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IMAGES Retail

Future of Businesses

JANUARY 2018

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EXCELLENCE IN RETAIL AND
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[COVER STORY]

SOUTH INDIA SPECIAL

An In-Depth Study of
the Indian Retail
Industry's New Hub

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A Happy New Year you all. It has indeed been a momentous end of 2017 for us, with the successful conclusion of the South India Retail Summit in December. We want to thank all those who joined in creating a powerful and collaborative atmosphere at SIRS 2017 and we hope you are already on your way to creating success stories from the experiences shared at the event.

For those who couldn't make it to SIRS 2017, our January issue of IMAGES Retail magazine encapsulates the theme event and awards.

We bring you a complete lowdown on the retail sector – we tell you which retailers down South are seeing an exceptional rate of growth and how they are doing it. The South India special also features 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.

Shifting focus a little: as 2018 dawns, we are busy working towards creating another success story – the 11th Edition of our flagship event, India Food Forum 2018 to be held between January 17-19, at Bombay Exhibition Centre, Mumbai.

India is one of the largest food consumer marketplaces of the world and is constantly on the radar of all the major food producing economies since the early 2000s. Believe it or not, India has been witnessing a paradigm shift from healthy food to luxury food culture and trends.

The January issue will help retailers understand the changing dynamics of the foodservice industry and food retailing in India, in this digitally connected, tech savvy, demanding consumer-driven era. In keeping with the theme, the magazine also provides detailed research pieces on global trends in the F&B space.

We hope that you will find this first edition of the year as insightful as the rest and we hope to see you in large numbers at the India Food Forum 2018.



Amitabh Taneja

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The who's who of the South Indian retail industry converged on a single platform at SIRS 2017 to discuss key retail issues, retail solutions and best practices within the industry



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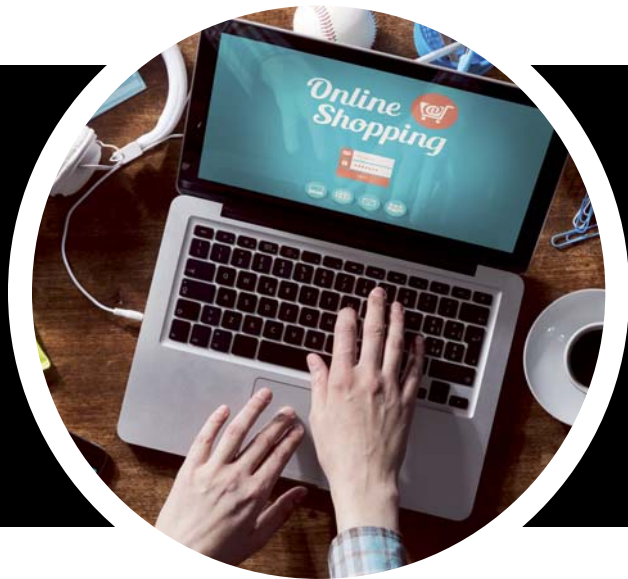
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E-COMMERCE BUILDING A STRONG PLATFORM FOR GROWTH IN 2018

– By IMAGES Retail Bureau

2018 has started on a positive note, and e-commerce companies across the country are taking rigid steps towards building a strong platform for long-term growth. Here's a look at some success stories in the e-tail sector...

E-COMMERCE MARKET MAY CROSS US \$50 BILLION MARK BY THE END OF 2018: STUDY

➔ The digital commerce market in the country is expected to cross US \$50 billion in value by the end of 2018 from the current level of US \$38.5 billion, on the back of a growing Internet population and increased online shoppers, says a recent study. The digital commerce market in India has grown steadily from US \$19.7 billion in 2015 to US \$13.6 billion in 2014, as per a joint study conducted by ASSOCHAM and Deloitte.

The increasing mobile and Internet penetration, m-commerce sales, advanced

shipping and payment options, exciting discounts, and the push into new international markets by

e-businesses are the major drivers of this unprecedented growth, it said. Banks and other players in the

e-commerce ecosystem are providing a secured online platform to pay effortlessly via payment gateways.

On the increase in preference of mobile transactions, the study said one out of three customers currently makes transactions through mobiles in Tier I & II cities. As per the study, there would be more than a seven to ten fold increase in revenue generated through e-commerce as compared to last year with all branded apparel, accessories, jewellery, gifts and footwear available at cheaper rates and delivered at the doorstep.



MYNTRA'S BIGGEST EORS: 65 PC NEW CUSTOMERS, 60 PC SALES FROM TIER II & III CITIES

➔ Myntra's 'End of Reason Sale,' held between December 22-25 concluded with over 1.7 million people purchasing 5 million products over the four-day sale period. Myntra recorded the highest share of first time buyers of 5 lakh customers during the current edition of the sale, of which over 65 percent came from Tier II and III cities and towns. The company processed about 365 orders per minute on average during the sale and has so far completed delivery of 35 percent of the total items ordered.

Sports dominated the sale as the most popular category across Myntra

and Jabong, which clocked almost 22 percent of all sales on the platform. The introduction of social shopping, through 'Myntra Shopping Groups,' enabled shoppers to avail additional discounts that contributed 20 percent to the revenues of EORS. Speaking on the success of EORS-7, Ananth Narayanan, CEO, Myntra-Jabong, said, "With over 5 million items sold, 60 percent sales from Tier II & III cities, and 5 lakh new customers,

this edition of Myntra's End of Reason Sale has been the biggest ever."

"The Myntra App ranked No.1 app on IOS and as the top shopping app on Google Playstore during the sale," he added.



DLF MALL OF INDIA CELEBRATES 'MIGHTY 50'

 This Holiday season, DLF Shopping Malls introduced their Mighty 50 Campaign, a one of its kind, the biggest shopping carnival of the year. As part of the campaign, DLF Mall of India Noida, hosted a series of unique pop up events that offered scintillating music performances, food festivals and cultural fests. These were combined with super lucrative shopping deals across the brands. The mall also collaborated with Uber so that customers can avail subsidized rates in order to travel to the mall, thus making the commute, convenient and cost-effective.

The key highlights of the event were, Mighty Fashion, Go crazy with 3999! This offer is valid on the International Boulevard at DLF Mall of India, where customers get shopping vouchers every time they spend. Mighty Sales: This EOSS get upto 50 percent off at your favourite brands across the mall for the entire duration of the campaign. SBI cashback offer – As a part of DLF Shopping Mall's recent collaboration with SBI, the SBI credit card customers are entitled to an additional 5 percent cash back up to a maximum of ₹1500 with a minimum



spend of ₹7500 for a whopping period of 75 days. Mighty Rides: Uber & DLF Shopping Malls offered subsidised commuting rates for regulars at the mall. Anyone traveling within a 15 km radius to and from Mall of India can pay a flat rate of ₹109 and anyone travelling

within a 9 km radius to and from DLF Promenade, DLF place and DLF Cyberhub can pay a flat rate of ₹69/-

DLF Mall of India hosted fashion exhibition Pitstop where a variety of hand-picked designer brands across fashion, jewellery, luxury, home décor and art were at the display. Christmas Carnival – Hamleys hosted an exclusive gift unboxing activity with celebrity mom Riddhima Kapoor Sahni and offered multiple kids activations at their store. A flash mob performed, to pay tribute to the legendary singer Talat Mehmood for visitors to explore a beautiful genre of music in a visual spectacle. A unique food pop up Chocolate festival is planned in January where popular patisseries, home bakers and food brands will serve unique desserts.

“Our endeavor is to always elevate the customer experience coupled with value and purpose. Mighty 50 campaign entails a host of new initiatives that will make every visit to the mall completely worthwhile and further strengthen the festive spirit among the consumers. From lucrative offers on all the aspirational brands to engagement initiatives coupled with travel convenience, the new campaign has all that a customer is looking for,” said Harshvardhan Chauhan, Central Marketing Head, DLF Shopping Malls.

DESPITE ORDERS, E-COMMERCE SITES NOT DISCLOSING MRP: SURVEY

 Most sellers on the e-commerce sites have failed to comply with the order of the Department of Consumer Affairs to disclose the MRPs of their products on their portals, according to a survey. Though the Department of Consumer Affairs gave six months for the e-commerce sites to comply, most of them still aren't ready with MRP disclosure on 100 percent of the products, as per the survey conducted by citizen engagement platform Local Circles.

“Feedback from users suggested that only 10 to 12 percent of the products on e-commerce site are now showing MRP as they are being stocked by the e-commerce sites themselves,” a LocalCircles statement said.

Earlier this year, the Department of Consumer Affairs amended the Packaged Commodity Rules 2011 and issued a notification, under which sellers on all e-commerce sites will have to disclose the actual MRP of the product January 1 onwards. Soon, e-commerce companies will have to take a call to speed up enforcement and demand that the product cannot be listed or sold unless it has MRP.

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GLOBAL RETAIL TRANSFORMATION CONTINUES AT STEADY PACE IN 2018

- By IMAGES Retail Bureau

Whilst online and mobile commerce are expected to drive the majority of retail growth across all sectors in 2018, international retailers are pursuing the integration of online and offline channels to create the most convenient and efficient customer experience...

INITIATIVES BY DUBAI EXPORTS BOOST FOOD TRADE WITH INDIA

➔ Bilateral trade between India and Dubai has received a shot in the arm after Dubai's Department of Economic Development launched a programme early this year to allow commercial disputes between the trading entities of the two countries to be resolved quickly at minimal costs.

The initiative was the brainchild of Dubai Exports, the trade promotion agency of the Department of Economic Development. Nicknamed 'Buyer Protection Programme,' this dispute resolution mechanism has been designed by the Commercial Compliance and Consumer Protection (CCCP), as a pilot project through Dubai Exports Overseas Trade Office in India. Dubai Exports already has six overseas trade offices in Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Brazil, Russia and Germany, in addition to India. In the months following the launch of the



programme, leading industry bodies and trade associations from India have lent their support to this unique trade facilitation and dispute resolution platform. CII, PHD Chamber of Commerce, FIFI, MSME, FICCI, FIEO, ECGC and leading trade and professional associations, all of whom feel that the step by Dubai Exports will go a long way in boosting trade between the two countries.

Mohd. AL Kamali, Deputy CEO of Dubai Exports said, "Government entities in Dubai are committed to see this platform flourish on the back of exemplary practices and greater efficiencies." It is expected that the historic trade relations between the UAE and India are now set to enter a new phase of dynamic and sustainable engagement with the leadership in both countries determined to work closer on optimising their respective strengths. India is an important partner of the Middle East market both in terms of exports and imports. India's economic dynamism along with the size and diversity of tastes automatically make India a highly promising market.



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MICHAEL KORS ADOPTS FUR-FREE POLICY

➔ Michael Kors, a global fashion luxury group, has announced that it will no longer use animal fur in its products, with production being phased out by the end of December 2018.

"I am pleased to announce our company's commitment to no longer use animal fur in our Michael Kors and Jimmy Choo collections," said John D. Idol, the Company's Chairman and CEO. Idol added, "This decision marks a new chapter as our company continues to evolve its use of innovative materials."

"Due to technological advances in fabrications, we now have the ability to create a luxe aesthetic using non-animal fur," said designer Michael Kors. Kors added, "We will showcase these new techniques in our upcoming runway show in February."

L CATTERTON PARTNERS WITH **GANNI** TO CONTINUE BUILDING BRAND ON GLOBAL SCALE

 L Catterton, the largest and most global consumer-focused private equity firm in the world, has announced a definitive agreement to make a strategic investment

in Ganni, one of Scandinavia's most successful advanced contemporary fashion brands.

Ganni is one of the fastest growing brands in the global apparel space and has

established an international presence through its owned stores and more than 400 premium retailers in 20 countries. The brand has significant digital exposure and a unique style endorsed by key fashion opinion leaders and embraced by a quickly growing base of loyal customers.

Nicolaj Reffstrup, Ganni's CEO, said, "Partnering with L Catterton is a hugely exciting opportunity for us to further build on the solid foundations that were laid since 2009. This comes exactly

at the right time for Ganni and will drive us forward in the next few years as we'll get access to the knowledge and network of both L Catterton and LVMH. Ganni attracted a lot of interest from various investment firms, but we chose L Catterton as we felt we share the same vision for the brand. We firmly believe that L Catterton will strengthen our business with their unparalleled expertise in brand building and their deep understanding of how a global fashion brand operates."



LONDON'S **HAMLEYS** OPENS STORE IN BEIJING

 On December 23, 257-year-old British toy retailer Hamleys, opened its largest store worldwide in Beijing, the third one so far in China. An exclusive Hamleys Toy Parade was also held to celebrate the opening, timed to coincide with the start of Christmas festivities. Located in Beijing's Wangfujing area that contains the most famous shopping streets in China, where is similar to Oxford Street in London. The 10,700 sq.m. store covers five floors with thousands of items on display. From traditional toys to high-tech entertainment and educational games for children of all ages, the store



boasts a range of entertainment facilities as well. Guided by Hamleys principal slogan 'Bring Toys to Life', Hamleys Beijing is poised to go beyond the concept of a traditional Toy Store, establishing itself as a Lifestyle Centre Store. The grand opening was witnessed by the British ambassador - Barbara Woodward, Chairman of Sanpower Group - Yafei Yuan, Chairman of C.Banner International Holdings Limited - Yixi Chen and Chairman of Wangfujing - Yi Liu, along with hundreds of Hamleys fans gathering together from all parts of Beijing and even China.

ASICS OPENS FIRST FLAGSHIP RETAIL STORE AT NYC

 ASICS America Corporation, the true sport performance brand, has opened the doors to its first US flagship store featuring two brands in the ASICS family - ASICS and ASICS Tiger™. The new store on the famed Fifth Avenue in New York City is designed to represent its storied heritage and its mantra and trademark, 'Sound Mind, Sound Body', as well as unveil a new platform for the brand to reach a wider variety of consumers.

"ASICS is proud of its unique approach to the retail experience and our product development that focuses on maintaining a healthy lifestyle as a whole. By combining two of our uniquely different

brands, we are offering consumers a wide range of quality performance and lifestyle shoes and apparel for an array of needs - directly addressing the shift in the way people are working out and moving today," said Gene McCarthy,

President and CEO, ASICS America Corporation.

"Every design and material detail has been elevated and considered against ASICS' heritage and local context, bringing a distinct New York attitude to the space," said Sam Derrick, Director at Brinkworth. ASICS' new global campaign 'I Move Me' will be brought to life via a sensory experience exhibited by sight, sound and motion.

In-store elements include an infinity mirror, LED light columns and I Move Me visuals, which will be strategically placed throughout the space and prominently displayed in the large floor to ceiling windows for maximum exposure both on the interior and exterior.



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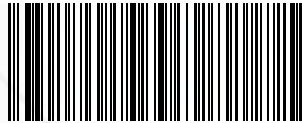
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TABLEZ TO OPEN TEN MORE STORES THIS YEAR WITH A FOCUS ON NORTH AND WEST INDIA

– By Sandeep Kumar

Considering e-commerce's strong presence in India, Tablez totally believes in the brick-and-mortar model of expansion. This model is here to stay, and the story of Indian retail will continue to be written around it in the coming 10 to 20 years...



