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Future of Businesses

DECEMBER 2017

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YEAR-END: THE FINEST SHOPPING CENTRES IN INDIA

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It's the end of the year and retail has moved forward by leaps and bounds. 2017 has been eventful in as far as the retail industry is concerned. There's been transformative change, radical store reinventions, the firm ingress of VR and AR into the sector, and the rise of Omnichannel analytics.

2017 was the digital tipping point for the Indian industry, with e-commerce on a relentless growth trajectory. Pure player online retailers turned to the traditional medium while brick-and-mortar retailers ventured online. Both started adopting Omnichannel concepts, which offered consumers a seamless experience across channels of purchase.

One section of the retail community which is actively espousing Omnichannel retail is the Shopping Centre. While it was unique (and ground-breaking) for physical retailers to have an online presence some time ago, it's now highly unusual for major retailers not to have an Internet storefront. And embracing the trend are mall developers, who are seriously thinking Omnichannel to lure and retain the digitally connected consumer of today.

In our December issue of IMAGES Retail, we bring a list of some of the finest shopping centres in India in 2017. These are malls which have embraced technology, are ecologically conscious, have a clear sense of corporate social responsibility and more than all of this, put the consumer above the rest.

We also bring you a peek into the life and work of retail leader, Raza Beig, Splash Fashion CEO and Director Landmark Group. In an exclusive interview, Beig spills the beans on Splash's India expansion plans to drive growth.

Rounding up the year is our final IRF 2017 segment. We bring you an in-depth view into the importance of warehousing for the retail industry in India.

As always, we hope you find this issue informed and beneficial. We look forward to renewing our relationship with you in the coming year. We welcome 2018 and hope it brings with it a plethora of new ideas, concepts, technology and innovations for the retail sector in India and the world.



Amitabh Taneja

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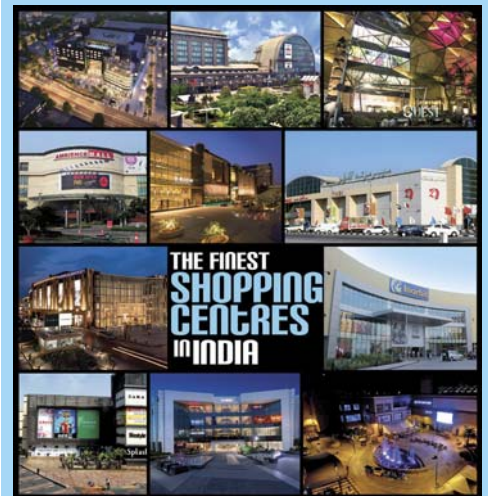
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Aditya Birla's hires fashion advisors to educate consumers on innovative Liva fabric

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THE FINEST SHOPPING CENTRES OF INDIA

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No mall today can afford to operate in isolation and just be a 'shopping' destination. Shopping centres are transforming into community spaces bringing to the discerning consumer the best of brands, food as well as entertainment. We bring you an in-depth look at the India's growing mall culture and what mall owners are doing to lure consumers and make them stay



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INDIAN RETAIL SECTOR CONCENTRATES ON DIGITALISATION, LOWER IMPORTS

– By IMAGES Retail Bureau

November turned out to be a busy month for domestic Indian brands which made steady moves that focused mainly on expansion and imports, all with the aim to make major inroads towards profit. Here's a look at some relevant success stories in the retail sector.

MOTOROLA LAUNCHES THREE MOTO HUBS IN KOLKATA



In line with its commitment to launch 50 Moto Hubs in the country, Motorola in November announced the opening of three Moto Hubs in Kolkata. Earlier, the company opened six 'Moto Hubs' in Delhi-NCR and Mumbai. Moto Hubs allow users to experience and purchase latest online and offline portfolio of Motorola products under one roof, including the recently launched smartphone Moto X4.

"We have received an overwhelming response from our previously opened

Moto Hubs in other parts of the country," Sudhin Mathur, Managing Director, Motorola Mobility India, said in a statement. "We will continue to expand our retail presence and enhance customer experience by making our product portfolio accessible and available to them," Mathur added.

Users can avail 50 percent off on Motorola accessories purchased along with a Motorola smartphone as an inaugural offer. The three Moto Hubs are now open at Forum Mall, City Centre in Salt Lake City and Avani Mall.



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CLOG LONDON TO EXPAND ITS FOOTPRINT WITH ROMA VENTURES



Clog London a premium men's footwear brand owned by Coincept Retail Pvt. Ltd has appointed Roma Ventures as its licensed partner to expand its footprint. As of now Clog London is available at international and national market. Internationally it is present at Canada and in India at some reputed chain stores with certain MBOs in Punjab and J&K. "We are now looking forward to expand its presence aggressively. As of now we are targeting Delhi NCR and UP markets. Once we are present at these markets then we will plan in other states/cities. We are also in process of making it present at leading MBOs" said Gopal K Rathor, Director of Roma Ventures. Clog London is very well accepted by the customers due to design, comfort & quality.



IKEA TO SET UP HEJ HOMES IN HYDERABAD

Swedish home furnishing retail giant IKEA is all set to open its first store in Hyderabad in early 2018. But before that, just to give India a taste of what IKEA furniture feels like, the brand has set up pop-up stores called Hej Homes in November at Forum Mall, Hyderabad. Mirroring the features offered in global IKEA stores, Hej Homes store will be set up in places with high footfalls - like malls - to attract the maximum number of consumers.

Soon after launching Hej Homes, IKEA, which is the world's biggest furniture retailer, will open its first India store - spread across 400,000 sq.ft. - in Hyderabad in December 2017. The store

will feature 7,500 furniture and home furnishing products and a 1,000-seater restaurant serving healthy and nutritious Indian and Swedish cuisine. It will also have a play area for children and a day-care centre for children of its employees. IKEA is investing ₹700 crore in the Hyderabad store and will hire 500 direct workers and provide 1,500 indirect jobs.

IKEA is also planning to double its sourcing from India from €300 million to €600 million by 2020. About 70 percent of the current sourcing is in textiles and rugs. After Hyderabad and Mumbai, IKEA will be opening stores in Bengaluru and Delhi NCR. The company has plans to open two to three retail stores every year.



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Ahmedabad, Chennai, Kolkata, Pune and Surat are the other cities IKEA is looking at. It will host 5-6 million customers every year. The customers will be able to touch and feel the products at the store and they will also have the option of ordering the same online.

RAYMOND TO DOUBLE FMCG TURNOVER TO ₹1,000 CRORE IN 3 YEARS

Textile and apparel major Raymond is sharpening its focus on its FMCG business as it plans to double turnover to ₹1,000 crore over the next three to four years. According to a PTI report: Raymond is present in the FMCG space through its subsidiary JK Helene Curtis, which makes the Park Avenue brand of men's grooming products. It was begun in 1964 as JK Ansell.

The combined FMCG revenue between the two companies is ₹500 crore at present. The Raymond group had recently acquired Ansell's stake in the sexual wellness and personal care brand KamaSutra, from joint venture entity



JK Ansell and expects to get regulatory approvals shortly, it said.

"We are transforming the whole group.

What has not been achieved in the past 50 years in the FMCG business (for the group), we want to achieve in less than five (years)," Gautam Singhania, Chairman and Managing Director, Raymond, was quoted by PTI as saying. Giriraj Bagri, Raymond's FMCG Chief Executive Officer, reiterated that the company expects to reach ₹1,000 crore sales in the next three to four years.

"One Park Avenue is another significant step that will strengthen our FMCG play both nationally and internationally, which is an important driver for value creation for us," Singhania was quoted by PTI as saying.

HAIER EXPANDS PUNE PLANT CAPACITY TO LOWER IMPORTS

Consumer appliances and electronic goods maker Haier India expects its product imports to fall by half with the additional capacity at Pune plant becoming operational, a company official said. According to a PTI report: Haier, which inaugurated the additional capacity at its plant at Ranjangaon in Pune in November, will manufacture washing machines, ACs, TV panels and water heaters.

"I expect our product imports to go down from around 50 per cent at present to 20-25 per cent with this new plant. We, however, will continue to import some high end products,"

Eric Braganza, President, Haier India, told PTI.

"Haier is eyeing over 45 percent growth in its net sales at ₹2,300 crore in the current calendar year," he said. Earlier, the company was manufacturing refrigerators at the plant. Haier's production capacity now stands at 3.8

million units. The inauguration event was presided by Devender Fadnavis, Maharashtra Chief Minister.

Haier said with this additional capacity, the company will generate 2,000 new direct jobs along with 10,000 indirect employment opportunities in the ecosystem. Haier had signed an MoU

with the Maharashtra government in 2015 for the plant, built with an investment of ₹600 crore. Haier India, a 100 percent subsidiary of China's Haier Group, began operations in 2004 and started manufacturing in India by acquiring a 40-acre plant at Ranjangaon in 2007.





BIG NAMES, BIG ALLIANCES: BRANDS REFORMAT RETAIL TO END 2017 ON A HIGH PROFIT NOTE

– By IMAGES Retail Bureau

Despite witnessing a slow growth trend as far as consumers were concerned in November 2017, top international brands – both traditional as well as e-commerce – continued to invest in their business in order to maintain a strong sales growth balance...

ALIBABA GROUP, AUCHAN RETAIL, RUENTEX FORM NEW RETAIL STRATEGIC ALLIANCE

 Alibaba Group Holding Limited, Auchan Retail and Ruentex Group has announced a strategic alliance that brings together their online and offline expertise to explore new retail opportunities in China's food retail sector.

As part of this strategic alliance, Alibaba Group will invest a total of HK \$22.4 billion (approximately US \$2.88 billion) to obtain an aggregate direct and indirect stake of 36.16 percent in Sun Art Retail Group Limited by acquiring shares from Ruentex. Auchan Retail is also increasing its stake in Sun Art. The transaction will give Auchan Retail, Alibaba Group and Ruentex approximately a 36.16 percent, 36.16 percent, and 4.67 percent economic interest in Sun Art, respectively. Auchan Retail will continue to consolidate Sun Art in its financial following the transaction.

Sun Art is a leading multi-format offline food retailer in China. As of June 30, 2017, Sun Art operated with a total gross floor area of approximately 12 million square meters in China. Sun Art currently operates 446 hyper markets as large as 17,000 square meters in 29 provinces, autonomous regions and municipalities across China under the RT-Mart and Auchan banners. It also operates supermarkets and innovative unmanned stores under the Auchan Minute brand.

The alliance reflects Alibaba's New Retail vision to leverage its Internet-based approach and new technology, while working closely with retailer partners to provide a seamless online and offline experience to consumers in China. It also aligns with Auchan Retail's Vision 2025 Auchan changes lives. Building on the strengths of the three partners, the alliance aims to introduce a new shopping experience to China's 1.3 billion consumers.

"Alibaba is excited to join with our new partners to redefine traditional retail through digital transformation," said Daniel Zhang, Chief Executive Officer of Alibaba Group.

"Physical stores serve an

indispensable role during the consumer journey, and should be enhanced through data-driven technology and personalized services in the digital economy. By fully integrating online and physical channels together with our partners, we look forward to delivering an original and delightful shopping experience to Chinese consumers."



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Wilhelm Hubillioner, Chief Executive Officer of Auchan Retail said, "This alliance with Alibaba stems from our shared vision for the future of commerce in China. Bringing together the leaders of in-store retail and of online retail will allow us to serve hundreds of millions of Chinese consumers a fully integrated, world-class shopping experience."

"In recent years, consumer demands have changed tremendously with the rapid growth of the mobile internet, and Sun Art is also endeavoring to move from offline to online," said Peter Huang, Vice Chairman of Ruentex Group.

"Ruentex is delighted to see the win-win collaboration between Sun Art and Alibaba with high synergies in online and offline that will meet the needs of consumers for a better life with better products and services and higher efficiency," he added.

Combining the resources of the three companies, the new alliance will enable Sun Art's activities to benefit from Alibaba's digital ecosystem. It will digitise and introduce new retail solutions at Sun Art stores, including online and offline integration together with modern fulfillment and personalised customer experience.

FRENCH RETAIL FIRM **AUCHAN** TO OPEN CHECKOUT-FREE SHOPS IN CHINA

 Auchan, one of France's leading retail groups, has announced that it would open several shops without checkout counters in China by the year-end, a media report said. "The operation of Auchan Minute is very simple and intuitive. To enter, the customer uses the application WeChat. At the entrance, it scans a code that opens him the doors of this automated shop and identifies it," Xinhua news agency quoted Auchan as saying in a statement.

After scanning the products, they are automatically added to a virtual cart. The customer takes the products after paying them via Wechat Pay or AliPay and validating them by the mobile, the company added. Founded in 1961 by Gerard Mulliez, Auchan is France's second largest retail group after Carrefour.



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ALIBABA'S SINGLES' DAY FEST SALE GROSSES OVER US \$25 BILLION

 The Chinese e-commerce major Alibaba grossed over US \$25 billion in its 24-hour long 11.11 Global Shopping Festival on Saturday.

The company sold US \$25.38 billion (168.2 billion Chinese Yuan) worth of goods within 24 hours of its annual sales event, registering about 39 percent growth over its previous year's sales of US \$18 billion during the one-day event in 2016. "This year is the first time that the fest was held during the weekend, on a Saturday. We had consumers who shopped throughout the day right up till the last second of the festival," said Daniel Zhang, the Chief Executive Officer of the Alibaba Group, as the sales event came to a close.

It was not a fest just for consumers but also for the merchants, with 157 merchants registering over 100 million Chinese Yuan (about US \$15 million) worth sales within 24 hours, Zhang

said. The ninth edition of the much anticipated 24-hour annual shopping festival was kicked off at midnight of Friday in China. The festival had promotions and offers from over 140,000 brands and 15 million product listings this year.



About 325,000 orders were processed per second during the festival by Alibaba Cloud (the cloud computing arm of Alibaba) and 256,000 payment transactions were made for the placed orders through Alipay (Alibaba's online payment platform), the company announced.

Nearly 90 percent of the orders that were placed from across the world during the shopping fest were made through mobile phones. This year's festival was entertainment-and-media driven with a "new retail" strategy employing various ways to engage the Chinese consumers both online and offline, Zhang said. The company had converted about 100,000 retail stores to "smart stores", which allow consumers to receive customised shopping experience with the use of facial recognition, "cloud shelf" and location-based store and discount recommendations among others.



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WALMART TESTS SHELF-SCANNING ROBOTS IN 50 STORES

Walmart is rolling out robots to 50 stores by the end of January 2018. The robots go up and down the aisles, scanning for out-of-stock items, incorrect prices, and wrong or missing labels. It's a part of Walmart's plan to make stores more efficient and easier for customers to shop. The robots are about 2 feet in size and come with a tower on their backs that is fitted with cameras, which scan aisles to check stocks, missing items and if products have been left in the wrong place by customers. They are 50 percent more productive, can scan shelves three times faster than their human counterparts and significantly improve accuracy levels. Store employees are only able to scan shelves about twice a week. Out-of-stocks are a big challenge for retailers, which miss out on sales every time a shopper is unable to find a product on store shelves.

The entry of international brands, changes in preferences from non-branded apparel to brand names, the fast-growing economy, and a large young consumer population in the country has made India a highly lucrative market – something Splash Fashions’ CEO & Director Landmark Group, Raza Beig, plans to cash in on...

– By Charu Lamba



RAZA BEIG TO FASHION A MAKEOVER FOR MIDDLE EAST RETAIL CHAIN SPLASH IN INDIA AS HE EYES GROWTH, EXPANSION

The Indian retail market is expected to hit ₹1,02,50,500 crore (US \$1,576 billion) by 2026, growing at a CAGR of 10 percent. A big chunk of this number belongs to the fashion segment. Retail pundits are predicting that the Indian fashion retail market worth ₹2,97,091 crore (US \$46 billion) will grow at a promising CAGR of 9.7 percent to reach ₹7,48,398 crore (US \$115 billion) by 2026.

The Indian apparel industry, which is the second largest contributor in the retail industry after food and grocery, is seeing some major shifts. The entry of international brands, changes in preferences from non-branded apparel to brand names, the fast-growing economy, and a large young consumer population in the country has made India a highly lucrative market.

To cash in on this immense opportunity, Splash Fashions, Middle East’s largest fast fashion retailer, plans a makeover, and will present itself to India in a new avatar.

Speaking on his big plans for the brand in India, Raza Beig, CEO, Splash Fashions, & Director Landmark Group, said in an exclusive interview on the sidelines of India Retail Forum 2017: “Splash Middle East is at a very mature stage. We have already captured quite a bit of the fashion market in the Middle East.

The brand is 287 stores strong in 13 countries covering 2.8 million sq. ft worldwide. However, in India, the growth is in nascent stages.

SPLASH – THE MIDDLE EAST FORMAT

Splash Fashion stores comprise of three formats in Middle East:

POWERHOUSE STORE –

Ranging from 20,000 to 22,000 sq. ft.

ATTITUDE STORE –

Covering 15,000 sq. ft.

BOUTIQUE STORES –

Ranging between 8,000 to 10,000 sq. ft.

“We have been operating in India for about seven years now but because of all the expansion that we were taking on in the Middle East, we have not been able to give a lot of attention to our Indian model. Earlier, our India operations were done through a franchise model. However, two to three years ago, we decided to takeover and conduct operations internally. Honestly, we have started working on Splash India only over the last eight or nine months,” Beig said.

“We went back and revisited the entire India model – from product to pricing. We had to re-engineer products to a certain extent to meet the demands of the Indian consumers and the traction that we have received in last seven to eight months has been really good,” he added.

steadily as we have learnt a few lessons in the last seven years, we do not want to make the same mistakes. At present, what Splash lacks in India is position. We are in B-spots and even C-spots in malls. So, the first thing that we need to go is ensure that we are in the right space and retailing to the right consumer,” said Beig.

In keeping with this vision, Splash Fashions closed some stores that were not rightly positioned and now plans on refurbishing the remaining stores in line with their new format.

