fashion should be one of creating the biggest hub for manufacturing as all the elements related to same are strong here. India specifically holds the potential to be a value manufacturing hub.

**...on the employment and income generation potential of fashion**

**SJ:** The fashion industry would be creating jobs in bigger numbers in comparison to other industries as it's still not mechanical, it requires human resources for manufacturing.

**...on the fashion skills that will matter**

**SJ:** Fashion designers, product merchandisers and manpower at

***Technology plays an important role. The whole supply chain management along with order indent depends on technology.***

***Today there are means to predict if the customer at store is a buyer or just a casual viewer. Technology helps both in predicting fashion, getting higher footfalls and managing the supply chain.***

productions units would be required in great numbers in the near future. I also see requirement of many visual merchandisers too.

**...on driving growth: accelerators and decelerators**

**SJ:** India is far more dominated by population and clothing is a basic necessity. This shall drive and accelerate the demand in fashion. The second point being, today the earning capacity of a family is much higher in comparison to 20 years back and consumers are open to more brands and choices.

**...on where the profits in fashion will now come from**

**SJ:** I see with better supply chain management and by introducing new collections every month, it shall help any brand for better profitability. Secondly in retail, high rentals take deep costs. If this can be negotiated; or if the properties can be bought over, this can save 25 percent of the cost annually for a company.

**...on why being "good" does and will matter a lot**

**SJ:** Every organisation wants to give back to the community and CSR activities help with the same. The CSR activity also connects deeply with the consumers.



# MEET THE MASTERS

VISION AND VIEWS OF  
FASHION THOUGHT LEADERS

Sunil J Pathare, Chairman and Managing Director of VIP Clothing Ltd., has been associated with the company for more than two decades. VIP Clothing owns brands like VIP, Frenchie, Feelings, Leader, Brat and Eminence. With sheer vision, Pathare has completely given a new dimension to these brands. He has always driven the company to become a benchmark for others to follow. A strong believer in concepts like JIT (just-in-time) and 5S, Sunil has been instrumental in improving the overall productivity. He has an extensive experience in marketing, production operation, sales, finance, advertising, business start-ups in various markets.



## SUNIL J PATHARE

**CHAIRMAN &  
MANAGING DIRECTOR  
VIP CLOTHING LTD.**

IMAGES Business of Fashion

### ...on the paradigm shift from a seller to buyer led market

**SJP:** Consumer will always remain the king, whether it's a buyer or seller-led market. You can't influence against his choice. There is always clarity in his mind while making a decision of purchase. The consumers in today's world are demanding which is clearly due to availability of information and options.

### ...on how technology is changing the business

**SJP:** Technology has a direct impact and is rapidly changing the model of fashion business to a fast paced one. It has influenced a fast track revolution from mom-and-pop stores, big stores, to malls, to brand stores and then from offline to online. The entire technology advancements have developed in a very short span of time in India. The consumer today enjoys shopping on a particular mobile app, which makes the traditional business model outdated.

### ...on the changing fashion consumer

**SJP:** The consumer today is more demanding with the continuous exposure to different forms of media. Nevertheless he is continuously upgrading his fashion knowledge and would like to make a statement with his dressing style. He has moved from a saving economy to a spending economy.

### ...on if the product is the most important aspect in fashion

**SJP:** Fashion is an ongoing trend, which should be wearable, looks good and also carries a great idea with innovation. It is a way to express one self, it is more than designer whims.

### ...on the 'Make in India' vision for the fashion industry

**SJP:** Every Indian takes utmost pride in a 'Make in India' tag in all aspects. India has a huge potential of becoming a big manufacturer, design center, or a fashion tech/IT hub. On the other hand, the challenges which need to be worked on are providing a good infrastructure with good exposure to new trends world across.

### ...on the employment and income generation potential of fashion

**SJP:** India is demographically a vast country and democratically strong. It totally depends upon the consumer's economic purchasing power whether he will choose a brand accordingly.

### ...on driving growth: accelerators and decelerators

**SJP:** Fashion retail can accelerate the growth for brands rapidly but because of infrastructure issues, quality standards, designer's sensibilities, and economical scales in the retail center are causing the roadblocks.

×

*"Technology has a direct impact and is rapidly changing the model of fashion business to a fast paced one. It has influenced a fast track revolution from mom-and-pop stores, big stores, to malls, to brand stores and then from offline to online. The entire technology advancements have developed in a very short span of time in India".*



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# MEET THE MASTERS

VISION AND VIEWS OF  
FASHION THOUGHT LEADERS



## VINEET GAUTAM

**COUNTRY HEAD &  
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER  
BESTSELLER RETAIL INDIA PVT. LTD.**

Vineet Gautam, Country Head and Chief Executive Officer of Bestseller Retail India Pvt. Ltd., joined the company in January 2010 and is leading their business and brand strategy in India. The Danish clothing company Bestseller is present in India with the brands Jack & Jones, Only, Vero Moda and Selected Homme. Prior to assuming his current role, Gautam had led the team at United Colors of Benetton and handled retail and business development for its all brands. He has headed the retail vertical for Idea Cellular, where he implemented various retail strategies for the telecom giant. With over 16 years of experience in retail and marketing, he has worked with Wills Lifestyle, Café Coffee Day, Domino's and Nirula's.

### ...on why working in the fashion industry is exciting

**Vineet Gautam (VG):** The fashion and retail industry in India is an exciting field that is striving to create newer and better avenues for everyone involved. The business is constantly expanding in India, allowing for some fantastic opportunities, given the market potential and growth prospects.

### ...on the paradigm shift from a seller to buyer led market

**VG:** Yes, the fashion retail market has shifted now from a seller to a buyer-led one. The reason for this shift can be attributed to the influx of global high-street brands into the country. There is immense competition amongst brands, which has led to positive shifts whereby brands are now investing in consumer insights and coming up with innovative product and service solutions to stay relevant to the modern-age consumer.

### ...on how technology is changing the business

**VG:** Technology is positively contributing to almost all functions of the retail business like operations, supply chain management, marketing, customer accessibility, etc. E-commerce, for example, has allowed brands to reach consumers in places where physical stores are not feasible. Brands in India have started focusing on incorporating technology into in-store and online experiences and are making a headway in the right direction.

### ...on the changing fashion consumer

**VG:** Customers today are exposed to trends that have a global appeal on a day-to-day basis. Due to this, they are well-informed, and cautious about the decisions they make and the brands that they choose to associate with.

### ...on the changing fashion product

**VG:** Consumers today have various parameters that influence their fashion needs. These may vary from value for money, trending styles, accessibility to products that are manufactured in an environment friendly way. Among these demands, sustainable fashion is fast

becoming a globally recognized need. Hence, brands are looking at educating the customer about materials, products and manufacturing techniques that make the final product. Product mix is constantly getting adapted to offer more options to the consumer. Today, brands are expanding for more options in terms of categories and styles offered in those categories.

**...on if the product is the most important aspect in fashion**

**VG:** A great product is a key factor because it implies great quality. There is a certain pleasure in recognising something that has been well made. However, several other factors come into play – timeliness, fashion accessibility, value for money and local sensibilities, which are extremely relevant too.

**...on the employment and income generation potential of fashion**

**VG:** India is one of the fastest growing retail markets in the world. Currently, Indian retail contributes to more than 10 percent of India’s GDP and is one of the top five retail markets in the world. With the second largest population in the world and much of it an earning population, India has not only become a huge market but also a favourable one for all retailers. Therefore, it is not surprising that brands across the world are actively looking to expand within India. It also goes without saying that, this booming industry is in constant need of a vast workforce as well to adapt to the ever-evolving needs of the consumer.

**...on driving growth : accelerators and decellarators**

**VG:** There are various factors that are actively shaping the way fashion is being consumed, namely higher



**However, lack of better infrastructure is a major roadblock to this growth. There are limited shopping malls and the constraint of quality retail space..**

purchasing power, demand for quality over quantity – the consumer is ready to spend on a product more than their initial budget if they believe that the material and style is worth purchasing. Adding to this, the emergence of consumers in new markets and brands catering to their needs has further accelerated the retail growth. However, lack of better infrastructure is a major roadblock to this growth. There are limited shopping malls and the constraint of quality retail space.

**...on where the profits in fashion will now come from**

**VG:** From a Bestseller India perspective, all our fashion brands continue to grow and support the strong consumer demands across key metropolitans and tier -II and -III markets. We are doing so by capitalising across all retail channels, i.e. EBOs, shop-in-shops and online. Optimisation of each channel in terms of investment, revenue and sale is very important to ensure overall profitability. Actual business success is a collective contribution of all these channels.

**...on why being “good” does and will matter a lot**

**VG:** Environmental sensibilities are making inroads into the fashion universe as awareness amongst consumers continues to rise. Companies investing in sustainable and environment friendly processes to manufacture products are poised for increased brand value in consumer’s minds and check manufacturing costs in the future. At Bestseller, obedience to globally standardised ‘Bestseller Code of Conduct’ ensures liaison with world class manufacturing units across the globe and manufacturing of superior quality products.



# MEET THE MASTERS

VISION AND VIEWS OF  
FASHION THOUGHT LEADERS



# VINOD KUMAR GUPTA

**MANAGING DIRECTOR  
DOLLAR INDUSTRIES LTD.**

**Vinod Kumar Gupta, Managing Director, Dollar Industries Ltd., is one of the masterminds behind the company's exponential growth. Gupta is responsible for formulating policies of growth and expansion of the brands under Dollar. He also looks after the network development and distribution channels for Dollar. Dollar was the first innerwear company with a fully integrated manufacturing unit. With vast technical knowledge and experience, Gupta's effective leadership and excellent business tactics have driven the entire organisation towards success. His achievements also include embossing Dollar's reputation beyond the boundaries of the country.**

#### **...on why working in the fashion industry is exciting**

**Vinod Kumar Gupta (VKG):** Fashion industry is one of the most dynamic industries in the whole world. It's absolutely dynamic and changes with every season. There is no such thing as long lasting in this industry and one has to double up his own speed to keep pace with it. You are bound to keep a tab on your social, environmental and technical factors which deeply influence this whole industry. It's an enduring voyage which excites me, motivate me always.

#### **...on the paradigm shift from a seller to buyer led market**

**VKG:** Today's fashion market has become consumer centric. Manufacturers will now have to follow trends and keep pace with the ever changing demands of the consumers. Earlier, fashion was made, now it is followed.

#### **...on how technology is changing the business**

**VKG:** Fashion diligence is changing fast, so does the technology buttressing it. The innovations taking place at the juncture of fashion and technology are extremely amazing and reframing. In order to produce world-class quality we have state-of-art technology in all our factories. For, an example we have blow and carding machine from Trutzschler & Trumac equipped with foreign material detector. As a global undergarment brand, Dollar employs quality machines like Mayer & Co, Terrort, Smart and Unitex.

#### **...on the changing fashion consumer**

**VKG:** Today's consumer is very much impulsive and choosy. Ten years back buying was much more restricted. Due to digitalisation now, this has become an experience. That's the reason we always experiment with our products, be it the quality, while inventing new product lines or introducing new styles.

#### **...on the changing fashion product**

**VKG:** The kind of experiments we do with our products today, be it with fabric quality, colours, or patterns, it was not in practice 20 years back. The dexterity of choosing fashion is customised from region to region. India is diverse in both land and culture, and naturally demands vary too. A good mix of product with seasonal themes is necessary to have a loyal consumer base.



*Our diversity is a blessing in disguise. You look at the world in demography and see that India is the only country to have accommodated people from both hemispheres. We can be the flag bearers of global fashion world. We hope the present government will work hard to get their vision of 'Make in India' a success and provide more opportunity for us.*

**...on if the product is the most important aspect in fashion**

**VKG:** Yes absolutely! Good fabric, eye soothing patterns and nice looks make a product great.

**...on the 'Make in India' vision for the fashion industry**

**VKG:** Our diversity is a blessing in disguise. You look at the world in demography and see that India is the only country to have accommodated people from both the hemispheres. We can be the flag bearers of fashion in the globe. We hope the present government will work hard to get their vision of 'Make in India' a success and provide more opportunity for us.