A deeb Ahamed, Managing Director, Tablez was recently honoured with the Entrepreneur of the Year award at the Franchise Awards 2017 in New Delhi. Ahamed, a multifaceted professional, heads Tablez, the organised retail arm of LuLu Group International, along with LuLu Exchange, the financial services company which has developed more than 170 branches across the globe in a merely eight years. He also heads Twenty14 Holdings, the hospitality arm of LuLu Group, which owns prestigious properties around the world including the Great Scotland Yard in London, the Steigenberger Hotel Business Bay in Dubai and Sheraton Oman in Muscat, among others.

With LuLu Group recently announcing big investments in India, Ahamed has been very busy. He has been chosen to oversee the rapid expansion of leading global brands into GCC and the Indian subcontinent. Some of the brands Ahamed is bringing into India are Cold Stone Creamery (a leading US-based ice cream chain), Galito's (a South Africa based flame grilled chicken chain), twin brands from Grupo Cortefiel – Springfield and Women's secret. All these brands are expected to hit the top metros in India soon.

Apart from this, he helped launch ToysRUs and BabiesRUs, leading global toy stores, in Bengaluru in October 2017. In an exclusive interview with IMAGES Group's Sandeep Kumar, Ahamed spoke of his retail brand's business model, as well as expansion plans in India.

Business Model

Founded in the year 2010, Tablez is an F&B brand retailing company, which currently runs around 35-odd restaurants under different brands all over the world. We have a collective brand size of nearly six to seven brands in our entire portfolio in UAE. In 2013-14, we entered



THE TRADITIONAL MODEL OF RETAIL IS HERE TO STAY, AND I THINK THE STORY OF INDIAN RETAIL WILL CONTINUE TO BE WRITTEN AROUND BRICK-AND-MORTAR IN THE COMING 10 TO 20 YEARS



India with our F&B brand, Bloomsbury's along with the launch of our mall in Kochi. At that time, we figured India was at a stage where there was an opportunity to create visibility of international brands in large numbers. We also understood that Indians aspired towards acquiring Western brands. Keeping this in mind, along with F&B, we started building a strong portfolio in other retail sectors as well.

We then brought Galito's to India, a South African peri-peri chicken specialty F&B brand. After that we took Cold Stone Creamery to India, an ice cream brand from USA and then came Springfield, a Spanish apparel brand which is located in over 1,000 markets in 60 countries.

The fifth brand that we were associated with was Women's secret, a women's essential brand with a large presence in the international market. The sixth and seventh brand which we introduced

here was in the toys segment, ToysRUs and BabiesRUs. All of these brands have one store operational with many more stores opening up in India soon.

LuLu exchange site is the financial retailing arm for the group side as such. Started in 2009, in Abu Dhabi, currently, we are spread over nine odd countries and have a collective store count of close to around 170 plus stores.

Then there is Twenty14, our asset management arm, which essentially maintains our hospitality portfolio. We are also currently we are building two of the Marriot properties in Bengaluru and one in Kochi. Predominately we don't manage these units, these are all managed by third-party international players.

Expansion Plans

Currently we have six operational stores of Cold Stone Creamery, two each of Bloomsbury's and Galito's

followed by one store each of ToyRUs, BabyRUs, SpringField and Women's secret. By end of this year, we are hoping to add at least 10 to 15 more outlets collectively across the country. We have in the pipeline, signed leases from various players starting from Delhi in the North and petering down the South of India.

Early Setbacks & Challenges Faced in India

I think the customer demand or the DNA of the customer as such remains the same across the globe. There is always a liking towards a particular

brand, and it continues over a long time if the brand quality and service remains intact.

We at LuLu are a customer-focused organisation, where we always give the first preference to the viewpoint of the customer. We figure out what they want and modify the product according to the demand. Internationally, the customer base and demands remain same to a larger extent but in India, the business was a tad bit difficult to establish in the initial stages.

Nonetheless, things are getting on track in India. A big chunk of the credit for this goes to the present

government, which has lived up to its promise of 'ease of doing business.' Unfortunately, for now GST has not been very successfully implemented, but in the long run, it will certainly benefit the retail community at large.

I think we have arrived at an appropriate moment in India. We know it would not be smooth, and expected a lot of confusion initially, but were confident that as days passed, we will settle in, and that's exactly what is happening. Once we are fully settled in, I am confident we will see a much faster rate of expansion of our retail arm across India..

Difference in Approach Of Tier I & II Cities

The Consumer Approach: We chose Kochi because the dynamics of the entire group is based out of Kochi and that made it easy for us to enter through that route. Kochi despite being a Tier II city is a net consumer state. The consumption level is quite high there. In terms of sales, we see that it is pretty much the same as any other metro in India. We have not touched Mumbai and Delhi so far, so I can't quote those numbers but in comparison to Bengaluru, Kochi has been pretty much the same..

The Company Approach: Since our entire business plan was made in the pre-GST era, we didn't jump into building a central warehouse in every state. We moved rather slow and believed in a natural progression from down South to the North of India. Currently, with the flexibility of not wanting to have a warehouse in each state, our expansion plans have become much easier to implement.



Five Years from Now

Although e-commerce has a strong presence in India, we at Tablez totally believe in the brick-and-mortar model of expansion. The traditional model of retail is here to stay, and I think the story of Indian retail will continue to be written around brick-and-mortar in the coming 10 to 20 years. I am very confident and bullish on this factor for many reasons, one of them being that every relevant piece of data shows that e-commerce is a medium of penetration only in Tier II & III cities where actual shopping malls are not present or in markets that bigger brands can't penetrate. Once we develop a strong base of shopping malls across India, then I think more and more brands would like to be physically present in these towns rather than digitally present. So, in five years, we see us opening more stores.

Investment & Infrastructure

Around 80 percent of the money that we need to build malls and open more stores in India has already been pumped into the market and in next couple of months, we would pretty much put in the entire amount of ₹300 crore in the Indian market, which we

I DON'T SEE HAMLEYS AS A COMPETITION, I SEE THEM AS A DEFINITE PARTNER IN MAKING A BETTER-ORGANISED TOY SECTOR IN INDIA. IN FACT, WE NEED MORE PLAYERS LIKE HAMLEYS IN A COUNTRY LIKE INDIA

had committed in 2014-15. A second round of the funding will be on the cards starting 2018.

Competition:

Coming of international brands into India is not a bad thing. Local brands can study them and figure out what's working for them in terms of new trends, sales and marketing styles. It will help organise the Indian market greatly.

If we look at the F&B scenario, the majority of the brands originates from USA and the reason behind this origination is that they follow certain policies and procedures. The entire production cycle is so well planned that it scales up the brand easily. In India,

the brand is more human-oriented and scaling up becomes a very difficult scenario. Indian cuisines are chef-based rather than a factory procedure on most of the occasions. But brands like McDonalds and Starbucks, don't need a qualified chef to make their products. A human and machine combination fulfills all needs. We need to start thinking about creating a fine mechanism of easy maneuverability and making procedures or we will find it hard to expand our brands across India.

The Indian Toys Market

Hamleys has 60 outlets across India and we have one. It's a huge difference. The entire toy market business is 90 percent unorganised in India. Combining Hamleys and other multiple toys store throughout the country would not even constitute 10 percent of the toy segment in the country. So, I think there is a large space for any organised toy retailer to come and create a much more favorable industry here. I don't see Hamleys as a competition, I see them as a definite partner in making a better organised toy sector in India. In fact, we need more players like Hamleys in a country like India.

Projection for the Current Financial Year & Revenue Targets

I think it is very early to comment on this because most of our brands are new. Our F&B segment, which was launched just a couple of years ago, has seen a double-digit growth. We are very happy with those numbers. We strongly believe that 2018 should see us as ₹100 crore+ company. 

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MAX FASHION IS ON A GROWTH SPREE, TARGETS 50 NEW STORES IN FY 2018

—By Charu Lamba

Currently, Max Fashion stores are present in 100 cities across India and the brand plans to expand to 20 more cities in the coming year. The brand will cover 120 cities with its brick-and-mortar format...



M

ax Fashion has recently opened its 200th store in Chennai, marking the occasion as one of the many milestones achieved in the past 11 years of the brand's presence in India.

Currently, Max Fashion stores are present in 100 cities across India and the brand plans to expand to 20 more cities in the next one year. The brand will cover 120 cities with its brick-and-mortar format. Apart from that, its e-commerce portal, Maxfashion.com serves to connect to consumers in more than 500 cities.

Talking about the same, **Vasanth Kumar, Executive Director, Max Fashion India**, told IMAGES Retail Bureau at the sidelines of IRF 2017: "The growth of Max continues to be as strong as ever. Today, we have crossed 200 stores and by the end of FY 2017-18, we will be adding another 50 stores."

The Omnichannel Journey So Far

Omnichannel has opened a bag of opportunities for retailers, and Max Fashion is also leaving no stone unturned to provide a similar, unparalleled experience to its customers across all mediums. Kumar said, "Apart from opening physical stores, we are also connecting the inventory of all online and offline stores through click-and-collect. Customers can shop online and then collect the item from any store. They can also get alterations done in-store if needed."

"By going Omnichannel, the fulfilment and convenience for the customers goes up. It also helps brands give consumers a superior experience," he added.

Max is also working on an Endless Aisle pilot project in Bengaluru. The brand is connecting its key stores to its warehouses so that products are available to consumers. If a product is not in store at a particular point in time, customers



ALL ABOUT MAX FASHION

- Max is part of Dubai-based Landmark Group, which is worth US \$9 billion
- Max is 97 percent private label
- All products are designed in-house
- The brand has a team of 100 designers and buyers and approximately 250 vendors
- The brand is working on Tier II expansion
- 23 percent revenue comes from the kids wear segment – approx. ₹ 500 crore
- The brand has received the IMAGES Most Admired Fashion Retailer of The Year: Large Format Store Chain Award two years in a row



we can provide the consumer with a seamless experience. We are also using their third-party vendor platform for logistics,” said Kumar.

The Road Ahead

Max has witnessed rapid growth since its inception – from a growth rate of only 20-25 stores per annum till just four years ago, to 2017 that saw Max double its growth rate by opening 50 stores in this calendar year. The brand is now planning to leverage its nationwide acceptance by continuing to expand all over India, with a focus on northern and eastern markets.

According to Kumar, “We are opening one store a week. So, in a year, we plan on opening 50 stores. This is what we did in FY 2017-18 and this is what we are planning

Max is in its 12th year, and growing at the CAGR of 32 percent from past 10 years and expects a similar growth for next three years.

“The growth format in the same store has been in the region of 13-15 percent and the trend has stayed stable for past two to three years. We are continuing to have same traction. We are right now growing at 13 per cent like-to-like growth and we expect the like-to-like growth to continue in double digits between 11 and 13 percent for over next three years as well,” revealed Kumar.

“Whether online or offline, a brand needs to have four things to be successful – you need to be a destination, you have to offer freshness, give customers an experience to remember and completely

can place their order and the brand will get it delivered to their home from the warehouse.

Max will be using kiosks and tablets wherein the customers can browse the range and then place their orders. Towards this, they are Wi-Fi enabling all their stores as well. The brand is now training its staff to manage this facility.

The brand is now investing more into its digital marketing. It is also getting into digital catalogues, creating different look-books and trying to connect with customers. They are also promoting their app.

Max gets just one percent of its business from its online channel. However, over the next five years, the brand hopes to achieve a healthy contribution from the same.

“Over the past two years, we are working towards



making Max Fashion a true Omnichannel brand. We have tied up with vendor partners who are providing us with solutions and we are using their platform towards better tracking and analytics, so that

for the next fiscal year too. Every store has around ₹2.5 crore capex. That way, it is a ₹100 crore investment every year. We will be aiding the expansion plans though our own internal accruals.”

eliminate all pain points,” he added.

He concluded, “This year we have had a run-rate of ₹3,000 crore. We expect Max to become a ₹5,000 crore brand by 2020.”

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'2017 TURNED OUT TO BE A BRILLIANT YEAR FOR PRESTIGE GROUP'

– By **Irfan Razack**, CMD, Prestige Group

Going forward, factors like rapid urbanisation, increased migration to cosmopolitan and Tier I cities, and the Government's focus on infrastructure and affordable housing will give the required impetus and push to the real estate sector...

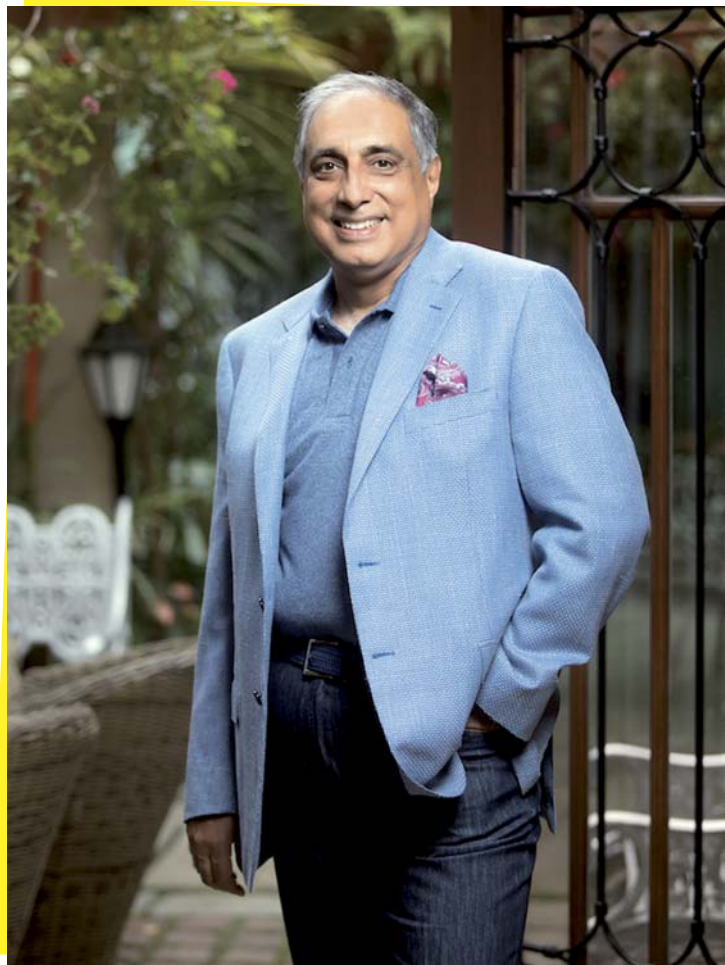
Last year, GST and RERA played a very significant role in redefining real estate in India. Both Bills were introduced in 2017, which resulted in the modification of several rules/regulations related to the real estate and construction industries. After GST was implemented, we also had to realign the financial structure and understand how to execute new launches, keeping in line with the new laws. Hence, a lot of time was spent in understanding the legal implications of all these changes. As a result, no new products came into the market in terms of new launches, but we had satisfactory sales from our existing inventory. From that aspect, I think we have done very well as a company. While the market as a whole witnessed some turmoil with several developers extending offers and schemes to ensure sales, at Prestige, without launching any new properties, we managed to meet our sales targets by selling from the current inventory that was under production. Looking back, 2017, I feel, turned out

to be a brilliant year for the company.