According to Beig: “We will be repositioning all of our stores in malls – we are already in talks with mall developers for the same, and we will also start looking for spaces in existing and new malls.”

The brand, which will be



There are around 18 stores of Splash Fashions – part of the Dubai-based Landmark Group – in India and Beig aims to take this number to 50 in next three years.

A Slow & Steady Pace

Raza Beig feels that aggressive expansion is not the style of Splash Fashions.

“We want to go slowly and

spending between ₹100-150 crore to open new stores in India, eyes a revenue of ₹1,000 crore in the next four to five years.

Making a Splash in India

Splash, which used to retail several brands in India like all MBOs – including Benetton, Vero Moda – has decided to do away with this model. They will

RAZA BEIG: THE SUCCESS STORY

- Raza Beig heads Splash, the fashion concept of the Landmark Group.
- Back in 1993, Splash was at a nascent stage and Beig was involved in almost every aspect of the business from buying to visual merchandising, budgeting and retail operations.
- Before he became cognizant of it, Beig was promoted as the General Manager of the fast-growing fashion brand, Splash.
- Over two decades with the organisation, his strong dedication and passion has guided Splash to become a category leader and a core brand of the Group.
- Since the inception of Splash in 1993, Beig has been actively involved with the overall business development and retail buying for the brand.
- In 1998, he helped set up Lifestyle, the department chain in India.
- Beig's bullish approach facilitated the initial days of the Group's entry into a new market and before he knew it, he was made a board member, in charge of the fashion division for India.
- Sometime in early 2000, he was appointed Managing Director of Splash and was invited to be part of the Board of Directors of Landmark Group.
- Eventually, in 2006 he was appointed the CEO of Splash.
- Splash has achieved new heights under Beig's vigilant leadership and today the brand is taking 'fashion' forward to a new level.
- Beig heads the buying team, and oversees the creation of Splash's season collections. He travels with Splash's team of designers and buyers to major international fashion shows, to keep abreast with the changing trends in global fashion.
- He is personally involved in selecting and signing off all the garments and accessories which finally make it to a collection.
- Beig is at the forefront of the business, spearheading the brand across the Middle East, Levant countries and the sub-continent, with aggressive expansion plans in the near future.



ABOUT SPLASH FASHIONS

- Splash, part of the Landmark Group, is one of the biggest retail conglomerates in the Middle East and India.
- Founded in 1993 as a single-brand store in Sharjah, in the United Arab Emirates, Splash has grown to over 287 stores across 13 countries.
- Earlier, basic and essentials accounted for almost 70 percent of the merchandise in Splash stores. Now fashion occupies half the merchandise.
- In other markets, fashion accounts for over 70 percent and, with a positive response from the Indian market, Splash wants to take fashion to that level here as well.
- The brand has 11 stores in the south. But it has seen better growth in the western and northern markets of late.
- Cities like Mumbai, Pune and Delhi have done better than southern cities. These two regions have seven to eight stores now and going ahead Splash will ensure that these regions have a deeper presence with more stores.

still be retailing Being Human and Bossini apparel and merchandise at their stores, but 90 percent of the inventory will be purely Splash.

Beig outlined the format of stores in India, saying, "In India, our stores will range from 6,000 - 12,000 sq. ft. depending on the mall we are in, as well as the catchment."

Stores will have the average

target price point between ₹999 and ₹1,499. Beig said that his brand closed the last financial year at ₹160 crore. "Going forward, we are looking at a growth of 50-60 percent every year, year-on-year for next three years. Last financial we touched a like-to-like growth of 35 percent, and we want to maintain the momentum."

Going Omnichannel: Catering to the Evolving Consumer

Technology holds great importance in the success of any brand and retailers are leveraging digital technologies to reach the modern shopper. Mobile-enabled applications draw in a lot of consumers and retail chains are investing heavily in them. Automation and IoT (Internet of Things) are lower on the list for investment but gaining momentum as they are perceived as game changers.

“We want to go slowly and steadily and because we have learnt a few lessons in the last seven years, we do not want to make the same mistakes. At present, what Splash lacks in India is position.”



To stay ahead of the competition, Splash Fashions is leaving no stone unturned as far as leveraging technology is concerned. The brand is planning on investing 4-5 percent of its turnover in this space.

Elaborating on the technological advancements his brand is embracing, Beig stated, "With the world moving so fast, we have to be very tech-savvy. We will soon be introducing an entire tech-based collection. This means that technology will be an integral part of the garment we are selling."

He further added, "Two months ago, we introduced tech-merchandise in UAE to which young kids can relate to. These include phone-

covers, headphones and even quirky speakers. Our India stores are just receiving their first shipment."

And as Omnichannel retailing is continuing to mature, and the lines between the online and the physical store blurring, Splash is preparing its e-retail website in a bid to lure more customers and with an eye on profitability.

"We have launched our e-commerce website in UAE, as well as Saudi Arabia and by the end of this financial year, our online stores will be available across all GCC's. In India, we have signed up with Myntra and we will soon be launching Splash online in India," Beig concluded. **R**

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“We Are A Master Retailer”

- Rohit George, MD Virtuous Retail

“VR’s strategy is to hit the market in multiple ways. The company is looking at purchasing land and will get down into brown-field development level. The way the retail market has been played out, it is necessary to build plans for the future,” says Rohit George...

- By **Surabhi Khosla**

Virtuous Retail has been at the forefront of retail news in India over the past many

years. VR, as it is better known, is the retail arm of the Xander Group, and recently marked its 10th anniversary in the retail industry.

Renowned as the forefront of building and operating cutting-edge lifestyle centres, VR Group’s objective is to serve the evolving retail market in India as well as discerning Indian consumers.

Following the successful launches of VR Surat in May 2013, VR Bengaluru in 2016, and the acquisition of North Country Mall and its subsequent conversion to VR Punjab in early 2017, the brand has now moved on to polishing the latest, exciting addition to its kitty - VR Chennai.

VR’s current portfolio comprises of 5.5 million sq. ft. of space with these four flagship centres across India. Going by its reputation of leveraging extensive capabilities across the value chain of development, ownership and operations, VR aims to grow its portfolio by adding centers in other key markets, including the National Capital Region of Delhi, the Mumbai Metropolitan Region, Pune, Hyderabad and Kolkata.

Brand Impact

VR got into the retail business exactly 10 years ago. The group was formed in 2005, ironically at a time when the retail scenario in India was in the doldrums, severely struck by soaring inflation rates.

However, the group took it slow and steady, making impactful inroads in the field to successfully establish organised retail of 4-5 percent over the



years. Today, this rate has grown to approximately 10 percent.

“Fundamentally from a macro standpoint, we have always believed in India’s consumption story. For us, the biggest challenge in the market today is to find quality real estate,” said Rohit George, Managing Director, Virtuous Retail South Asia.

At the sidelines of the India Retail Forum 2017, held in Mumbai, he said, “Back in 2007, when the market was in a similar kind of euphoria, everyone wanted to have a retail mall of his own. Be it the land owner or any real estate developer, everyone wanted to be a retail leader, irrespective of experience or background. That was the time when capital was given more importance than skill, knowledge and experience. However, over a period of time, people started realizing that retail was a very specialized business. They understood that successfully running a mall required experience and knowledge. People understood that there were certain levels of retail

businesses where it was important to understand different categories and also how the market was moving. We figured out that it was important to hire a team of professionals to design an effective retail space.”

The Market Standpoint

From a market standpoint, VR has been bullish over the past seven to eight years and will continue to be so in the near future.

“We continue to look for acquisition opportunities in India’s top 10-12 cities where most organised consumption

“We continue to look for acquisition opportunities in India’s top 10-12 cities where most organised consumption predominantly is. Our strategy is to hit the market in multiple ways.”



predominantly is. Our strategy is to hit the market in multiple ways. We are looking at purchasing land and will get down into brown-field development level. The way the retail market has been played out, it is necessary to build future plans. We are aggressively trying to leave build an impactful footprint,” said George.

Importance of Design & Zoning

Beyond the type of tenant, or the size of an anchor, the most important question to ask from a developer’s point of view is what type of a user experience is being created for consumers. From interiors and aesthetics of the

interior, but also the need to create a development that offers the consumer a varied and unique experience. The quality of the exterior and interior lighting, the nature of the public realm, the design and placement of the environmental graphics and way finding elements are all designed by specialist consultants that when managed well can add great value to user experience.

The recognition of people wanting to move around quickly with good supporting infrastructure and offering qualitative public spaces supported by a rich offer in tenant mix adds to creating the sense of lifestyle.

Concurring with this,



VIRTUOUS RETAIL TO LAUNCH VR CHENNAI IN 2018

- Virtuous Retail announced the brand launch of its flagship retail center VR Chennai at the India Retail Forum 2017
- Following the successful launches of VR Surat in May 2013, VR Bengaluru in 2016, and the acquisition of North Country Mall, now known as VR Punjab – in early 2017, VR Chennai is an exciting addition in the series of developments under the Virtuous Retail umbrella.
- Inspired by the soaring Gopurams of the temples of Chennai, and the technicolour of the Madras Check, this striking contemporary addition to Chennai’s rich heritage will redefine the city’s landscape.
- With over 1,000,000 sq. ft. of retail, community, entertainment and leisure space, VR Chennai offers a mix of the best of local, national and international retailers and programmes to connect communities and attract residents and tourists of every age and aspiration.
- Some of the brands that will have their retail stores at VR Chennai include H&M, Aeropostale, Sephora, Forever 21, PVR (with IMAX), GAP, a flagship Apple store, Lifestyle, Home Centre, Louis Phillippe, and Allen Solly.
- VR will introduce its innovative ‘Master Retailer’ formats, including a premium luxury hotel and thoughtfully designed community event spaces.
- VR Chennai will also introduce ‘Foodbox’ which offers multi-cuisine, all-day dining options for an unrivaled experience.
- Strategically located in Annanagar, VR Chennai will be the state’s first experiential lifestyle destination.

George said, “At some level, we are a curator of experiences from the point of view of the consumer – essentially how the consumer thinks about our product. We make sure that everything is new, innovative. We will not take design which is in Surat and replicate it in Bengaluru or Chennai. A lot of our product is based on history and essentially just what connects the community and the city to our project.”

“Apart from this, there are certain other things which need to be kept in mind before developing a mall. Developers need to understand what makes a mall different from others. Is it a high tech interactive facade? Is it a new open public plaza holding a range of events during the day and turning into a performance plaza at night? Or is it a place where people can gather and watch a film via bluetooth on the big screen? Is it the retail supplementary to an even bigger type of offering? The important thing is to think out-of-the-box and find new exciting ways to incentivise people to shop and linger,” he added.

“We need to think of malls

as lifestyle centres that form an integral part of our town centres and daily activities. Instead of boring long facades, we need buildings with active edges that create and animate the streets,” he further stated.

Highlighting the balance between the design, branding and zoning, George said, “It is important to understand what brand mix works for a city. Mall developers should also explore other avenues which are important and necessary for a wholesome shopping and social space experience. In the case of Virtuous Retail, we are in the business of creating experiences. At every step we are a master retailer. We bring the right experiences to people. Every place is not about the right retail mix.”

The Omnichannel Approach

Omnichannel offerings and the challenges behind the process are top of mind for every mall developer, retailer, retail analyst, and industry expert.

Convenience and ease of purchase have become key decision-making factors for retail consumers and Omnichannel provides consumers with varied options to achieve this objective.

“We have a very strong Omnichannel strategy and we have a very solid reason behind creating Omnichannel retailing – to get current retailers to trade up, increase sales and enhancing consumer experience. Implementing an Omnichannel plan and introducing new technology aids both of these, and we are well on the path to Omnipresence,” George concluded. [IR](#)

THE ART OF CREATING A SHOPPING DESTINATION

Building a shopping mall is an easy job, but creating a shopping destination which delights the shoppers is an art. There are many malls mushrooming across India but only a few are successful. The reason is lack of knowledge or experience in transforming the mall into a shopper's paradise.

BY GOPAL K. RATHOR (DIRECTOR - ROMA VENTURES)



Roma Ventures™
Retail leasing consultants

Roma Ventures is a professional leasing consultancy firm based at New Delhi and managed by Gopal K Rathor. Roma Ventures recently entered into retail by joining hands with premium men's footwear brand CLOG London to expand its foot print.

Building a shopping mall is an easy job, but creating a shopping destination which delights the shoppers is an art. There are many malls mushrooming across India but only few are successful. Reason is lack of knowledge or experience in transforming the mall into a shopper's paradise. Malls which are successful are unable to face competition once new mall comes up nearby.

New developers venturing into this field must seek professional guidance from consultants who have been instrumental in leasing and managing of many successful malls. Gopal K Rathor who is heading Roma Ventures is a professional who provides the expert guidance to create a successful shopping destination.

"A successful mall should have mix of entertainment, kids play area, shopping, F&B and hospitality with proper ambience to make a strong impact on a shopper's mind. The mall itself must offer a complete array of services and facilities for all age groups under one roof to ensure repeat visits. All these can be planned successfully on basis of lots of factors which a specialist can guide." said Rathor.

Nowadays; Tier II and III cities are experiencing the retail boom. New shopping destinations are coming up at these cities. Developers are also focusing on managing the malls and are hiring professional agencies to do so. Due to it the malls in such cities are doing great business and retailers also reap the benefits.

Real Estate plays a very important part in creating a shopping destination. Controlling the real estate factor in retail is very important as it is the highest overhead in a retail store.

Retail industry is growing at a phenomenal pace and we are yet to see lots of changes in retail and real estate sector. Future of retail is bright in India due to high spending power of consumers and strong economy. All international brands are eyeing to enter India and grasp the opportunity. The next 5 years will see a vast growth in India's shopping centers.

India is having great potential in retail which was focused entirely on metro cities. Now the tier II and tier III cities are going to emerge as lucrative markets with brands racing to tap into their potential. Some brands are already reaping the early bird benefits due to their presence in high street market of these cities.

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Such is the growing mall culture in India that 34 new shopping malls, covering 13.6 million sq. ft. area, are expected to come up in top eight cities by the year 2020...

– By IMAGES RETAIL BUREAU

No mall today can afford to operate in isolation and just be a ‘shopping’ destination. Shopping centres today are transforming into community spaces bringing to the discerning consumer the best of brands, food, and entertainment. They’re hubs where people go to rejuvenate, socialise and entertain.

Talk to any person living in a city, a small town and they would all give you a plethora of reasons why they love to visit malls. And although malls have not yet penetrated remote, rural pockets of India, people living in these areas are aware of them and eagerly await the day one opens in the vicinity.

Without a doubt, these centres have changed the way India shops so much so that consumers are even hitting malls to buy household basics today. From a customer perspective, frequent traveling can be exhausting. It can get worse in the festival or the holiday season, when crowds throng dirty markets, when finding parking space can be a struggle and haggling for discounts a near nightmare.

In such a situation, shopping centres give the consumer an edge. They not only provide everything basic and upscale under one roof, but also take care of convenience. Shopping is time taking process. Mall developers and owners ensure that costumers are relaxed, engaged and generally.

Today shopping centres have options available for food, entertainment, gaming zones for kids as well as adults, and leisure apart from a plethora of retail choices to for an uninterrupted experience. Large format stores in malls further provide consumers with all they need – from branded clothes to grocery, electronics to footwear, Malls house restaurants, movies theatres and even spas.

Shopping in the scorching heat or the blistering cold has now been replaced by the option of a climate controlled environment. Millennials view visiting malls as a status symbol, college going teens choose malls for entertainment, couples consider it for a romantic tête-à-tête. Malls are also becoming regular after office hangout places or even during office workspaces – with the new generation frequenting coffee shops and preferring to work there on their laptops, rather than their staid old offices.

In keeping with the evolving tastes of consumers, mall developers are fast warming up to the idea of Omnichannel retail to stay relevant in this digital age.

SECRET TO SUCCESS

The Indian shopping centre industry has been under continuous dynamic transformation since 2000. In the year 2001, there were only three malls in India. The number increased to 343 by 2007. As of 2017, India has more than 600 operational malls and going by the report of Cushman & Wakefield, the International property consultancy firm. Such is the growing mall culture in India that 34 new shopping malls, covering 13.6 million sq. ft. area, are expected to come up in top eight cities by the year 2020.

Despite this, the mall industry in India is very tough place to be in. Almost every mall aspires to deliver similar kind of facilities to consumers and expects enormous footfalls and business in return. However, only a few achieve the target successfully. The success of the shopping malls depends on certain factors:



LOCATION AND

ACCESSIBILITY: Malls need to be located in a prime shopping area, which is accessible by quality public transport and frequented by cabs. The time of reaching a mall from the furthest area in a city should be minimum in peak hours.

VALUE: Providing value-added services in the mall premises is a show stopper apart from the regular EOSS.

BRAND MIX: A healthy brand mix – the best of international and national names in the mall are a sure shot way to bring in and retain consumers. Pop-up stores and restaurants and well-planned events simply add to the excitement.

EXPERIENCE: A great ambience, quality of window displays, shop décor, friendliness and competence of clerks and service staff, dining and accommodation

options also help increase footfalls.

Today, the mall culture in India has evolved into something more than just a simple shopping trip. Shopping centres across the globe are now focusing on prime entertainment, with actual shopping taking a backseat. There are malls offering over-the-top features including indoor ski-hills, indoor theme parks, water parks, zoos, science centres, shooting ranges and even an underground shark tunnel.

NCR’s Mall of India has an indoor ski-range – Ski India, The Great India Place has a water park and one of the best kids play zone in town – Worlds of Wonder and Kidzania. The Grand Venice Mall in greater Noida offers gondola rides. The Mall of America in Minnesota has an indoor amusement

park, complete with a roller coaster an underground aquarium, a water park and a gun range. The Venetian Hotel & Casino in Las Vegas also has gondolas that ferry consumers from one designer store to another. The Berjaya Times Square shopping mall in Kuala Lumpur, has an extraordinary 48-storey complex house with a theme park, 3D cinema as well as a hotel.