**...on the employment & income generation potential of fashion**

**VKG:** The Indian fashion industry is comparatively young and unexpectedly experiencing 10 percent growth year-on-year. This industry holds lots of

potential for budding artists and fashion graduates. There will be immense opportunities in textile mills, boutiques, fashion shows, export houses, apparel manufacturing companies like us, or they can be self employed too.

**...on the fashion skills that will matter**

**VKG:** Skilled labour and creative designers will be in demand in the future.

**...on where the profits in fashion will now come from**

**VKG:** In business, sometimes we have to take some hard decision to sustain. In the future too, basic cost cutting measures to keep up profits will prevail. But in the long run, we have to concentrate on product diversification, winning new markets and company expansion to grow in this industry.

**...on why being "good" does and will matter a lot**

**VKG:** Going green is often seen as a "nice to have" policy for companies. Most of the companies takes it on a very lighter note. But this is one of the easiest and most powerful ways to enhance one's business and promote the concept of "good fashion" in the future.



We, at Dollar, take care of our industrial footprint. The water generated from Dollar's factory in Tirupur is treated chemically and biologically at our effluent treatment plant and reused in the factory while the remainder goes to watering plants and landscaping the area.



## The Biggest Fashion Conference of the Year THE INDIA FASHION FORUM 2017



...as it unfolded...  
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Team Images Business of Fashion makes sense of the concepts, ideas, debates, thoughts, data and research presented at IFF'17. If you missed being there, or even if you were there, it's your *feng shui* issue that sieves and declutters through the mammoth wealth of information and insights, and publishes the very best!

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### **COMING UP NEXT ... IN THE JUNE 2017 ISSUE...**

## The first ever study on why **'GOOD FASHION IS ALSO GREAT BUSINESS'**

Team IMAGES BoF analyzes why Indian fashion businesses need to support sustainable fashion and socially responsible initiatives across the value chain. The study will also showcase some great initiatives already undertaken by India's most responsible fashion organisations. We invite organisations to express their interest to participate. Kindly mail requests to [rajanvarma@imagesgroup.in](mailto:rajanvarma@imagesgroup.in)

**TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS SPECIAL ISSUE PLEASE TALK TO OUR BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT ADVISORS:**

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DENIM AND FASHION TRENDS – CAPSULE FOR INDIA

# SPORTSWEAR INTERNATIONAL

APRIL 2017

The Good. the Bad and the Ugly

The

of

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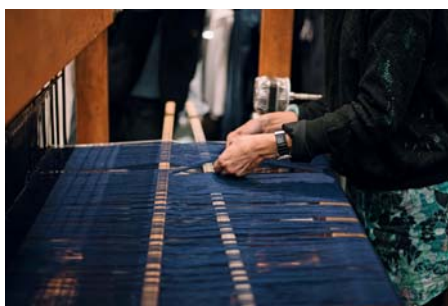


DEMI AND FASHION TRENDS CAPSULE FOR INDIA  
**SPORTSWEAR  
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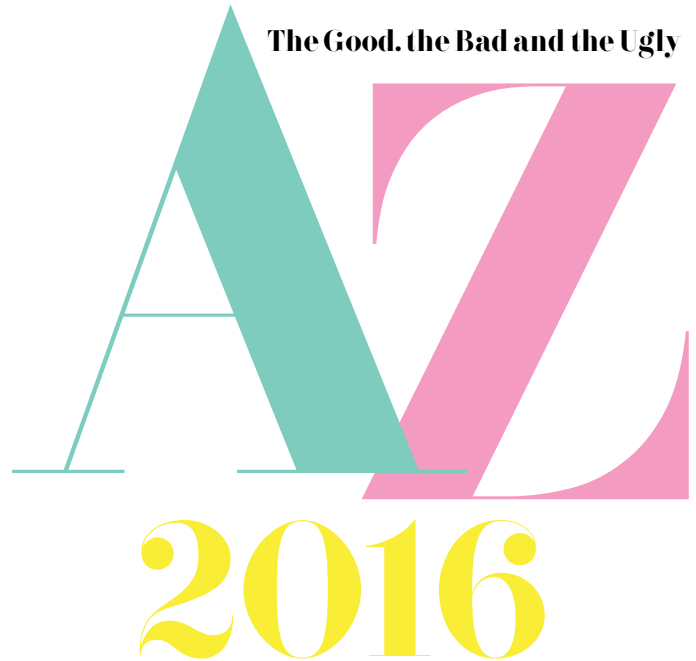


Credits for India Capsule

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**Christopher Blomquist**  
 Fashion Editor: **Juliette Nguyen**  
 Managing Editor: **Wolfgang Lutterbach**

The Good. the Bad and the Ugly



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# LOOK BACK IN ANGER

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**H**ardly ever do you find political topics in SPORTSWEAR INTERNATIONAL. Not that these don't affect our industry, but we feel the reporting on that sector is in better hands with other media.

In this "Best of" issue things have changed quite a bit though, since we felt the need to also include some "real meat" in between the easy-breezy trend bits. Not because SPORTSWEAR INTERNATIONAL needs to show some more gravity, but simply because political subjects such as the Brexit, the terror attacks or the election of a new president in the USA obviously do affect our work and lives—and be it only that the "small talk" during trade shows and meetings has turned into "big talk."

So the world has changed again, and we faced a year that somehow seemed overflowing with sad events, tragedies and disasters more than ever.

Uncertainty has grown, and this goes far beyond our small fashion universe but affects the world as such. Unfortunately, this uncertainty—in many cases caused by a high level of ignorance and illiterateness—creates an anti-attitude against anything new or different, and populism spreads. This is not acceptable.

The fashion sector might not be the best example for all things forward-oriented, but after as tumultuous a year as 2016 has been it should take the chance to stand strong together against all populist and anti-democratic tendencies and simply say "no."  
I know, these are huge words—but it's huge problems we are facing.

Until we reach this undoubtedly high goal and take action against evil, let me kiss 2016 farewell by using the same words that formidable talk show host John Oliver already used when giving this horrible year just what it deserves: "F\*\*k you, 2016. Go and f\*\*k yourself."

A very Merry Christmas or Happy Holidays to everyone and here's a toast to a far better 2017!

Sabine Kühnl  
Editor-in-Chief

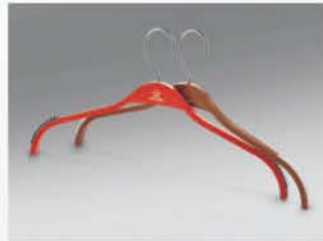


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# ANNIVERSARIES



## Miss Sixty's 25

*In the year of its 25th birthday Italian fashion brand Miss Sixty, opened two stores in Great Britain. The store concept presents some additions—for instance a new denim area with curvy design elements on the ground floor and a wing-shaped installation added on the wall of the first floor. The stores hope to be a good frame for the relaunch of the brand, which has struggled in recent years.*



## G Star's Elwood

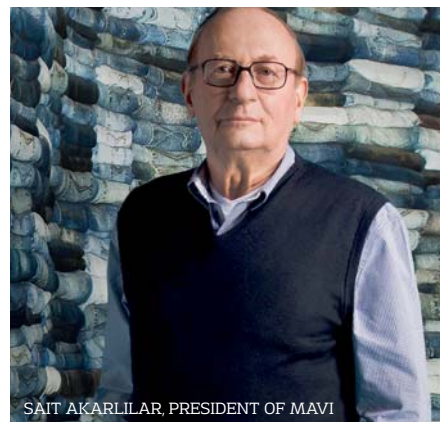
*In 2016, G-Star's famous Elwood 5620 jeans model turned 20. The now iconic style with the bold seams around the knee became super popular in the early/mid 2000s, especially in very light washings. This version dropped somewhat off the fashion radar for a while, but the design has always been a part of G-Star's collection and was altered over time to fit today's aesthetics. However, the Elwood has always kept its five signature elements: knee patches, 3D knee seams, saddle patch, heel protection and diagonal thigh seams.*

## Broadway turns 30

*Broadway's history started in 1986. Its founder, Dr. Rehfeld, had the idea to name the label Broadway in reference to the once most important street in New York's Garment District. It was a great idea, but getting the copyright for the name was a difficult task. But finally the legal matters were solved and now, three decades later, the young fashion label continues to be as dynamic as its namesake thoroughfare.*



MIKAEL HANSEN, CEO OF BROADWAY



SAIT AKARLILAR, PRESIDENT OF MAVI

## Mavi hits a Quarter of a Century

*Mavi, which is the Turkish word for blue, is celebrating its 25th anniversary this year. Sait Akarlilar founded the Istanbul-based jeans brand in 1991. Today it operates in 50 countries and is sold in more than 4,000 specialty stores, department stores and specialty chains.*

## More Anniversaries

+++ US smart-casual brand **Dockers** celebrated its 30th anniversary with a series of parties and events in the US and Europe, as well as with the launch of an exclusive Dockers 30th Anniversary capsule collection. It offered four complete total looks that reinvented some of the brand's classic khaki items. +++ Italian jeans and fashion brand **Replay** is celebrating its 35th anniversary this year. In its 35 years of business Replay has faced success as well as challenges such as the unexpected death of its founder Claudio Buziol in 2005, a change of ownership and the acquisition of a 29% stake by the Chinese partner Belle International. +++ It was in South America that Emma François was first inspired by people who weave, embroider, sew and make things by drawing on a heritage of techniques and know-how. That led to the birth hour of French label **Sessùn** 20 years ago. Today the clothing and accessories brand operates internationally with wholesale and its own retail. +++ Of the teams appearing at football's **Superbowl 50** in January, the two that most held our attention were **Levi Strauss** and Spanish company **Jeanologia**. The denim giants collaborated to bring Jeanologia's Nano laser system to the NFL. The display, set up at the eventful game, allowed fans to transform their Levi's apparel by adding the logo of their fave team. The laser system display also served to highlight the growing popularity of POS customization. +++

## Kappa – 60th anniversary

Kappa, the casual- and sportswear brand owned by BasicNet, is celebrating its 60th anniversary this year. In honor of the milestone the brand released some special edition items, including a revamped edition of the revolutionary Kombat soccer shirt launched in 1999. Another special anniversary item is the 222 Banda tracksuit. Created in the '70s, it has a side band (hence the "Banda" name) with the Kappa logo of two seated people repeated.



## Riri Group – 80th anniversary

Riri Group, the specialized zipper manufacturer founded in 1936 and acquired in 2014 by Gilde Buy Out Partners, turned 80 in 2016 and started celebrating this special anniversary in June from its headquarters in Mendrisio, Switzerland. The company is best known for creating zippers made of pre-cut metal teeth applied directly on the tape and many other innovations such as Aquazip, a water-repellent model that guarantees comfort and performance in the most extreme conditions.



MODEL ELISA SEDNAOUI

PHOTO: LAURA SCIACOVELLI

## Cotonificio Albini – 140th anniversary

Cotonificio Albini, the Italian specialized shirting fabric manufacturer that offers precious, top quality to casual-chic indigo shirting fabrics from its Albiate 1830 division, celebrated its 140th anniversary with many initiatives. In addition to throwing exclusive parties it launched a photo campaign featuring Elisa Sednaoui, an Italian-Egyptian top model.

ENZO FUSCO (L.) WITH HIS FAMILY AND MODELS; PHOTO: STEFANO BABIC



## Erwin O. Licher turns 70

Erwin O. Licher is a veteran in the German fashion business. Born in the small town of Gießen the trained metalworker and denim aficionado started his own jeans business in 1972 by opening a denim store. In 1992 he founded his own brand Freeman T. Porter, and after separating from his business partner he launched his new denim brand Herrlicher in 2004.



ERWIN O. LICHER

## Blauer 80th anniversary

Blauer USA, the historical outerwear brand worn by US policemen and loved by leather apparel and sportswear aficionados, celebrated its 80th anniversary with a memorable party in Venice during the International Venice Movie Festival in September. An exhibition of images from the most iconic jackets and movies, international actors and celebrities and the launch of an 80th anniversary special limited edition collection featuring jackets, sneakers and eyewear added extra glamour to the occasion. Two families—the Blauers, descendants of the founders, and the Fuscos, who manage Blauer's fashion-minded soul through FGF Industries—celebrated the past and future glories of the brand.