In April 2017, we restructured the company by segregating the retail, residential, office and hospitality portfolios into four separate segments. This helped us look at the business from a different perspective. We intend to scale these segments over time. We are also exploring new cities and hope to be in the West and North by the end of 2018.

The residential real estate market has picked up pace. The demand is growing steadily. I feel that the long-term impact of the recent economic reforms will only add to the growing enthusiasm and positive outlook for real estate in India. With rapid urbanisation, the demand for housing in the affordable and mid-income group segments has always seen an upward growth trajectory. As long as developers are able to produce homes between 25 lakhs to 100 lakhs, there will always be a constant demand.

Going forward, factors like rapid urbanisation, increased migration to cosmopolitan and Tier I cities, and the Government's focus on infrastructure and affordable



“RETAIL MALLS HAVE BEEN DOING EXTREMELY GOOD BUSINESS. IN THE RETAIL SPACE, WE WILL BE OPENING THE MYSORE CENTRE CITY MALL IN JANUARY. FORUM PRESTIGE SHANTINIKETAN, WHITEFIELD IS EXPECTED TO BE READY IN THE SECOND QUARTER OF 2018”

housing will give the required impetus and push to the real estate sector.

In fact, the demand for commercial space is seen as a litmus test for the overall health of the economy. With businesses flourishing globally and several processes getting outsourced to India, the absorption of commercial space is on the rise. We have near zero vacancy in our office developments. We are

launching 2-3 large-scale IT developments in Bengaluru. Simultaneously, we will be developing an IT Park in Pune and an office building in Gift City.

Retail malls have been doing extremely good business. In the retail space, we will be opening the Mysore Centre City Mall in January. Forum Prestige Shantiniketan, Whitefield is expected to be ready in the second quarter of 2018. Both our hospitality projects, The Sheraton Grand and The Conrad will start operations from February.

Progress is impossible without change. It is up to each one of us how we choose to evolve as individuals in this ever-changing world. As we enter a New Year, full of new hopes, dreams and possibilities, I would like to take this opportunity to thank all our patrons and friends for their continued support, and wish everyone a wonderful and prosperous 2018! [IR](#)



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SRI SRI TATTVA TO OPEN 1,000 NEW STORES IN INDIA

– By Charu Lamba

The expansion of Sri Sri Tattva will take the number of countries where the brand is present to 60 from current 30 ...

The FMCG brand Sri Sri Tattva plans to launch its products in 30 new countries with a focus on Latin America, including Brazil and Argentina. This expansion will take the number of countries where the brand is present to 60 from 30 currently.

“We will launch Sri Sri Tattva brand of products in 30 new countries with a focus on Latin America, including Brazil and Argentina. We are already present in countries in Middle East, Far East, and Russia, where we will further expand our range,” said Arvind Varchaswi, MD, FMCG firm.

The company also plans to launch 1,000 new stores in

the next few years, through a partnership with Franchise India. Varchaswi also indicated that 600 stores will be opened this year.

“We are also expanding our personal care range, and home care and *pooja* ranges,” he said.

The brand intends to launch about 20-25 products in the next one month in these various categories. It has also launched an apparel range with Indian ethnic wear, which will sell online and through the app, he said, while unveiling a range of healthy cookies in collaboration with Bengaluru based biscuit maker Unibic Foods India.

The company has set up two more factories in Bengaluru for its personal care range.

Sri Sri Tattva: The Brand

Sri Sri Tattva has been established by committed individuals with nearly four decades of experience. With a 360-degree approach including a College of Ayurvedic Science and Research, a state of the art hospital, inspired doctors



and therapists, Panchakarma Wellness Centers, spas and clinics, and manufacturing facilities driven by technology and stringent control systems and widely growing franchise and retail presence, the brand has a holistic approach to health and wellness.

Sri Sri Tattva (formerly known as Sri Sri Ayurveda) comes with a goal of promoting health and wellness through its range of genuine offerings, innovatively derived from ancient science of Ayurveda.

Leading the modern world towards healthy and happy living through pure, authentic and effective products defines the objective of the brand towards its ultimate vision.

Inspiration

Sri Sri Tattva is inspired by the vision of Gurudev Sri Sri Ravishankar – ‘to lead the world towards happy and healthy living.’

The brand represents a strong commitment to social responsibility and proudly supports the Art of Living foundation’s rural and social welfare projects.

How Sri Sri Tattva is different?

Sri Sri Tattva has highly experienced Ayurveda Vaidyacharyas, health and Pulse Diagnosis (*Nadi*

Pariksha) camps and ailment specific as well as rejuvenating treatments at its multiple centers.

The brand takes immense care in maintaining hygiene and safety standards in manufacturing products right from sourcing of raw material till they reach our end customers. Their frontrunner products like Ojasvita (Health Drink), Cow’s pure *ghee*, immunity builder Shakti Drops, Sudanta (Herbal) Toothpaste and range of Facewash are very popular.

Sri Sri Tattva has products in multiple categories of Ayurveda Medicines, supplements, food products, Personal Care products, Home Care and cleaning products as well as Incense and Fragrances for home and personal use.

There is a major focus towards the brand’s rapidly growing retail presence through multiple mediums including modern supermarket chains. Through general shops and the soon-to-be-launched Sri Sri Tattva franchise stores, the brand aims to enhance the presence of its product range across India.

Sri Sri Tattva’s online stores via website srisritattva.com and its mobile app caters to home delivery orders across India.





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'ETHNIC WEAR RETAILER SOCH TO GO INTERNATIONAL, CREDITS GROWTH TO SHARP UNDERSTANDING OF THE CONSUMER'

—By Surabhi Khosla



PROFILE: MANOHAR CHATLANI

- Manohar Chatlani— one of the pioneers of the ethnic fast fashion category revolution in the organised retail market of India – is credited with growing the brand Soch from just an 800 sq. ft. store to the enormous chain that it is today.
- Aside from his success story at Soch, Chatlani is a man of many firsts– he was the first to launch a department store in Bengaluru catering to the full family, first to conceptualise a 'Half Price Sale' in India and first to manufacture Fibre Glass Mannequins in India.
- He has successfully expanded Soch from Bengaluru's high street to a pan India presence.
- He spends a great deal of his personal time doing philanthropic work, sponsoring over 150 heart surgeries a month for children.

Today, Soch has established itself across India as a key player in women's retail with more than 100 stores, and now has plans to expand into the South East Asian markets. Soch plans to open their first international outlet by the end of FY 2018...

In an age where brick-and-mortar retailers are wrestling with issues of creating lasting value and relevance, there are some homegrown retailers who are aiming for a pan India presence by offering the best to their customers.

One such regional retailer is Soch. From a humble start in 2003, when MD & CEO, Manohar Chatlani's family business of multi-brand clothing retail had just five stores in its repertoire, the brand is today 100-store strong.

Today, Soch has established itself across India as a key player in women's retail with more than 100 stores, and now has plans to expand into the South East Asian markets. The brand plans to open their first international outlet by end of FY 2018.

Soch owes its growing presence to Chatlani's continuous efforts to understand and decode the ever-changing consumer's behaviour and needs. Today, astute business decisions and a sharp understanding of the consumer have led to Soch reaping rich rewards.

In an interview with IMAGES Retail Bureau, **Manohar Chatlani** talks about Brand Soch, his stringent quality control methods and business strategies that have helped the brand grow at a national scale.

Tell us about your brand Soch.

Soch is a very young brand. We opened our first store in 2005, second in 2008, and the third in 2009. From 2009 to 2017 we have opened 99 stores. We now have 102 stores in total and plan on opening another 40 stores by the end of 2018.

What is your brand's USP? How do you woo consumers, especially Millennials?

The USP of my brand is the 'best merchandise at a very fast pace.' We have 102 stores plus 50 counters in large format stores. That's 150 stores along with e-commerce tie ups. Due to these large numbers, we can source in bulk. Since we pay

manufacturers on time, we get merchandise on time, which then reaches the stores on time. Also, since we pay on time and in full, we get the best of merchandise, one of the main reasons we are patronised by so many consumers.

Are your stores company-owned or do you run a franchise model?

In bigger cities, where we have a warehouse, an area manager or strong staff presence, we prefer to go in for company-owned stores. However, in Tier II & III cities where we have just one or two stores and which are difficult to reach, we prefer to work on a franchise model.

How do you maintain quality in the franchise model?

Since we supply goods, quality control is done by us. In as far as service quality is concerned, we have an audit team, outside agencies who conduct mystery audits. Only when we are satisfied that everything is running

smoothly, we hand over the reins of running a store to a franchise partner. If we are not satisfied, we appoint our own store managers – even for franchise stores – to ensure that service standards are maintained.

Apart from this, we have a regular training team, for all employees, including those at franchise stores. We prefer to pick partners who are well versed in the field of retail, who know the industry well.

What's one foremost business strategy that has helped you grow?

We manufacture only about 3 to 4 percent of our product. We buy the product, and we buy in bulk. We buy in bulk and pay on time and hence we are able to get the best of goods. We source goods from the best of manufacturers from across the country. One reason that we don't get into manufacturing is that it limits our taste and variety. If we employ an in-house design team, our breadth, taste and concepts would become very limited. In this way we

get an opportunity to pick the best from in the country – specialised embroidery from Lucknow, prints from Jaipur etc. It also widens the spectrum of goods that we deal in.

Clicks or bricks – what is your preferred channel of sale?

Today, there is no option of clicks over bricks. Every retailer must go with both to succeed since competition is cutthroat and we have to be on our A-game to stay on top. At the moment 4 percent of our sale is clicks, and 96 percent is bricks. From e-commerce, in 2017, we have done approximately ₹10 crore business and we will be actively scaling this up in the coming years. We see our online business growing to between 10-12 percent in the next couple of years. We have our own website, and we have marketplaces on Myntra, Amazon, TataCliQ, Flipkart and Ajio to name a few.

Tell us about your Omnichannel strategy.

We are working towards building a strong Omnichannel strategy for the better part of the last year. We have implemented the endless aisle as part of our Omnichannel strategy in 10-12 stores on a trial basis. This means if a customer comes to any Soch store, he can choose from 400,000 to 500,000 garments across the eco-system of Soch – including from our warehouses – instead of just the couple of thousand in one store. This helps in consumer delight and satisfaction since they have such a huge variety to choose from.

In the same stores, we also give the consumer the option of ordering online and picking



up merchandise from a store if that is convenient. If not, we can deliver the products to the consumer, at his doorstep. We plan to roll this out in all stores very soon.

Apart from this, we actively capture and study customer data, and track customer buying patterns online as well as offline. Of course, we are still in the process of refining all these techniques, but we are vigorously working towards achieving them.

In case of brick-and-mortar stores, do you have a location preference?

We prefer to open Soch stores on high streets, but unfortunately in every city there are only three or four streets which are workable. The advantages of being in a high street are that retailers more or less know how much business they are going to do. When you sign up for a mall, which hasn't even been launched, you are taking a

little bit of risk for you don't know how soon they are going to be open to public, whether their cinemas, FEC zones and food courts will be good enough to attract crowds. A lot depends on these elements.

However, if we want to grow more, the only way is to go malls. In India, around 100 malls are coming up in another two years. Out of these 100, there are 25-30 that are brilliant, and we would

best of quality at affordable rates, making us formidable to the competition.

Tell us about the growing competition in your segment.

Luckily, in our space, there is not much of competition. We are an Indian ethnic wear brand and even if four or five brands like Soch emerge, there is enough scope for growth for all of us. When you consider the women's ethnic wear segment – since we haven't branched out into any other segment yet – approximately 10 percent of the share comes to the organised sector, which means huge scope for growth for us and our competition.

What are your expansion plans?

We are at a stage right now when we don't need to raise funds for expansion. Our internal growth, luckily, is enough to fund any expansion plans that we have. Since we are also using the franchise route to expand, we don't need much in the way of investments. The plan to keep expanding with the franchise model.

What is your expected turnover?

Soch expects to earn a revenue of ₹425 crore in 2017-18 and is targeting a growth of 40 percent on that in 2018-19. The Indian womenswear market was estimated to be worth ₹1.128 trillion last year and grew at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 11.4 percent between 2011 and 2016, according to data from research firm Euromonitor International. And Soch believes they are perfectly poised to grow bigger than what they are today. **IB**



like to be in all of these. At the moment, we have 48 high street stores and are present in 54 malls.

What is your pricing policy?

I think if you compare our range of the products, we are cheaper than most of the brands in our space with quality which is as good as the competition, if not better. Since we also manufacture some, we know the costs of manufacturing when we go to buy from outside manufacturers in bulk. And since we are able to strike the best of deals with our suppliers, we manage to offer our products to consumers the

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SOUTH INDIA RETAIL SUMMIT 2017: THE CHANGING LANDSCAPE OF SOUTH INDIAN RETAIL INDUSTRY

- By IMAGES Retail Bureau



South India is largely recognised as the birthplace of modern retail in India. About 70 percent of India's rich live in its eight states, including in Karnataka and Tamil Nadu. Across all the middle and high-income classes, except the super-rich, the highest growth in retail has been witnessed in the southern region. Bengaluru, Hyderabad, and Chennai are growing at an exceptional rate, with the retail buzz in these cities becoming more pronounced by the day. The emerging cities of Coimbatore, Kochi, Vizag, Vijayawada, Trivandrum and Madurai are contributing more than \$7,000 million worth retail activity to India today.

In order to highlight achievements, challenges and future prospects in retail of the Southern, the third edition of the South India Retail Summit (SIRS) was held at the ITC Gardenia, Bengaluru on December 6, 2017. The event was graced by the who's who of the retail industry who all converged on a single platform to discuss key retail issues, retail solutions and best practices within the industry.

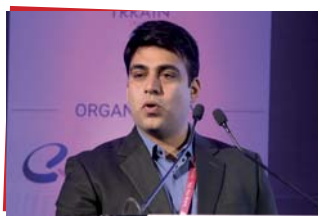
The day long conference comprised of sessions, discussions and presentations on the South Indian retail industry featuring in-depth analysis of the achievements,



Vineet Satija



Harish Bijoor



Farhat Hanif



BS Nagesh

reports, scope, data, opportunities, all of which are making the region the new hub of the retail industry. The focus of the conference was to explore bigger and better opportunities, align with the national vision and provide a platform for all the stakeholders in South Indian retail industry to learn, share and evolve with the masters in the business.

Session highlights

The summit kicked off with the SIRS Research session on **'Intelligence on Changing Landscape in Retail'** which was presented by **Vineet Satija**, Associate Director, Corporate Finance, PwC. The session focused on the forces which are shaping the future of retail across India. He talked about the developing innovative solutions to increase convenience. He also talked about the role that technology plays in shaping the future of retail in years to come.

The second research session, **'Shopping Reinvented - A Focus on India'** was presented by **Farhat Hanif**, Global Market Analyst, Euromonitor International. He spoke on the constant flux of economic and technological realities and how the consumer buys goods and services in the shadow of this situation.