The conclusion? No mall today can depend only on shopping as its prime source of bringing in revenue and footfalls. Just shopping is no more a crowd-puller. Malls need to transform into community spaces to stay relevant to the discerning customer.

Here’s a lowdown on what the best malls in India have done right to attract consumers and make them stay.

BUILDING A BRAND: THE JOURNEY & THE CHALLENGES

To be successful, shopping malls in India need to become brands. And like all famous brands – national or international – malls need to position themselves strategically, zero in on a target audience and then work towards building amenities that will attract these people.

There are many malls in India which have followed this philosophy to become successful brands in their own right. One of these is Pacific Mall.

Pacific Mall is a part of Pacific India, a reputed business group with presence in real estate, hospitality and education verticals. The group’s flagship mall in Tagore Garden is a 6 lakh sq. ft. premium shopping, entertainment and leisure



“The mall regularly interacts with the customers and conducts research and interactive surveys to ensure that the data analysed can be utilised with valuable customer insights to help us prioritise on brand mix and areas of focus and investment.”

– **Abhishek Bansal**,
Executive Director,
Pacific India.

destination hosting more than 140 national and international brands in the country.

“We are a one-stop lifestyle destination for the complete family offering a bouquet of global brand experience under one roof gainfully engaging the people of Delhi NCR. The mall regularly interacts with the customers and conducts research and interactive surveys to ensure that the data analysed can be utilised with valuable customer insights to help us prioritise on brand mix and areas of focus and investment,” says Abhishek Bansal, Executive Director, Pacific India.

Another shopping centre which has fiercely worked towards creating its own identity is Viviana Mall.

“Today, Viviana Mall is recognised as one of the leading malls in India. The challenges and difficulties,

we faced was related to the location. Thane had a stigma attached that majority of the population that belongs to the middle class who never aspired for international brands and the shopping pattern is conservative. At the same time, many were of the view that the distance between Mumbai and Thane would restrict footfalls only from Thane. Sheth Developers & realtors Ltd. wanted to break this stigma. They wanted to build a mall which is based on the needs and requirements of the people residing in and around the Thane region and did so successfully,” says Rima Pradhan, Sr. Vice President, Marketing at Viviana Mall.

One mall which took a different path – and came out successful – is the Grand Venice Mall in Greater



“We have successfully established DLF Promenade as the most admired fashion destination and DLF Mall of India as the largest mall in India today. DLF Place Saket has also carved an identity for itself with more and more brands finding space in it and rapidly growing footfalls on a daily basis.”

– **Pushpa Bector**,
Executive Vice-President
& Business Head, DLF
Shopping Malls.



“The Oberoi Garden City with its world class residential, commercial and hospitality projects gives the mall an added advantage, by supplying a steady stream of affluent and aspirational consumers. Oberoi Mall enjoys nearly a 70 percent market share of footfalls and retail sales amongst the shopping centers located on Western Express Highway.”

– **Anupam T**,
Vice President, Oberoi Mall

Noida. The mall is a tourist destination with a Venetian concept, something that had never been explored in India before. Inspired by the city of Venice, with a distinctly European feel, The Grand Venice Mall is spread across a whopping 3.2 million sq. ft.

“This journey has been dream come true for us. We worked on The Grand Venice eight years ago. Making the architects, technologists and labours understand the concept was really difficult, which is why the mall took almost 3X more time to be built than usual. We also needed to make sure visitors were secure and taken well care of when they came to the mall. As a result, the mall design is extremely complex. We still are facing a few

difficulties when we work on both the real estate and the technology side of the mall, but we are on our way to realizing a goal – that of being a mega tourist destination,” says Queency Bhasin, CEO of The Grand Venice Mall.

The journey for the DLF Group too has been a challenging one, but extremely rewarding at the same time, with all its malls – DLF Promenade, DLF Mall of India, DLF Cyberhub, DLF Place Saket and DLF City Centre, Chandigarh – doing exceptionally well.

“We have successfully established DLF Promenade as the most admired fashion destination and DLF Mall of India as the largest mall in India today. DLF Place Saket has also carved an identity for itself with more and more brands finding space in it and



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– **Rima Pradhan**,
Sr. Vice President, Marketing
at Viviana Mall.



“With over 300 stores representing an exhaustive mix of international, national and regional premium brands, Phoenix MarketCity offers the most comprehensive and compelling lifestyle shopping experience in Bengaluru. The mall hosts several theme-based events and large scale musical concerts where best in class music bands and popular Bollywood singers perform.”

- Gajendra Singh Rathore, Director, Phoenix MarketCity

rapidly growing footfalls on a daily basis. DLF Cyber Hub is a unique F&B destination that offers the best world cuisines in the heart of Gurgaon,” explains Pushpa Bector, Executive Vice-President & Business Head, DLF Shopping Malls.

“GST and demonetisation have been the major challenges but the impact of the same vanished soon after their implication. From a technology standpoint, there have been no significant challenges as we have been moving ahead of the curve using innovative technology to elevate the customer convenience quotient,” she adds.

United Arab Emirates-based LuLu Group, known

for running a retail chain of over 120 hyper markets in the middle East, is planning to expand rapidly in India. And to expedite the process, the brand is using technology in its best form.

Business Head, LuLu Mall, Shibu Philips says, “We are using new technology to pre-cast the buildings of our new mall. This will help hasten the process of constructing the mall. By using this technology, we expect our mall to be ready in 24 months straight.”

He further adds, “Apart from this, with respect to loyalty, we are using technologies like geo-fencing, beacon technology and ANPR (Automatic Number Plate Recognition). We identify our customer the moment he/ she enters the mall as this technology helps in recognising number plates of cars and keeping track of customers. Presently, we have loyalty details of 1.5 lakh customers and we know what they shop for in our mall at the micro-level. Now, we have started interacting with them and ensuring that they get all timely information about our mall.”

Another case in point is Phoenix MarketCity, Bengaluru, a marquee development in retail real estate space that opened in 2011 and has established itself as a lifestyle and entertainment destination, operating with full occupancy. It has grown more than 15-20 percent in terms of sales as well as bottom line. The mall has established itself as an urban lifestyle consumption destination, which offers a holistic and premium experience for retail, entertainment and movies, and F&B.

“With over 300 stores representing an exhaustive



mix of international, national and regional premium brands, Phoenix MarketCity offers the most comprehensive and compelling lifestyle shopping experience in Bengaluru. The mall hosts several theme-based events and large scale musical concerts where best in class music bands and popular Bollywood singers perform,” says Gajendra Singh Rathore, Center Director, Phoenix MarketCity.

Ishanya Mall, a venture of Deepak Fertilisers and Petrochemicals Corporation Ltd (DFPCL) came in to being a decade ago with an objective of making the joy of home making come alive. The mall offers an atypical experience when compared to a conventional mall.

“Ishanya is one of our prestigious projects, which is

quite the first among equals in terms of the project vision, physicality and customer experience. We want our customers to make home-making a joyful experience. Being a pioneering theme, the concept visualisation and composition of various related segments have taken time to settle down amidst the target audience. Striking the right balance between two diverse target groups of B2B and B2C has been at the core of the business model and finding the sweet spot is interestingly complex,” says Mahesh M, CEO Ishanya Mall.

And then there is Quest Mall, introduced with the anticipation of a change in consumer attitude. The mall brought with itself a complete retail revolution in eastern India.

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“The mall sizing has to be right; you cannot size it too small or too large. There has to be an in-depth study into infrastructure, the buying power of the consumers and their preferences, thus making a mall relevant to a particular market.”

– **Naviin Ibhrampurkar**,
Head of Marketing &
Corporate Communication
Inorbit

“We had hoped for, and seen a complete change in the way consumers behave and spend now. They stretch themselves to pay a premium for international brands, something we are happy to see,” explicates Sanjeev Mehra, Vice President – Quest Properties India Limited.

The mall wants to stay connected to the Millennials and is trying to differentiate itself by adopting digital technologies, staying active on social media platforms including Facebook, where they have more than 100,000 organic followers – mobile apps and a dynamic website.

“We strongly believe digital is the way forward,” says Mehra.

Inorbit, one of the Mumbai iconic malls, has come a long way thanks to the unwavering support of its patrons. “Change is the only constant in today’s dynamic world and in our 13th year we revamped ourselves with an attractive

array of fashion, lifestyle, food and entertainment options. To be successful you have to continuously gauge the consumer sentiment and act to provide the best shopping experience. Real estate has its own set of challenges, one of them was renovating the mall without shutting operations and affecting business,” says Naviin Ibhrampurkar – Head of Marketing & Corporate Communication Inorbit Malls (India). “

Planning of the renovation, phase wise is the biggest of the lot. It requires meticulous arrangements and coordination amongst multiple teams. We launched our app this year with innovative shopping features like the ability to reserve a product online and picking it up from the mall and a same-day shopping bag delivery service,” he adds.

KEY ELEMENTS OF SUCCESS

Mall managements in general encompass the process of conceptualisation, positioning, zoning, deciding the tenant mix, promotional activities and marketing of the mall as well as facility and finance management as the keystones of success.

All these put together ensure that the mall targets the right audience, and garners the correct responses from them not only to make the mall a successful place, but also to ensure that retailers and consumers gain the most.

Inorbit Mall’s Ibhrampurkar says: “The strategy for a mall to become successful involves a gamut of things – location, the design and circulation, size, tenant mix – all that creates a product. There is no one simple formula to succeed because

you are creating a product which has to be relevant to the neighborhood and the economic prosperity of the micro market. Eventually, a good mall is one that provides comfort, excitement and a refreshing experience to the consumer. A good product can succeed anywhere and same goes for Tier II & III cities. The mall sizing has to be right; you cannot size it too small or too large. There has to be an in-depth study into infrastructure, the buying power of the consumers and their preferences, thus making a mall relevant to a particular market.”

Bansal concurs saying, “Location, retail tenant mix and project viability are the important factors that plays a major role in determining the success of the mall.”

“It is the bond between the mall and its customers and retailers that determines the degree of success. Since its inception, Viviana Mall has been making a conscious effort to upgrade their offering and has pioneered in setting high benchmarks in the retail real estate market of India to create better synergies with customers as well as retailers,” adds Pradhan.

“The most important thing is to address the needs of the majority of the catchment area around a mall. A lot of expertise is required for this – the way a mall is designed, the displays, the brands and shops. Visitors to the mall should be able to see the maximum number of shops from any point in the mall, shop fronts should be exposed well, and merchandise needs to be attractively displayed to encourage sales. Careful planning of the centre to provide an atmosphere that is conducive to consumers is

what will bring in an effective flow of footfalls,” she states.

Bector adds, “An ideal brand and product mix is sacrosanct in determining the success of a mall. Additionally, elements like hospitality, location, convenience and safety play a significant role. Malls are increasingly becoming experiential centers and hence, there is considerable emphasis given to F&B and entertainment when planning a mall. Our endeavor is to always give our customer the best experience; therefore, we deeply focus on providing great hospitality and safety.”

Says Mehra, “For Quest, its zoning which sets us apart from the rest. Positioning comes next. We have positioned ourselves as an aspirational shopping center which caters to every segment of the society. Apart from this catchment area, luxury



Mohammad Ali,
COO – Retail, Prestige
Group:

Location always has a positive impact on mall revenues and plays a major role but beyond that there are several important factors as well like-

- Design – how comfortable it is for the people to spend more time
- Ambience
- Brand’s collection and brand placement
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“For Quest, its zoning which sets us apart from the rest. Posing comes next. We have positioned ourselves as an aspirational shopping center which caters to every segment of the society. Apart from this catchment area, luxury brands, F&B, cinema theatres are the other elements which determine the success of the mall.”

– **Sanjeev Mehra,**
Vice President, Quest
Properties India Limited

brands, F&B, cinema theatres are the other elements which determine the success of the mall.”

Talking about his experiences running Ishanya, Mahesh M says, “Shopping experiences are created by multiple and meaningful engagement methods. The three categories offered are curate, a set of unique moments that translate into memories of joy and fulfilment. The sheer layout, indoor-outdoor ambience, elements such as the clock-tower or the wishing well, an amphitheatre that plays host to high quality events in music, dance, theatre, an art gallery that has a continuous stream of shows and workshops – all of these add to the memory nodes through both head and heart responses. Our unique



“Omnichannel retailing is a market reality and it has to be embraced, but I feel that Indian customers take time to get accustomed to something new. It may take them two to three years to get used to this new fad”

– **Anil Malhotra,**
Executive Director,
Elante Mall

services platform Myfitbkh short for a well-maintained and coordinated bedroom, hall, kitchen (or the home in sum) is another case in point to provide elevated experiences to our customers. To me, the key elements driving success are three pronged – context, content and communication.”

Anupam T, Vice President, Oberoi Mall, Mumbai, is of the opinion that a good product mix, location with great design supported with outstanding operations and cutting-edge marketing defines the success of the mall. “Activation and events play a key role to enhance the mall experience,” he adds.

INNOVATION & CUSTOMER CENTRICITY

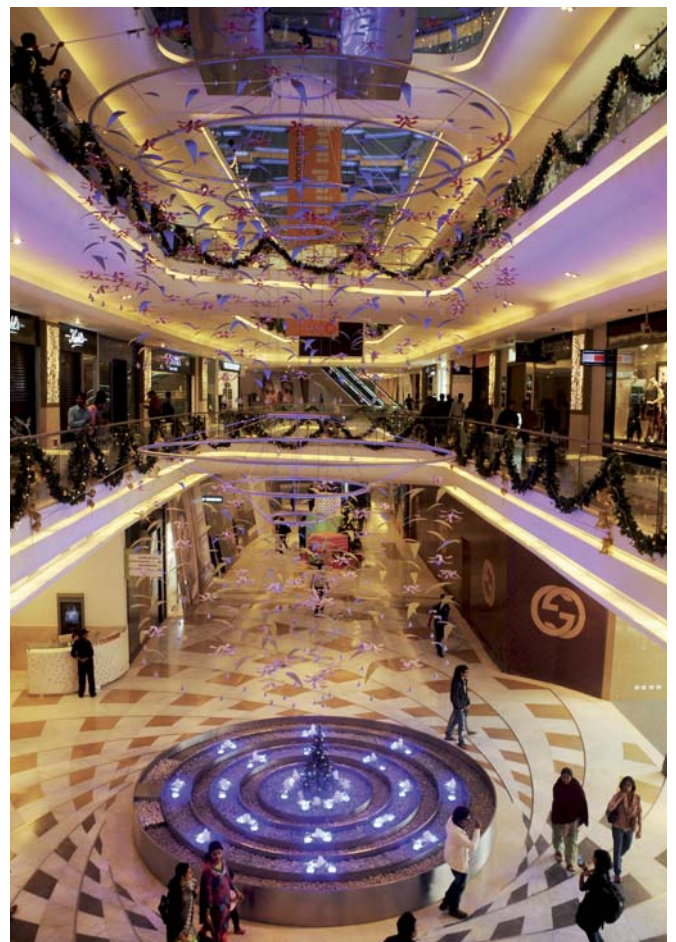
Beyond the type of tenant, or the size of an anchor, the most important question to ask from a developer’s point of view is what type of a user experience is being created for consumers. From interiors and aesthetics of the interior, and also the need

to create a development that offers the consumer a varied and unique experience. According to Rohit George, Managing Director, Virtuous Retail South Asia, the quality of the exterior and interior lighting, the nature of the public realm, the design and placement of the environmental graphics and way finding elements are all designed by specialist consultants that when managed well, can add great value to user experience.

“At some level we are a curator of experiences from the point of view of the consumer – essentially how the consumer thinks about our product. We make sure that everything is new, innovative. We will not take design which is in Surat and

replicate it in Bengaluru or Chennai. A lot of our product is based on history and essentially just what connects the community and the city to our project,” he says, adding, “We need to think of malls as lifestyle centres that form an integral part of our town centres and daily activities. The important thing is to think out-of-the-box and find new exciting ways to incentivise people to shop and linger.”

A mall’s evolution is a continuous process. Shopping centers need to continuously keep upgrading their tenant mix in order to provide the community the latest in fashion and lifestyle and making reservations for other finer aspects like food and entertainment.



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Oberoi Mall's Unique Consumer Focus

- Flagship Event – Women's Wednesday, is a major attraction.
- Intellectual Events – Light up Luck (Diwali Festival), Jingle All The Way (Christmas Event), Denim Calling (Denim Festival) among others
- Privilege Loyalty Program – Club Uno has a database of over 10,000 delighted members

Phoenix Market City: Rising Above Competition

- A courtyard for hosting events including live concerts and shopping festivals.
- Phoenix Gift Card
- Using technology and innovation for customer satisfaction – touchscreen floor plans, innovative direction signages, themed décor, art and ambience upgradation

LuLu Mall: Loyalty Above Rest

- LuLu's loyalty program has helped to establish a direct relationship with customers, which goes beyond their visits to the mall, says Shibu Philips
- Shoppers can use their smartphone to scan purchase receipts in exchange for points that can be redeemed against gift vouchers
- Every time you spend your money within the mall – from spending money to park your car or to watch a movie, you will earn loyalty points, which is as good as money within the mall
- Close to 25 percent of the mall sales are reflected in the loyalty bill submissions. But the customer base forms a much larger percentage

"Pacific Mall has been aggressive in creating specialised marketing events. The quality of marketing activities is different and unique. We focus on a lot of international performances like Queen's Wednesday, live performances every other Saturday, Musical Fridays at the Plaza. We are also a favourite host for Auto Arcade every year. The mall has created many larger than life replica's, such as the Qutub Minar on Independence Day, the Taj Mahal on Valentine's Day and Eiffel Tower for Christmas celebrations," says Bansal.

The mall also offers various convenience services to shoppers including ticket booking, currency exchange, bill payments, tailoring services, phone repair, travel services etc. which helps it fortify its bond with customers.