## Cone Denim – 125th anniversary

In 2016 Cone Denim marked its 125th anniversary celebration in its hometown of Greensboro, North Carolina. Top denim brands and designers from around the world attended the two-day event, which included tours of the historic White Oak mill, a tribute party at the Revolution Mill Event Center and a design challenge and runway competition featuring designs by students.

## More Anniversaries

+++ Founded in 1966, **K-Swiss** is a heritage American tennis brand. Its signature K-Swiss Classic, the first leather tennis shoe, made its debut at Wimbledon, and 50 years later is still a style staple both on and off the court. Under new leadership, and committed to a fast-paced and significant brand turnaround, K-Swiss is based in Westlake Village, California. The brand is celebrating its 50th anniversary this year with the launch of its "50 Love" campaign and a limited edition anniversary footwear collection. +++ **Keds'** iconic style, the Champion, is often named as the first model that became important in terms of commercial sales for the brand. This year Keds celebrates its 100th birthday. To mark the occasion, the brand introduced its own group of leading women, the Keds Collective, a curated group of celebrated female tastemakers. +++ The story of **Odlo** started in 1946 with two sewing machines and the vision of founder Odd Roar Lofterød to produce high-quality sportswear. This year the brand celebrates its 70th anniversary with a special collection inspired by the history and origin of the brand. +++ **Peak Performance** turned 30 this year, but instead of having a mid-life crisis the brand presented an anniversary athleisure collection that confirms it is older and wiser. +++ Cult Japanese denim brand **Evisu** celebrates its 25th anniversary in 2016. +++



### DFV turns 70

SPORTSWEAR INTERNATIONAL's publishing house, the DFV Media Group, is turning 70 this year. Founded by journalist Wilhelm Lorch, DFV came out with the release of its first publication –*TextilWirtschaft*– back in 1946. In the past 70 years a lot has happened. The group has grown organically as well as via multiple acquisitions. Especially with the purchase of *Horizont* –a newspaper for marketing, advertising and media– in 1986, DFV marked a milestone in the company's history. Today, the DFV Media Group headquartered in Frankfurt is still in possession of the founder's family Lorch and remains, according to last year's business numbers of €147 million revenue, one of the top-selling trade media companies in Germany and Europe. Including over 100 titles, the company distributes more than 16 million magazines and newspapers a year with approximately 970 employees working on them from eight locations in Germany and abroad. In addition, the company offers a broad online portfolio including websites and a variety of smartphone and tablet apps. In 2015, turnover generated by digital offerings increased by more than 15% percent.



### Modefabrik 40th edition

With the slogan "Fast Forward," trade show Modefabrik celebrated its 40th edition on January 24-25 in Amsterdam. True to the motto, visitors experienced a completely new layout during the winter edition. To meet the standards of the co-op trend, Modefabrik's new layout is designed to inspire and stimulate new meetings. Its facelift was also apparent in the rearrangement of its floor plan into new "Districts."

## More Anniversaries

+++ The renowned Milanese concept store **10 Corso Como** founded by art gallerist, talent scout and retailer Carla Sozzani marked its 25th anniversary with many special events in Milan and globally. It also launched collabs with different partners including Asics, Levi's and Mandarina Duck. Through the years this store that has become synonymous with the idea of "shopping experience" has changed the language of retail, bringing culture, art, design and fashion to a global audience in the same place. After expanding with new unique locations in Seoul, Shanghai and Beijing, it will also open in New York. +++ Long-running skate brand **Etnies** celebrated its 30th birthday this year. Since its arrival in 1986, the brand has offered footwear for skateboarders and board lovers. In celebration of the milestone, Etnies released some limited editions, influenced by nostalgic colorways from the archive and applied to its Marana Bloodline models. +++



### Pitti Uomo n.90 edition

In 2016 Pitti Uomo hit some record figures. Its June 2016 edition, named "Pitti Lucky Numb3er5," was its 90th, and therefore marked the biannual show's 45th anniversary. The show was also another record-breaker. The fair was attended by an increased total of more than 30,000 visitors, including 20,500 buyers, 8,400 of whom came from 20 different countries. Raffaello Napoleone, Pitti Immagine's CEO, said: "It was a sizzling event with lots of new ideas bubbling and many new menswear projects debuting internationally—be them big names, emerging talents and experimental designers."



### Vans turns 50

It's hard to imagine that Vans, a brand so synonymous with youth culture, turned 50 in 2016. Making its name in the 1970s SoCal skateboarding scene, Vans has kept the faith continually, with the young and the young-at-heart repping Vans Sk-8 Hi, Old Skool, checkerboard styles and the iconic Off the Wall side stripe. Who'd have thought the little family business that Paul Van Doren opened five decades ago would still be family run, even with VF Corp. ownership, and would still be the pinnacle of California cool?

### Munich Fabric Start turns 20

Specialized textile show Munich Fabric Start celebrated its 20th anniversary at its August 2016 edition where it again stressed innovation, research and technology. It added two new pavilions to the Bluezone denim area (the Catalyzer and the Keyhouse), hosted panels and roundtables and launched innovative projects and collaborations including the new HighTex Awards, a contest for the most innovative textiles. The August edition welcomed 1,000 suppliers, of whom 100 were denim manufacturers in the Bluezone and newly added Catalyzer area.





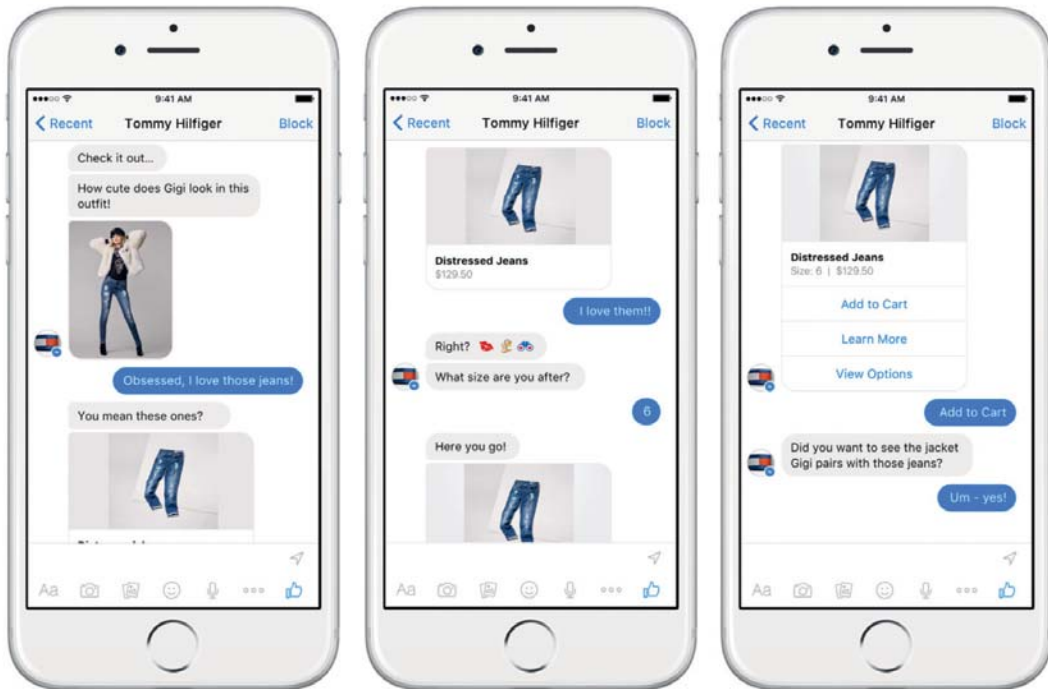
ADIDAS ORIGINALS BY ALEXANDER WANG

## ADIDAS HYPE

No matter what your favorite sports goods supplier is, it is difficult to deny that Adidas has seriously upped its game over the past one to two years, especially in the sneakers and lifestyle segment. After fetching Kanye West from Nike and rolling out exemplary reintroductions of its Stan Smith and Superstar sneakers, team Trefoil is on a clear winning streak. The year started off with an impressive sci-fi inspired presentation of the Adidas Originals by White Mountaineering collection at the January edition of Pitti Uomo, only weeks after the brand had unveiled its first NMD sneaker in a star-studded event in New York—a silhouette which should become one of the most sought-after of the year, together with the Ultra Boost or Gazelle—another heritage model that it successfully cemented back into the market. Later in the year, the brand with the three stripes will announce that it is about to bring back large-scale shoe production to Germany in its first Speedfactory in Ansbach before unveiling plans for a second one in Atlanta (Georgia, US). With the help of these highly-automatized local footwear manufacturing facilities, Adidas wants to react faster to local market needs (with the help of its Futurecraft 3D printing innovation) and shorten long shipping distances. Oh, and did we mention the ongoing work with Pharrell, the extension of the Kanye West partnership onto various (sports) product categories and the massive three-stripes army that ran down the catwalk at Alexander Wang's NYFW show in September?

Adidas has obviously understood one thing or two about marketing in the social media age. Instead of simply endorsing celebrities, it really involves them into the creation process, so that these spread the hype on their personal social outlets just naturally. And, most importantly, that same thing applies to consumers, too. There is hardly any clothing brand that engages more closely with its local communities—be it in its own Run Bases in several cities or by simply getting together with the right local creatives, musicians and influencers. According to an Interbrand listing, Adidas is growing 16% in 2016. And there is no stop in sight. [Text: Maria Hunstig/Photo: Jürgen Teller]

# ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE



TOMMY HILFIGER'S CONVERSATIONAL COMMERCE BOT IN ACTION

Artificial intelligence (AI) is the next big wave of innovation which will propel digitization of retailing in the years to come. There is a wide array of visions of what our future will look like ranging from how cute robots will aid in sales and help address customers uniquely via smartphones all the way to “invisible” online shopping tools which will finally make the help of human sales assistants possible online, too. The basis of AI is cognitive computer systems able to process unstructured, complex data, such as language content, while also continuously learning over time. The ideas for this have existed for a very long time, but the computing power had previously been insufficient to make projects of this kind commercially useful. Now there are initial projects out there. The Amazon language computer, Amazon Echo, has triggered an outright race among major IT companies. According to forecasts by experts, Echo is expected to generate \$11 billion in sales revenue by 2020. This has prompted Google and Apple to focus considerable effort on comparable systems. Fashion brands also see tremendous potential in AI, but are not yet working with the human voice. They are working with written content instead: The North Face and solutions provider Fluid teamed up with IBM to launch a pilot project that focuses on developing a personalized digital shopping assistant able to understand how humans make purchasing decisions and provide them with personal recommendations. The beta solution of the website was launched in December of 2015 and helps people identify solutions more quickly while avoiding time-consuming visits to other sites. For the TommyNow Fashion Show, Tommy Hilfiger also launched its own AI technology solution, the TMY.GRL chatbot, for providing consumers with shopping advice via Facebook Messenger. Macy's department store chain also plans to harness AI to guide customers through its stores. Users will only need to open the “Macy's On Call” system on a Web page of their smartphone. Its test platform is powered by the IBM Watson supercomputer and is able to respond to questions using a natural language interface. Customers can ask for a certain item or brand and “Macy's On Call” provides navigation help for getting to the desired product.

[Text: Regina Henkel/Photo: Tommy Hilfiger]



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# AMAZON'S FASHION AMBITIONS

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Amazon's fashion story began in 2012 when its first fashion advertisement debuted in the States. And over the past five years, it has made a series of moves aimed at the fashion market that go far beyond print advertising. Company founder and chief executive Jeff Bezos has long seen a presence in the fashion industry as critical to the company's long-term ambition to surpass \$200 billion in sales. The company confirms fashion is one of its fastest growing categories and during recent years large numbers of brands have partnered to sell their items there. But this might be not enough: Rumors say that Amazon released 1,800 products, ranging from women's clothing and bags to children's clothing to men's tailored apparel in the US, spanning more than seven private labels such as Society New York, Lark and Ro, Scout and Ro, Franklin and Freeman, Franklin Tailored, James and Erin and North Eleven. The \$250 billion clothing and accessories industry in the US is a hotbed for Amazon. For 2017 it could become the top clothing seller in the US, according to Cowen and Company. Amazon is also on the advance in Europe. After inaugurating its European fashion studio in London for professional shoots and tapping Suki Waterhouse as a brand ambassador for fall '15, Amazon Fashion announced the appointment of "The Blonde Salad" mega blogger Chiara Ferragni as its new face in 2016 and started a big TV campaign on its fashion category. As a further move to gain credibility in the high fashion and designer sector, Amazon signed a contract as the "multiyear" headline sponsor of Tokyo Fashion Week this summer.