"Today's consumer, shops across multiple platforms and merchants must be well prepared to engage with them at anytime and anywhere. The ideal customer journey weaves a brand into the entire experience, providing value before, during, and after the purchase. Shopping reinvented will provide a framework to understand some of the successful strategies, of incorporating



L to R: Venkatesh Parthasarathy, Pratik Shah, Vasanth Kumar, Veena Kumaravel, CS Suryanarayanan



L to R: Sumit Arora, M Ramakrishnan, C Gopalakrishnan, Rahul Bhalchandra, Piyush Chowhan, Seshu Kumar, Amit Thapliyal

a brand into the shopper's journey across a range of industries, geographies and companies," Hanif noted.

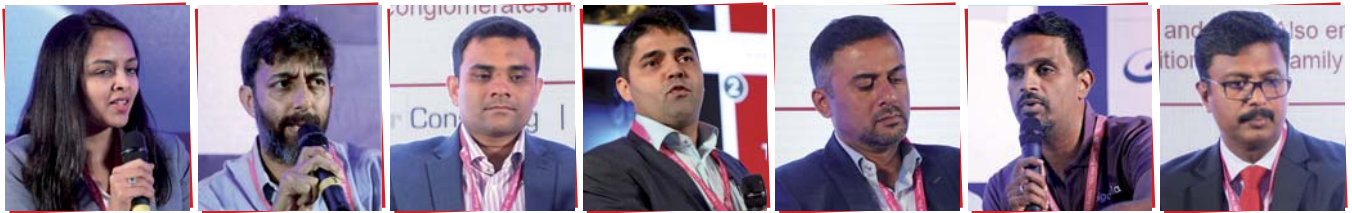
Harish Bijoor, Brand Guru & Founder, Harish Bijoor Consults Inc. shared insights about the latest trend in the retail industry. In his brief session, **'The Ethos of Building a Brand: Top Creative Marketing Ideas for Retailers-Maximum Bang for your Buck'**, he talked about the day-to-day operations of the retailers and creative marketing ideas which delivers great returns at minimal cost.

He also discussed the role brainstorming plays in formulating creative marketing ideas as well as promotional events, which would within the budget and not too expensive. The

focus should be on building imagery around the brand and develop the art of storytelling to capture the consumer's interest in the product or service as per requirement, he said in his sitting.

Following this was the mega inaugural keynote session on **'The Bahubalis of Retail - The Golden South Powering Indian Retail'** which was moderated by **BS Nagesh**, Founder, TRRAIN.

Joining the panel were **Venkatesh Parthasarathy**, MD, Foodworld Supermarkets and Health & Glow; **Vasanth Kumar**, Executive Director, Lifestyle International (Max Retail Division); **Pratik Shah**, CEO, Specsmaakers Opticians; **CS Suryanarayanan**, Founder & MD, SolveSmart International, Singapore; and



Parul Bajaj

Sohrab Sitaram

Suraj Shantakumar

Shubham Anand

Naveen Pishe

Siddarth Menon

Shibu Philips

Veena Kumaravel, Founder and Director, Naturals Salon & Spa.

The panel discussed the rise and impact of the South Indian retail market and its top retailers, comprising of brands like VR, Prestige Group, Nalli, Pothy's, Lifestyle, Chennai Silks, Nilgiri's, MTR, Sangeetha Mobiles to name a few. They also talked about the plethora of technology innovations that were being witnessed in the South Indian Retail sector and which were playing an impactful role in supporting retail in the digital age.

The first half of SIRS 2017 concluded with a session moderated by **Rahul Bhalchandra, Co-Founder & CEO, R&R Salons (YLG-You Look Good)** titled, **'Think Big, To Grow Bigger - How to Grow Regional Retail-Expansion Ideas That Are a Must For Retailers Today and How To Get Them Right.'** **Sumit Arora, Lead Retail Vertical, Nielsen South Asia** was the lead presenter of the session. Joining the discussion were **C Gopalakrishnan, CMD, N Dairy Farm and Founder family of Nilgiris (Founded - 1905); M Ramakrishnan, MD, Thulasi Pharmacies; Piyush Chowhan, VP & CIO, Arvind Lifestyle Brands; Seshu Kumar, National Head, BigBasket and Amit Thapliyal, Global Head- Marketing & Digital Initiaves, Vinculum Solutions.**

The panel talked about the current situation of

THE IDEAL CUSTOMER JOURNEY WEAVES A BRAND INTO THE ENTIRE EXPERIENCE, PROVIDING VALUE BEFORE, DURING, AND AFTER THE PURCHASE. SHOPPING REINVENTED WILL PROVIDE A FRAMEWORK TO UNDERSTAND SOME OF THE SUCCESSFUL STRATEGIES, OF INCORPORATING A BRAND INTO THE SHOPPER'S JOURNEY ACROSS A RANGE OF INDUSTRIES, GEOGRAPHIES AND COMPANIES

established and successful retailers/ brands and what they must do to make sure they stay that way in the future. They also attempted to answer the following questions - With things stable at the moment, what must retailers do to take their business to the next level? What all implementation the brands should make to keep them ahead in the race?

The session highlighted factors impacting the sustainability of profitable business versus increasing market share, giving impetus to the revenue model and delighting customers, the importance of social and digital media, role of technology and mega trends in the retail sector.

Parul Bajaj, Principal, The Boston Consulting Group (BCG), moderated the post-lunch session on **'Creating Lasting Legacies & Making Your Businesses Last Generations: How To Build Businesses Which Retain The Ethos Of Their Founders And Still Set Timeless Trends Even Decades After.'**

Shubham Anand, Head Retail - CPG, RedSeer Consulting, was the lead context presenter. The other panel members included **Naveen Pishe, Partner and Director, PN Rao, Fine Suits (since 1923); Sohrab Sitaram, CEO and Director, Keventers; Suraj Shantakumar, Director Business Strategy, Kirtilals and Honorary Consul General of Kazakhstan for South India; Siddarth Menon, CMO, Drums Food International (Epigamia and Hokey Pokey); Shibu Philips, Business Head, LuLu Mall.**

The session discussed

how to thrive through tough economic cycles, through downturns in the economy, managing lean sales periods, succession changes and promoter-professional harmony. Since South India is legendary for businesses that have been around - successfully - for decades, panelists thought it relevant to share experiences of legacy and timelessness. They talked about fourth and fifth generation scions who are carrying businesses forward with great innovativeness, while keeping their traditional values intact.

The next session talked about the new entrepreneurs and the start-ups which is the latest trend in the industry. **Bijou Kurien, Board Member, L Catterton Asia,** moderated the session titled **'New Entrepreneurs And Start-ups Special: Ways To Take Your Early Business To The Next Level. What It Takes To Be**



L to R: Bijou Kurien, Prashant Parameswaran, Anuj Batra, Dhawal Phadke, Gajendra Singh Rathore, Jahan Peston Jamas, Santosh Verma, Swadeep Patil

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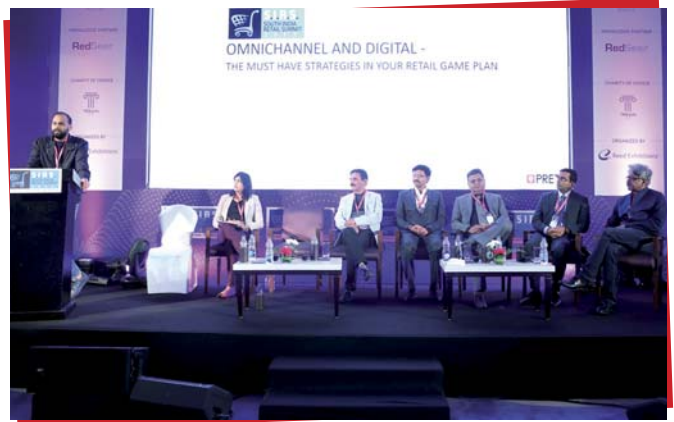
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L to R: Bhavik Jhaveri, Pooja Maheshwari Salwan, Anil Chinnabhandar, Hemanth Sheelvant, Niladri Mazumder, Jitendra Vyas, Vipul Mathur

A Successful Entrepreneur And Build A Robust Young Business.

The other members who joined him in the panel were **Dhawal Phadke**, Co-Founder, Sattviko (Finalist at World Food India – selected top 20 innovative food processing startups); **Anuj Batra**, President, Alcis Sports; **Gajendra Singh Rathore**, Centre Director, Phoenix Marketcity, Bangalore; **Jahan Peston Jamas**, Co-Founder and Director, Bombay Hemp Company (BOHECO); **Prashant Parameswaran**, Founder & MD, Soulfull; **Santosh Verma**, Co-Founder & Director, MyOwnEcoEnergy (Indizel); **Swadeep Patil**, Founder, Dr. Charcoal.

The panelists shared their start-up journey experiences with emphasis on the vision, strategy formulation, execution, prowess, scalability, growth and profit to mold their success and keep moving forward.

The next session was on **‘Retail Showpieces -Retailers & Concepts From The Region That Are Redefining Retail!’** **S Raghunandan**, CEO, Next Practice Retail moderated the event.

The panelist includes experts with the likes of **Surendra Nayak**, Head

Sales & Marketing, Logic ERP Solutions; **L Subhash Chandra**, MD, Sangeetha Mobiles; **Manohar Chatlani**, MD, Soch; **Mukesh Kumar**, Sr. Vice President, Infiniti Mall; **Nikhil Ranjan**, Founder & CEO, William Penn; **Ramesh Natarajan**, Founder and COO, LitmusWorld; **Sanjeev Rao**, Director - Business

Development, Raymond. The discussion’s focus was on the retailers and brands that, after making a successful mark in the national market, were targeting international markets. The talk centered around their visions, strategies, and plan execution.

Rounding up the day-long conference was a session

dedicated to the future of the Indian retail titled **‘Omnichannel And Digital –The Must Have Strategies in Your Retail Gameplan.’**

The session was moderated by **Pooja Maheshwari Salwan**, Category Head - Fashion Tech & Gadgets, Ajio.com.

The panel constituted of **Bhavik Jhaveri**, Founder & CEO, PRETR; **Dr. Anil Chinnabhandar**, Senior Vice President – SCM & Planning, Landmark Group - Max Retail Division; **Hemanth Sheelvant**, Head - Personalization Technologies in Retail; **Niladri Mazumder**, Vice President and Head Marketing, Seiko Watch India; **Jitendra Vyas**, VP - Marketing and Strategy, Ginesys; **Vipul Mathur**, CEO, American Bull.

The panelists discussed the opportunities and challenges faced by retailers to meet the increasing demands of customers who dictated everything in this digital age and expected everything to be done in a more convenient way. They spoke on the importance of Omnichannel, which would turn out to be the most important medium to reach out the customers not only in fashion but other sectors of retail in the store, mall and online. [IR](#)

JURY PANEL



Abheek Singhi



Ajay Macaden



B S Nagesh



Bijou Kurien



Harminder Sahn



Subhendu Roy



Ramesh Nair



Amitabh Taneja

The session was followed by the gala evening in which top admired leaders and retail business from the region were awarded and honored. The jury panel constituted of speakers and experts from the finest organisations. The list included **BS Nagesh**, Founder, TRRAIN; **C Gopalakrishnan**, **Abheek Singhi**, Senior Partner and Director, The Boston Consulting Group, **Ajay Macaden**, Executive Director, Nielsen India; **Bijou Kurien**, Member, Strategic Advisory Board, L Capital Asia; **Harminder Sahn**, Founder & MD, Wazir Advisors, **Subhendu Roy**, Partner, A.T. Kearney; **Amitabh Taneja**, CMD and Editor in Chief, Images Group and **Ramesh Nair**, CEO & Country Head, India - JLL.

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'THE FOCUS OF PRISMA IS ON CREATING INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS FOR CONSUMERS'

– By IMAGES Retail Bureau

A premium product from the house of Poomex, Prisma caters to both men and women in the sportswear, leisure and essential wear segments. It is one of the fastest growing companies in the category...

The apparel market in India is evolving. Consumer tastes and demands are advancing at a fast pace. They want contemporary fits and styles and one homegrown brand which is giving them all this and much more is Prisma. A premium product from the house of Poomex, Prisma caters to both men and women in the sportswear, leisure and essential wear segments. It is one of the fastest growing companies in the category. With a state-of-art facility at its disposal, the focus is on creating an international benchmark with originality, great styling and the best of quality.

In an exclusive chat with IMAGES Retail Bureau, Ajay Kumar Jain, Executive Director Prisma, talked about the origins of his brand,

opening up of exclusive stores and the company's e-commerce focus.

"Prisma originates from the city of Tirupur in Tamil Nadu. It's a part of Poomex Group, a company which boasts of a 40-year-old legacy. Prisma started around five years ago and we are catering to the outerwear garments category for both men and women," he said.

"We have recently entered into the retail market and are working to expand our reach. We are opening exclusive stores for men and women. A couple of flagship stores are also in the pipeline," he added. As of now, Prisma has five stores down South, five in Mumbai and one franchise outlet in Pune. All of these are exclusive brand outlets. The brand is also looking at opening five more franchise stores in Gujarat.

"We are expanding carefully – going region by region. We have made our presence felt in the Southern region with five EBOs and 3,500 MBOs and now we are slowly inching up, exploring the market for EBOs, MBOs and franchise outlets," Jain said.

The Prisma management is also working with many consultants in the retail sector – top levels experts from

companies like JLL, Shoppers Stop and Raymond – who help the brand take its business forward in an intelligent manner. "I think our brand evolution comes from the fact that we focus on quality, and our customer – in the sense that our product is designed keeping the customer's needs in mind. That's the only way to stay ahead in a market which is seeing a lot of players coming in and in which huge amounts of capital is being invested," Jain explained.

Location Preference

In the next phase, Prisma will be focusing on the North Indian market. By the end of 2017, the brand aims to have between 10 and 15 stores across the nation with fresh plans for 2018 underway.

"We prefer to open stores everywhere – malls and high streets. We have around 40 distributors across the nation who help us identify the best locations. One of our flagship stores is located in one of Tirupur's premium high streets. Currently, we are focusing on malls where we are assured of walk-ins and increased sales," he stated.

E-commerce Focus

While the brand has yet to develop an Omnichannel

strategy, the management understands that an amalgamation of offline and online is the future of retail and expansion into e-commerce is definitely on the radar.

"So, although we don't have an Omnichannel strategy yet, we are well on the way to planning and implementing one soon. For the time being, our products are available on some e-commerce sites and we are looking for more exclusive sites. We also have our own website, myprisma.in, where patrons can go and purchase our products," Jain said.

Prisma is currently doing ₹80 crore worth business from its stores.

"Since we are almost doubling our turnover every year, we hope to take this figure over ₹150 crore by 2018 end. We also hope to take our revenue from the digital medium to between 5 and 10 percent of our annual turnover," said Jain.

He stated that his brand was not bound to any particular category and that they were "very focused on category expansion."

"We will be coming out a complete new range of products very soon," Jain concluded. ■





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GO COLORS OPENS **200TH STORE** AT HIGH STREET PHOENIX MUMBAI

– By IMAGES Retail Bureau

The 200th store is a testament to Go Colors for its ability to create a branded legwear segment in a space which was completely unorganised till a few years ago. It has also managed gather a loyal customer base, catering to a class of consumers who prefer buying quality products ...