Viviana Mall, too, has been very quick in adapting latest technologies and developments popular in mall development. "Advancement in technology has become a global phenomenon. Innovation and customer centricity is the need of the hour. The demands and requirements of customers is changing every second. We are widely known for being the first to introduce practices that were never thought of by an Indian player before. We were the first one to be known has visually impaired friendly mall, first to install 900 KVA rooftop solar power plant and have a 4DX technology enabled multiplex - Cinopolis. We were also the first to give an experience of an open dribble court within the premises of the mall," says Pradhan.

According to Mahesh M of Ishanya Mall, innovation



“We have over 300 days of events. This year, we have consciously tried to move away from events and activities which are noisy – give patrons a noise-free zone. We have already pulled off a few digital led ideas at Ahmedabad One and there are many more in the pipeline.”

– **Jayen Naik**,
Vice President (Mall of Amritsar and Ahmedabad One), Nexus Malls

is an initiative to convert a customer's pain into customer's gain – and hence customer centricity is like the holy grail.

"Customer engagement is achieved in the realm of products by sheer range and depth and uniqueness, through carefully thought-through services such as home maintenance, renovation and interior design apart from product selection support, coupled with an array of events from short weekend spurts to longer shows and expos. We leveraged our different venues from indoor spaces to the art gallery to the Amphitheatre. International story telling competitions, design exhibitions, corporate futsal and cricket tournaments, children's plays, live concerts by internationally renowned maestros, dance workshops are among many of the engagement tools. Knowledge



“Customer engagement is achieved in the realm of products by sheer range and depth and uniqueness, through carefully thought-through services such as home maintenance, renovation and interior design apart from product selection support, coupled with an array of events from short weekend spurts to longer shows and expos.”






– **Mahesh M**,
CEO, Ishanya

workshops help in aiding customer awareness and interest. Various media from digital to social, print to outdoor are deployed to promote these events, sale periods and brand launches. While all of the above may be done in parts and pieces by all market players, we could probably say that our approach is to earn respect from our customers as against awe- you know, large footfall numbers, big celebrities, high profile events etc. are important, yet what makes the customers come again and again is when they have respect for you rather than awe. Differentiation is in the thinking and the doing automatically follows," he says.

Bector concurs, adding that customers today are demanding and look for that



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innovative edge which will make them keep coming back to a certain mall.

“Keeping the customer sentiment in mind, we are constantly innovating and coming up with customer engaging events to multiply footfall. Events like Sugar Rush, Burgers & Cocktails Festival, Night Owl Festival, Sufi sama, khaana bajana, Japan Cultural Fest, etc are some of the examples in this direction. All the events have done well, and some have even been huge successes. We focus on providing a holistic pleasing experience entailing not just great shopping but impactful events,” says she.

Mehra says that the challenge is to keep the consumers engaged by bringing in new concepts which would have acceptability amongst both shoppers and retailers.

“We put up regular surprises for our customers. Our Midnight Sale (MSQ) is an extremely popular concept and is one example of how we generated a record number of footfalls in our mall. We transform the ground floor into a night club to celebrate special occasions or festivals. Innovation, surprise and fun are the keys to keep us ahead of the crowd,” he says.

LOCATION STRATEGY

Location plays an important role in the success of mall. Getting a prime location is the first criteria to the success of a mall. An ideal location would be one with a good catchment area, without other malls around. Research on the affordability levels of the people who live in the area and the kind of shopping and entertainment alternatives they have is also a must, before a developer decides to build a mall.



“You need to be where your target audience is and if the location is not so then the need to be well connected, accessible and reachable becomes a prerogative. A prime location makes a lot of difference to the brand growth and sales. Luckily, we are not only well placed but well connected as well, both by public and private transport,” says Bansal.

According to Ali, demographic and psychographic study of the catchment is very important. “If driving distance is going to be more than an hour for some key areas to be connected so it will work against the success of a mall. Whether the catchment is high spending/brand lovers/shopping experience lovers or not is always worth considering,” he explains.

“There are multiple factors that a mall developer evaluates before investing in a property. These factors have also been constantly evolving and prioritization primarily depends on the region they will be catering to and the catchment and demographics. Some key factors a developer will definitely look at are the disposable income level, ability to spend, propensity to spend, the attitude towards spending v/s hours for spending. A few other



factors include the ability of catchment to grow in terms of size over a period of time once the mall has come in and infrastructure – roads and metro stations,” Ali adds.

According to Viviana’s Pradhan, “The churn of customers from Mumbai, and its suburbs Thane and Kalyan, has increased and so have their choices. Viviana Mall has created an epicenter when it comes to offerings in shopping, entertainment, dining and recreation to these areas. We consistently upgrade our tenant mix, create marketing campaigns, enhance our customer and retailer outreach programs to ensure that we are ahead to match changing trends.”

With nearly 100 malls in operation across the region, Delhi-NCR is the default ‘mall capital’ of the country. No other Indian city comes anywhere close to its undisputed position. In 2015-

16, Delhi-NCR influenced about 60 percent of the pan-India supply and demand for retail real estate – and this scenario is unlikely to change in time to come.

“Location is an advantage, Elante has been successful in positioning itself as a ‘preferred and happening shopping destination’ on account of other factors like strong customer connect and right tenant mix,” states Anil Malhotra, Executive Director, Elante Mall.

“Location will always be a prime concern for consumers and we are cognizant of that. Therefore, all our malls are located in the heart of the city with easy connectivity, through metros, cabs or simply driving oneself. We have two in Delhi itself, which cater to different catchment areas. Customers prefer going to a mall, which is closer to them and hence, our shopping centres are located



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where the customers are,” as per Bector.

Inorbit Mall has an interesting inception story. In the early 2000s, Malad witnessed a process of gentrification and Inorbit saw this micro-market as a potential place to invest and it has turned out to be a great choice of location. “This catchment has developed rapidly in the past 10 years. Today even the government is adding more infrastructure to this location and it is promoted as ‘Mumbai’s fastest growing locality’. Our strategy is to invest in similar locations which are value aided and easily accessible,”

says Ibhrampurkar.

Location and access are the two complementary yet dichotomous words. If one is able to reach a place comfortably and conveniently, location is superseded by access. Keeping this in mind, Ishanya Mall’s approach has always been to promote accessibility, easy drive time, destination concept, and marrying the strength of the locality with the access.

“Any destination typically works on assessment of potential, ability to draw the right customers and surrounding infrastructure and their growth-

sustainability potential. As Ishanya is located in East Pune, which has grown in retail market size, social strata and purchasing potential, we wish to cover a wider ambit, covering the city and its limits and a bit beyond too, based on strength of content and communication,” says Mahesh M.

Quest’s Mehra meanwhile, believes in tapping open spaces in the centre of the city. “We target properties with roads on all four sides and the sole reason behind this is accessibility,” he claims.

Anupam T explains why Oberoi Mall is strategically located in Goregaon, East on the Western Express Highway, as a part of the Oberoi Garden City Project. He says, “The Oberoi Garden City with its world class residential, commercial and hospitality projects gives the mall an added advantage, by supplying a steady stream of affluent and aspirational consumers. Oberoi Mall enjoys nearly a 70 percent market share of footfalls and retail sales amongst the shopping centers located on Western Express Highway.”

Phoenix MarketCity’s location was envisaged to have the following in the immediate neighborhood – a commercial area surrounding major IT Parks, high-end residential gated communities, hotels, and schools, thus attracting the desired profile of customers. “Our development is now surrounded with premium residential layouts and commercial offices which forms a huge captive catchment for mall,” states Rathore.

“We like to be placed in the middle of a rich residential catchment. We were primarily touted as a neighbourhood city center so that the entire residential catchment within a 3 km radius would be able to use our facilities,” says Jayen Naik, Vice President (Mall of Amritsar and Ahmedabad One), Nexus Malls.

THE IMPORTANCE OF ZONING

Zoning refers to the division of mall space into zones for the placement of various retailers. A mall is dependent on the success of its tenants, which translates to the financial feasibility of the tenant in the mall. Right tenant mix and optimum retailer placement after a diligent zoning exercise can help retailers attract all types of consumers.

“A zoning exercise, if done properly, helps in building a separate image in the minds of the visitors. This also helps influence shoppers’ mall preferences and frequency of visits, which is critical considering the robust upcoming supply of shopping centres. Targeting both pre-planned shoppers and impulse visitors is critical if the shopping centre is to achieve higher conversions





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and thereby, higher sales for its tenants,” explains Bansal.

Right adjacencies play an important role for brands to perform better and sometimes the performance of a brand improves if it's located in the right place and around similar brands. Ibrahampurkar explains this with the help of an example: “At Inorbit, The Body Shop, which had been operating from the first floor of Malad for almost 13 years was relocated to the ground floor along with other similar cosmetic brands like MAC, Bobbi Brown, NYX and Kiehls to make it a part of the cosmetic zone. All this led to absolute sales increasing

for the brand with a trading density increase of nearly 45 percent.”

Pushpa Bector adds to this saying, “The zoning of a mall is an added convenience service that plays a key role in becoming a one stop destination for the customers. DLF Mall of India is the first mall in the country that is fully zoned. The ground and first floors house the international and national brands, the second floor focuses on ethnic wear followed by the family world on the third floor and F&B and entertainment spread across the fourth, fifth and sixth floors. Zoning of the mall has helped in structuring the offerings effectively and

customers are able to find different within the same category easily.”

It's imperative for malls to put a lot of emphasis on mall positioning, zoning, customer walk flow management tenant mix, mall layout, promotions/marketing, and facility management.

Since most consumers are always pressed for time, Viviana has provided easy digital touch screens at all entry points and on all floors, so consumers can easily locate any brand in the mall without any assistance.

Benu Sehgal, Head – Retail and Marketing, Ambience Mall, says, “We have already started restructuring the zoning of the malls. We are planning to allocate 40 percent to food and entertainment, 8-9 percent to beauty and the rest will go to fashion and anchors.”

Sanjeev Mehra says since Quest has been extremely selective of the brands they have inducted, zoning is even more important for them.

“Zoning at Quest is based on the aspirational slide. Sandwiched between two luxury levels – (Ground floor – Luxury to Bridge

Luxury and Fifth Floor – Casual Fine Dining) is the first Floor – International Premium, Second Floor – Indian Premium, and Third Floor – Ethnic and Kids Wear. Entertainment and F&B are on the Fourth Floor as the anchors which aid in bringing more footfalls – especially since we are the only ones who have a Michelin star restaurant in Kolkata,” he says.

At Oberoi Mall, too, sections are categorized very effectively, Anupam T explains. The ground floor is given to high fashion, beauty, wellness and accessories with stores like Zara, Lifestyle, GAP, Forever New, The Bodyshop, Swarovski, Clarks, Kama Ayurveda, Jack & Jones, VeroModa. The first floor offers a mix of men's and unisex fashion combined with accessories and electronics, while the second floor is dedicated to women's and kid's fashion along with home durables. The third floor has Food and Entertainment sections.

Ishanya Mall is spread over 10 acres of land and boasts of six arcades. Each arcade in turn has its own identity, completely different from others in construction and design, anchored by a leading market player and supported by a set of mini-anchors. F&B is divided into both sides of the campus, with Blue Frog anchoring the North-east side and Pubtown anchoring the South-west side. Entertainment options are zoned closer to the F&B and the Amphi theatre – which is a cultural hub, occupies pride of place being equidistant from both wings of the campus, enabling customers to access either side quite comfortably.

“Despite the diversity, all different arcades work



together towards a single goal which is enhancing the lifestyle of our customer," says Mahesh M.

THE RIGHT BRANDS

Bringing in the right brands can sometimes prove to be a nightmare for malls. There are many national and regional brands who prefer to open their stores in high streets because they know their customers. Such is not the case fortunately with international brands who like malls since they need a platform to push themselves up in front of a select crowd and in a place which guarantees footfalls.

"We have wonderful properties which are very unique because of their positioning and location. However, as far as brand mix is concerned, we have raised the bar of both the malls. We are also looking to increase the entertainment factor in both the malls," says Benu Sehgal.

Pradhan however feels that brands cannot avoid malls, especially in a country like India, where malls need to be in a location that their target audience frequents the most.

"Also, customers are not just looking for a shopping place, but also destination which affords them other activities at the same time. Malls offer a wide variety of options to customers, which in turn helps them to make their buying decisions easier," she says.

Bansal added that malls afford a more family experience while a high street is more convenient for individual shopping.

"With cinemas, entertainment activities, F&B, events etc., malls have become centres of family outings apart from shopping.



“We have already started restructuring the zoning of the malls. We are planning to allocate 40 per cent to food and entertainment, 8-9 per cent to beauty and the rest will go to fashion and anchors.”

– **Benu Sehgal,**
Head – Retail and
Marketing, Ambience Mall

They offer consumers the convenience of parking – which is very difficult on a high street. Impulse buying is higher in a mall than on a high street. Most malls have anchor tenants who take up large spaces and who also attract a lot of customers. Hyper-markets or departmental stores too find it easy to operate from malls for the relatively lower cost of rentals and the availability of large sizes which are impossible to get on high streets," he explains.

"Most brands prefer to have a right balance between high streets and malls, for obvious reasons of eyeballs from malls and higher conversions from high streets (and of course brand presence across mall and street shopper segments). Commercial implications guide such decisions. We with a differentiated experience and destination being key drivers across the three categories as our architecture lends itself to an outdoor street



“It is important to understand what brand mix works for a city. Mall developers should also explore other avenues which are important and necessary for a wholesome shopping and social space experience.”

– **Rohit George,**
MD, Virtuous Retail South
Asia

coupled with advantages of a mall with parking space, security, aggregation. We offer brands and retailers the best of both worlds-high street and mall," says Mahesh M on the choice brands have between opening a store in a mall versus opening one in a high street.

"Brands in the mall need to be aggressive enough to catch up with the existing technology and compete with the competition. Every customer looks for newness and the brands which provide this newness are successful. Lifestyle brands like AND and Global Desi work better inside a mall format. The same goes for fast fashion, which is gaining huge acceptability in India," says Quest's Sanjeev Mehra.

INTERNATIONAL VS NATIONAL

Bringing in the right kind of tenant mix is a big task for a majority of developers and retail companies. There are some mall developers who

go in for only luxury brands, some tap international brands while others focus on regional / homegrown brands. To build the right kind of brand mix, mall developers need a fair idea of the audience they are catering to. Only after thorough research should they start planning a retail mix.

"The right tenant mix, space allocation, knowledge of catchment and an intelligent approach to customer shopping preferences, backed by quality knowledge and market research, is imperative. It is important to adopt and be up-to-date about trends and changing dynamics and influencers today," says Bansal.

"Both international as well as domestic brands have their own importance. All have a unique brand proposition which helps them co-exist in a mall. Space allocation depends on the requirement by the brand and its demand. There are instances where a homegrown brand has occupied more space than an international brand," adds Pradhan.

Bector agrees with her saying that DLF malls make sure they provide a wide number of both international and national brands to their consumers. "Both the categories are doing well in our malls. For instance, national brands like Chumbak, Desi Pop, and Fabindia are doing well and occupy considerable space in the mall."

Quest's Mehra concurs saying that his mall features a lot of homegrown brands and many of them are performing better than international brands.

"These homegrown brands have a strong emotional connect with customers. For an instance, The Little Shop



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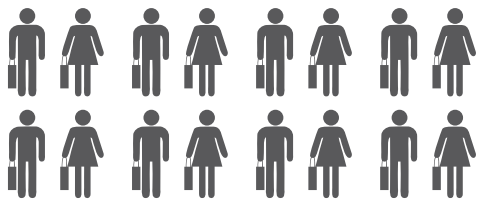
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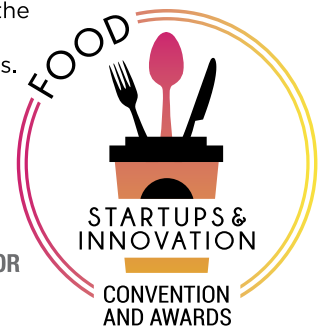


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- + STARTUPS & INNOVATIONS THAT CHANGED THE TASTE OF INDIA : Ten Outstanding Food start ups and enables selected by the Prelim Jury will present their ideas, execution strategy, implementation stages and payoffs / results - a valuable learning for all - whether it's strategy driven to execution perfected.



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is doing way better than many of the international kids' brands in our mall. In the F&B segment as well, we have brands like China South, and Masala Kitchen which are home developed with franchise partners and are performing extremely well."

Highlighting the balance between the design, branding and zoning, George says, "It is important to understand what brand mix works for a city. Mall developers should also explore other avenues which are important and necessary for a wholesome shopping and social space experience. In the case of Virtuous Retail, we are in the business of creating experiences. At every step we are a master retailer. We bring the right experiences to people. Every place is not about the right retail mix."

Inorbit doesn't really differentiate between homegrown versus international, but prefers to give space to performance-oriented brands. "We look at consumer behavior and changing preferences to identify the right brands which will add to the memorable shopping experience. There are cases of international brands failing and alternately there are homegrown brands that have adopted right strategies and succeeded. The adidas store at our mall decided to introduce their new format and opened a bigger store with their new experiential concept. Many brands with increases in their fashion assortment need more space for example AND and Fabindia moved to bigger stores in our mall," says Ibrahampurkar.

At Oberoi Mall, too, there are various national and international brands sharing



similar sizes, locations and consumption as the management believes in choosing performance and customer delight over names. "For a mall to attract footfalls, it is very important to have the right mix of brands. Central, Lifestyle, AND, Global Desi compete in the same space with Zara, Marks and Spencer, and GAP. F&B brands like Maharaja Bhog, Farzi Café, and BBC operate in the same space as Burger King, Taco Bell and McDonalds," says Anupam T.

"What we have tried to embrace is a global mix, with players from varied roots of Pune, Jaipur, Mumbai and Delhi and global brands sharing space and co-existing with the common objective of enhancing home lifestyles of our customers," adds Mahesh M.

However, Rathore has a slightly different point of view. "International brands have wider expansion plans when compared to homegrown brands. Hence, their affinity towards malls is well justified. Having homegrown brands in a mall helps in expanding the array of choices to customers, and drives additional footfalls," he says.