*[Text: Melanie Gropler/ Photo: Amazon Fashion]*



CHIARA FERRAGNI STARRING IN AMAZON'S S/S '16 FASHION CAMPAIGN




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## BURKINI

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The climate in France was hot in July and August. It wasn't because of summer though, but actually the heated mood pervading local politicians and several society members after the bloody terrorist attacks registered in Nice and Normandy. Thirty beach towns across the country decided to ban the use of burkinis, the swimsuit for women adapted to Islamic traditions that covers the whole body except for the face. The measure raised a wave of rejection among Muslim sectors in society who criticized the infringement of freedom of religion and that the decision deepened the stigma of Muslims in France, who were already reporting rising hatred and disrespectful gestures towards them. Women's rights organizations bemoaned the fact that, unlike men, one could still legislate to restrict their bodies by regulating what women could wear. The New York Times website published a poignant report in early September including comments sent by several Muslim women on the burkini ban in France and their day to day lives in various European cities. "I was curious to see if, in the cities where they forbade women in burkinis, dogs could swim. The answer was yes for some of them. Personally, I am scandalized that dogs can have more rights than a scarfed woman," stated one of them. For many, the issue brought back a traumatic resonance with the early steps of the bikini, which was banned in countries such as Italy and Spain in the late '50s, with women being subject to penalties and forced to leave the beach in such attire. The comparison inevitably raises one question: How long will women's body be still a subject of regulation at the expense of their individual freedom? Sadly, this probably won't be the last controversy when it comes to women's attire.

[Text: Lorenzo Molina/Photo: Getty Images]

# BUSTED KNEES

All of a sudden it was there: boys and girls wearing jeans, preferably in black, with busted knees. We have no idea where this came from, so let's assume it's a desire by today's youth to bring in some rebellious attitude—less for political criticism against the ruling capitalist system (as it was in former, more punk days) and more because of the personality that aged, worn-out clothes carry with them. A staple in this field are ripped denims. In its recent revival, first arrived the success of busted knee jeans, which became the favorite partner to long-line T-shirts and bomber or suede jackets for men and off-the-shoulder tops and heeled sandals for style goddesses such as Kendall Jenner and her BFF Gigi Hadid. During the year, the appetite for destruction in jeans has progressively risen to the extent of brands offering heavily distressed models embellished with other popular details such as frayed edges and shadow back pockets.

[Text: Lorenzo Molina/Photo: Mark Robert Milan/GC Images]



# BREXIT

Let's start with this: Brexit hasn't happened. But the summer's public vote to quit the EU has bruised this sceptered isle.

For the fashion industry the usual result of war and crisis: prices went up. The pound tanked like a tank in a septic tank. Imagine you are major department store chain John Lewis. Two thirds of your goods are imported. Half you pay for in dollars. Sudden inflation. Pound down against the dollar. If sterling doesn't recover there's a problem brewing: imports cost 20% more. And the Euro is now the same value as the pound, no advantage there. Indeed, the beguiled pound is the best opposition to Brexit. Brits who want to break from the continent love sterling, need it to be strong.

Meanwhile, fashion trade association UKFT runs a Make It British campaign and offers trade missions to Scandinavia. The value of UK fashion exports was £5.8bn in 2015, and the European Union its biggest customer. Business as usual? July 2016 saw a 5.9% increase in retail sales compared with July 2015, tagging Brexit as a political crisis, not yet an economic one. But anomalies can be treated as successes. The UK is now the best-priced luxury goods market in the world thanks to the humbled pound. So, welcome international tourists, fill your cashmere-lined boots.

Formal application to leave the EU, known as Article 50, happens in April 2017, according to Prime Minister Theresa May. However, two major legal cases, one in London and another in Belfast, challenge the entire legality of splitting, based on human rights, based on the Irish peace accords. Could-be the public vote to leave becomes some elaborate negotiation tactic, a way to frighten the French and Germans into letting Europe's second biggest economy have free trade and control immigration. For sure, if Parliament is allowed to vote on Brexit, the Referendum will



EMBRACING ALL THINGS BRITISH: GUCCI RESORT 2017 CAMPAIGN STARRING UK ACTRESS VANESSA REDGRAVE (R.)

be dismissed. In late October, Nicola Sturgeon, first minister of Scotland, which voted to remain, indicated that the British government had no roadmap, no clue.

The British people have spoken! They don't know what they said, but they have spoken. The Government has mumbled about a "hard" and a "smooth" Brexit, which sounds like a bad night for some unlucky girl. Witnessing the shrewd dumbness of UK politicians such as former PM David Cameron, who called the vote, should make us more tolerant of America's election fiasco. By comparison, Donald Trump's vile presidential bid seemed like a book publicity tour that got out of hand. This guy's an amateur

politician; our idiots are professionals. In fairness to the 52% of voters who ticked Leave, parts of the country feel like every kid that ever came here on a school trip subsequently emigrated... with their entire family. The Italians complain about the French. My Filipino cleaner complains about Pakistani landlords. The immigrants hate the immigrants. In London this seems funny, a side effect of vibrant, congested cosmopolitan society—until you check the property prices. In other parts of the country whole communities have transformed in little more than a decade. The pace of change, the sweeping-away of the familiar, the lack of control in one's home town...all fed the anti-Europe vibe.



The newish PM made a big fuss over designers at London Fashion Week in September '16, bleating about the UK as a creative force, shoring up love from the £28 billion fashion sector. Strangely, fashion's biggest injuries in recent months have been self-inflicted. Topshop boss Sir Philip Green is to lose his knighthood for mismanagement of the historic chain, BHS. And SportsDirect founder and chief executive Mike Ashley has also been raked over the coals for maltreatment of the largely immigrant workforce at the retail group's Derbyshire warehouse, which MPs likened to the darker works of Charles Dickens.

Since the Brexit vote, the future is uncertainty with a side order of uncertainty. If Article 50 is triggered in April, there will be two years to secure favorable trade agreements, and to avoid higher tariffs such as import/export duties. Further concerns: skilled workers including irreplaceable machinists being returned to Europe, the UK's dominant position in fashion education suffering from the withdrawal of EU funds, and intellectual copyright becoming harder to protect without cross-EU support. And then there are whispers of exodus: will VF Corp withdraw troops to its mountain fortress in Lugano, Switzerland?

Besides the tarnished brand values of tolerance, creativity and humor, the UK's great strengths are stability and connectivity: a solid currency and first-rate transport links (say hello, third runway at Heathrow). The likes of Nigel Farage, the Muppet-faced, Muppet-voiced, Muppet-brained ex-leader of political pressure group UKIP, believe that Britain can remain superior while supping at an empty well, as if the country's economic health can be ring-fenced via a magical alliance of The Beatles, black-tea-with-milk, cricket and Marks & Spencer.

*[Text: Oliver Horton/Photo: Glen Luchford for Gucci]*



THE MAIN CAST OF SUICIDE SQUAD

## CARTOON HEROES

It already started by the end of 2015: the seventh installment in the main *Star Wars* film series, *Star Wars: The Force Awakens*, hit theaters and triggered merchandising machines to run hot. But there wasn't an end in sight after the Lucasfilm inherited characters such as Luke Skywalker, Chewbacca or R2-D2 had flooded the wider fashion market with appearances not only on clothing and shoes (Adidas Originals, Crocs) but even watches (Nixon) and fine jewelry (Malaikarais). While the Disney licensing machinery seems to always be in full swing (a trend especially jumped onto by Japanese retailer Uniqlo with its ongoing "Magic for All" clothing line and dedicated stores), heroes from alternative comic universes were gaining momentum, too—and that came as no surprise. With *Deadpool*, *Captain America 3*, *X-Men: Apocalypse* and *Doctor Strange*, Marvel has released four highly anticipated movies in the course of 2016 and DC Comics' *Batman v Superman: Dawn of Justice* and *Suicide Squad* both have caused their own (style) stir. Starring Cara Delevingne and Jared Leto, *Suicide Squad* even had two of fashion's favorites in its cast. When the latter appeared to the film's New York premiere in August, he was (once again) wearing a full Gucci look for spring/summer '17 with Donald Duck embroidery embellishing his lower coat seam. Seems like Gucci designer Alessandro Michele is only one of many creatives in this industry who was inspired by the legendary life of cartoon heroes this year. [Text: Maria Hunstig/Photo: 2016 Warner Bros. Ent.]

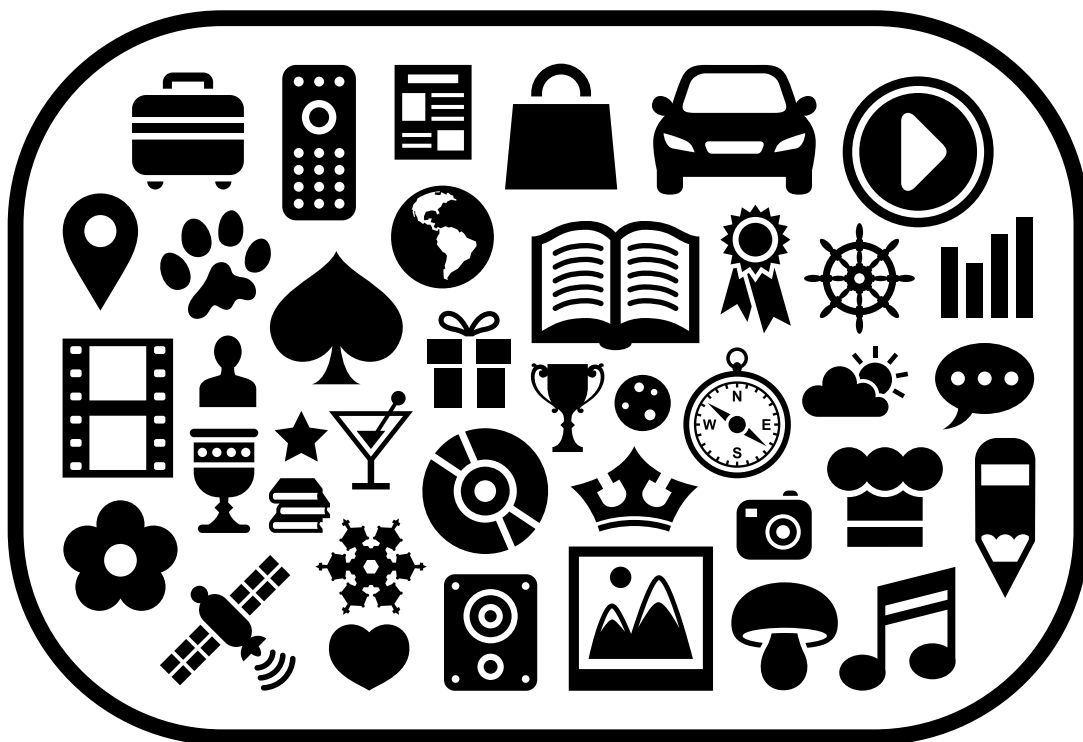
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# CONSUMER 2.0

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Customer is king. That's what was always said, but that's not how it was. It was far too often the case that customers had to tolerate the whims of sales assistants. But digitization has erased the gap between retailers and buyers. Now it's customers who can impose their moods, looks and likes. The customer is more daring and better informed than sales assistants—if one is even there at all. The customer has gone from making requests to calling the shots and that is an unprecedented state of affairs. Customers are the focal point and so are their needs, wishes, ideas and dislikes. They have a lot of all those things and they are growing more urgent as our lifestyles have become global, complicated, technological, multi-optional and fast-paced. Plus: These needs are dynamic and change rapidly. For example, Jörn Stiller of online retailer Stylefile says: "If a product matches the current taste of consumers, they are very receptive to it. On the other hand, consumers react more rapidly (positively or negatively) and have a stake in determining the success or failure of a brand."