Leading women's legwear brand Go Colors, has opened its 200th store in High Street Phoenix at Lower Parel Mumbai. With this store – its 30th EBO in Mumbai – Go Colors has moved ahead in its expansion, while strengthening its footprint in one of India's major metropolitan cities.

“We'd love for everyone to experience the phenomenon that Go Colors is, to soak in the comfort and classy finish of chic and colourful dressing. Customers visiting High Street Phoenix can buy all their legwear needs at one Go! The store provides an international shopping experience for its customers. With the widest range of women's legwear from ethnic to Indo-Western, to denims, we have the right legwear style for every occasion,” said CEO, Go Colors, Gautam Sarogi, at the launch of the brand EBO.

The 200th store is a testament to Go Colors for its ability to create a branded legwear segment in a space which was completely unorganised till a few years ago. It has also managed gather a loyal customer base, catering to a class of consumers who prefer buying quality products.

The brand has been at the forefront of giving customers a lot of choice and options in the legwear segment under one roof. It offers consumers the widest variety of products, empowering women to choose and spruce up their wardrobe and experiment with new styles including Kurti Pants, Jeggings, Palazzo, Pencil Pants, Super Stretch Denims, Culottes and the regular leggings.

And all of these styles are available in a dazzling array of 120 colors.

The brand has been investing in the brick-and-mortar model, while giving a huge boost to its Omnichannel retail model. Their mainstay is to ensure that customer convenience is prioritised, and that the customer should be able to get the product she needs at the store closest to her.

Currently, Go Colors has 200 exclusive brand outlets across high streets and leading malls in over 48 cities. It also has presence in large format stores like Reliance Trends, Shoppers Stop and Central among others. The brand's products are also available on major shopping portals in the country including Myntra, Jabong and Amazon. 



SOUTH INDIA RETAIL AWARDS 2017

IMAGES Group instituted 'South India Retail Awards' to honour business legends, professionals and innovators in the business of retail from South India for Excellence in Retail and Customer Service...

The third edition of the South India Retail Summit (SIRS) was held on December 6, 2017 at ITC Gardenia, Bengaluru. IMAGES Group had instituted 'South India Retail Awards' to honour business legends, professionals and innovators in the business of retail from South India for excellence in retail and customer service. Here is a list of the 10 honourees who were felicitated at the event:

★ CK KUMARAVEL ★

CEO & CO-FOUNDER, NATURALS SALON & SPA

CK Kumaravel and his wife Veena set up Naturals in 2000, a venture that has led to over 300 franchise outlets in 16 states. Naturals currently operates 390 beauty salons, with 220 of them in Tamil Nadu and 50 each in Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka. The rest are located in other parts of the country. Naturals started making profit from the fourth year of its launch and had clocked a turnover of ₹270 crore last year. Kumaravel believed that good beauty salons at the time were only found in luxury hotels, which were very expensive and far from the reach of the average customer and normal local salons and barber shops were also out of sight due to their poor-quality standards. Most middle class women would agree with this. Naturals filled the gap by hiring the Head, Taj's beauty salons and asked him to set up operations by hiring a team of his own.

The first year, Naturals did a business of ₹2 million and with a loss of ₹1 million. Gradually, the turnover increased and loss narrowed and by the fourth year, the company stated making profit as number of salons inched up. Kumaravel preferred to tie up with 'gracious partners,' a self coined term of those who fulfilled six of his criteria. Absolute integrity, willingness to be owner-managers, ability to lead a team, good customer management skills, the ability to invest money and finally, no knowledge of the beauty industry were his working criteria to make the business a success.



“*The last 17 years have been very exciting. We have learnt a lot, we have failed a few times, and now we have 600+ salons. We have created 300+ financially independent women entrepreneurs and 8000+ direct jobs – the most significant contribution of Naturals. India is poised for big growth and so is the beauty industry in the country. My dream is to make Naturals, number salon chain in the world.*”



“*Since 2009, we have expanded to 40 branches. Normally most of the restaurants use basmati rice, and Chennai was no different. We were the first ones to introduce seerega samba rice. Biryani was initially cooked in a traditional manner using wood and charcoal, but it didn't suit our demands. We therefore imported biryani machines from Taiwan, which are now used in every outlet.*”

★ D NAGASWAMY ★

MANAGING DIRECTOR, DINDIGUL THALAPPAKATTI

Dindigul Thalappakatti was started in the year 1957 by Nagasamy as Anand Vilas in Dindigul. His wife's recipe of uniquely ground spices and *masalas* coupled with the taste of *seeraga* samba rice and mutton achieved a legendary status as his name spread far and wide and the restaurant became a landmark for anyone visiting Dindigul. Out of love, the customers christened the restaurant and branded it as Dindigul Thalappakatti Restaurant, in which name it has achieved worldwide recognition.

In the year 2008, Nagasamy Dhanabalan, the founder's grandson, took over the reins of business and expanded in Chennai, rest of Tamil Nadu and abroad in countries like USA, France, Dubai and Malaysia. Today Dindigul Thalappakatti with 43 branches worldwide, are serving over 5 million biriyanis in a year with over 2000 employees and has crossed 200 crores of sales, is arguably the biggest biriyani brand in the world. They brand was awarded 'Pride of Tamil Nadu' in the food and beverage category.

★ N NATARAJAN ★

FOUNDER CHAIRMAN, KOVAIPAZHAMUDIR NILAYAM

N. Natarajan, Founder Chairman of Kovai Pazhamudir Nilayam's story has been one of rags to riches, a truly inspiring tale. He single-handedly created a completely new model and platform for selling fruits and vegetables in Tamil Nadu, which is now widely accepted and adopted across the nation.

Pazhamudir Group had a very humble beginning with its first outlet being a mere 100 sq.ft. showroom in Coimbatore. It was started by Natarajan and his brothers. Their interest in the fruit and vegetable business started at a very young age when they were working in a small fruit shop in Coimbatore. They had put lot of effort in their early stages by selling fruits on carts

and by carrying in baskets before they eventually started their first outlet in Coimbatore.

Natarajan chose Chennai as a potential retail market for fruits and vegetables and established the first outlet in T. Nagar in 1999, under the brand name Kovai Pazhamudir Nilayam (KPN). Since then KPN has expanded to 30 branches in Chennai, four in Coimbatore, five in Pondicherry, two each in Tirupur, Trichy, Thanjavur and one in Cuddalore. He built a strong group comprising 51 retail shops, two textile units and two restaurants with a turnover of ₹285 crore in 2016-17).

KPN has all the facilities of modern retail outlets while maintaining its core structure of giving a market-like feel for the customers in terms of quantity displayed, variety



of products spread and competitive pricing.

KPN was the first outlet to bring in weighing based system against the dozen based system followed for a long time in the markets. Also it abolished the bargaining system, which was very prevalent in fruits and Vegetables trade. They have also now introduced selling cut fruits and cut vegetables in hygienic packs, which helps customers save time in their busy schedules.

Kovai Pazhamudir Group has a huge volume of product movement

approximately close to 200 tones every day. They have been steadily bringing truckloads of oranges, apples, pomegranates, grapes and onions from North to South everyday and import produce directly from 15 countries.

Pazhamudir's success is the result of providing a wide range of quality fruits, vegetables, juices and associated products to its customers, at reasonable rates around the year. KPN seek to provide opportunities for growth and enrichment to our employees, our business partners and the communities in which they operate.

★ SYED AHAMED ★

CHAIRMAN, LKS

Founded in 1925 by seven brothers from Kayalpatnam, in a small town named Tiruchirappalli - LKS stands to be one of the most revered respected and trusted brands in jewellery segment. The pioneers in organised jewellery retail expanded to Sri Lanka in the 1930s with two retail stores in Jaffna and a manufacturing unit in Colombo. At that time LKS had the biggest manufacturing unit in Sri Lanka with 600 artisans.

Rewards and recognition

followed from United Nations and Ambassadors of Japan, Australia and United Kingdom on the skilled workmanship and artistry of design. The retail journey in Chennai began with a single small jewellery store in China Bazaar in 1945.

LKS started its expansion by opening stores across Tamil Nadu and slowly they diversified into Fashion Retail, Home Life Stores and Banquet Halls as well. Today LKS has become a household name in Tamil Nadu with an annual turnover exceeding ₹2000 crore and providing employment and livelihood



to 850 people.

The 92 year old business is currently managed by eight family members spearheaded by Syed Ahamed, Chairman and Akbar Shah, the Managing Director.

The fourth generation of LKS has already taken the

reigns. The future vision of the group is to expand across South India in different segments of retail, spearheaded by their jewellery stores, and achieve a turnover of ₹10,000 crore and provide livelihood to over 3,000 people in the next five years.

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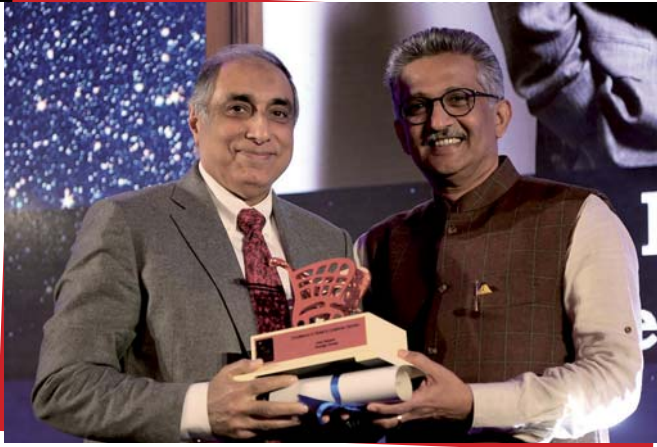
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★ **IRFAN RAZACK** ★
CMD, PRESTIGE GROUP

Referred to as a humble and approachable individual, Irfan Razack with his visionary leadership, foresight and sharp business acumen has transformed Prestige Group into a truly diversified and fast growing business conglomerate. Under his able leadership, the Prestige Group has flourished into an entity that is considered the symbol of innovation and international offering. Reflecting this success, most

of Bengaluru's landmarks today display the iconic Falcon symbolising the Prestige Group. Over the last decade, the Prestige Group has firmly established itself as one of the leading and most successful developers of real estate in India by imprinting its indelible mark across all asset classes. Founded in 1986, the group's turnover in FY 17 was ₹4862 crores. A leap that has been inspired by CMD Irfan Razack and marshaled by his brothers Rezwan Razack and Noaman Razack. As

of Q1 FY 18, the group has completed more than 210 projects covering over 80 million sq. ft., and currently has 53 ongoing projects covering 54 million sq. ft. and 35 upcoming projects aggregating to 48 million sq. ft. of world-class real estate space across asset classes.

In October 2010, the Prestige Group also successfully entered the capital market with an Initial Public Offering of ₹1200 crore. The market capital of the company is ₹10,854 crore (NSE - 16th October, 2017). No surprise then that the company is also credited with responsibly shaping the city's skyline.

The company today has completed several million sq. ft. of world-class real estate development across the residential, commercial, retail, leisure and hospitality sectors in cities including Hyderabad, Kochi, Mangalore, Mysore, Goa and Chennai, besides Bengaluru. The Group's businesses also include Property

Management Services and Interior Design. The group owns three malls:

- **UB City: The Collection** - India's first true luxury mall (Partnered initiative with Vijay Mallya - UB Group)
- **Forum Mall** - Globally-recognised today and probably the first successful retail mall in the country which created new benchmarks in modern day retailing.
- **Forum Value Mall** - India's first real outlet mall featuring international and national brands

Razack himself is recognised for his successful initiatives in hospitality where he has been credited with introducing leading brands to the country such as the Hilton Group and Marriott International for hotels; the Banyan Tree for resorts; and Oakwood for service apartments. His world-class projects have also attracted renowned clients including Intel, Microsoft, Hewlett Packard, Oracle, IBM and Cisco to name a few.

★ **MR JAISHANKAR** ★
CMD, BRIGADE GROUP



The founder-CMD of Brigade Group, MR Jaishankar, comes from a reputed family of coffee planters from Chikmagalur, in the Western Ghats. For over a hundred years, his family has been well known in the region for their business integrity and philanthropy.

His commitment to quality and passion for innovation has seen Brigade Group grow from a single-building, small-scale private enterprise to a diverse multi-domain Company which is into all verticals of real estate. Under his

leadership Brigade Group has scaled new heights and this has been recognised by many awards which Brigade Group has received over the years. Brigade Group has a diverse multi-domain portfolio that covers property development, property management services, hospitality and education and their projects extend across several major cities in South India.

The group has received various awards and accolades including IMAGES Most Admired Shopping Centre of the year 2015 - South, and IMAGES Most Admired Shopping Centre (Marketing & Promotions) of the year, 2015.



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★ PANNALAL GIRIA ★

DIRECTOR, GIRIAS INDIA

Pannalal Giria, the Managing Director in the joint family of Girias consumer- South India's No.1 consumer durable retailer electronics business owns 50 stores across Tamil Nadu and Karnataka. Each store is a 10,000 sq. ft. haven for consumer electronics and durables shoppers. Started in 1971 the group has grown to become leaders in consumer electronic segment in the south.

The journey from a 300 sq. ft. store to a 5,00,000+ sq. ft, multi-city showroom brand, four decades of quality delivery and unmatched service -Girias has come a long way and is now counted among South India's top consumer durables retailers.

With 49 stores in India including Bengaluru, Chennai, Mangalore, Mysore, Hubli, Coimbatore, Madurai and Salem and growing. Girias believes in the philosophy of providing the latest products to customers at the best market price.



★ L SUBHASH CHANDRA ★

MANAGING DIRECTOR, SANGEETHA MOBILES

L Subhash Chandra's undying spirit and relentless commitment to excel has taken Sangeetha Mobile's to the absolute pinnacles of success and growth.

Sangeetha Mobiles had humble beginnings in 1974, when its founder LP Narayana Reddy partnered with his friends to establish a music shop named Sangeetha, selling Gramophone records in Bengaluru. When his son L Subhash Chandra, joined Sangeetha then its fortunes changed. The company grew exponentially and forayed into home appliances, pagers, TV sets, computers as well. After reaching a relevant success point, the company decided to focus on handsets exclusively.

The sincere efforts of Chandra turned Sangeetha Mobiles into a force to be reckoned with today. Be it the industry-first Damage Protection or the Price Drop Protection plan, Sangeetha has always redefined the game. His vision and endeavor has helped Sangeetha clock a turnover of ₹1000 Crores, with over 15 million happy customers who have become the brand's happiest endorsers! The brand now sells 1.4 million phones every year.

Chandra was voted & selected in the public voting category by the Juries & Public at '8th Annual India Leadership Conclave & Indian Affairs Business Leadership Awards 2017'.



“*I have been lucky to be riding on a wave of telecommunication boom in the country. In 1974, Sangeetha was born as a gramophone retail company. From a gramophone record seller to cell phones, we have travelled a long way. From one store to 400 all across South India, we have come a long way and we have just started our journey beyond South India.*”



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★ PRATIK SHAH ★

CEO & FOUNDER OF SPECSMAKERS

A self-chiseled entrepreneur, Pratik Shah, the CEO & Founder of Specsmaakers is a MBA in Finance & Marketing from Spears School of Business, Oklahoma State University. His return to India was unavoidable as he had to handle his father's wholesale business of optical lenses. In just couple of years, he envisioned to start India's first single brand optical retail chain. He launched the first outlet under the brand 'Specsmakers' at Anna Nagar, Chennai in 2007.