BUZZWORD: OMNICHANNEL

Competition between online and brick-and-mortar retailers has blurred, with e-tailers opening physical stores and their competition adopting e-commerce. The new destination for retail is Omnichannel and malls have to adopt it too, in order to stay relevant in this digital age.

The future of retail is Omnichannel. This trend towards an Omnichannel strategy will enable retailers to re-think their business strategy in order to tap the best of both worlds and maximise on footfalls.

"Over the years, customer preferences have undergone a metamorphosis, influenced by a global influx of brands, growing economy, increase in customer spending and demand for the latest trends in fashion, fitness, dining and lifestyle. Over the years Pacific Mall has become synonymous with entertainment, fine dining and the latest collection of brands and trends in fashion and lifestyle. We have increased our focus on creating niche campaigns and events for our customers based on their feedback and preferences," says Bansal.

Talking about the Omnichannel initiatives that Ambience Malls will be taking, Benu Sehgal says, "My customer is very busy. Although we would not like to impinge onto his/her privacy but if he/she wants then we would like to reach out to them even in their offices and homes and tell them that the product they were looking for at the mall during their last visit is now available and at this price point. This is where our Omnichannel play comes in."

DLF's Pushpa Bector gives a differing point of view, saying, "In our view, malls need to embrace technology and become increasingly more digital. However, they don't need to take the traditional Omnichannel approach. At DLF Shopping Malls, we are moving towards a phygital experience for the customer, which in our view is the right path to tread."

Convenience and ease of purchase have become key decision-making factors for retail consumers and Omnichannel provides consumers with varied options to achieve this objective.

"We have a very strong



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Omnichannel strategy and we have a very solid reason behind creating Omnichannel retailing – to get current retailers to trade up, increase sales and enhancing consumer experience. Implementing an Omnichannel plan and introducing new technology aids both of these, and we are well on the path to Omnipresence,” says George.

Rima Pradhan of Viviana adds that going forward Omnichannelisation would certainly be the need of the hour, but to do that, malls need to first effectively

understand consumer behavior.

“Display advertising, social media, e-mail, mobile marketing, all need to be integrated in a way that the communication and the messaging remains intact. Going Omnichannel has huge benefits for a mall. Malls can tap the best of both worlds and maximise footfalls, but owners and developers first need to strategize depending on the target group,” she states.

Sanjeev Mehra says that while Quest has not yet taken any steps towards

Omnichannelisation, it is his firm belief that mall developers need to adopt this technology to stay relevant.

“We have kept in mind that the brands that we are bringing in are aggressive enough to meet the expectation of the customers at the brand level. Most of our brands have digital platforms inside the stores itself to give the customers options to choose and order from these platforms and take the advantage of the technology at its best,” he says.

We believe in learning from everyone and identifying growth drivers. There are so many things we can pick from the e-commerce model to elevate consumer experience. We have introduced convenience services like the ability to reserve a product online, on our app, and pick it up from the mall or even have the mall deliver it to your doorstep. Our additional services like dropping customer’s shopping bags to their home gives them a hassle-free shopping experience. We have tied up with prominent cab operators

to offer comfortable rides back home with exclusive offers,” says Ibrahampurkar.

Malls need an Omnichannel strategy that will help them compete in the age of Omnichannel retailing and build a sustainable advantage.

The interplay of multiple channels and touch points is indeed quite complex, as complex as today’s consumer behaviour. One must recognise that the consumer buying journey no longer follows the conventional route which marketers had so well captured, but is much more prone to switching, ambivalent and abandonment of a channel. As a student of Omnichannel retail, I can personally probably add that Omnichannelisation of malls is a must do, but a must do only if you want to genuinely add value to the consumer experience, and not just something to tick off the technology list,” says Mahesh M.

“Shopping malls are still experimenting with this medium. With more customers using multiple modes- online and physical, being Omnichannel is naturally a value add. Just like an online store is looking for a physical presence, we are evaluating and exploring the Omnichannel route. We hope to move on this very soon,” adds Anupam T.

IMPORTANCE OF F&B ZONES

No mall today can afford to stand tall with just a bouquet of brands. Shopping, food and entertainment go hand-in-hand and malls are pulling up their socks and ensuring that they offer the best of all three worlds to keep the consumers coming in.



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their family and friends. Apart from big box retail we are also moving towards play zones and engaging events, like celebrations, special campaigns, shows, summer workshops music concert etc," says Bansal.

Pradhan differs a bit saying that instead of being an FEC, malls should aim to be community centres. "Malls need multiplexes, and gaming zones to heighten customer delight. We have a megaplex, Cinepolis with 14 screens and India's first 4Dx theatre. Along with it we also have a FEC - FunCity. Right from bumper cars and twilight bowling to 32 arcade games and entertainment for toddlers, the play zone sets a new standard for family entertainment. The London bus inside our mall has become a major attraction," she says.

Bector agrees saying, "A customer's visit to the mall is not limited to shopping just today; rather they view it as a way of spending quality time with their family and friends. We have accounted

multiple entertainment channels to ensure the desired holistic experience a customer is looking for. We have incorporated a separate entertainment hub for kids such as Funcity; for people across age groups there is Ski India, movie theatres, etc. An ideal combination of food, hospitality, entertainment touch points and of course shopping helps in creating the holistic experience that will drive a customer to the mall."

However, Ishanya Mall's Mahesh M has a completely different point of view. He says, "FEC actually doesn't apply on us, since we are not a typical neighbourhood mall with a hyper, fashion, food court and gaming zone, which seem to be the basic necessities of an FEC. We are a meaningful destination for the mindful consumer, a destination for different occasions from work to life and hopefully will be seen by our customers as a place that helps them to discover themselves and go through multiple experiences during every visit."

The fact of the matter is that new retail/restaurant/entertainment hybrids are capturing an increasing share of families' limited disposable out-of-home leisure time and their retail spending. Malls have re-invented the wheel and embraced entertainment as an important driver to churn the fate of their centres."

"Omnichannel retailing is a market reality and it has to be embraced, but I feel that Indian customers take time to get accustomed to something new. It may take them two to three years to get used to this new fad," added Malhotra of Elante.

Mehra concurs saying that Quest Mall is no longer a shopping center. "We have become an experience center now where the entire family and group love to spend time together. And to cater to the interest of all age-group, apart from F&B and entertainment, we have also created an exhibition space called the loft which is a permanent area for pop-ups art and culture."

MALL HOSPITALITY & HOW IT GENERATES FOOTFALLS

Modern retail is estimated at 14 percent of the total market, which is pegged at ₹142,237 and is expected to grow at healthy rate. Retail expansion grew by over 50 percent in terms of number of retail outlets and retail space with same outlets revenue growth being 20 percent.

But if retail in India is to succeed, shopping centres need to do more than just provide a significant amount of entertainment and F&B. With changing customers and evolving lifestyles, shopping centres need to change too and one way to continue to attract consumers is exceptional hospitality.

"Returning customers are the foundation of any successful business, hence the malls have to be on their toes and work ways to encourage and maintain customer loyalty. At Pacific, we have an International Mall Management company managing the mall and the first priority is to ensure Pacific mall is utmost customer friendly. In C1 (Customer First) program the emphasis is to continuously train and groom on roll and out sourced staff to establish high standards in customer interaction and experience and extending unparalleled shopping experience. We offer a host of services to our customers like Travel Agency, Salon, Car Spa, Kid's Play Area, ATMs, Baby care Rooms, Pram Services, Mobile Power Bank Service, Infirmary, Tailoring Services, etc," says Bansal.

"Unlike unstructured high street shopping, malls focus on grooming of staff, training and extending the best hospitality to a customer. Special attention is given to etiquettes which make the consumer happy at the entry points of the mall. On weekends, our staff is dressed up in yellow and blue T-shirts (Inorbit colours) to welcome customers and pep up the weekend mood. Services like parking & valet facility, Free Wi-Fi, clean and maintained washrooms, Drinking Water stations, Phone charging stations, Baby Care room, Wheel Chairs and Concierge services for bill payments, ticket booking etc are few services that we offer and always look to adding more to it. Recently we did tie-ups with Ola and Uber cabs to offer custom services at the mall," states Ibhrampurkar.



“Our zip line is one of the first in the country and this adventure has never been a part of any mall before; we also promote art, theatre, music learning to the aspiring by having stalwarts train them”

– Quency Bhasin, CEO, The Grand Venice Mall

“We pride ourselves on being able to offer a high-quality experience at any of our DLF Shopping Malls. We have ex-hoteliars at the helm of each property, ensuring a high level of operations is maintained. Every customer touch point from the parking to rest rooms and concierge services are designed to ensure the utmost level of service. If a customer feels attachment to a mall basis how he/she is treated at every interaction point, then they will be a customer for life. We have a host of services across our malls like free Wi-Fi, valet, baby changing and baby feeding rooms, currency exchange, pharmacy, first aid, differently abled assistance, wheelchairs, prams, tailoring

services, dry cleaning, driver’s lounge, car wash services, child safety bands, etc,” states Bector with just the right touch of pride.

“Hospitality play a major role in the entire service industry. Apart from a well-trained support staff, we also offer laundry service, Car Spa, Key maker, Mobile repair, Shoe laundry, etc. that helps customers. We also have XRCVC – Viviana resource centre for training visually impaired, Pankh training centre for training disabled persons, free manure distribution, Handicap washroom, Braille menu cards, Audio tactile labels, etc. that helps us to create awareness toward social as well as environmental causes,” says Pradhan.

Mahesh M too lists out the hospitality services his mall offers. “Hospitality truly is a key aspect of running an experience led destination. In fact, our leadership team in Operations and customer service are people with rich background of the hospitality industry. While the usual services are available, the personal touch makes the difference. From offering wet

tissues when people come on a summer afternoon to pocket size raincoats during the monsoon, we try to pro-actively offer a superior service. Baggage free shopping and opportunities to be part of our culture club are other services that we offer. Our home specialist services ranging from home maintenance to home improvement and home design are again delight builders from a customer perspective. We believe that differentiated services help us in retaining existing customers and hence we build patrons rather than footfalls”

“Hospitality has emerged as a lucrative category to keep the mall bustling. With an intent to leverage on the higher revenues generated by this segment, malls are leasing out prime ground floor spaces to bring new F&B brands within their fold. We are making it a destination for convenience needs, lifestyle shoppers, tourists, youth and children. Our zip line is one of the first in the country and this adventure has never been a part of any mall before; we also promote art, theatre, music learning to the aspiring by having stalwarts train them,” says Quency Bhasin of The Grand Venice Mall.

“The hospitality that each and every patron gets is no less than the five-star facilities that one enjoy in the best hotels, for an instance we have made it a point to never compromise on our housekeeping standards even if it costs us a fortune,” says Mehra, who’s Quest Mall is known to one of the foremost luxury destinations in Kolkata.

Key Attractions of The Grand Venice Mall

- Dodges Palace
- Water bodies
- Two canals complete with gondola rides
- Tourist attractions like Fountain de’ Trevi, the Statue of Julius Caesar and the clock tower – all reminiscent of Italian architecture and its glory.
- The inside is a replica of Venice city architecture, including the famous Leaning Tower of Pisa.

PHYGITAL EXPERIENCE, PERSONALISATION & INTELLIGENT TECH

Phygital and personalisation are the latest catchphrases for mall developers. The premise is that the physical experience of shopping is blurring into digital, where every shop is “smart” and will interact with customers.

“Shopping experience has become sophisticated with the advancement of web technologies. Not only are individual brands putting more focus on e-commerce and mobile, but we’re also now seeing shopping centers adapt to the digital customer. Being a premium shopping and leisure destination with very high footfall, the experience that a customer has once he or she enters the gate is of prime importance to us. We have invested in state of the art security management service and surveillance systems and they are one of the biggest enablers for us in maintaining our performance and meeting customer expectations,” says Bansal.

“Our nation is in the transformational phase when it comes to cash; from physical to phygital and then

leading to digital economy. We, at our end have embraced these advancements,” says Viviana’s Pradhan.

“With the re-launch of DLF Cyber Hub, we ushered in the era of ‘phygital’ experiences for our customers within the DLF shopping malls portfolio. Huber – DLF Cyberhub’s virtual concierge is a prime example of this. You can talk to Huber to find out where the next Sufi night/ladies night/etc will be and at which location; you can reserve a table; check out the menu; find the perfect place which is right for the customers right at your fingertips and at your convenience. Over time Huber gets to know you and can make personalised recommendations just for you,” adds Bector.

Ibhrampurkar recalls a customer survey done by Inorbit Mall which showed that people did not like being interrupted during their shopping time in malls. The other thing they learnt from the survey was that customers prefer personalisation at the retailer level.

“We have to tread a tightrope to maintain this balance. We have introduced

several convenience services like bag park stations, gift wrapping and same day delivery. Shoppers Stop at Inorbit has taken the plunge and installed Magic Mirrors – virtual dressing rooms. Through these mediums there is huge opportunity in terms of digitizing the store and providing endless options for the customers to try fashion virtually,” he explains.

“Technology is an enabler which must be a means to the end rather than the end itself and more importantly lend itself to sharing knowledge instead of just being a mall guide. We understand that the simultaneous interplay of the various channels, be it physical or digital is the new normal. Being a unique physical retail space and India’s largest destination in home & interiors and now getting big on food & entertainment as well, we want to ensure we get it right not just as a gimmick or the cliched ‘app route’, but as a meaningful solution that enriches our customer experience, enhances our retailers’ confidence and finally enables us to be better service providers based on business intelligence that we will gather. Our Myfitbkh website and app helps the customer design his own room in just a few clicks and minutes,” says Ishanya Mall’s Mahesh M.

Gajendra Rathore adds, “Phoenix MarketCity has all digital directories at multiple locations for helping patrons navigate the mall. Our website is interactive, user friendly giving all information that a customer would desire. We are very active on the social media platforms and there is always a huge traffic and customer engagement on real time.”



PHYGITAL EXPERIENCE

PACIFIC MALL

- Cloud based applications to empower teams to help them deliver higher productivity & efficiency.
- This includes services like Real time CSI & RSI Mgmt. System, Fit-out Mgmt. application, Automated Daily Sales Report (ADSR), Leasing & SOH Inventory Mgmt., Retailer Analytics System and customer analytics, Task & Snag Mgmt. application to name a few.

VIVIANA MALL

- A point of sale (POS) system installed at all retail outlets in the mall
- Trained visually impaired individuals on how to do cashless transactions at the mall’s XRCVC - Viviana Resource Centre
- Most retailers in the malls have tied up with leading banks and wallets to encourage electronic transactions by providing discounts

DLF MALLS

- Launched Huber – DLF Cyberhub’s virtual concierge

ISHANYA MALL

- MYFITBHK website and app helps the customer design his own room in just a few clicks and minutes

PHOENIX MARKETCITY

- Booking cabs
- Restaurant reservation
- Bill payments
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- High tech security systems
- Night vision IP based CCTV cameras
- Facility to make parking payments through digital wallets

OTHER INITIATIVES TO KEEP CONSUMERS COMING

A mall is home to some of the top brands not only nationally, but internationally. It has to keep innovating to bring in consumers, attract a larger client base and retain these customers even in the face of competition.

“Shopping is all about a great ambience and a good experience. Apart from the best brands in fashion, Inorbit hosts several consumer connect events and activities throughout the year. Overall, we host more than 250 events in a year. Community connect initiatives like Pink Power, Family and Kids centric events like The International Clown Festival and *Baccha* Bollywood have evolved as the most popular initiatives. We celebrate special occasions and festivals in grandeur by creating larger than life décor and installations to increase customer delight. It is imperative that we give consumers a WOW feeling when they come to shop, be it for a special occasion or a regular weekday,” says Ibhrampurkar.

Bansal says Pacific Mall is also doing a lot to ensure consumers are loyal. “We have a fresh mix of brands retail & F&B (Superdry, GAP, Armani Exchange, Mango, Dune Hamleys, Nike Kicks Lounge, Asics, Metro Shoes, Baggit and Arrow Sports). We focus on multi-cuisine and fine dining new outlets include Chili’s, Café Delhi Heights, Beer Café, Castle’s Barbeque, Khan Chacha, Cafe Hawkers and Street Foods of India by Punjab Grill and Sugar & Spice and we provide exceptional shipping experience through customer engagements. We also initiate

innovative services and quality marketing events and promotions, which are relevant customer activities. We do all of this so that we can connect with our customers emotionally.”

Meanwhile at Ishanya mall, since the core proposition is Home & Interiors – augmented by experiential fine dining and differentiated entertainment – the aim is to try and bring mutual customer segments to the destination.

“Apart from the home offerings spread across 200,000 sq.ft. of space and fine dine offering spread across 100,000 sq.ft., we curate a whole lot of offerings catering to design thinking, workshops, art, music, theatre and dance shows that bring the culturally deep-rooted Pune-ites to our mall,” says Mahesh M.

Oberoi Mall on the other hand works at implementing two things – a great brand mix and a fabulous customer experience. “Our retail mix is planned in a way that there’s something for everyone. We have an exciting mix of fashion & accessories, F&B and entertainment (which comprises of 35 percent of the mall area). We also host premium events to keep our customers engaged. Customer delight is achieved by focusing on finer experiences like a bright and lit parking slot, cleaner washrooms, clean food court and a smile to greet every customer,” says Anupam T.

And enhancing the overall experience for the entire family is Phoenix MarketCity’s key focus area.

“We are expanding our entertainment areas, adding varied F&B options. We have recently invested to enhance the sensorial experience by

adding fragrance architecture, and have upgraded our mall interiors. We have even invested in art and decoration to make the mall more welcoming,” adds Rathore.

“We have over 300 days of events. This year, we have consciously tried to move away from events and activities which are noisy – give patrons a noise-free zone. We have already pulled off a few digital led ideas at Ahmedabad One and there are many more in the pipeline,” adds Naik of Ahmedabad One.

Viviana Mall’s Rima Pradhan says the mall devises its marketing programs in a manner that can help us in reaching its target audience and encouraging them to participate in events in order to create a formal and informal point of connect between them.