But how can these needs be recognized? By being where the consumers are. Where the consumers open up, communicate and share things about themselves. That can be at the point-of-sale but more often it is online. Debates, discussions and brand awareness are taking place there. That is where customers decide about the success or failure of trends, products and companies. Those who want to stay in the running have to make the presence of their labels and products felt in the lives of consumers and must become relevant for (potential) customers. If successful, then all-powerful customers will probably be willing to share some of the limelight. [Text: Julia Mönnich/Illustration: Getty Images]



# CREATIVES' MOVES

## Thomas Steinbrück

Reebok appointed Thomas Steinbrück as new creative director in October. In this position he accounts for the creative direction of the shoe and clothing collections. Steinbrück has held several positions in the fashion business, most recently at Liebeskind Berlin. Before that, he worked as creative director for the Porsche Design Group. His CV also includes positions at Elie Saab and Kenneth Cole, among others.



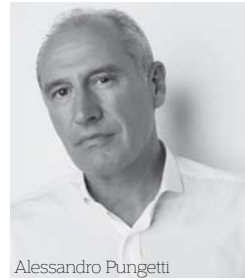
## Yossi Cohen

Italian jeans brand Gas has a new creative director, Yossi Cohen, an Israeli designer of Yemeni origins. Cohen, who has previously worked for international brands including Moncler, Les Copains and Ballantyne, designed Gas Edition, a new capsule collection for f/w 2016-17. It aims to give the Gas brand a unique identity while keeping its denim-focused DNA intact.



## Aitor Throup

More fresh blood at G-Star: the Dutch denim brand has appointed Aitor Throup as its new executive creative director. The 36-year-old has served the brand as a creative consultant since 2013. In June 2016, Throup's first collection for G-Star, titled Raw Research, debuted during Paris Men's Week. His responsibilities will stretch beyond product design and collections and also include more marketing-focused aspects such as brand campaigns.



Alessandro Pungetti



Paul Harvey

## Alessandro Pungetti & Paul Harvey

Baracuta, the iconic British outerwear brand, debuted a new direction at the June 2016 edition of Pitti Uomo. Contributing to the brand's latest course are Paul Harvey and Alessandro Pungetti, appreciated designers who have worked with brands such as Stone Island, Iceberg, Zegna, Les Copains, Missoni, Cruciani and C.P. Company.



## Sean O'Shea

Tennis & sportswear brand K-Swiss designated industry veteran Sean O'Shea as creative director in June. Based at the brand's headquarters in Westlake, California, he supervises the full product design process globally and reports to Barney Waters, K-Swiss president. O'Shea is expected to bring in new impulses from the running and training segments, for which he was head of design at former employer Puma.

## More Creatives' Moves

+++ Uniqlo appointed **Christophe Lemaire** as artistic director of a new clothing line called Uniqlo U, which was launched for fall/winter 2016 +++ **Francesco Riso** has been appointed new creative director at Marni, as founder Consuelo Castiglioni stepped down after more than 20 years +++ **Justin O'Shea** only had a short performance at Brioni. In April the former head of buying of Mytheresa.com became creative director of the traditional Italian luxury house. In his six-month tenure there he launched a new and memorable campaign with hard rock band Metallica as testimonials +++ **Raf Simons** was officially appointed chief creative officer of the Calvin Klein brand in August. Less than a year after leaving Dior in October 2015 and openly criticizing the pace and pressure of today's fashion system, Simons is now helming the creative side of another global fashion enterprise +++ **Tim Coppens** was appointed new executive creative director at Under Armour. He debuted with a modern take on fashion-driven performance sportswear. +++





A STREETWEAR FAVORITE  
TOUR MERCH BY RIHANNA

## GOthic LETTERING

It's hard to say where, when and by whom exactly the rise of bold gothic script prints in fashion was started. Its dominance, however, is indisputable. The trend became most widely obvious this year via two of today's most powerful (though very different) fashion forces: Vetements and Kanye West. Whilst the ultimately hip French design collective debuted goth-style logo lettering on the superlong-sleeved shirts in its spring/summer '16 collection, West (who already played with metal graphics for the merchandise of his *Yeezus* tour in 2013) took the use of blackletter fonts to the extreme with his sought-after *Life of Pablo* tour merchandise. The collection of rather plain shirts, sweats, hoodies and jackets with a repeated "Life of Pablo" print on them became part of the streetwear uniform and earned West a freakish amount of money—according to his own tweets, he sold one US\$1 million worth of *Pablo* merchandise in two days in his New York pop-up alone in March—and he ran 23 further pop-ups around the globe later on. The man behind these designs is the artist Cali Thornhill Dewitt, who reportedly was inspired by memorial sweatshirts from South Californian Latino gangs. But as mentioned, this might only be the most prominent example—one can also find gothic typography in styles by the likes of Been Trill, Born x Raised, Marcelo Burlon and Second/Layer amongst many others—and of course the high-street versions by the Forever 21s of this world. Even Justin O'Shea replaced the logo of traditional and slightly dusty Italian suit maker Brioni with a blackletter logo and put that on a campaign starring Metallica in his short interplay as creative director of the luxury brand. Maybe the trend became so powerful because it hits two other fashion fads these days: The general craze for tour merchandise (Justin Bieber's *Purpose* and Rihanna's *Anti* merchandise use a blackletter script as well) and the recurrence of metal and rock band shirts as seen on Millennial influencers from Gigi Hadid (in AC/DC) to Harry Styles (in KISS) recently. Fashion and musical taste have apparently long lost their direct relation to each other.

[Text: Maria Hunstig/Photo: Sascha Hemmer]



## DAVID BOWIE

Nobody will ever forget David Bowie (1947 - 2016), a most impactful artist, musician, performer and fashion king of self-transformation. Evolving from Mod teenager to hippie through modern pirate, space traveler and Thin White Duke, he often changed his image astonishing and surpassing expectations every time in different new ways. He sported extravagant hairstyles and -colors, shaved his eyebrows and covered his face with vibrant make-up. He wore skintight catsuits, theatrical costumes and flashy suits from bright yellow, blue and pink to pure white. He also wore high-heel lace-up boots and platform shoes and never failed to surprise his fans and the world in always new, extreme, glittery and creative ways. Through his costumes and chameleonesque transformations, Bowie expressed modern zeitgeist and contradictions as well as his personality, individuality and ambiguity. He was loved by both sexes. In March 2013, the Victoria and Albert Museum in London held the dedicated "David Bowie Is" exhibition after they were given an unprecedented access to his own archive. Bowie is featured in more than 300 objects that include handwritten lyrics, original costumes, fashion pieces, photographs, films, music videos, set designs and his own instruments. This exhibition has started travelling worldwide with stops in Chicago, Sao Paulo, Toronto, Paris, Berlin, Melbourne, Groningen, Bologna and Tokyo and throws a look back at the style of one of our history's most irreverent and revolutionary kings of unique fashion who we sadly lost way too early this year in January. [Text: Maria Cristina Pavarini/Photo: Masayoshi Sukita; Sukita/The David Bowie Archive 2012]

DECONSTRUCTED JEANS  
FROM TOPSHOP'S RECLAIM  
COLLECTION



## DECONSTRUCTED DENIM/FASHION

In 2014, at the same time as the industry was preoccupied about the rise of joggers and sweatpants at the expense of jeans' consumption, a still unknown design collective called Vetements presented what would be the biggest hype in the denim market only a few seasons later: jeans created from deconstructed vintage pieces that were sewn together into new shape. The reworking process was visible through the different indigo shades that the jeans presented. Deconstructed denim was in full swing at this year's trade shows, as denim and streetwear brands such as Daily Paper, Closed and Guess—to name a few—introduced their own interpretations of patching together different denim fabrics, frequently featuring other on-trend touches such as frayed hems. Deconstructed jeans embody DIY-attitude as much as other trends enjoying success among consumers like garments with patches—even though today's consumers mainly buy ready-to-wear items representing the DIY-look rather than customizing products themselves (like the hippies and punks did when patches were a thing for the first time).

Moving forward, deconstruction doesn't just stay a theme in the denim frontier. Brands and designers showcasing at Paris Fashion Week in October proved how much territory is yet to be explored with classic shirts, coats, jackets or dresses by just reimagining their structure. Nehera delivered fluid blazers worn hanging from the neck and attached to the waist by a rope and one of the most eye-catching pieces at Y/Project was a jumpsuit featuring a jeans' bottom and an extremely curled up striped shirt that seemed to be born out of the garment's fly. [Text: Lorenzo Molina/Photo: Topshop]



## DISRUPTION

**E**verything. At once and at any time—those who use digital channels are used to that—whether it’s about flights, books or sex partners. Millennials have never known it to be otherwise; they are growing up with this fast-paced 24/7 availability of goods and services. Wait six months for a pair of Gucci shoes? Almost nobody is willing to do that anymore. And no designers want vertical operators to fill up store space and cash registers for months with his or her ideas (according to Forbes, Inditex boss Amancio Ortega is now the world’s richest person...) prior to them selling a single item themselves.

But those days are over now: For example, Burberry presented winter fashion during the fall London Fashion Week which was then available in stores or could be purchased online while the show was still going on. This is a major and unsettling outbreak which turns procurement and production on its head, but also changes the contents: Instead of sensational new looks, these collections, of course, also show off current trends—and people want to sell NOW—this means there is no time to get customers used to unusual looks for weeks ahead of time via campaigns, interviews, posts and the (involuntary)

help of vertical retailers. If it is being presented, it has to work right away! Instant fashion instead of innovation. What does it mean? First of all, it is good to try out new approaches. At a time when same-day delivery and drones are being discussed, six months waiting time just seems very very long. No company can ignore changed customer requirements and expectations. The only question is: Must, or can, a product, which justifies its existence through innovation and quality, be marketed like a T-shirt from Topshop? Burberry’s Christopher Bailey acknowledges this



discrepancy and as a result not only does a fashion show, but also presents good, old-fashioned craft artistry which his collections cannot do without. But he is not the only one to do this: Amazon states that it now sells over 10,000 “unique and handmade” products created by craftspeople from all over the world. This shows how genres and categories are thrown together with customary habits and formats. A good opportunity to think about form and content: Why is Burberry showing its fashion at all at this time? And why winter wear? Burberry is a global company with

customers throughout the world—isn't it always summer somewhere? And what does it all mean for, for example, trade fairs? What is being presented there? Are the revolutionaries being followed and only instant-wear still being showcased? What models are being used for production? Or is the whole thing unleashing trendsetting creativity because it is no longer possible to rely on the accepted designs of X and Y, and you have to do it yourself? We wanted a global business and now we have global business and are confronted with a global task.

Nothing about the initial question has changed. It is still: To whom can I sell something, and when?

[Text: Julia Mönnich/Photo: Martin Veit]



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## KICK FLARES

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**W**hile the classic flare jean didn't take off wildly during its latest revival, the more adapted-to-the-times cropped version, fashionably known as the "kick flare," gained much of a broader acceptance among consumers.

A mid-rise waist and variations from slightly to very flared were the attributes to look for in models from Weekday, Citizens of Humanity, Denham, 7 For All Mankind and BLK DNM, to name a few. Besides ankle-bragging, kick flare jeans still keep the relevance of your footwear choice unspoiled. It doesn't matter if you opt for the comfort of flat sandals or booties for the autumn chill, this style looks great with both.

*[Text: Lorenzo Molina/Photo: 7 For All Mankind]*



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## HANDWOVEN DENIM

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**H**andwoven denim is hot right now. Many initiatives are meeting success not only among insiders, but among demanding consumers who can appreciate the high value of hand labor. Italian denim manufacturer Berto recently launched its Le Mani-Manifattura 1887 selection of entirely handwoven denims. Berto and denim connoisseur Scott Morrison, owner of the US 3x1 premium denim brand, presented a denim weaving process live in Morrison's 3x1 own store on Mercer Street in New York. Customers could order their made-to-measure jeans made with that handwoven denim and all the fabric was sold out in seven hours. "By using this fabric we wanted to give a strong sign and offer our customers a very valuable century old-tradition product that goes beyond the usual purchase logics," explained Morrison. Weaver Elena Sanguaneko demonstrated how she could produce a unique authentic fabric with her 3,000 strokes per meter. Customers were even more surprised considering that a handloom can produce a maximum three meters of fabric per day. "Seeing the handloom in action, right there in the middle of the store, was breathtaking," added Morrison. "The handloom denim is gorgeous, and a sophisticated customer can easily see and feel the difference."