Specsmakers as brand has shown phenomenal

growth under his expertise and leadership by expanding its footprint from a single store to 110 stores spread across Chennai, Bengaluru and Madurai, in a span of 10 years.

Shah's interest and love are towards stocks, marketing and banking. He steps up to the next level as a tech evangelist, who believes that software's can assist product demo's to attain new experience and better understanding to consumers.

He is an avid believer of woman driven organisations and has to that effect, appointed his wife Sonal Shah, the company's COO. His belief has enabled the



brand to achieve 45 percent woman staffing with an overall head count of 462 employees. His sheer passion towards his work had made

the brand to receive "South India's Best Affordable Optician" by Times Retail Icon for two consecutive years 2015 & 2016.

★ LAVANYA NALLI ★

VICE CHAIRMAN, NALLI GROUP OF COMPANIES

Lavanya Nalli is a hands-on leader with 12 years of experience across retail, e-commerce, strategy and operations. She started her career with the Nalli Group - a \$100 million national retail chain - focusing on new business development and growth opportunities, retail store operations, and a private-label.

She later launched a sub-brand that penetrated untapped markets, and incubated a venture that empowered artisanal communities by bringing design-led products to market. During her tenure, Nalli doubled its revenues, and expanded from 14 to 21 stores.

Lavanya graduated from Harvard Business School with an MBA in 2011, and worked at McKinsey & Company (Chicago) advising CXOs of Fortune 500 companies on issues ranging from top-line growth and profit improvement initiatives, change management programs and multi-channel strategy.

She moved to India in 2013 into the e-commerce world as VP, Revenue & Shopping Experience at Myntra (Flipkart Group) and is now leading the e-commerce, private-label and expansion efforts at Nalli Group of companies. Her father, Nalli Kuppuswami Chetti received the award on her behalf.



“ I am most passionate about is making Nalli, the number one saree destination in the world. When I had joined the business in my early twenties, I didn't have knowledge about the consumers and the product. So, in a way I was able to understand the business ground up. I had my hunches, I tested it out with the costumer's surveys or just through observations and then I was able to do new things. ”

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1. Gauhar Khan 2. Priya Banerjee 3. Soha Ali Khan 4. Dino Morea 5. Karisma Kapoor 6. Sophie Choudry 7. Neil Nitin Mukesh 8. Nishka Lulla, Neeru Kumar, Neeta Lulla, Avnish Kumar, Aftab Shivdasani, Suchita Ahuja at Neeru's Santacruz store launch, in December

ETHNIC WEAR BRAND NEERU'S JOURNEY: FROM HUMBLE BEGINNINGS TO INTERNATIONAL PLANS

—By Charu Lamba

The brand has grown multi-fold since the day of its inception as the trend of ethnic wear is growing in India. From a humble beginning of supplying raw material to fashion retailers to being counted among the top fashion brands in India today, Neeru's has come a long way...

From a humble beginning of supplying raw material to fashion retailers to being counted among the top fashion brands in India today, Neeru's has come a long way. The brand is synonymous with ethnic fashion. With its active participation in fashion weeks and close engagement with celebrity fashion influencers, Neeru's has come a long way from its humble beginnings.

The journey of Harish Kumar, CMD - Neeru's, along with his mother Basant Kaur, the founder of Neeru's, began in 1971 with tailoring and embroidery of superior and intricate designs in Hyderabad. In 1983, Kumar started manufacturing and wholesale supplying of fabric

to over 1,000 retailers across India.

Spotting a potential, he was quick to introduce handloom and other natural fabrics. This not only came as a fresh boon to the fabric market, which was till then saturated with man-made fibers, but also gave a respite to weavers from South India helping them generate due economic benefits from their skills of weaving natural fibers.

It would be no exaggeration to say that Harish Kumar worked towards making handloom look fashionable and trendy thus giving it a face lift from its earlier avatar of being considered a choice for people who could not afford expensive fabric.

The turning point came in 1991 when he realised that there was a dearth of good ethnic wear brands in the country, specially so when ethnic wear had a strong underlying demand. This is when Neeru's journey started as a brand.

Avnish Kumar, Director, Neeru's told IMAGES Retail Bureau, "The brand has grown multi-fold since the day of its inception as the trend of ethnic wear is growing in India. Earlier, malls were hesitant to give space





to ethnic wear retailers. Today, the situation has completely reversed with shopping centres realising the value ethnic wear brings to them and are dedicating separate floors to this mode of fashion. This is also a big reason why we as a brand are planning to spread to our wings.”

Market Presence

Today, with 40 EBOs and 22 MBOs stores (including the one in Dubai) and approximately 4.5 lakh sq. ft. of retail space, Neeru’s is redefining designer ethnic wear in India, making it available to patrons who are connoisseurs of fine design but shy away from buying due to expensive designer tags.

Kumar said, “The brand’s USP is selling the latest and the best of Indian ethnic wear at a reasonable price tag.”

The locations of Neeru’s exclusive stores include Hyderabad, Delhi, Chennai, Bengaluru, Vijaywada, Tirupati, Nellore, Vizag, Guntur, Mumbai, Lucknow, Nizamabad and Dubai.

Neeru’s is also associated with large format retailers like Central and Lifestyle. According to Kumar: “By March 2018, we are planning to take our total store count to 50.”

The Flagship Concept Store

Neeru’s Emporio, The Ethnic Palace of India, which recently opened in Santacruz, Mumbai is a visual treat spread over a sprawling 40,000 sq. ft. area. The store is dedicated to men, women, and kids ethnic wear fashion – a one-stop destination for wedding shopping.

The design aesthetics of the store is at par with international luxury stores with Italian marble inlays, a waterfall inside the store, a one of its kind 3D history wall, a 15 foot LED screen wall display and a live handloom machine where customers can watch weavers creating sarees right in front of their eyes.

The brand has another Neeru’s Emporio in Banjara Hills, Hyderabad.

Apart from this Kumar revealed that they have two other formats. “Our small format stores known as ‘Be Desi’ by Neeru’s, a fast-fashion brand, has a store size ranging from 500 to 800 sq. ft. The other format is the proper Neeru’s store which spans 15,000 sq.ft.”

Product Line

The product line includes *lehengas, sarees, silks, suits, mix-and-match, accessories,*

men’s ethnic and kids’ wear. Women’s wear includes *lehengas, ghagras, silks, sarees, half sarees, blouses, tunics, and mix and match* in both ready-to-wear, and unstitched formats. Men’s wear includes *kurta pyjamas, Indo western wear, sherwanis, suits, shirts and trousers.*

Neeru’s is also going strong on a sub-brand expansion, with the most prominent being Neeru’s Mix & Match – an exclusive collection of tunics, kurtis and bottoms. This is led by the Signature Neeru Kumar collection. Then there is Neeru’sMenz which is an exclusive collection for men.

The other collections include Little Neeru’s which is dedicated to children up to 14 years of age and Yuva which includes fashion jewellery, clutches, bags and footwear. The brand also forayed into the world of pret with the launch of their signature collection, Neeru Kumar Collection.

“Our target audience ranges from infant to 60-year old men and women as we have an extensive product range to cater to all their ethnic needs,” explained Kumar.

Marketing & Promotions

Neeru’s has signed Bollywood star and fashionista

Sonam Kapoor as its brand ambassador. The brand believes that this association will leverage the versatility and legacy of both the brand and the actor, as she represents the brand promise ‘Fashion’.

Talking about the appointment, Kumar said, “We are proud to welcome Sonam Kapoor to the Neeru’s family. The style diva’s fashion style complements the brand’s legacy and her vibrant persona, elegance and popularity makes her a great fit for our brand.”

Expansion Plans

Today, apart from its own outlets, Neeru’s is looking towards expansion through both the franchise as well as the dealership route. According to Avnish, the franchise terms of Neeru’s require a space of about 1,500 to 4,500 sq. ft. The requirement for its sub-brands is between 500 and 1,000 sq. ft.

The Future

With an aim to spread the brand’s reach across the country, Harish and Avnish, envisage opening EBOs of the brand in the metro cities and are also looking forward to a presence in Tier II & III cities.

New EBOs are being planned in Hyderabad, Bengaluru, Chennai, Tirupati, Hubli, Raipur, Nagpur, Pune and many more along with all major Tier II and III cities in India. Neeru’s also plans to expand internationally by adding stores in the Middle East as well as the United States of America. Currently, Neeru’s has a presence in 2 countries, 11 states and 20 cities. “We are eyeing to hit a revenue target of ₹220 to 230 crore this fiscal,” concluded Kumar. **IR**

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COOL COLORS TO FOCUS ON OPENING NEW EBOS & MBOS IN 2018

Cool Colors aims to break free from being typecast as 'just another brand' and is on its way to becoming an alternative to mainstream brands in the country...



With a focus on brand image and consumer experience, Bengaluru-based brand Cool Colors is making waves in the South Indian apparel retail sector. Cool Colors, which

offers a unique shopping experience to patrons has a strong network of exclusive retail showrooms across the four major South Indian states of Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, and Kerala.

The brand is now major in-roads into the Eastern region of India. **Praveen Mutha, Managing Director, Bafna Clothing Company** – who has over 20 years of experience in the garment industry – heads the company. In an exclusive interview with IMAGES Retail, he talks about the growth, expansion and future strategies of Cool Colors. Excerpts from the chat...



Tell us about your brand history

Bafna Clothing Company, the parent company of Cool Colors, has been in the business of garment making for over 35 years now. It is considered to be one India's fastest growing garment makers and is now an ISO 9001 company, established as a well-respected and renowned brand.

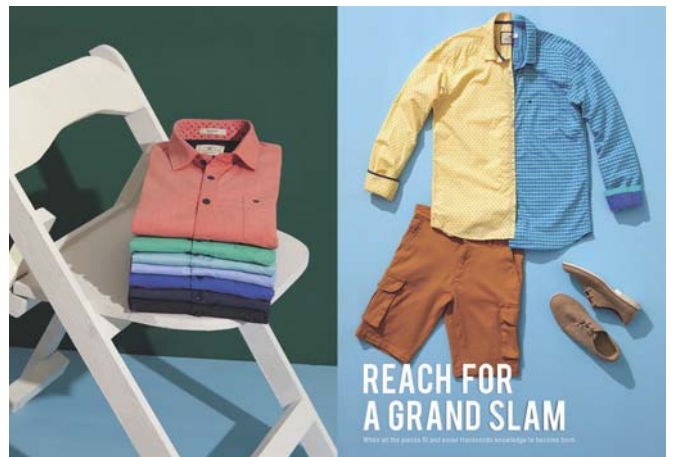
Based in Bengaluru, Bafna has a steady presence across India, Singapore and UAE along with a wide range of online services as well.

What is the USP of your brand?

We are a shirts brand for men and we decide the percentage of our products based on our consumer preferences. Currently our manufacturing breakup is 40 percent check-design shirts, 30 percent block colours and 30 percent printed shirts.

Cool Colors, which has dedicatedly worked on building its brand image, has broken free of the 'just another brand' impression. We are consciously working to become an alternative to mainstream brands





and not just the immediate competition. We provide the best quality of clothes at affordable prices to our consumers.

What is your current brand reach?

The brand operates across leading stores in India, Singapore and the UAE, with over 1,200 MBOs and four EBOs. We are also present in large format stores such as Reliance and Brand Factory. Since we have been actively present in the market, we have focused on creating a strong presence across Tier I, II & III cities.

What in-store experiences are you offering consumers?

The brand evokes interest among its customers with an engrossing setup. We make sure that our customers are comfortable and are well assisted by dedicated and trained

staff to ensure they make the right purchase and go home happy. We focus on giving consumers strong in-store promotions that help our products gain greater visibility.

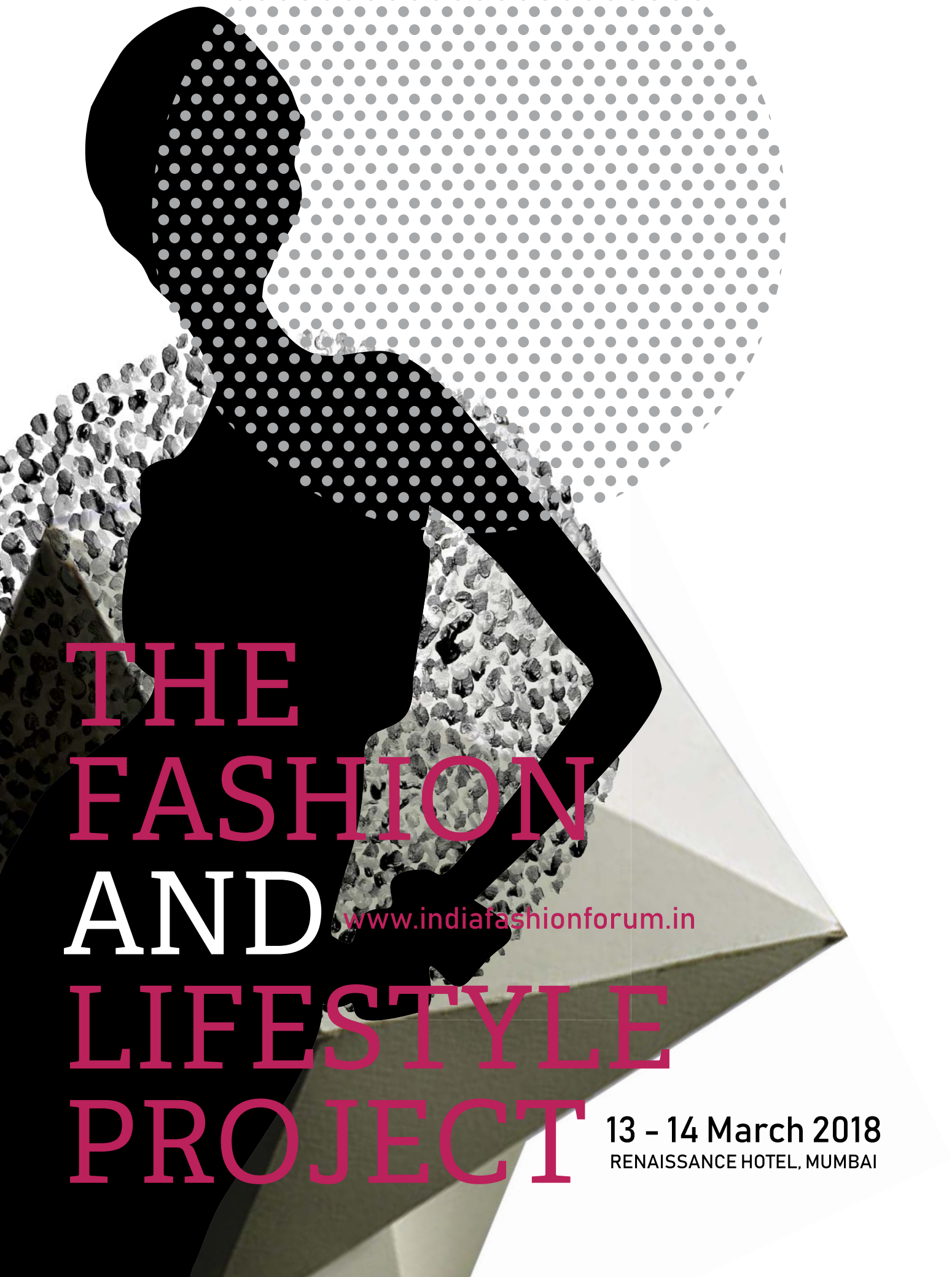
Do you have an Omnichannel strategy?