“We have different themes

and activities lined for the entire week through our initiative called ‘Celebrate Everyday’. One of the unique initiatives that the team effectively manages is the dedicated rickshaw stand – an idea to provide comfort to our customers. To address the problem of women safety, a dedicated lane for women is created in which women rickshaw drivers help women customers reach their required destination in a GPS-enabled special orange rickshaws that are loaded with other safety tools,” she adds.

DLF Shopping Malls too craft a robust marketing calendar round the year. Given the target audience, the activities vary across the malls that make the customer keep coming back and experience something new with every visit.

“Throughout the month there is a programmable



events calendar that is executed across the properties along with promotional hooks to drive sales and conversions. This backed with a digital amplification ensures consumers know what's happening at a destination near them," explains Bector.

Quest Mall too aspires to constantly innovate. The mall has come up with unique ways to surprise their patrons and be on top of their game.

"We host a Midnight Sale every year and we transform the ground floor into a night club on special occasions. Right now, the mall is decorated in all its Christmas glory to attract people. Last year on Christmas, we had carol singers with a guitarist and a pianist. We have also created an exhibition space called The Loft, which is a permanent area for pop-up art and culture," says Sanjeev Mehra.

WHAT THE FUTURE OF RETAIL HOLDS FOR MALLS OF TOMORROW

India's e-commerce sector is expected to touch US\$ 28 billion by FY 2019-20 on account of an increase in the number of buyers and stable annual spends per consumer, according to a Kotak Institutional Equities report.

"A gradual increase in shopper base, coupled with steady increase in online spends can help the Indian e-tailers reach gross merchandise value of US\$ 28 billion by FY 2020. We assume buyer penetration to improve to 18 percent by FY 2020 from 12 percent in FY 2016, with annual average online spend to increase by 10-15 percent year-on-year over the forecast period," the report states.



The report observes that e-commerce will continue to find more takers, particularly as organised retail penetration remains limited in Tier II and III cities.

So, will shopping malls will lose their sheen in the future since consumers will seek shopping solace through clicks over bricks?

Generally, the success rate of malls varies, usually depending on factors like design and layout, the mall's brand positioning, location and how well they cater to the needs of their target segments. Also, whether or not they have been able to evolve into family destinations rather than just remaining shopping centres is important.

Mall owners these days are striving hard to provide shoppers with an unparalleled shopping experience and say while they are open to new technology, they are certainly not scared of e-commerce.

Bector strongly feels technology will continue to be the game changer, and "As a leading player in the malls arena DLF will capitalise on this trend and continue to innovate in the interest of

Millennials and other target groups."

"In recent years, the sector witnessed two distinct channels gains prominence mainly brick-and-mortar and e-commerce. Though growing smart phone penetration and burgeoning online retail platforms have created diversions, offline retail is here to stay. The trend towards an Omnichannel strategy will enable retailers to re-think their business strategy in order to tap the best of both worlds and maximise on footfalls giving the perfect customer experience," adds Bansal.

"Being a sunrise sector, the mall space has grown rapidly in the last 10 years or so. Malls have established themselves as a must-visit destination for families and friends. They have enhanced not only the shopping experience but also the employment, trade and infrastructure development in all locations where they are present, so in my opinion, the future is very bright. This is just the beginning of the mall era," says Malhotra.

"With malls converting into experience centres, malls of tomorrow will have more of entertainment

to keep patrons engaged. Retail is all about aspiration, which ensures that the malls are here to stay and be an important part of the lifestyle of the people," says Mehra.

Ibhrampurkar feels Indian retail is still in its nascent stages. "There are not more than 8-9 good performing malls in Mumbai where there is potential for 20, and even lesser penetration in other metro cities. We believe there is potential for more malls to open in the country."

"The future of retail is challenging and exciting. Challenging due to the exponentially changing trends on one end, the dramatically evolving consumer behaviour on the other and merging them both won't be that easy. Exciting because of the complexities involved, yet the tools that we develop, the thoughts that we envision and the actions that we embark on, will surely help us to ride the wave of complexities and create a new era of shopping- for all three stakeholders- the consumer, the retailer and we the mall operators. We aim to be part of this journey not as a passenger, but leaders," concludes Mahesh M. **IR**

With inputs from Sandeep Kumar, Surabhi Khosla & Charu Lamba



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DLF SHOPPING MALLS: THE PREFERRED MALL DESTINATIONS

– By IMAGES RETAIL BUREAU

Gone are the days when malls were only about shopping. Today, they are all about offering shoppers experiences – F&B options, special promotions and entertainment hubs are fast becoming the norm rather than the exception...

In an exclusive conversation with IMAGES Retail, Pushpa Bector, Executive Vice President and Business Head DLF Shopping Malls, talks about the mall's journey, retail expansion plans and future strategies.

Tell us about the journey of DLF malls? What challenges did you face coming up to the top?

The journey of DLF malls has been challenging but extremely rewarding with all malls (DLF Promenade, DLF Mall of India, DLF Cyberhub, DLF Place Saket & DLF City Centre Chandigarh) doing exceptionally well. We have

successfully established DLF Promenade as the most admired fashion destination and DLF Mall of India as the largest mall in India today. DLF Place Saket has also carved an identity for itself with more and more brands finding space in it and rapidly growing footfalls on a daily basis. DLF Cyberhub is a unique F&B destination that offers the best world cuisines

in the heart of Gurugram.

In the recent past GST and demonetisation have been the major challenges but the impact of the same vanished soon after their implication. From a technology standpoint, there have been no significant challenges as we have been moving ahead of the curve using innovative technology to elevate the customer convenience quotient.

In your opinion, what factors have led to DLF malls being such a huge hit in India?

An ideal brand and product mix is sacrosanct in determining the success of a mall. Additionally, elements like hospitality, location, convenience and safety play a significant role. Malls are increasingly becoming experiential centres and



hence, there is considerable emphasis given to F&B and entertainment when planning a mall. Our endeavor is to always give our customer the best experience; therefore, we deeply focus on providing great hospitality and safety.

What role does innovation and customer centricity play in keeping visitors engaged?

Customers are very demanding these days and look for an innovative factor every now and then that will drive them to the mall. Keeping this customer sentiment in mind, we are constantly innovating and coming up with customer engaging events to multiply footfall. Events like Sugar Rush, Burgers & Cocktails Festival, Night Owl Festival, Sufi Sama, Khaana Bajana, Japan Cultural Fest, etc are some of the examples in this direction. All the events have done well, and some have been a huge success. We focus on providing a holistic pleasing experience entailing not just great shopping but impactful events.

Let's talk about the Phygital Experience, personalisation, and intelligent technologies DLF offers...

With the re-launch of DLF Cyberhub, we ushered in the era of 'phygital' experiences for our customers within the DLF Shopping Malls portfolio. Huber - DLF Cyberhub's virtual concierge is a prime example of this. You can talk to Huber to find out where the next Sufi night/ladies night/etc. will be and at which location; you can reserve a table; check out the menu; find the perfect place which is right for you right at your fingertips and

at your convenience. Over time Huber gets to know you and can make personalised recommendations just for you.

How important is a location strategy in defining the success of DLF Malls?

Location will always be a prime concern for customers and we are cognizant of that. All our malls are located in the heart of the city with easy connectivity whether through metros, cabs or simply driving oneself. We have two in Delhi itself, which cater to different catchment areas. Customers prefer going to a mall, which is closer to them and hence, our shopping centres are located where the customers are.

Your take on importance of zoning in a mall?

The zoning of a mall is an added convenience service that we offer to consumers and it plays a key role in becoming a one stop destination for all that the customers are looking for. DLF Mall of India is the first mall in the country that is fully zoned. The ground and first floors house the international and national brands, second floor focuses on ethnic wear followed by the family world on the third floor and F&B and entertainment spread across the fourth, fifth and sixth floors. Zoning of the mall has helped in structuring the offerings effectively and customers are able to find different stores within the same category easily.

Is there need for Omnichannelisation of malls? Your views.

In our view, malls need to embrace technology and become increasingly more digital. However, they don't

need to take the traditional Omnichannel approach. At DLF Shopping Malls, we are moving towards a phygital experience for the customer, which in our view is the right path to walk down.

What role does F&B play in generating footfall in malls?

Over the years food courts and F&B outlets have emerged as one of the key factors in generating footfalls as they create stickiness. The evolving food palate of Indian customers is always

levels of customer service. They can come to except the same from malls and brands in India as well. Hence, we pride ourselves on being able to offer a high-quality experience at any of our DLF shopping malls. We have ex-hoteliers at the helm of each property, ensuring a high level of operations is maintained. Every customer touch point from the parking to rest rooms and concierge services are designed to ensure the utmost level of service. If a customer feels attachment to a mall basis



on a look out for trying new international cuisines. While some look for an elaborate seating set up to spend quality time with their friends and family, others prefer quick on the go delectable bites. F&B accounts for almost 20 percent of the space in the malls.

Tell us about the role that hospitality plays in generating footfalls? What are the other services that you offer? What is the importance of these services? How is DLF different from others in this segment

Hospitality is extremely important for us at the DLF shopping malls. Customers are increasingly well travelled and exposed to various

how he/she is treated at every interaction point, then they will be a customer for life.

We have a host of services across our malls like free Wifi, valet, baby changing and baby feeding rooms, currency exchange, pharmacy, first aid, differently able assistance, wheelchairs, prams, tailoring services, dry cleaning, driver's lounge, car wash services, child safety bands, etc.

What does the future of retail hold for the malls of tomorrow?

Technology will continue to be the game changer and as a leading player in the arena, we will capitalize on this trend and continue to innovate in the interest of Millennials and other target groups. **IR**



Jayen Naik, Vice President (Mall of Amritsar and Ahmedabad One), Nexus Malls



Anil Malhotra, Executive Director, Elante Mall

NEXUS MALLS: THE FLAGBEARERS OF THE INDIAN MALL RENAISSANCE

– By Sandeep Kumar

The management of Nexus Malls is upbeat about Indian Retail and is confident that they can be flagbearers of the much-needed renaissance through fresh perspectives and innovations

Blackstone Group, one of the world's leading investment firms, forayed into India's shopping centre sector with its fully-owned subsidiary, Nexus Malls last year. The aim of the Blackstone Group was to transform the shopping experience of Indian

consumers. The management of Nexus Malls is upbeat about Indian Retail and is confident that they can be flagbearers of the much-needed renaissance through fresh perspectives and innovations.

In conversation with IMAGES Retail Bureau, Jayen Naik, Vice President (Mall of Amritsar and Ahmedabad One), Nexus Malls, and Anil Malhotra, Executive Director, Elante Mall, talk about the innovations their malls have adopted and the roadmap for the future for Nexus Malls...

Tell us about your mall – the inception, and the challenges faced.

Jayen Naik: Our mall opened its doors to patrons in October 2011 and pretty soon became

one of the most popular shopping destinations in Gujarat. Nexus Malls took over the asset in July 2016 and there came about a sea of changes, the first one being that our brand identity changed to Ahmedabad One. The retail mix was churned, and we brought in a lot of international fashion labels. Our process of transformation is not yet over, as we are working on more futuristic innovations and ideas.

Anil Malhotra: Since its inception in April 2013, Elante has emerged as the hub of the city by providing the right tenant and brand mix and constantly engaging its patrons with a plethora of exciting activities. The mall has made a mark as a leading

shopping destination of the northern region, having introduced leading brands and retail chains like Hackett London, Vero Moda and Collective. We have emerged as the only mall in the region which can boast of 100 percent occupancy. Spread over 1.2 million sq. ft., Elante has recorded a footfall of over 1 crore since its launch. This vibrant and upscale shopping hub is part of the overall 21.5-acre complex being developed as per the government's conversion policy.

Give us a lowdown on the innovations – tech and in-store in 2017, in Nexus Malls.

Jayen Naik: Over the last 18 months, we have upped our game in terms of the

experience that we want to deliver to our patrons. We have conceptualised and executed several digital innovations at the mall and those were very well received by retailers and shoppers alike.

We were the first mall in Gujarat, and probably India, to host a full scale Augmented Reality show. The first day of the activity saw an organic reach of over a million on our Facebook fan page. We saw a surge in footfalls during that week and our social media pages were full of reactions and comments.

We followed it up with a Digital Pictionary, which we executed in association with Mattel. This was a special experiential event curated for the Children's Day weekend

app, patrons will be able to pluck out offers and discounts from within the mall, using the camera on their phones. We are very optimistic about the application and will announce its launch dates in a couple of weeks.

Let's talk about your CSR activities for 2017.

Jayen Naik: At Ahmedabad, we take up several causes across the calendar year. This year, we found a unique way to celebrate an eco-friendly Dussehra digitally. We executed the Digital Dussehra activity which was ideated and executed by us across five of our assets. We got a reach of 21 million across our five assets and we trended on Twitter for both the days of the activity. For every 50 times that the

into the lives of the inmates there. We celebrated the Independence Day to spread the message of 'Equality in Society' by involving 100 children, including 50 underprivileged kids and as many school students, to set up the map of India in the heart of the mall. Elante also took underprivileged children to Fun City, so they could experience something new and exciting.

Are you an eco-friendly mall?

Jayen Naik: The mall retained all the trees and plants that were on the periphery and surrounding the plot line of the facility when it was being constructed. Moreover, we created a complete tree cover by building our actual

Anil Malhotra: During construction of the mall and the complex, we adhered to all the prescribed norms to make the building energy-friendly. We have balanced all aspects of energy use in the building including lighting, space-conditioning and ventilation. Elante's passive design features are well complemented by optimisation of power through energy-efficient equipment.

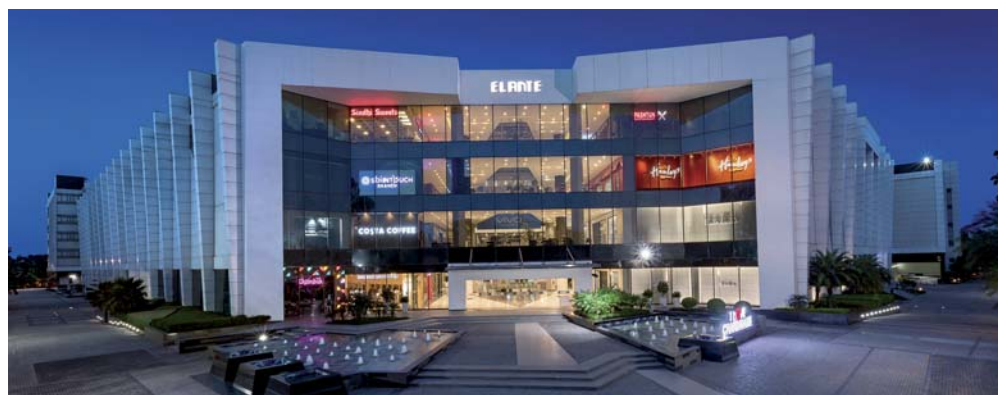
What according to you are the key elements that determine the success of a mall?

Jayen Naik: In my opinion, the success of the asset hugely depends on two things: 1) Retailer satisfaction; 2) Customer satisfaction. Both play a very critical role in determining what an asset would mean to not just the immediate catchment, but for a city in general.

Consumers look to a mall for more than just shopping now and the onus is on us to give them a reason to spend time at our establishments and become the destination of choice for them. The more time that they spend at the mall, the more likely they are to spend here.

For retailers, it is important that we keep getting footfalls and repeat customers. When we plan events and activities at a mall, we need to ensure that retailers are roped in as active partners.

Anil Malhotra: What determines the success of a mall or a shopping centre is how well it is positioned keeping in view the customer profile in the catchment it wants to cater. The right size, the right location, the right aesthetics and the right tenant mix is what defines the right model.



where a mime artist played the game virtually, through an LED screen and gratified over 300 kids who participated over the two days.

Anil Malhotra: In terms of innovations to lure patrons, we have already pulled off a couple of great digital ideas – Digital Dussehra which garnered a reach of over 21 million. Now, we are gearing up for the End of Season Sale in January, and work is going on for an Augmented Reality app, which is going to be a first in India. Through this

hashtag #GoodOverEvil was used, the Ravana burned digitally on the LED screens which were installed at the atrium of each of our assets. We gratified over 2,000 patrons across our five assets during the course of these two days.

Anil Malhotra: Taking up social causes is what we do at Elante Mall. It's our way of spreading some cheer in the community. We celebrated Lohri 2017 at Elante in conjunction with an old age home in the city to bring some cheers

compound wall one meter inside the actual plot line – an area which is full of trees and green plantation and maintained by us.

We recycle water and use it for plantations across the facility as well as for cooling towers of the chillers. Conservation of water has been at the forefront of our commitment to the environment.

Recently we installed approximately 500 KW of solar power panels on our terrace to ensure further conservation of energy.

Since the direct customers of malls are the retailers, it is imperative to rope in the right kind of retailers with suitable rentals that give them every opportunity to sustain their growth. This in turn ensures that customers who come to the mall have maximum options in all retail categories. In order to bring long term sustainability and growth, it is important to optimise occupancy cost through a transparent process and maintain a healthy relationship with all retailers. Last but not the least, more emphasis should be given to the look and feel of the store fronts, upkeep and maintenance, ease of access and exit, washroom standards, well thought out marketing strategies, quality events and promotions.

What is your mall doing in terms of innovation and customer centricity to keep consumers engaged?

Jayen Naik: We have over 300 days of events. This year, we have consciously tried to move away from events and activities which are noisy – give patrons a noise-free zone. We have already pulled off a few digital led ideas at Ahmedabad One and there are many more in the pipeline.

Anil Malhotra: At Elante, we take great pride in the innovations that we come up with throughout the year. We have something or the other happening at the mall every now and then. We constantly strive to innovate and provide a unique experience to our patrons every time they walk in to the mall. We recently executed a Digital Dussehra activity. We got a reach of 21 million across our five assets and we trended on Twitter and Facebook on



both the days of the activity. For every 50 times that the #GoodOverEvil was used, the Ravana effigy burned digitally on the LED screens which were installed in the atrium of each of our assets.