Other handwoven denims are now appearing in the market. The Dutch company Seven Senses Denim produces handwoven traditional Indian Khadi selvedge denim employing naturally dyed organic cotton, without exploiting workers. Also Arvind Denim, an Indian denim specialist, who participated in Munich's Bluezone in September 2016, launched its Khadi Denim, a denim woven with artisanal looms that employ handspun yarns only. [Text: Maria Cristina Pavarini/Photo: Berto]



## INTELLIGENT FASHION

**I**ntelligent fashion—clothing manufactured with fabrics enabling digital components and electronics to be embedded in them to become interactive surfaces—has been an on and off topic in recent times, certainly more discussed in conferences and panel discussions rather than put into practice, with only a small bunch of start-ups investing their (limited) resources on this exciting field. This year, however, industry heavyweights have made a clear step to support wearable technology's shift from offside, niche player into a widespread phenomenon. Last spring, Levi's introduced a new interactive denim jacket within its Commuter line—aimed at urban cyclists—where technology-driven yarns powered by Google have been woven in, making possible for wearers to control their phones through a small tag placed on the jacket sleeve. Without the need to remove the phone out of the pocket and just by swiping or tapping the sleeve tag, one can take calls, adjust music volume or get an estimated time of arrival to a certain location wirelessly.

Still before summer, British fast fashion juggernaut Topshop announced Top Pitch, a mentoring program targeting wearable tech entrepreneurs to discover and co-develop innovative smart clothing products. Run in cooperation with corporate innovation specialist L Marks, a number of start-ups were selected to participate in a four-week bootcamp to work on their prototypes with the help of expert mentors and eventually present them to Sir Philip Green, owner of the Arcadia Group, Topshop's holding company. The winner was The Crated, an innovation house focused on integrating electronic circuitry into textiles, which will develop a heated garment prototype alongside Topshop's design team.

Deutsche Telekom also got its hands on tech fashion solutions with Fashion Fusion, a similar initiative where ten teams will present their concepts in a grand finale at the #FashionTech conference during Berlin Fashion Week in January 2017. The winning team of the Fashion Fusion challenge will receive a cash prize of €20,000 and the opportunity to bring its creation to market together with Deutsche Telekom and its partners Intel, Adidas and Premium Exhibitions.

We'll have to wait until 2017 to buy Levi's trucker jacket and to see the outcome of both Topshop's and Deutsche Telekom's mentoring programs in reality. Nevertheless, the start of all these endeavors certainly points out that big tech and fashion players see untapped potential in the field and want to capitalize on the mass-market introduction of intelligent fashion—sooner rather than later.

*[Text: Lorenzo Molina/Photo: Deutsche Telekom]*



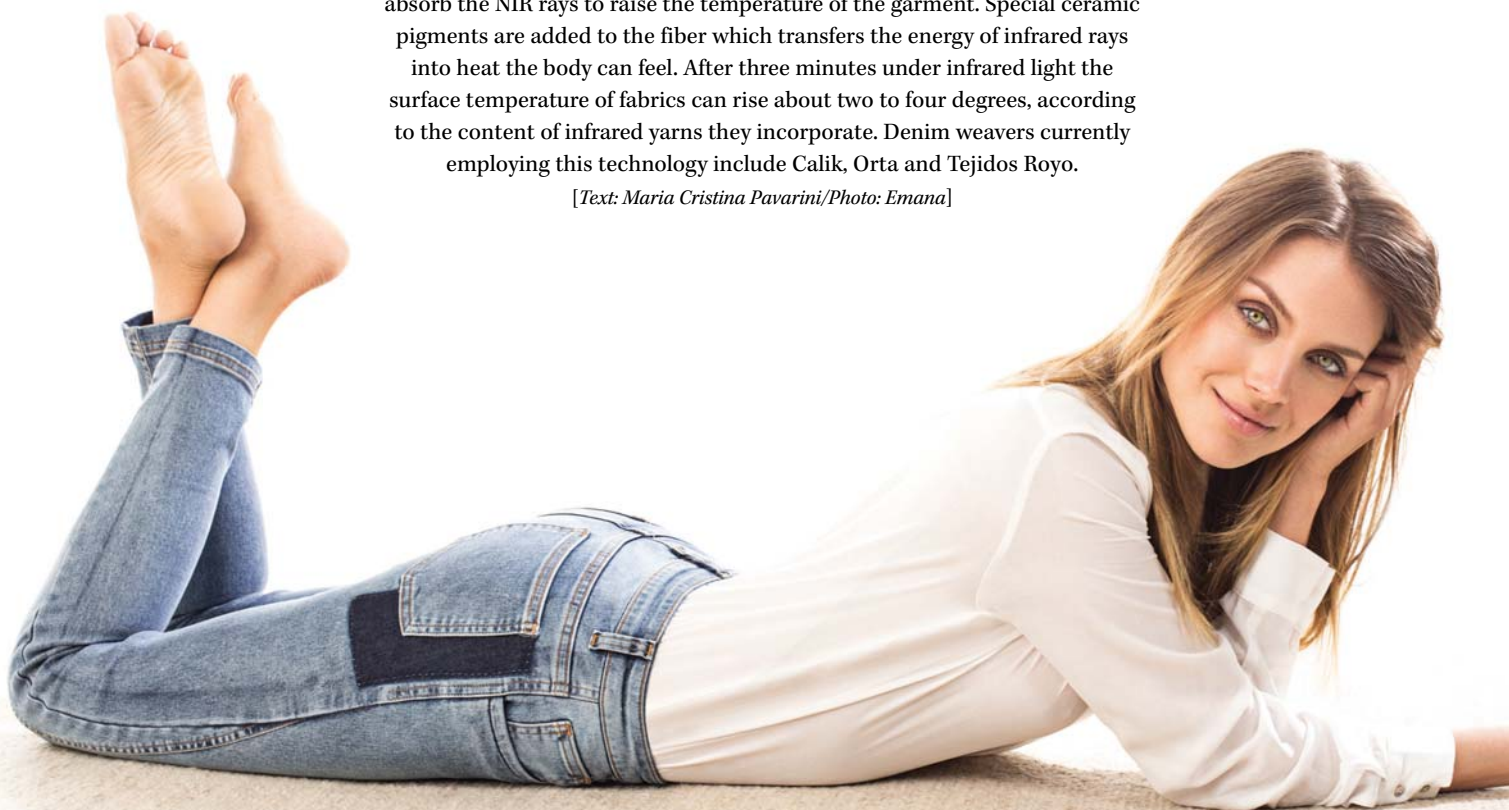
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# INFRARED RAY FASHION

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**F**orget fabrics that never interact with those who wear them. The future will see an increasing number of materials acting as if they were in symbiosis with the consumer. Apart from wearable technology applied to textiles, some new fibers can help those who wear them feel and look better. Starting from this year Emana, a fiber by Solvay, was employed in the denim market significantly. This fiber is made of a bioactive mineral-based polyamide yarn that absorbs human body warmth and returns it to the wearer as infrared rays. Blood microcirculation is activated and cellulite appearance can be reduced after wearing garments made of this fiber. Kipas and Canatiba offer denims that contain it. Canatiba is also testing new variants for menswear that aim to help support muscle power. Orta also launched denims that contain a new black Emana fiber for functional denims. At the beginning of 2016 Invista announced the launch of its new warming Thermolite Infrared technology. It is activated by the sun or artificial light sources using unique Near Infrared (NIR) yarns. The yarns absorb the NIR rays to raise the temperature of the garment. Special ceramic pigments are added to the fiber which transfers the energy of infrared rays into heat the body can feel. After three minutes under infrared light the surface temperature of fabrics can rise about two to four degrees, according to the content of infrared yarns they incorporate. Denim weavers currently employing this technology include Calik, Orta and Tejidos Royo.

*[Text: Maria Cristina Pavarini/Photo: Emana]*



DENIM MADE WITH EMANA, A FIBER EMPLOYING INFRARED TECHNOLOGY

LOOKS FROM CLOSED'S  
GENDERLESS 'EQL' COLLECTION  
FEATURING MODEL TONI GARRN  
AND HER BROTHER NIKLAS



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# NO GENDER

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**W**hen Alexis died, the actress Patricia Arquette lost her sister. She had already lost her brother years before—when he became this sister. Radically, purposefully and by means of an operation, Alexis changed gender. But nowadays no one needs to go that far. Giving up the distinction between man/woman, playing with and slipping back and forth between genders is a major topic in fashion: Closed is developing genderless looks for women and men, Selfridges is trying out genderless departments, Mother Denim has launched a “gender neutral” section at its online shop, and US labels such as 1.61, Telfar and 69 no longer distinguish between man and woman. According to the business magazine Nikkei, in Japan friends and relatives coordinating their look is all the rage. More important than being a man or a woman is the statement that he/she belongs to me! Why are the most rudimentary categories such as man/woman no longer valid? What does that say about us? And most of all—what does it mean for the fashion industry?

Structures, rules and laws, which used to hold society together, have lost significance in Western countries. Carmakers “cheat,” doctorates are acquired unscrupulously, banks are facing ruin, athletes are full of drugs and administrators are in jail, but nobody raises their voice in protest. Codes which represented a specific way of life (left or right, green or Nazi, man or woman, etc.) could be unambiguously understood, but that is no longer the case today. Now bundles of characteristics that once helped create social, economic and cultural cohesion are being deconstructed and are reappearing in new contexts: The shoes of punk rock musicians can be seen in exclusive boutique window displays, their torn jeans are hanging prominently inside. Mommy drives a brand new SUV into the countryside to buy local produce. Music albums are sold as individual tracks online. Newspapers are disintegrating into single articles, snippets and two-minute videos show up on YouTube and Facebook. Everything is broken up into the smallest components according to preference and how people feel on a given day. Instead of following a life pattern, only the individual moment is attended to, with the result that no two individuals have the same wants or needs. Anyone who does a Google search receives isolated information within seconds which is suited only to that

person’s requirements. Everybody receives an individual response. The desire to have a choice/selection around the clock no longer applies to consumer goods only. Friendship, love and even gender, too, can be rearranged or redefined within seconds. The many different options available—Facebook offers its users over 60 different ways to describe their gender—is growing. At the same time there is less commitment to choices people make and for how long. One click and I am someone else. The options are becoming ever more varied but with the help of the “Like” button we are reducing our highly complex world to the simplest level possible. Each person fiddles around with his or her own individual life pattern in this way. No wonder that at Zalando’s Bread & Butter everything was customized in every possible way: a watch with its own name, jeans with selected patches, a jacket with embroidery. The main thing is that it is unique, just like you.

That is all well and good, but that is precisely what makes it hard for those running a mass consumer product business of any kind, for fashion, too, has to satisfy these new needs—otherwise why buy a new dress? What customers also expect is authenticity. Businesses today must be true to life and not too slick. For this reason, in their new campaign Dolce & Gabbana present themselves as down-to-earth, and hired a war photographer who documents instead of staging, and regular Neapolitans can be seen wearing other labels alongside the €1,000 jackets. That is new. That is authentic. That connects with people. Individuality and authenticity are exactly the things that have been neglected in the fashion industry in favor of mere (shop floor) growth. Thus, there is only one thing that can become a threat to the fashion business today—and that is the fashion business itself. Conformity, mass mailings, mass-produced goods, the least common denominator in order to increase efficiency and maximize profit have guided business until now. This “higher, faster, farther” principle set the devaluation of the fashion business in motion and stripped the business of its own vitality. No gender? It’s possible that it will all settle down again. However, what is certain to remain is the enthusiasm which gives rise to the novel, the unknown, the surprising—in every individual and in everybody else. [Text: Julia Mönnich/Photo: Closed]

# SKATE

Fashion borrowing from subcultures is nothing new and the vast field of boardsports has been a source of inspiration in this context again and again—not least thanks to the segment’s usually fancy and inventive graphics. But 2016 will go down in fashion history as the year that invariably EVERY fashionista sported her own pair of Vans—and we’re not talking the slip-on style that has been popular for a few years already thanks to Céline’s high fashion interpretations back in spring/summer ’12, but rather more bulky and skate-y styles such as the Sk8-Hi or Old Skool.