We focus on a combination of traditional retail stores and online shopping through our online partners Flipkart and Amazon. This strategy has been working well for us, giving us a steady growth, coupled with our use of social media marketing as a key driver for engaging customers and promoting online sales. The greatest success still comes from the traditional retail stores where customers are free to indulge in in-store experiences.

What are your expansion plans? What is your retail strategy?

We are working on increasing our distribution network through a mix of EBOs and MBOs. We have also improved our market portfolio to cater to our consumers.

Apart from this, we are beginning to enter into the Eastern India retail space, where we have focused our resources in understanding the challenges as well as opportunities for creating a sustainable business in the region. **IR**



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THE “SHOPPING REINVENTED” MEGATREND IN INDIA



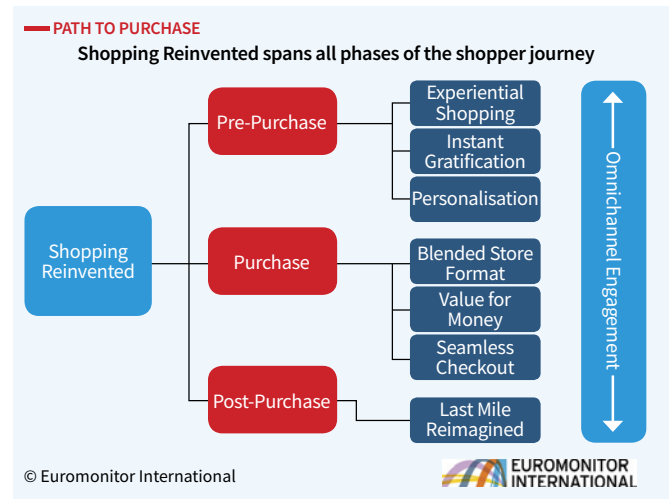
– By **Farhat Hanif**, Global Market Analyst at Euromonitor International

Today, the purpose of shopping is a journey. It's not just purchasing the product, but a relationship building process for the brand.

Shopping experience over the years has seen a paradigm shift in the way services are offered and consumed. This shift in consumer behaviour has a global impact across industries which will shape the world through 2030, termed as a “megatrend” by Euromonitor International’s team of industry trend experts, “Shopping Reinvented” reflects how economic and technological

shifts have rewritten the shopper journey holistically. Previously, purchases revolved around the transaction itself with a little bit of word-of-mouth research. However today, the purpose of shopping is a journey. It’s not just purchasing the product, but a relationship building process for the brand.

Firstly, the shopper journey can be broken down to: pre-purchase stage, purchase and the post-purchase stage. Today, brand experience has been infused into all these stages.



associated with the purchase will also be integrated into shoppers’ perception of value. Furthermore, making things quicker is not only about speeding up the payment, but curating goods and services in one location.

In the final stage – post-purchase, the shopper’s journey is not about giving something to someone in exchange for money anymore. It is about selling them a lifestyle, and lifestyles do not stop when you walk out of the store. This stage is important as connecting your brand with the consumer’s lifestyle makes the brand experience relevant.

Nodes of Shopping Re-invented

As we have established, each stage of the shopper’s journey is important for a brand. The pre-purchase stage is a place to strengthen the brand. While purchase stage enables more items in carts and post-purchase stage ignites the next purchase. We will get into detail of how some significant “nodes” of these stages have evolved with some examples:

Experiential Shopping
Retailers engage in experiential shopping when

they make the pre-purchase stage less transactional and focus on providing customers with exposure to their product or service in physical locations. These retailers take a longer-term approach to making a sale instead of relying on volume. For example, Zivame a leading online lingerie store launched its first fitting room store, to bridge the gap and provide consumers with the touch and feel of the product. Launched in Bengaluru, the store allows women to come and get themselves fitted for the right measurements and then place the order online, at the store.

Instant Gratification

With information available at the touch of a button, consumers expect answers quickly and easily to satisfy their ever-changing needs. Traditionally, the gratification of the shopping experience would occur in-store after a customer had decided upon a purchase and leaves the store with the product/service. Consumers now have a different expectation throughout the buying process; they have expectations from customer service even before a purchase is made. For example Dunzo, an app based personal assistant, offers services like product purchase and pickup/drop exemplifies this trend by offering instant response to service query even before the money is spent.

Personalisation

Given the evolution of the shopper, Brands are searching for new ways to engage with consumers and build brand loyalty, of which a growing number is through personalisation. This personalisation could be in the form of a service such as

nutrition plans or laundry pick-up services, or even one step further in offering personalised food plans based



Blended store format offered by FreshMenu through their offline store at Kempegowda International Airport, Bengaluru.

on genetic testing. Companies such as, HealthifyMe offer personalised meal plans, weight-loss coaching and even customise solutions for consumers on individual basis.

Blended Store Formats

Gone are the day of “stack it high and watch it fly” philosophy, stores can no longer looked at like self-service warehouse. Greater consumer engagement enabled by technology also provides opportunities for creative new models to thrive. Selling via social media and social messaging (s-commerce), internet-enabled subscription programmes, pop-up shops and other innovative methods offer ways to tailor the transaction to the product being sold and to the consumer. For example, online food delivery platform FreshMenu opened its first offline restaurant at the international airport in Bengaluru. The 70-seater restaurant and all-day cafe is following the trend of B2C online start-ups creating

Omnichannel presence in order to be available at every customer touch point, whether it is online/offline.

Value For Money

For most consumers, value for money means looking for low prices, however, with increasing disposable income this viewpoint has evolved. Today's urban consumer is looking a quality of products along with durability and are willing to spend that extra buck. Some of the best retailers manage to offer high quality goods alongside the price competitive. The Future Group announced their Retail 3.0 plan to include opening 10,000 member-only easy day store. These stores will offer a higher discount on a variety of products with the added convenience of ordering through applications such as WhatsApp.

Seamless Checkout

Checkout is the last stage of the purchase stage, and lesser the time spent more valuable it is for today's consumer. Smart phones are becoming a must-have device for many and slowly the default screen for brand engagement and digital commerce transactions. Consumers seek

higher convenience in all parts of the journey and with the aid of technology, retailers are offering faster and more seamless experience in the checkout stage. For example, Perpule 1Paya mobile app, enables mobile app based self-checkouts and queue management solutions for offline stores which enables the consumer to transact seamlessly.

Last Mile Re-imagined

The consumers' quest to shorten and simplify the shopping journey, provides a great opportunity for the last mile. Their willingness to spend money to save time drives innovation. The openness and flexibility that the internet age has ushered in translates well to the new, ever-changing reinvention. Companies such as Flipkart and Amazon are offering products at dedicated pick-up centres. This convenient service adds to the array of options available to the consumer, to simplify the last mile of the shopping journey.

In conclusion, the framework for Shopping Reinvented Mega trend and its sub-trends allows companies to identify and evaluate various areas, which can be developed further by infusing the brand experience in order to connect with the customer.

Each 'stage,' 'node' can be assessed in isolation and measured. A company may only need to target one or two 'nodes' to achieve an enhanced brand experience and customer engagement. However, it does work best to consider the shopping journey holistically. In my opinion, we have seen that companies that are good at Omnichannel engagement do this better than others. **R**



‘EXPRESS AVENUE LED TO THE CREATION OF A **NEW-AGE** RETAIL MARKET IN CHENNAI’

– By **Surabhi Khosla**

When the entire country’s retail growth was concentrated in the North and West, Kavita Singhania envisaged and worked towards building Express Avenue in Chennai. Amidst serious doubts about the potential of such a huge mall in such a conservative market, she launched the mall in 2010 and it turned out to be a roaring success...

Express Avenue, the brainchild of its visionary Managing Director, Kavita Singhania, has often been said as the potential to introduce a whole new dimension of stylish living to the people of Chennai. When the entire country’s retail growth was concentrated in the North and West, Kavita Singhania envisaged and worked towards building Express Avenue in Chennai.

“Amidst serious doubts about the potential of such a huge mall in such a conservative market, she along with her entire team launched the mall in 2010. It turned out to be a roaring

success and laid to rest the arguments of many skeptics. It also proved her right – that Chennai was ready for transformation. The creation and success of Express Avenue has also paved the way for other malls, leading to the creation of a retail market that is second to none,” says Ganesh CV, President – Leasing & Marketing, Express Infrastructure Pvt Ltd in an exclusive interview with IMAGES Retail Bureau.

The mall has a perfect mix of the key elements that determine the success of any shopping centre in the country today – a great location, a catchment area second to none, a category and brand mix to be envious of and an entertainment

quotient – including dining options – that’s par excellence.

The mall also follows a superior zoning strategy to ensure that stores are organized in an ‘easy discovery’ manner for visitors. The ground floor, being the face of the mall, is occupied by some of the best international brands and the mall management is now upgrading the same by bringing in more bridge-to-luxury brands.

“We just finished one round of churn and brought in brands like Bobbi Brown, H&M, Forever21, and Sephora to name a few. We are now planning to bring in bridge to luxury brands, of which Omega is already present and Mont Blanc is in the verge of opening. We are also in discussion with a couple of more bridge-to-luxury brands, the names of which will be revealed when the time is ripe,” Ganesh reveals.



The lower ground floor is the hypermarket, along with electronics and many homegrown brands. The first floor is dominated by menswear and accessories, and footwear, while the second floor is occupied by womenswear and accessories, kidswear, and sportswear.

The third floor is earmarked for entertainment. It includes a cinema, a funzone, food options as well as best of indulgence options like a spa.

“If a mall doesn’t have F&B and hospitality, then why should a consumer visit? He can get the same things that he buys in a mall in his neighbourhood market as well. Today, coming to a mall does not mean only shopping, but it also means spend quality time with your loved ones and having a delightful experience. The only way to get a family to come to a mall again and again is to provide right quotient of retail therapy, entertainment, indulgence and no mall can provide a ‘wholistic experience’ if F&B and hospitality options are absent,” states Ganesh.

“Our motto is that the customer and his convenience come first, and we have worked tirelessly

towards this, and towards ensuring that our brand value is preserved,” he adds.

Keeping customer convenience in mind, Express Avenue was the first mall to introduce an emergency medical centre inside its premises, complete with ambulance services.

“We also are one of the first malls to bring in a dedicated pharmacy. Also, to enable ease of commuting within the mall by the elderly and the physically challenged, we have battery-operated carts,” he adds.

Aside from this, the mall also organises activities and promotional activities through the year – festive season or not – to keep the consumers interest and the

Implementing Intelligent Tech

Apart from physical convenience to consumers, the mall also offers personal and digital technologies to give more power to mall visitors.

“Express Avenue was the first mall to introduce a Robotic Directory. The Robot moves around the mall and when a customer stands in front of it, the Robot welcomes them to the mall and helps them with the store directory using a screen mounted on its body,” explains Ganesh. “We are also on the verge of rolling out an app which will not only help visitors locate stores and find offers, it will also help them locate the area where they parked their car, as well as



“OUR MOTTO IS THAT THE CUSTOMER AND HIS CONVENIENCE COME FIRST AND WE HAVE WORKED TIRELESSLY TOWARDS THIS AND TOWARDS ENSURING THAT OUR BRAND VALUE IS PRESERVED.”

– Ganesh CV,
President – Leasing & Marketing,
Express Infrastructure Pvt Ltd



people would rather sit at home and shop, than drive – which has significantly changed consumer behaviour in India, it has become a matter of survival for most brands to go Omnichannel. Malls are no different.

Today we are talking about and bringing in Omnichannelisation, tomorrow we might be talking of some new technology that could change the face of retail and we will have to adapt to it as well,” says Ganesh.

While 2017 was all about the e-commerce boom in India, the mall management strongly feels that 2018 will be the year when brick-and-mortar emerges victorious, for after all, while Internet may have penetrated the heart of India, the hearts of Indians (and their trust) still lies with the physical retailer. Hence, the management is working tirelessly towards giving the consumers the best of both worlds, a union of offline and online. **R**

footfalls rolling in. These include shopping festivals, fashion shows, international and national sports activities, promotional activities of in-house retail brands and FMCG, Automobile, CSR-related events.

We take pride in creating a buzz all the year around. In fact, the events are so well-attended that Express Avenue even received the award for the ‘Highest Footfall of the Year’ by Total Activation Venue Forum.

the nearest toilet, making it one of the most consumer-convenience oriented apps and malls,” he adds.

The Omnichannel Route Change is the only constant in this evolving world and malls have no choice but to adapt to survive. Adhering to this maxim, Express Avenue has willfully set on the path to Omnichannelisation.

“With the advent of m-commerce – add to this traffic woes and the fact that



THE CHANGING LANDSCAPE OF FOOD RETAILING IN INDIA

– By Zainab S Kazi

The food and foodservice market in India is witnessing a phenomenal change. Alibaba investing in BigBasket, Huzaifa Khorakiwala of the Wockhardt fame setting up cafés, Amazon India receiving a nod to sell packaged and locally sourced food items, international brands like MooCow all set to give a taste of their frozen yogurts and ice-creams to India and many such instances accentuate the potential of Food Retailing in India. We track the changing dynamics...

A

joint report by National Restaurants Association of India and Technopak Advisors state that the food service market in India is projected to touch ₹4.98 trillion by 2021. These are no small numbers as in 2016, the market was at ₹3.09 trillion, thus India is expecting a growth of 10 percent YoY on an average.

The Changing Landscape

India recently had Amazon investing \$500 million in its food retail business to sell locally made and packaged food. With Amazon now running successfully and Amazon Pantry too becoming a hot favorite for daily household items and grocery, it is only a matter of time before we have the online retailing giant giving stiff competition to players like BigBasket and Grofers. But the growth seen by BigBasket cannot be negated, especially when Alibaba has received a nod from the Competition Commission of India to invest in them.

Launched in 2014 as a mobile app wherein small merchants could list and sell their products, Grofers has now evolved into an inventory-led online grocery delivery firm with an expanded portfolio of home-care products, apparels and other merchandise. The company's revenue made news in November 2017 where the chief executive officer, Albinder Dhindsa confirmed that the revenue tripled thus putting an end to speculations that they were soon to shut shop /sell the property created. In a news article, he was quoted as saying that 2018 is going to be a breakout year for the online grocery industry with the convenience benefit giving way to value benefit.

Where Amazon is planning an all India roll out from March 2018 onwards, Flipkart has already entered the genre with a soft launch into the grocery business in Bengaluru. Innovative Retail, which runs BigBasket, crossed the ₹1,000-crore sales mark in FY17, doubling its business with a 107 percent jump from ₹527 crore in the last financial year.