Tell us about the phygital experience, personalisation, and intelligent technologies your shopping centre offers?

Jayen Naik: We run great events on our social media, making it a popular online engagement destination. We announce the arrival of new styles and products on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram, to connect our tech savvy consumers with the brands at our mall. We were also among the first malls to be featured on the Google Maps. All these happen in tandem with connecting with patrons regularly via email and SMSs, informing them of our schemes and promotions. We were one of the first malls to have an active website and an app, which provides all details including navigation, offers, events, availability of specific products etc.

Apart from this, we use technology to calculate footfalls, hot areas and to collect customer flow data, which helps us in sharpening our services. We provide WiFi across our facility aside from a ton of other services to enhance customer experience.

Are you planning on going Omnichannel anytime soon?

Anil Malhotra: Omnichannel retailing is a market reality and it has to be embraced, but I feel that Indian customers take time to get accustomed to something new. It may take them two to three years to get used to this new fad. Malls, with the help of the available technology, will play an active role in bridging the divide between offline and online retailing. We at Elante firmly believe that we need to take Omnichannelisation and digitisation seriously in order to stay relevant to our patrons, and we are working towards the same.

When you look for an area for your malls, what is the location strategy and why?

Jayen Naik: We like to be placed in the middle of a rich residential catchment. We were primarily touted as a neighbourhood city center so that the entire residential catchment within a 3-km radius would be able to use our facilities. This obviously gave a lot of fillip to initial footfalls. Easy accessibility, the relative safety of the location, hygiene and a good parking facility are other important things that we look at.

Anil Malhotra: Centrally located in Industrial Area, Chandigarh, Elante was set up as per the government's conversion policy. Though

its location is an advantage, Elante has been successful in positioning itself as a 'preferred and happening shopping destination' on account of other factors like strong customer connect and right tenant mix. We have premium, value for money and luxury brands, which address the needs of all social classes.

Why is zoning important for a mall?

Jayen Naik: Formulating the right tenant mix based on zoning not only helps attract and retain shoppers by offering them multiple choices and satisfying multiple needs, but also facilitates the smooth movement of shoppers within the mall, avoiding clusters and bottlenecks. This helps influence shoppers' mall preference and frequency of visits. It also helps in building a distinct image in the minds of shoppers, which is extremely critical.

Anil Malhotra: Coming up with the right tenant mix based on zoning not only helps attract and retain shoppers by offering them multiple choices and satisfying multiple needs, but also facilitates the smooth movement of shoppers within the mall, avoiding cramming and bottlenecks. This helps influence shoppers' mall preferences and frequency of visits. It also helps in building a distinct image of the mall in the minds of shoppers, which is extremely critical.

Why according to you, should brands choose malls instead of high streets?

Jayen Naik: I think the belief in the brand philosophy has to be strong. The proposition has to be undebatable. Being located in a mall or on high streets is about individual budgetary choices. Both has its own set of pros and cons. But I strongly feel that brands do not get lost in the crowd in malls. Rather a strong backend support is in place in malls.

brand enjoys their share of limelight. Ultimately, it is quality that drives customer connect.

Anil Malhotra: At Elante, each floor is properly planned. We have not differentiated between international or indigenous brands. Each brand enjoys its share of limelight. Ultimately, it is quality that drives customer connect. Here, we have a lot of homegrown brands across retail categories as both franchise and company-

the inclination of people wanting to experiment with various types of cuisines. Knowing this fact, we have recently renovated our food court completely and gave it a very classy and upmarket feel. We have also added several new options in the food court. Additionally, we now also have a dedicated section for those who prefer non-vegetarian dishes. Since then, we have seen a sudden spike in the sales figures at our food court.

Anil Malhotra: Punjab is known for its love for food and the inclination of people to experiment with various types of cuisines. Familiar with these facts, we recently renovated our food court to give it a very classy and upmarket feel. We have also added several new options in the food court. Since we introduced a dedicated section for those who prefer non-vegetarian dishes, there has been a sharp spike in the sales figures at our food court.

Why are malls stressing on being Family Entertainment Centres?

Jayen Naik: In today's time, shopping alone could lead to the downfall of an asset. Malls are no longer just shopping destinations, but they are more of community centres. The success of a mall hugely depends on how it caters to the people walking in. It is imperative that malls now cater to all age groups and they deliver a unique experience each time that they visit.

Anil Malhotra: In today's time, shopping alone cannot prop up an asset. Malls are no longer just shopping destinations, but they are more of community centres.

The success of a mall hugely depends on how it caters to its visitors. It is imperative for malls to cater to all age groups and deliver a unique experience to them each time.

Do you think theme malls work in India?

Jayen Naik: Though at present only Big Box Malls – with their full array of shopping, entertainment and food – have been successful, the concept of boutique and theme malls is slowly starting to take shape. Given the dynamism in the youth of today, the mall developer community is confident that theme malls will be a great hit in the future. Cyber Hub in Gurugram, which is pure F&B mall, is a successful example of a theme mall.

What is the future of real estate in India?

Anil Malhotra: Being a sunrise sector, the mall space has grown rapidly in the last 10 years. Malls have established themselves as a must-visit destination for families and friends. They have enhanced not only the shopping experience but also the employment, trade and infrastructure development in all locations where they are present, so in my opinion, the future is very bright. This is just the beginning of the mall era.

What does the future of retail hold for the malls of tomorrow?

Jayen Naik: Retail in India is still in a very nascent stage. In terms of shopping habits, I feel India is still very traditional in nature and consumers will take time getting used to online shopping. Malls are very much in the present and future of Indian shopping. **IR**



How much space should homegrown/indigenous brands be given in a mall, as opposed to international brands, which have bigger budgets are more of crowd-pullers?

Jayen Naik: If you look at Ahmedabad One, every floor has a distinct character. We have not differentiated between international or indigenous brands. Each

driven. We are specifically dominant in food and beverage and fashion, though we have a good presence in other segments too.

Elaborate on the importance of food courts and the role F&B plays in generating footfall in malls?

Jayen Naik: Gujarat is known for its affection for food and

SELECT CITYWALK TO ADD A DOZEN NEW BRANDS, OPEN A NEW MALL IN DELHI-NCR

– By Charu Lamba

Select CityWalk, inarguably India's most recognised and felicitated shopping centre, is expanding its retail portfolio by introducing over a dozen new retail brands in the next one month...

Delhi's Select CityWalk, inarguably India's most recognised and felicitated shopping centre, is expanding its retail portfolio. The most popular shopping destination is introducing over a dozen new retail brands over the next one month.

In an exclusive interview,

Yogeshwar Sharma, Executive Director, Select CityWalk, said, "We want our shoppers to go through a new experience every time they visit Select CityWalk. To keep the exclusivity and their demands in consideration we're partnering with a variety of brands. From Pandora, Theobroma to relaunching Mango or even opening Lulu & Sky, Tribe Amrapali and



SELECT CITYWALK EYES EXPANSION; TO OPEN ANOTHER SHOPPING CENTRE

- Select CityWalk is mulling locations beyond Delhi-NCR for its second shopping centre, though the national capital region remains its first preference, and is looking for long-term financial partnership for the project.
- It is also experimenting with its own e-commerce channel to cater to customers who skip malls for their convenience.
- "We are in the process of deciding the size of the mall, its location, and strategising on how to make it smart mall from day one," Yogeshwar Sharma was quoted by news agency PTI as saying.
- The new mall will have futuristic categories, and a healthy mix of cinema, entertainment and the best of technology, Sharma was further quoted as saying.
- Their flagship mall in Saket has a sales ratio of ₹3,200- 3,300 per square foot.
- Select CityWalk recently started managing the Shipra Mall in Indrapuram, Ghaziabad and is eyeing long-term alliances in this segment.
- The company has also started a loyalty program and home delivery in the NCR region, following the best practices of international malls.

Burma Burma, we've received tremendous response from our patrons. And there's so much more that we have in store for them in the coming months."

The mall is also gearing up to welcome other brands including Maison Des Parfums, Pizza Express, Scotch & Soda, and Jo Malone.

KAI Shop, Party in a Box, KICA, CASA POP, The Organic Wash Club, Modern Bazaar and Vega are some brands which have already set up shop in the mall recently.

The mall has futuristic categories, and a healthy mix of cinema and entertainment.

Spread over 381 sq. ft., KAI shop is a housewares and beauty care shop which offers a range of Japanese products. KAI is also the exclusive distributor for Vita Craft and is introducing their products through this store in the country. Speaking at the KAI Shop launch, Koji Endo, CEO & President, KAI Group, said, "We are glad to announce the launch of our first 'KAI Shop' outlet in India. KAI Group

is the only cutlery-related manufacturer developing more than 10,000 products in cooking, grooming, beauty care, and medical fields.

With our new range, we have plans to launch five outlets in key metros by 2022 and will increase dealings at general stores in other areas of India, too. We aim to increase our sales by more than 3X of the present 300 crore Japanese yen by 2022."

Modern Bazaar, which houses integrated bakery, a café and gourmet specialties, and spans over 7,000 sq.ft space has also launched a new store in Select CityWalk.

Kunaal Kumar, Owner, Modern Bazaar in Delhi-NCR, said, "This store is a reflection of the positioning where a customer walks into a store with a nice lay-out and picks his choice from a wide assortment of products and brands – from the basics to the upmarket – which are all priced very competitively and come with various deal offers." **IR**

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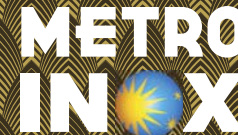
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PHOENIX MARKETCITY, BENGALURU: A COMPELLING LIFESTYLE SHOPPING EXPERIENCE

– By IMAGES RETAIL BUREAU

Developed by Island Star Mall Developers, Phoenix MarketCity is spread across a total built up area of 1.4 million sq.ft. and has a gross leasable area of 9,70,000 sq.ft. It boasts of a nine-screen PVR multiplex spread across 85,000 sq.ft. and a 35,000 sq.ft food court. The mall has four floors with 300 stores, a 40,000 sq.ft parking space and is by far the largest mall in Bengaluru...

In an exclusive conversation with IMAGES Retail Bureau, Gajendra Singh, Centre Director of Phoenix MarketCity, Bengaluru, talks about the strategies and planning it has taken over the years to become one of the most sought-after shopping destinations in the country.

Tell us about the inception of Phoenix MarketCity?

Phoenix MarketCity Bengaluru is a marquee development in Retail Real Estate space that opened in 2011 and has established itself as a lifestyle and entertainment destination, operating with full occupancy. The mall has grown more than 15 to 20 percent in terms of sales and bottom line.

Phoenix MarketCity Bengaluru revolutionised the customer shopping experience and has become a fully integrated recreational Centre in Bengaluru in a very short period of time. It has established itself as an urban lifestyle consumption destination, which offers a holistic and premium experience for retail, entertainment and movies, food and beverages and many more. With over 300 stores representing an exhaustive mix of international, national and regional premium brands, Phoenix MarketCity offers the most comprehensive and compelling lifestyle shopping experience in Bengaluru. The mall hosts several theme based events, and large scale musical concerts where best in class music bands and popular Bollywood singers perform.

What, according to you, are the key elements that determine the success of a mall?

There is no one formulae for success

of any mall. A right mix of research and planning, location, design, brand and category mix, customer centricity, and constantly refreshing and updating the mall to stay ahead of the competition. We focus a lot in personalisation of services offered to customers.

What has Phoenix MarketCity done in terms of innovation and customer centricity?

It is important to have some sort of differentiation so that we rise above competition. We have a courtyard where we host a plethora of events, such as live concerts by acclaimed artists, and shopping festivals.

We have recently launched a Phoenix Gift Card which offers customer abundance of choice for gifting.

At our centre, we have always used technology and innovation in favor of customer satisfaction. The touch screen floor plans used at the mall, innovative direction signages, themed décor, art and ambience upgradation to meet expectations of our customers and retailers, are few factors that differentiate our mall from others.

Tell us about the digital experience, personalisation, and intelligent technologies Phoenix MarketCity offers consumers?

The mall has digital directories at multiple locations to help our patrons to navigate. Our website is interactive, user friendly, filled with

HOSPITALITY SERVICES OFFERED BY PHOENIX MARKETCITY

- Concierge services
- Wheelchairs
- Prams
- First aid
- Gift wrapping
- Cab and flight booking
- Cake and flower delivery
- Clothes alteration and tailoring
- Free Wi-Fi
- Lost and Found Department
- And service with a smile

PHOENIX MARKETCITY'S CSR ACTIVITIES FOR 2017

Phoenix MarketCity Bengaluru is a socially responsible organisation and we always encourage events for a good cause; few of them are:

- Phoenix Festival of Giving organised by Smile Foundation.
- Green Peace – Environment Day
- Cook for a Smile – In association with Smile Foundation
- Unicef Awareness Drive
- Green Peace – Waste to Food
- World Yoga Day – In association with Reebok

every possible information a consumer needs. We are also very active on social media platforms, making sure that we draw in huge traffic and engage consumers online real time. To ensure more consumer loyalty, we have introduced a Phoenix Gift Card.

Apart from this, we offer personalised services ranging from booking a cab, restaurant reservation to bill payments and a 24x7 fully-loaded ambulance. We are also equipped with high tech security systems, night vision IP based CCTV cameras, and offer consumers the facility to make parking payments through digital wallet.

Let's talk about your location and zoning strategies...

When we were scouting for land to open Phoenix MarketCity in Bengaluru, we looked for the following in the immediate neighborhood – a commercial area surrounding major IT Parks, high-end residential gated communities, hotels, and schools, so as to attract the desired profile of customers. Our development is now

surrounded with premium residential layouts and commercial offices, which forms a huge captive catchment for the mall.

In as far as zoning goes, I feel it's important to develop category clusters that offer customers multiple choices in the same product category. This not only helps increase revenues, but also helps in building recall value for a customer in a mall with over 300 stores. It attracts both frequent shoppers and the occasional impulse shoppers and creates a demand for the category leaders to be in the mall.

What are your views on Omnichannelisation of malls in India?

Omnichannel requires a huge investment, a well sequenced road map of digital marketing and channel integration initiatives rooted in a deep understanding of customer behavior and related economics. Customers don't care about channels of shopping, they are looking for shopping with ease and simplicity. We will certainly go for it only once we are sure we want to walk this path.

Do you feel an F&B zone and hospitality are important in generating footfall in malls?

A well-planned food court is like an anchor that offers a wide variety of dining options in a casual environment. Categories like kids, entertainment and cinema, coupled with a food court makes for a very strong attraction point for consumers. Varied F&B formats in a mall results in higher frequency of repeat customer visits and longer time spent by them every visit. Currently, food services take upto 15 percent of global retail space and could grow to 20 percent by 2025.

Then there is hospitality, which is ever so important as it makes consumers feel very cared for. From security guards greeting shoppers with a smile, to efficient and friendly housekeepers in rest rooms, everyone adds to the experience. This is one of the main reasons we invest a lot in training our staff.

Tell us about some other initiatives taken at your end to keep the footfalls rolling?

Other than refreshing our brand mix, our key focus area is to enhance the overall experience for the entire family. As a result, we are expanding our entertainment areas, adding varied food and beverages options. We have recently invested to enhance the sensorial experience by adding fragrance architecture, have upgraded our mall interiors; we invest in decoration and art. We also host a variety of events like high-end fashion shows, musical concerts, shopping festivals and much more. These initiatives have helped the center become a holistic urban lifestyle consumption destination. 



MALLS WITH THE BEST NON-PROFIT CAMPAIGNS IN INDIA

– By IMAGES RETAIL BUREAU

The world is a burgeoning place, unevenly balanced between the haves and the have nots. But even as this disparity mushrooms, there are many privileged who have taken it upon themselves to do some good in society. Among these are malls, using their social connect and status to do their bit for the underprivileged in the society...

As Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) in the country continues to develop, malls are coming up with vibrant campaigns and exceptional innovations to counter increasingly complex societal challenges. IMAGES Group picked the malls that impressed with their CSR activities in 2016-17.

They were all nominated this year for the IMAGES Award for Excellence in Social Inclusion & Community Initiatives Award. The awards ceremony was held at the India Shopping Centre Forum 2017, in Mumbai. The winner of the award was Virtuous Retail.



● VIRTUOUS RETAIL ●

VR Bengaluru collaborated with “Make My Wish” to grant the wishes of orphans and underprivileged children from chosen orphanages and child caring agencies in Bengaluru. The mall gathered the wishes of these children and distributed them to expat and Indian connections who were happy to grant these wishes. This initiative concluded in December with the “Make A Wish Children’s Carnival”, a special day for these kids which the mall made even more special.

VR Surat has also worked along with various partners at the centre and beyond to organise activities like Green-walk, Say No to Drugs, *Nukkad Natak*, Neon Run, Say No to Child Labour, Blood Donation Camps, and Health Check-Up Camps.

Apart from this the mall also organised events on Women’s Day, Mother’s Day. Events like Book Donation and Water Donation were also a part of their way of giving back to the society.

For the first time ever, the mall also made an eco-friendly, edible Ganapati idol at the centre for 10 days on the festive occasion of Ganesh Chaturthi. On the last day of the festival, the idol was immersed in milk and given to underprivileged children.



● INFINITI MALL, MALAD ●

The Infiniti Mall, Malad organised a Breast feeding week to normalize breast feeding in Indian society.

They also held a Blood Donation campaign, and an Organ Donation flash mob.

Last year, SNDTC College students collaborated with the mall towards an awareness program for the Autistic, people with Cerebral Palsy and the Hearing impaired.

The mall also conducted a flash mob activity in collaboration with the Mumbai Police to promote traffic rules and road safety.



● LULU MALL, KOCHI ●

Under the property named Lulu Smiles, Lulu Mall has a history of CSR tradition and has been doing a lot of health awareness and socially responsible campaigns since its inception. Health awareness campaigns like 'Gift Blood. Gift Life', Blood Donation Camps, Stem Cell Sample Donation Camp, Osteoporosis checkup and BMD screening camp and Diabetes Check-up and consultation camp on World Diabetes Day are the best examples of the health and social awareness initiatives by Lulu.