These have been paired widely with other skate staples such as knee-high stripy tennis socks, cut-off workwear pants and, most notably, Trasher tees. For no obvious origin, shirts and hoodies carrying the established skateboard magazine’s flame logo have been high in demand with the likes of uber-pop stars such as Rihanna and Justin Bieber and consequently with fashion week attendees worldwide. And also in luxury fashion, everyone seems to want a piece of what feels like somewhat of the last credible subculture around. Several designers (including Ashish, Jimmy Choo and Philipp Plein) have made their models skate—or at least carry a skateboard—during their fashion shows in recent seasons and even conservative French fashion house Hermès hired two skater girls this year to star in an advertising film for silk scarves that your regular skater wouldn’t even be able to afford.

Fashion’s embracement of skate essentials has caused affronts by skate insiders such as Trasher editor Jake Phelps (see Justin Bieber) but also generated extra dollars for local skate shops (and the respective brands behind them). And while the fashion crowd still hunts for the Thrasher shirts and Palace track jackets of this world, “real” skaters are already turning to more “insider” brands such as Octagon, Polar, Bronze 56K, Dime MTL, DQM and Hélas. [Text: Maria Hunstig/Photo: Kyra Wilhelmseder, thenewage.club]

SKATERS OUTSIDE BRIGHT TRADE SHOW IN BERLIN





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## STRETCH

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**F**rom a commercial point of view, denim has to have stretch these days. In fact, elastic qualities will be making even more inroads into the denim market this coming season. Thanks to athleisure trends, bi-stretch or 360° stretch qualities, where the elastic fibers are used in both the warp and the weft, are playing a more important role in both mens- and womenswear. Buyers can no longer get by without stretch fabric as an option. With most retailers, stretch goods now account for over 90% of their denim range. Customers are after maximum comfort. And men do not want to do without it either. Replay caters to this with its Hyperflex and Hyperfree models, which helped flexible denim styles truly gain momentum in Europe. Since then, brands such as Mavi, Denham, Diesel, Monkee Genes, to name just a few, all emphasize bi-stretch. And the weaving mills, such as Candiani, Isko and Orta, are continuously working on new stretch materials offering even more comfort and function.

[Text: Melanie Gropler/Photo: Replay]




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## TURKEY

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**T**urkey is one of the most crucial areas for the denim market. The country hosts a huge number of denim and garment manufacturers involved with many global jeanswear brands and retail chains. The attempted putsch in July strongly impressed the international scene and has hit a noteworthy mark on Turkish history. Due to renowned news channels following July's events a huge number of officials, including judges, teachers, police, civil servants and journalists have been detained or suspended. Turkey's president Erdogan's decision to extend the state of emergency and temporarily suspend the European convention of human rights seems to push a general state of fear and uncertainty. Despite that, the denim industry seems to be heads up and hands on: "As we are used to work with the international market we have continued running our business," comments the general manager of a Turkish denim producer. "We kept traveling, visiting clients and shows as we have always done as we depend upon other countries." The whole big denim family hopes that a sense of relief and normal business rhythms can return.

*[Text: Maria Cristina Pavarini/Photo: Alessia Celato]*

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# THE SMITHS

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Two years ago, in an interview with The New York Times' T Magazine, Jaden Smith expressed his ambitions in life: "I have a goal to be just the most craziest person of all time. And when I say craziest, I mean, like, I want to do like Olympic-level things. I want to be the most durable person on the planet." Subtract some of that due to a teenage overestimation of the then-16-year-old's own capabilities, but that still pretty much sums up both the not-of-this-world and the determination that is special to these siblings. Jaden and Willow Smith, son and daughter to multimillion-dollar actors Will and Jada Pinkett Smith, had a career when other kids had their sacrament. Jaden starred in blockbuster *The Pursuit of Happyness* with his father when he was eight and Willow's debut single "Whip My Hair" dropped before she even turned ten (and it went platinum). Since then, the two of them have followed paths as recording artists and actors and also as models, designers, artists, entrepreneurs and Twitter philosophers ("If A Cup Cake Falls From A Tree How Far Away Will It Be From Down. #Jupiter" is just a taste of what @officialjaden has to say on the platform). The Smiths use their social media accounts to express their view on the world—always in a cryptic, but well-designed way. They do their best to maintain inscrutable and almost mystic public personae that are boosted through their idiosyncratic looks. Jaden has worn kimonos, dresses and mismatching sneakers in public and a white Batman costume to Kanye and Kim Kardashian West's wedding. His attempts to counter traditional gender norms pocketed him a job at Louis Vuitton this year, starring in the brand's spring/summer womenswear campaign. He also started his own clothing line and arts collective MSFTSrep and is involved in the sustainable water bottle company JUST. We can't say for certain if he or his sister might ever end up as the craziest person of all times—but we're VERY sure the future is all theirs.

[Text: Maria Hunstig/Photo: Getty Images]






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## VIRTUAL REALITY

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Virtual Reality (VR) headsets such as the Oculus Rift or Samsung's brainchild, the Gear VR—powered by Oculus—were big technological novelties for the beginning of 2016. In particular, the Gear VR, which costs only \$99 and works by snapping a Samsung Galaxy smartphone into the headset, was seen as the democratization of VR for households as well as businesses of all sorts thanks to its easy transport. In addition, companies such as Trillenium develop several VR applications for different needs. While VR is already quite established in the gaming industry, the fashion business wasn't profiting from the potential until recently. This is slowly but surely changing, as demonstrated during the latest edition of London Fashion Week. Shoe brand Malone Souliers offered an innovative presentation where guests were allowed to walk down the runway wearing the new brand proposals for spring/summer '17 with a green-screen setup in the background. They were filmed with a pretaped front row featuring designer Mary-Alice Malone and her managing director Roy Luwolt looking on approvingly. At New York Fashion Week, VR production firm Voke and Intel teamed up to shoot live VR broadcasts of 13 designers showcasing their collections from The Gallery at Skylight Clarkson Square. Fans could access the experience by downloading Voke's Samsung Gear VR app from the Oculus Store and using a Gear VR headset and Samsung smartphone. Besides better engaging shoppers who can't attend catwalk shows personally, these kind of VR experiences could smooth heavy burdens inherent to online shopping. Consumers can now see themselves wearing a garment or a shoe and easily decide if it works for them or not. Another example is a project launched by Ebay together with department store chain Myer in Australia: a virtual department store. Via the matching app and a VR headset customers can choose from 12,500 products. With an integrated "Sight Search" technology users can view a product, move it and put it in their virtual shopping basket. Special features try to match the customer's personal taste better.

*[Text: Lorenzo Molina/Photo: Trillenium]*





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## VELVET

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Velvet turned out to be one of *the* fabrics for 2016. The furniture industry has shown it already: materials tend to be soft and cozy again. The same goes for fashion. But forget about dumpy gowns and skirts in bordeaux or dark green that make girls look like a Christmas tree. Since 2016, velvet shows a rather cool side, making it even an option to be worn during warmer days. It comes in thinner versions, fancy colors and modern fits to show a light yet relaxed elegant attitude such as in Mes Demoiselles' wide pants or Jupe by Jackie's cute blouses. Accessories and footwear can help to give each outfit that bit of festive and still funny touch: Asos' hair bands, Miu Miu's flats or Charlotte Olympia's kitten clutch are among fashionistas' favorites.

[Text: Sabine Kühnl/Photo: Jupe by Jackie]

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# WASHING SEMINARS

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Most denim insiders and manufacturers agree that it has become vital for them to organize learning sessions for their clients as not all of them can be expert enough, might just have started working in jeanswear or simply don't know that denim represents another universe still unexplored for many. Various denim manufacturers have been hosting seminars that explain and teach how denim is produced, how a pair of jeans is manufactured and how it can be treated. Orta was among the first ones to organize such events for selected groups of clients. Isko does that too and when its annual Isko Iskool contest comes close to its end the company invites its shortlisted designers and shows those up-and-coming fashion talents how best to age a denim garment. Likewise, BPD Washhouse in New Jersey, which is run by Bill Curtin, holds several denim-treatment sessions for clients and jeans aficionados each year. More recently, to also reach clients that are based in distant countries, companies have started traveling far away. Isko has organized seminars in Korea and China. And Candiani Denim has established its own Development Center in Los Angeles to better serve, teach and support its US clients. ITV has opted for single theme workshops expected to become itinerant—just like trunk shows—in strategic locations where it wants to expand and where new brands and designers are willing to learn more. ITV's first washing seminar "Watch your Wash" was held in Los Angeles and focused on new sustainable technologies.

[Text: Maria Cristina Pavarini/Photo: Isko]

PARTICIPANTS AT A WASHING SEMINAR BY ISKO





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## WOOL IS THE NEW COOL

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**A** wave of wool is flooding the market. New collaborations, exhibitions, events and lots of innovative products are offered at different market levels from formal apparel to sportswear, activewear and jeanswear. This fiber is warm, breathable, thermoregulating, anallergic, naturally stretchy, versatile and no longer itchy nor available in thicker versions only. Milan's Triennale held the "Maglificio-Knit Talks" that showed how versatile different wool employs can be. Benetton has developed a new technique through which it can produce in-house seamless merino-cashmere pullovers knitted in a single piece. Le Coq Sportif is gradually upgrading its activewear offer by including more wool items that guarantee greater performance and comfort to sports players. Woolrich has employed the historical Woolrich US wool blankets for cool ponchos and coats as part of its f/w 2016 collections. Cotton-wool denims are also becoming a must for denim weavers such as Berto, ITV, Tavex and Italdenim who have developed new versatile and thermoregulating denims that can be treated as 100% cotton ones. Levi's, Zara, Hugo Boss, Canali and Boglioli are just some of the brands that now offer wool-cotton denim pieces.

[Text: Maria Cristina Pavarini/Photo: Carlo Volpi for Knit Talks]

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## X-LARGE JEANS

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**W**ith oversized silhouettes having already conquered coats, pullovers and pants, it was simply a matter of time before the wave for exacerbated volume came to denim—sorry for that, skinny. Such a shift didn't happen all of a sudden. The popularity of boyfriend styles and culottes among women was like a breath of fresh air for manufacturers and brands, as they found out that there was room for further growth in a denim market that was showing signs of stagnating sales. After all, why would any consumer buy a new pair of (skinny) jeans if there are already four pairs hanging in the closet? Luckily for them, the inescapable trend has now some serious counteroffering in wide-leg form. On the runway, Y/Project, Eckhaus Latta and Acne Studios delivered their own interpretations of roomy denim bottoms for both genders and denim brands such as Diesel and Carhartt WIP are offering these new “it” pieces in their spring 2017 assortments. For those who keep it safe, T-shirts and slim-fit shirts are the best companions to wide-leg jeans—preferably tucked into the pant. For an avant-garde feel, there's nothing better than an even roomier jacket or top to pair with wide-leg jeans to get the full look.

[Text: Lorenzo Molina/Photo: Diesel]





★★★★★★  
**IFF PRIVILEGE  
 MEMBERSHIP OFFER**  
 ★★★★★★

## MEMBERSHIP FORM

The Indian fashion industry is today a very fast-moving, challenging category. Technology and consumer behaviour are forcing fashion retailers to constantly evolve and adapt to these changes.

And that is where India Fashion Forum (IFF) comes in. It is India's largest fashion market intelligence hub, and its members have unparalleled access to every connection, information and research that they need to ensure informed and profitable growth of their businesses.

**Membership of India Fashion Forum Privilege Club** – India's largest fashion retail network – offers:

- Pan-India networking and business development openings for top leaders and industry influencers.
- Multiple routes to optimise brand visibility and marketing reach.
- Instant access to IFF's multiple knowledge platforms and a broad network of top-level decision makers and business owners.
- Connecting them to the entire value chain (designing, buying & sourcing to manufacturing, merchandising, branding, marketing & retailing) round the year.
- Privilege access to **India Fashion Forum** annual fashion retail intelligence event, including an exciting blend of Conference sessions, CEOs Roundtables, workshops and masterclasses, zoned exhibitions and industry awards.

### HOW TO ENROLL?

Choose your category/ies from below:

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- Fashion Brands, Exporters & Manufacturers
- Suppliers to Fashion Brands, Retailers, Exporters & Manufacturers

A group operating in more than one category may enroll its different companies in their respective categories. To know the applicable fee and entitlements please refer to the table IFF Annual Membership Fee & deliverables. Service tax will be levied as applicable which at present is 15%. A proforma invoice can be mailed on request.

IFF Annual Membership Fee may be paid by draft/ cheque payable to Images Multimedia Pvt. Ltd. or bank transfer (details below).

**Current Account No:** 02482000004779 | **Account Title:** Images Multimedia Pvt. Ltd. | **Bank:** HDFC Bank Ltd.  
**Branch:** S-355, Panchsheel Park, New Delhi 110 017 | **RTGS Code:** HDFC0000248 | **MICR:** 110240029

### MEMBER INFORMATION

|   |  |
|---|--|
| Company Name  |  |
| Category  |  |
| Address for communication   |  |
| Name of the person responsible for IFF communication and coordination |  |
| Designation:  |  |
| Ph:   |  |
| Cell:   |  |
| Email Id:   |  |

#### OTHER REQUIREMENTS:

- Please send brand / organization logo along with high resolution pictures of key people, products & services. The pictures can be sent through yousendit or wetransfer. All visuals should be of 300 dpi.
- Please send a separate Company Backgrounder of about 350 words. This should be in PDF or MS word format.
- Please send a separate note on outstanding achievements. This should be in PDF or MS word format. All visuals should be of 300 dpi.

#### IFF CONTACTS FOR MEMBERSHIP:

- **Anil Nagar**, +91 9811333099  
E: anilnagar@imagesgroup.in
- **Priti Kapil**, +91 9868801869  
E: pritikapil@imagesgroup.in
- **Sarika Gautam**, +91 9717544226  
E: sarikagautam@imagesgroup.in

#### NAME/S OF AUTHORISED REPRESENTATIVE/S TO AVAIL IFF PACKAGES

| Name: | Designation: | Phone: | Mobile: | E-Mail: |
|-------|--------------|--------|---------|---------|
|       |              |        |         |         |
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#### IFF SECRETARIAT

**IMAGES MULTIMEDIA PVT. LTD.**  
 CIN:- U22122DL2003PTC120097  
 S-21, Okhla industrial Area, Phase 2,  
 New Delhi 110020.  
**T:** +91 11 40525000  
**F:** +91 11 40525001  
**W:** www.indiafashionforum.co.in

.....  
 Signed by CEO / Director / Owner  
 Name:  
 Designation:

.....  
 Company stamp/ seal



## IFF ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP & DELIVERABLES\*

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| Membership Categories                               | For Fashion Retailers:   |  |  |   |   | For Textile Buyers = Fashion Brands, Exporters & Manufacturers: |   | For Vendors = Suppliers to Fashion Brands, Retailers, Exporters & Manufacturers: |  |
|---|--|--|--|---|---|---|---|--|--|
| Category Code:                                      | <b>A1:</b> Fashion Retailers with less than 5000 sq ft. retail space | <b>A2:</b> Fashion MBOs/ Independent Retailers | <b>A3:</b> Regional Chains – 3 or more stores.<br><b>A4:</b> Brands with Owned Brand Outlets/ Shop-in-shops) | <b>A5:</b> National Department Stores/ Large Format Fashion Stores<br><b>A6:</b> Online Retailers | <b>A7:</b> Groups with Multiple Retail Formats + Franchise/ Distribution/ Licensing/ Own Brand operations | <b>B1:</b> Fashion & Lifestyle Brands (without own stores/ SIS) | <b>B2:</b> Exporters, Manufacturers & Buying Houses of Fashion & Lifestyle Products | <b>C1:</b> Fibres, Fabrics & Finishes  | <b>C2:</b> Trims & Embellishments<br><b>C3:</b> Fashion Franchisees & Distributors |
| <b>All Inclusive Annual Fee (Service tax extra)</b> | <b>Rs. 5,000</b>   | <b>Rs. 25,000</b>                              | <b>Rs. 50,000</b>  | <b>Rs. 1,00,000</b>   | <b>Rs. 1,50,000</b>   | <b>Rs. 50,000</b>   | <b>Rs. 15,000</b>   | <b>Rs. 50,000</b>  | <b>Rs. 30,000</b>  |

### DELIVERABLES

|   |  |                                       |                                       |                                       |                                       |                                       |  |  |  |  |
|---|--|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--|--|--|--|
| 1 | Feature/s, Editorial coverage subject to Editorial guidelines in relevant Images publications/Research Books/coffee table books print/ online (Data & information to be provided by members) | 1 Page                                | 1 Page                                | 2 Pages                               | 4 Pages                               | 6 Pages                               | 2 Pages  | 1 Page   | 2 Pages  | 1 Page   |
| 2 | FOC promo banners in Indiaretailing.com portal/EDM (applicable as per category)  | FOC up to Rs.5,000                    | FOC up to Rs.25,000                   | FOC up to Rs.50,000                   | FOC up to Rs.1,00,000                 | FOC up to Rs.1,50,000                 | FOC up to Rs.50,000  | FOC up to Rs.15,000  | FOC up to Rs.50,000  | FOC up to Rs.30,000  |
| 3 | Entry Pass for IFF/ Trendview Conference, Master Classes, Workshops, Exhibitions, Trend Arenas & India Brand Shows   | 1 Pass                                | 2 Passes                              | 2 Passes                              | 4 Passes                              | 6 Passes                              | 2 Passes   | 1 Pass   | 2 Passes   | 2 Passes   |
| 4 | Special Invite for IFF Power Breakfasts, Networking Lunches, Awards & Gala Dinners   | NA                                    | 2 Invites                             | 2 Invites                             | 4 Invites                             | 6 Invites                             | 2 Invites  | 1 Invite   | 2 Invites  | 2 Invites  |
| 5 | Lounge Access at India Fashion Forum for B2B Meetings  | Yes                                   | Yes                                   | Yes                                   | Yes                                   | Yes                                   | Yes  | Yes  | Yes  | Yes  |
| 6 | Research Reports & Publications (Print/ Online)  | FOC up to Rs.2,000                    | FOC up to Rs.5,000                    | FOC up to Rs.10,000                   | FOC up to Rs.20,000                   | FOC up to Rs.30,000                   | FOC up to Rs.10,000  | FOC up to Rs.3,000   | FOC up to Rs.10,000  | FOC up to Rs.5,000   |
| 7 | Images Fashion Awards  | 2/3rd waiver on awards nomination fee | 2/3rd waiver on awards nomination fee | 2/3rd waiver on awards nomination fee | 2/3rd waiver on awards nomination fee | 2/3rd waiver on awards nomination fee | 2/3rd waiver on awards nomination fee (in applicable category) | 2/3rd waiver on awards nomination fee (in applicable category) | 2/3rd waiver on awards nomination fee (in applicable category) | 2/3rd waiver on awards nomination fee (in applicable category) |
| 8 | Presence on India Fashion Forum Website  | URL Link                              | URL Link                              | URL Link                              | URL Link                              | URL Link                              | URL Link   | URL Link   | URL Link   | URL Link   |

\*Deliverables are subject to submission of inputs/ confirmations/ approvals/ additional charges wherever applicable by specific dates/ deadlines as communicated to members. Deliverables are subject to change without notice.

#### Additional Benefits:

- ▶ Special Packages to join IFF delegations for national & international retail trade shows.
- ▶ Special packages for members for Print Ads in relevant magazines.
- ▶ Speaker/Panel discussion opportunities subject to availability of slots
- ▶ Priority in processing of your application for 'TRUSTED MARK' Certification.
- ▶ CEO's picture & profile in 'Who's Who' page on indiaretailing.com website
- ▶ Support & connect with potential partners.

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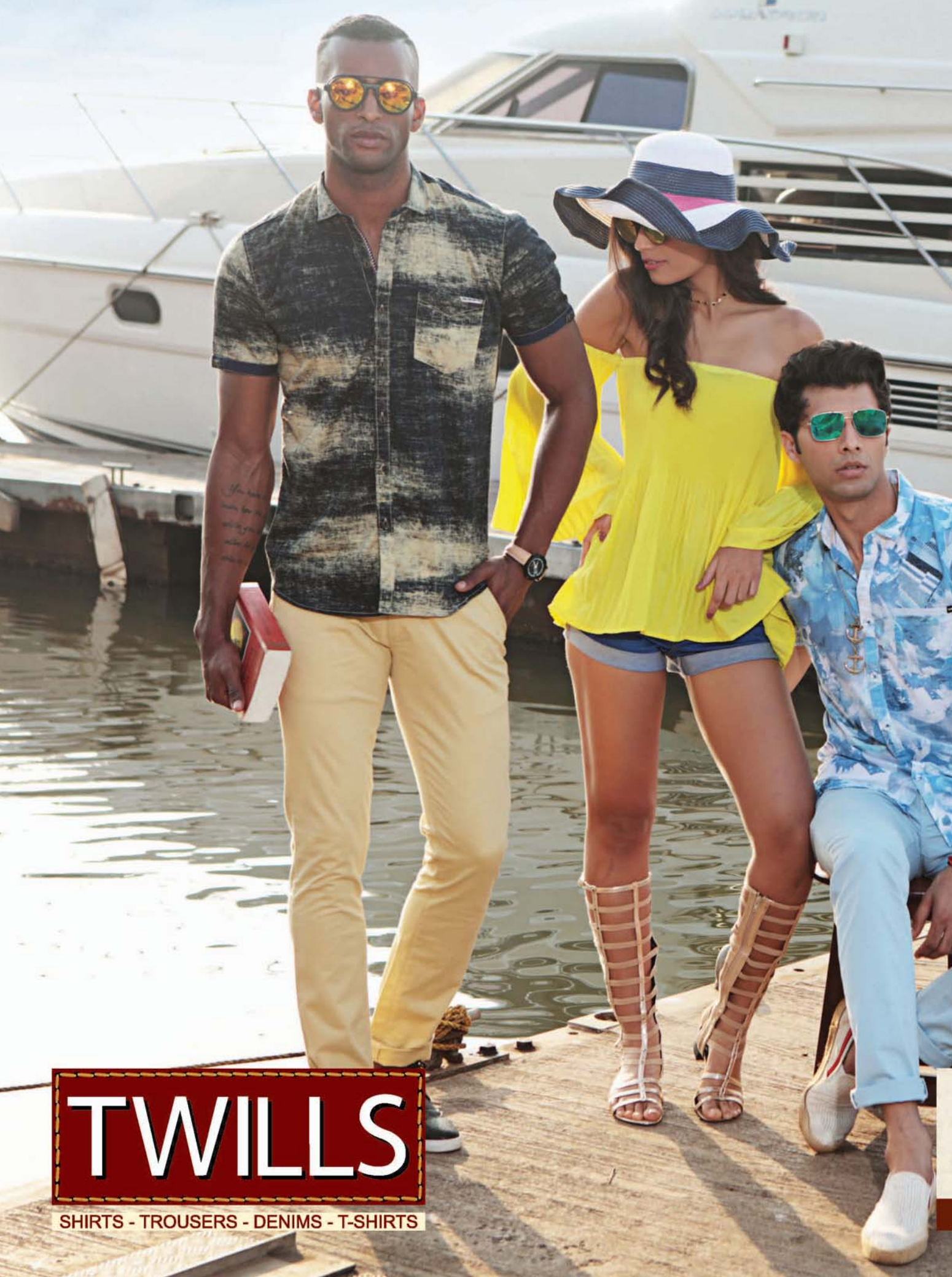
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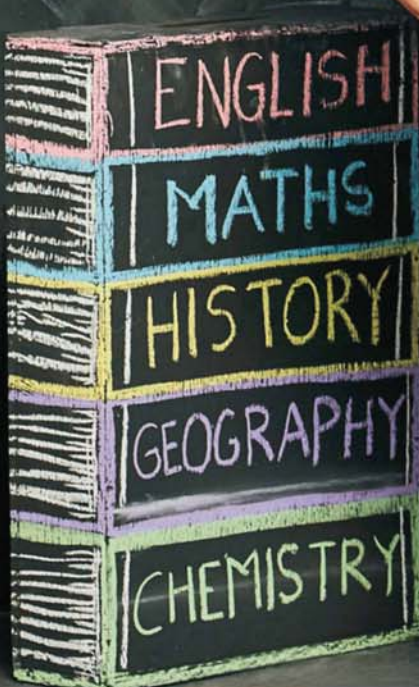
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