Lulu Mall has actively supported the Chennai Flood relief (Anbodhu Cochin Voluntary NGO); Stationary Collection for tribal kids in association with 'Sanchari'.

On World Environment Day, the mall conducted a campaign approved by the World Health Organisation (WHO) to create awareness on the increasing food wastage and food shortage the world is facing.

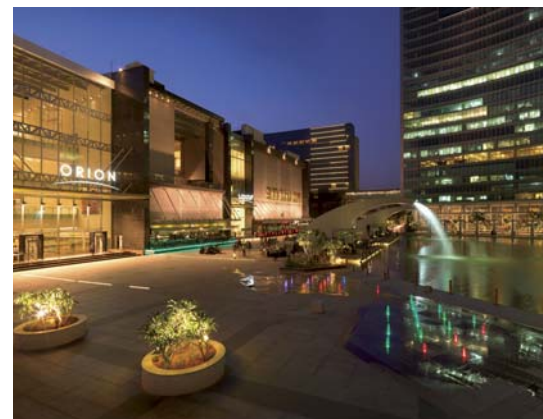
On the International Day for the Elderly, Lulu Mall facilitated an experiential visit of the mall for 340 senior citizens from old age homes. Similar visits for underprivileged children were also conducted on Children's Day.

● ORION MALL, BENGALURU ●

The CSR activities of Orion Mall mainly comprise of Orion Festival of Giving, a 15-day event that invites people to donate their belongings (in reasonably good condition) - clothes, books, toys, accessories, and footwear - at the donation counters at Orion Mall. In return customers get discount vouchers that can be redeemed at participating outlets at Orion Mall. The donated items are given to the Smile Foundation for distribution.

A Blood Donation Drive on World Blood Donation Day was also organised in association with Rotary Bangalore Metro in the mall.

The mall also works closely with various NGOs including APSA (The Association for Promoting Social Action). All lost & found articles in the mall, as well as money is given to street children, to facilitate their education and stay at APSA, Nammamane.



The warehouse industry has come a long way from godowns and mismanaged empty spaces to become the backbone of the manufacturing and growing e-commerce industry...

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The Indian warehousing industry, which is estimated to be approximately ₹56000 crore, refers to the storage and safeguarding of retail goods until they are dispatched to end consumers.

A few decades ago, what we now call warehouses, used to be decaying buildings called godowns. Any empty space surrounded by walls and a roof overhead which would be transformed into godowns, just for the sake of storing goods, without spending much on its maintenance or modernisation.

The industry has come a long way from old-style storage units. Large distribution centres and warehouses have become integral to the supply chain and sale of merchandise to customers. They are the backbone of the manufacturing industry as well as the growing e-commerce industry.

INDIAN RETAILERS WORK TOWARDS BUILDING THE WAREHOUSE OF THE FUTURE

– By IMAGES Retail Bureau

However, what needs to be understood is that there is much more to designing a warehouse than simply choosing the best site.

EVOLUTION OF LOGISTICS & WAREHOUSING

Warehousing in India is a fast-evolving sector, with both the nature of the business and technology driving it, apart from undergoing dynamic changes.

With India budding as an economy, warehousing systems and logistics are key

elements that play a major role in generating smooth trade activities in and around the retail and manufacturing sectors. Storing goods in a way that they are available at a moment's notice to buyers at every stage of the retail process is the ask of the day and this is what warehousing needs to enable. They should also be able to store good which are only produced in a particular season, but in demand all year round. Warehousing needs to facilitate production and

distribution on a large scale.

Going by the current industry estimates, the warehouse space in India will grow from the current 909.5 million sq. ft. to approximately 1,439 million sq. ft. by the end of 2019.

At the Indian Retail Forum 2017, held on September 19 and 20, 2017 in Mumbai, experts from the warehousing sector in retail met to debate its modern aspects basis latest technology, infrastructure apart from discussing many other benefits. They also talked about how the implementation of GST as well as a centralised warehousing system would ease things for the industry.

The esteemed panel included, Deven Pabaru, Stellar Supply Chain, Chief Strategy & Implementation Officer; Divyanshu Rathore, Vice President (Operations) -Future Supply Chain Solutions Ltd.; Vineet Kanaujia, Vice President, Marketing, SafeXpress; Suresh Chugh, Head



“By 2022, the warehousing industry is expected to grow from 6 percent to double-digits. Since GST has been implemented, more and more companies will change their working models.”

– Vineet Kanaujia



“In cities, we have created 1.5 million sq. ft. space of warehousing space for GST ready consolidation. We already have 8 to 10 meter clear height warehouses, and now we are constructing 14-meter clear height buildings.”

– Divyanshu Rathore



“Apart from the basic infrastructure and implementing basics like CCTVs, and fire alarms, we can successfully optimise operations by utilising minimum space and also keeping costs under control.”

– Suresh Chugh



“Unlike most companies, we operate from a single warehouse. The challenge for us always has been leave time, that is time and distance from the warehouse to stores.”

– Shailesh Solkar

Logistics, Raymond Apparel Ltd; Shailesh Solkar, Head Merchandising and Supply Chain TRENT; Sunit Mukherjee, Head CS&L Mondolez; Shrikant Phanse from Philips.

Vineet Kanaujia, Vice President (Marketing), SafeXpress, kickstarted the debate by emphasizing on the modern consumers' demands and the innovations done by warehouses to fulfill them in real time.

“Warehousing is very important and relevant right now. By 2022, the warehousing industry is expected to grow from 6 percent to double-digits. Since GST has been implemented, more and more companies will change their working models. The focus will be on creating more centralised warehouses. The first thing that needs to be done is investment in latest infrastructure, which is futuristic in approach. Creating warehouses which are operational 24x7, have organised docking areas, driver resting areas for 24

hours delivery services, working Sundays and holidays, apart from other small but necessary items is the need of the hour. For us, Artificial Intelligence is the next level of growth,” said Kanaujia.

“So far, we have created 32 logistics parks in Hyderabad, a ₹1.4 crore facility in Manesar- with 24x7 facilities- and we look forward to creating more such hubs. We genuinely believe that Tier III & IV towns will be the areas of growth in as far as warehouses are concerned. So, we are focusing building futuristic warehouses in smaller towns like Siliguri and Coimbatore as well,” he added.

KEY INNOVATIONS

Divyanshu Rathore, Vice President (Operations) -Future Supply Chain Solutions Ltd., talked about how his company was working on inculcating GST rules to make things easier for them.

“We have a network of around 5 billion sq. ft. Our

facilities are GST ready. In cities, we have created 1.5 million sq. ft. space of warehousing space for GST ready consolidation. We already have 8 to 10 meter clear height warehouses, and now we are constructing 14 meter clear height buildings. We are utilising space vertically now. We work towards great infrastructure, employee comfort and ushering in the latest technology,” he said.

“To counter this, we have linked labour working activity with WNS (consolidated suite of comprehensive, next-generation technology solutions - including voice directed warehouses and auto sortation - for managing complex business processes) and now we get the data automatically, which is easier to analyze and make further strategies. Interfacing or transparency with the supplier is another key aspect. We have an electronic data interface and the supplier has clear visibility of what is finishing in a store, which orders are pending, what's

in the warehouse and accordingly he can take action. These technological aspects have helped us in reducing warehousing costs by at least 35 percent,” he further stated.

Suresh Chugh- Head Logistics Raymond Apparel Ltd., added to this saying, “Apart from the basic infrastructure and implementing basics like CCTVs, and fire alarms, we can successfully optimise operations by utilising minimum space and also keeping costs under control. The pressure is huge on warehouses. Goods can be delayed in the production unit for months, but in warehouses, you can't delay it for even a day. We have currently four warehouses, one in each zone. We are now GST ready and are making sure all our warehouses are too, so that we are 10 years ahead of time.”

Shailesh Solkar- Head Merchandising & Supply Chain, TRENT spoke about how his company managed technology at warehouses.



“Today’s evolving consumer is impatient, and he wants convenience. Thanks to increasing consumer expectation, the supply chain is under continuous pressure to deliver.”

– Deven Pabaru

“We have different strategies for different formats. Unlike most companies, we operate from a single warehouse. The challenge for us always has been leave time, that is time and distance from the warehouse to stores. We are trying to optimize current transport routes. We are also trying to work in automation into our warehouses, although compared to labour in India, automation is not very cost-effective,” he said.

“We are also trying to optimize volume/space in our warehouses. One of the ways is by following the international trend of utilising space vertically. It is always helpful to have partners like a TESCO and Zara, as knowledge from them helps in implementing new trends faster,” Solkar added.

CONSUMER-FACING OPERATIONS

Deven Pabaru- Stellar Supply Chain, Chief Strategy & Implementation Officer, stressed on a futuristic approach based on ecosystem and Omnichannel strategies. “Consumers in India



“With GST coming in, we are trying to get into multi-user facility. With this we are not just only looking at warehousing costs, but total delivering costs as well.”

– Sunit Mukherjee

have gone Omnichannel much before retailers. Today’s evolving consumer is impatient, and he wants convenience. Thanks to increasing consumer expectation, the supply chain is under continuous pressure to deliver. To serve this discerning consumer seamlessly, we need to make sure infrastructure, technology, and the supply chain work together, flawlessly,” he said.

He also added that he thought there could be common warehouses for various companies – helping to bring costs down for everyone.

“Instead of discovering of our own ways, if everybody journeys together we can put together massive infrastructure, which can be supported by the best of technology. This is something that will be beneficial for all in the retail industry,” he stated.

Sunit Mukherjee- Head CS&L, Mondolez, talked about the multi-user facility of the warehousing industry, saying, “With GST coming in, we are trying to get into multi-user facility. With this we are not just only looking



“Philips lighting has become one of the most meticulous parts of the warehouse industry due to its tangible as well intangible benefits, which helps control cost.”

– Shrikant Phanse

at warehousing costs, but total delivering costs as well. We have to look at efficient ways of transporting goods. Another thing which we are looking into is multi-packing and customisation centres for customers to scale up quality.”

THE NEXT PHASE OF INNOVATION

Shrikant Phanse of Philips Lighting talked of the new technology which his company is bringing into the warehousing industry.

“Philips lighting has become one of the most meticulous parts of the warehouse industry due to its tangible as well intangible benefits, which helps control cost. We talk of huge G plus5, G plus7 warehouses, which definitely require efficient lighting. Lighting needs to be comfortable for workers, they need to create an ambience for skilled workers to do their work efficiently and quickly,” he said.

When the other members of the panel enquired about how much energy saving is possible with Philips Lighting, Phanse explained, “The usual lights which we used earlier in warehouses are conventional

ones. Now, we have diverse Led lighting. This reduces the electricity bill straightway by 50 percent. Further if we use connected lighting and controls for them, we can save an additional 20 percent at the very least. So, companies can straightaway save between 65-70 percent on their electricity bills.”

Supporting Phanse’s idea of saving electricity, Kannaujia said, “Ten years ago, we created Go Green facilities. The warehouses we made were pillarless structures, covered with a solar roof. This helped trap light, which in turn illuminated the warehouses till 7pm every day, saving on electricity bills enormously.”

He added that going green was in tandem with their idea of futuristic warehouses. “We had special green zones where trees were planted to create a positive work environment.”

Apart from these ideas, other revolutionary methods include the conversion of warehouses into logistic parks over the last seven to eight years, which are further being positioned as warehouses-cum-trans-shipment houses. The idea is to make warehouses sustainable and very technology centric.

On being asked about the future of the industry along with the focus would be in coming three to five coming years, Pabaru concluded the discussion saying, “Along with infrastructure, technology, people, IOT, Big Data, the idea is to create the right eco-system for the warehouse. With the increase in e-commerce and evolving consumer demands, the only question that warehouses now need to answer is: how fast can they meet demands.”

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ADITYA BIRLA'S HIRES FASHION ADVISORS TO EDUCATE CONSUMERS ON INNOVATIVE LIVA FABRIC

– By Charu Lamba

Liva, which was launched in March 2015, is now being used by over 30 women apparel brands including W, Biba and Auerlia. As per a consumer survey, around 97 percent women are believed to like the biodegradable cellulose fabric.



Liva, the new age fabric brand from the Aditya Birla Group's Birla Cellulose, has come out with a one-of-its-kind approach for spreading awareness about the fabric and its attributes. This season, Birla Cellulose will depute Liva Fashion Advisors in the country's top four large format stores namely Pantaloons, Shoppers Stop, Central and Reliance Trends. The fashion advisor will help generate awareness on brand Liva and induce trials.

The move, is in line with the government's 'Skill India' programme, that intends to train about 300-400, 12th standard girls aged 17 to 20. Pantaloons, Shoppers Stop, Central and Reliance Trends will absorb these girls after the training.

Liva, which was launched in March 2015, is now being used by over 30 women apparel brands including W, Biba and Auerlia. As per a consumer survey, around 97 percent women are believed to like the biodegradable cellulose fabric.

According to Manohar Samuel, President - Marketing, Birla Cellulose, "Market research conducted by Liva stated that 92 percent women buyers choose garments made of Liva fabric over other fabrics once they have experienced the fabric. This gave us the idea of placing Liva Fashion Advisor at stores. We are confident of the high quality of Liva fabric as it is manufactured through the value chain partners accredited by the Aditya Birla Group. We want the customers to experience the fabric and Liva Fashion Advisors will help us achieve this."

We spoke to Shardah Uniyal, Global Head - Branding & Communications, Aditya Birla Group (Birla Cellulose), who explained to us why the brand decided on hiring fashion advisors, the benefits of doing the same and lots more...

What was the need of introducing fashion advisors?

Liva is a high-quality fabric which is manufactured through value chain partners accredited by the Aditya Birla Group. Market research has shown that 92 percent women buyers chose garments made of Liva fabric over other fabrics once they experience Liva fabric. We want the customers to

experience the fabric. This gave us the idea of Liva Fashion Advisor at stores to induce trials and generate awareness.

In which stores will these fashion advisors be placed?

Liva Fashion Advisors will be based out of four large format stores - Pantaloons, Reliance Trends, Central and Shoppers Stop - as they carry multiple brands and private labels which have Liva tagged garments.

How many cities are associated with this concept?

Currently Liva Fashion Advisors are operating out of 30 cities in the country.

How will the concept of Fashion Advisors bring more consumers into stores? How is this move of hiring fashion advisors expected to contribute to revenue?

The objective of Liva Fashion Advisor is to generate awareness on brand Liva and induce trails of garments made of Liva fabric. We have carefully selected the large format stores based on the footfalls they receive. We expect maximum customers to get benefitted from this initiative. To increase footfalls in stores we use different means like window displays and mall dropdowns. Our new innovative mall dropdown is getting lot of attention and helping brands to generate footfalls.

The entire Liva strategy is offering high quality fluid fabric to consumers and generating awareness about the same. We are confident about the fabric as a lot of research has validated that consumers like Liva fabric once they take trial. The Liva Fashion Advisor's objective



is to generate awareness and induce trials. This will generate demand for Liva fabric and eventually generate revenues for the organisation.

What benefits does the brand expect from this personnel innovation?

Liva is a high-quality fabric which is manufactured through the value chain partners accredited by the Aditya Birla Group. Market research has shown that 92 percent women customers prefer buying a garment made of Liva fabric once they take trial. 91 per cent customers intent to purchase a Liva tagged garment during their next purchase. It is also observed that 94 percent customers would want to recommend a garment made of Liva fabric to their friends and acquaintances. The objective of Liva Fashion Advisors is to spread awareness about the brand and induce trials. This will eventually lead to sale of the garments made of Liva fabric and hence increase in demand for Liva fabric.

Do you think other companies will adopt this innovative idea?

While each organisation has its own strategy, and depending on their strategy adopt different means of promotion, we are confident this idea will catch on.



Tell us about other new innovations at Birla Cellulose?

We have initiated a very unique mall drop down campaign where a life size mannequin of Liva's brand ambassador Kangana Ranaut drops-down from the atrium. The campaign stands out uniquely apart in the cluttered mall spaces where every brand is trying to get attention of the consumer. This innovative concept not only catches attention but also delivers high footfalls for the partner brands present in that mall.

Do you have any future plans to enhance your marketing campaigns? How do you plan for them?

Our future campaigns plan are based on our learning from the current season's

campaigns. To understand the effectiveness of the actives we do we conduct audits with the help of a renowned research agency. Based on our learnings we plan for our future campaigns. We hope to target eight cities with new campaigns.

Elaborate on the objective behind the campaign?

Liva is a new age fabric brand. Brands like W, Pantaloons, Biba, Solly, Van Huesen, Shoppers Stop, among others use Liva fabric in their collections. Almost all the brands have their presence in leading malls. Our objective was to deliver high footfalls for our partner brands by being visible as a reminder in the last leg of consumer journey. [R](#)

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IMAGES Retail starts 2018 with a bang, with the January issue bringing you a comprehensive study of the South Indian Retail Market. We tell you why the highest growth in the Retail Sector has been witnessed in the Southern region of the country. We tell you which cities in down South are seeing an exceptional rate of growth in retail - Bangalore, Hyderabad and Chennai - and how they are doing it. We tell you how the emerging cities of Coimbatore, Kochi, Vizag, Vijayawada, Trivandrum, and Madurai are contributing more than US\$ 7,000 million worth retail activity today. The **JANUARY 2018 SOUTH INDIA SPECIAL** will also feature an in-depth analysis of annual reports and data on what is making the nation's 'down under' the new hub of the Indian retail industry.

THE BOOMING MALL CULTURE OF SOUTH INDIA



We bring you a detailed report of the trending malls of South India, by virtue of their brand associates, footfalls and events. The analysis will also feature interviews of leading mall developers in the south.

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We bring you the legacy and success stories of top ten retailers of the South India, their years of operation, successful product innovation and their outlook for the future.

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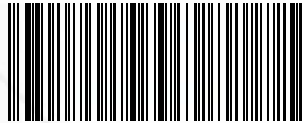
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100 AWARDS

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