According to a report in Kotak, FY 2017 saw Swiggy leading the segment of food delivery platforms, growing its revenues by more than 5 times YoY; Freshmenu, a food kitchen with some delivery operations posted a





124 percent revenue increase followed by Foodpanda, a food delivery company at 63 percent. Zomato's India business posted revenue growth of 91 percent, though this includes contribution from advertising business also.

The Spiritual Touch

Where multinational giants have long since got Indians used to their products, an unexpected player entered the market and began giving stiff competition to the likes of HUL and ITC. Baba Ramdev's Patanjali Ayurveda has introduced a range of products – from honey to muesli! The brand is available online as well through major market place models and its not uncommon to see them occupying prime space with entire wall racks being devoted to them in majority of the super/hypermarkets. The brand also plans to enter the diaper and sanitary napkin market soon.

Sri Sri Tattva as an FMCG and ayurveda brand by Sri Sri Ravi Shankar is catching momentum at par with Patanjali. They have gone ahead to introduce products that comes with the goodness of ayurveda. Arvind Varchaswi, Managing Director - Sri Sri Tattva

shares, "In the past several years the food business has evolved immensely in India. Consumers are more aware and are keen about natural and healthy substitutes. Packaged commodities are gaining popularity and trust, despite of their volatile price point and lesser shelf life, and this segment has shown a substantial growth in the food industry. Sri Sri Tattva packaged commodities aim at presenting the innovative FMCG products to the market place that demands the same. These commodities are sourced from farms following best agricultural practices. Sri Sri Tattva also aims at transforming the mindset of Indian customers towards the packaged food products by having achieved, high standards of safety, health and hygiene throughout the



manufacturing process and also in packaging."

Varchaswi further talks about their reach across the country stating, "Sri Sri Tattva effectively and efficiently facilitates the trade through its Omnichannel structure. We have channelised our products through general retail stores, modern trade outlets and are also available online through our website www.srisritattva.com."

Very soon, we shall also have exclusive outlets of the brand. Revealing information on the same, he shares, "With an increasing demand for the brand's products in the health and wellness space, Sri Sri Tattva will now launch its offerings through exclusive outlets pan India. The franchisee stores will provide an exclusive experience to the shopper looking for high quality, effective and authentic products in Ayurveda and FMCG space. Our franchise model alone as a vertical, will mark ₹400-500 crores in the coming year"

With a roll-out of franchise models pan India in early January, the brand expects to launch 1,000 stores across different formats. The Sri Sri Tattva Mart will carry its entire range of FMCG offerings in the food, personal care and home care categories. It will also carry the herbal OTC range of the brand.



“PACKAGED COMMODITIES ARE GAINING POPULARITY AND TRUST, DESPITE OF THEIR VOLATILE PRICE POINT AND LESSER SHELF LIFE, AND THIS SEGMENT HAS SHOWN A SUBSTANTIAL GROWTH IN THE FOOD INDUSTRY”

– Arvind Varchaswi,
Managing Director, Sri Sri Tattva

The second format called Sri Sri Tattva Wellness Place will be focused on health care and will house an Ayurveda Doctor who will provide a detailed diagnosis and prescribe lifestyle as well as ayurveda medicines to patients. Sri Sri Tattva Home and Health, the largest of the three formats will carry the entire range of daily use products as well as medicine and also have an Ayurveda Doctor. It is notable for the brand to have launched more than 350+ products ranging across personal care, health care, home care and incense and fragrance categories and more surprising is the fact that the brand is available in 33 countries across the globe.

Varchaswi adds, "Our front runner products include Health drink Ojasvita, Cow's pure ghee, 100 percent Natural Honey, range of high

quality *masalas* and staples. From the other categories we have Sudanta which is a non-fluoride toothpaste, an anti-acne range of Face wash, immunity builder Shakti Drops and healthy herbal juices.”

Shankara, a luxury brand of the company, offers an array of all-natural skincare products and they are currently available online at www.shankara.in.

The Market Dynamic for Snacks and Ready to Eat /Cook

To further delve into the segment of niche food products, nachos have gained quite a bit of fan following in India. Cornitos is one leading brand offering nachos in various flavors. Vikram Agarwal, director of Greendot Heath Foods Limited, Cornitos shares, “The journey has been good with our flagship brand, Cornitos with sales increasing annually. Cornitos not only commands a sizeable share in the Nacho Crisps market but has also kept pace with the evolved taste of healthy India. Initially Nacho Crisps was launched in Delhi, Chandigarh, Mumbai, Bengaluru, Chennai and Kolkata. Over the years, it has expanded to Tier II & III towns.”

The brand is growing at the rate of 20 percent YoY and commands more than 70 percent market share in Nacho Crisps Category in the country. It is interesting to take note of the challenges Agarwal and his team faced to make inroads in the taste palate of Indians.

Revealing the same, he shares, “Initially, we have faced difficulties in gaining wide consumer acceptance for these products. Our products at times have even



“OVER THE YEARS WE OBSERVED THAT CULINARY SKILLS ARE DIMINISHING AMONG THE YOUTH. THE PRIDE OF COOKING RESONATES MAINLY WITH THE OLDER GENERATION”

– Sanjana Desai, Business Development, Desai Brothers Ltd.

been equated with *papad*. A strong consumer focused approach has helped us create awareness around these products. Consumer preference and choices are changing slowly. This is evident from the fact that earlier Cornitos products were displayed alongside international gourmet products by modern trade channels such as Eazy Day and Spencer’s. Now this has changed, and our products are displayed alongside domestic chips and other snack products.”

Elaborating on the reach



the brand has managed to have across the country, he shares, “Our complete range of products are available in retail, e-retail and modern trade stores. We also have institutional sales across through airlines, HORECA, multiplexes and cafés. Mom and Pop Stores accommodate products that are in demand, smaller in size, premium quality but for budget customers. Cornitos range preferred by them includes Nacho Crisps 30g Packs, Taco Shells, Specialty Sauces, 30g Packs of Roasted Nuts – Cashews, Almonds and Pumpkin Seeds, 26g Packs of Coated Green Peas and Pickles - Jalapeno Peppers & Gherkins.”

With a pan-India presence, Cornitos products are available across 300 cities with over 30,000 retailers. Sale contribution is 40 percent from modern trade, 55 percent from general trade and 5 percent from export sale. Cornitos is one of the few brands exported not only to the US but also Australia, China, Singapore, the UAE and South-East Asia.

Besides the market for packaged snacks, there is a strong potential in the genre of ready to eat/ ready to use category as well. The 2-minute noodles phenomena is fading, giving way to packaged *pohas*, *upmas* etc. Sanjana Desai, Head of Business Development, Desai

Brothers Ltd. – Food Division (Mother’s Recipe) says, “Over the years we observed that culinary skills are diminishing among the youth. The pride of cooking resonates mainly with the older generation. Today’s younger consumers have grown up seeing their mothers use RTC products. They are okay with the even more convenient ready-to-eat (RTE) products. A change in lifestyle – rising dual-income families, diminishing culinary skills and numerous food delivery apps – has triggered a transition from the RTC to the RTE segment. This shift in consumer behavior offers huge market potential for RTC, RTE and instant mix categories. Having said that, the penetration of this category is limited to urban markets, and even in the urban scenario, the consumption patterns are not very consistent.”

Recently, the brand launched ‘mom’s style *poha* on the go’ pack. Apart from this, in the paste category they have revolutionised the packaging by launching convenient tub jar packaging

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BP 02 Receipt Printer

Print Specifications

Paper width: 58mm/ Roll Dia: 40mm,
Resolution: 203 dpi/ Printing Speed: 50 ~ 80mm/sec

Print Dimension (LxWxH)/Weight

102*108*50mm/ Weight 260g

Media Type/Sensor

Thermal Receipt Paper

Application

LOC ID Print, Courier Receipt, Parking, Retail/
Queue busting, Traffic Offence Receipt,
Visitor Management

Bluetooth WiFi USB



BP03 - R/L Portable Label/Receipt Printer

Print Specifications

Paper width: 80mm/ Roll Dia: 50mm (Max),
Resolution: 203dpi/ Printing Speed: 90mm/s (Max)

Print Dimension (LxWxH)/Weight

140mm*117mm*60mm/ Weight 450g

Media Type/Sensor

Paper receipt, Black mark paper/Label, Label gap

Application

Tablet/Mobile Compatibility, Courier Receipt,
Parking, Queue bust Receipt, Field Sales,
Visitor Management

USB

LAN

RP 80- V1 Linerless label/ Receipt Printing

Print Specifications

Print width 48mm & 72mm/Paperwidth 58mm&80mm/
203dpi, Label thickness - 0.06~0.15mm/Roll dia -
80mm max/ Easy Paper Loading/Print Speed - 350mm/sec

Print Dimension (LxWxH)

200*146*140mm

Media Type/Sensor

Receipt paper/Multiplex Ticketing
(Black Mark Sensor) / Linerless Label Printing

Application

Receipt, Food delivery, Address Label, Product Label,
Cinema Ticket, Visitor Stickers through Linerless
Re-Stick Label

for our ginger garlic paste. When we see Mother's Recipe entering the segment of ready to eat and ready to use, it makes us think if they are deviating from their core product line - that of pickles. But then that is not the case. Desai explains, "Mother's Recipe as a brand was synonymous with pickle and has always enjoyed a strong brand recall. With consumers being more open about experimenting new and different cross-regional

Over the last decade or so, people do not make pickles at home anymore. Lack of knowledge, paucity of time and availability of proper open space can be attributed as major reasons for this change. This offers huge market potential and has resulted in increased demand for packaged pickles in India."

According to her, pickle as a category in the retailing space has undergone a huge transformation both in terms of product offering and



flavors, we have seen a great traction for region specific packaged pickles. Mother's Recipe was the first brand to offer consumers several variants of region specific pickles, with recipes sourced locally and made in the most traditional way without any chemical preservatives." She further adds, "The consumption of pickles has changed over time, Pickles used to be considered as an essential element of everyday meals. Consumption was higher, and a meal used to be incomplete without pickles. Today's generation sees pickles as an occasional usage product. However, the exposure to various cuisines has ensured that they are consuming more variety and newer flavors and want to experiment with food. Also, with changing times, the traditional pickle making as an art is slowly dying,

packaging. From standard range of pickle to region specific variants to now exotic pickles, in line with the ever-evolving consumer preference. Also, from the packaging perspective the products which once use to be retailed through glass bottles jars has seen innovative and convenient packaging like pouches, pet jars and sachets. She says, "Online retailing has the advantage that people can order and try pickles that they are used to, or newer flavors that may not be available in their respective areas. So yes, the demand for exotic pickles has definitely gone up."

Sharing numbers on the market size for various categories within the ready to eat segment, she says, "Research data from Nielsen suggests that, the breakfast mixes market is growing at 17 percent and is currently



pegged at ₹275 crore. The RTE meals market is currently valued at ₹23 crore. It grew at a compounded annual growth rate of 3-5 percent in the last five years."

Ensuring that the new age customer is well tapped, Desai Brothers have gone ahead to launch their very own portal as well. Desai shares, "Yes, we do have an online store from where people can view and order their favourite items - www.shop.mothersrecipe.com. All our Pickle Pouches, Papads, RTC's, Masalas and Instant Mix ranges are available on our websites as well as on other e-commerce platform. Our presence on all relevant e-grocer sites and our own e-commerce site has helped us increase our depth of product availability."

Eating Out Culture and Changing Dynamics

To talk about the 'eating out' options, each street today has at least one fast food joint or a fine dining restaurant or an ice-cream parlour/café. Little wonder we see names like the Burmans' of Dabur fame and Khorakiwalas entering into this segment.

Huzaifa Khorakiwala is working on a startup which is rolling out chain of cafes. According to a news report, the venture, Peace Mission, promoted by him, has opened its first outlet at Wockhardt Hospital in Mumbai. These cafés, called as Peace Cafes, will not just serve delicacies for the stomach but they will also retail specially themed gifts like apparels and accessories. It is believed

that the venture has already broken even with sales of ₹1.4 crore in its first year of operations. Khorakiwala shall be opting for the franchise model of operation and the cities being targeted are Jaipur, Kolkata, Ahmedabad and Mangaluru.

We recently saw the opening of international coffee chain Papparoti in Mumbai. With a presence in over 32 countries, Papparoti set its foot in India getting inspired by the prevailing bun and tea culture and it seems to be betting bit on the response the chain would receive in the country. Bengaluru and Chennai shall soon have an outlet of Papparoti each.

When it comes to cafes, fast food joints, restaurants and especially ice-cream parlors, majority of the players opt for the franchise model



“2018 IS GOING TO BE A BREAKOUT YEAR FOR THE ONLINE GROCERY INDUSTRY WITH THE CONVENIENCE BENEFIT GIVING WAY TO VALUE BENEFIT.”

- Albindeer Dhindsa
Chief Executive Officer, Grofers

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and the above just proves the point. Mumbai's Jumbo King that revolutionized the simple *vada pav* making it look like a *desi* version of the burger, spread itself across the country through the franchise route. Similarly, Natural Ice Creams too made inroads across the length and breadth of the country via the franchisee model. In fact, they are so over loaded with franchisee queries that the WhatsApp status message of Srinivas Kamath of Natural Ice Creams reads - No Franchise Query Please.

To take the case of Kolkata's Pabrai's ice-cream, that has been pampering the taste-buds of ice-cream aficionados across the country, young entrepreneur, Harsha Gupta, Master Franchisee for the brand for the city of Bangalore shares: "It has been a very challenging yet rewarding experience to work with a niche brand like Pabrai's. The challenges of embracing a new premium brand definitely offered lot of lessons and experiences to cherish. Over the last three years we have managed to create a fan following across Bengaluru purely based on the quality of product and service. Our employees both past and present have been instrumental in providing the best experience to our customers which in-turn has spread the reputation far and wide. The loyal customer base we have acquired over the last few years is primarily through word of mouth rather than extravagant advertising spends.

With this we have managed to expand to four stores in three years' time." On what led him to associate with the brand, Gupta says, "Pabrai's manufactures some of the most unique and tasty ice

creams one can have. When I was looking to start a business of my own, Pabrai's offered the perfect combination of a differentiated offering and a potential to become really big. This was one of the prime reasons I got into it."

Out of the four stores in Bengaluru, he owns and operates two and the remaining two are operated by franchisees appointed by his company - HA Foods LLP. The potential that ice-creams have can be seen from the fact that we saw the South Korean Lotte Confectionary took over Havmor for ₹1,020 crore in an all-cash deal.

MooCow is entering India in partnership with FranGlobal, the overseas arm of franchise solutions company Franchise India Holdings Ltd. FranGlobal will be investing \$200,000 towards marketing and advertising and they plan to open 100 stores in key cities across India in the next five years.

One of the key destinations for majority of the fast food brands and cafes is the city of Bengaluru. The city is



“NON-VEG CONSUMPTION HAS INCREASED AS MOST PEOPLE ARE MOVING TOWARDS A HEALTHY PROTEIN DIET FORM CARBS.”

- Nishant Chandran, Chief Executive Officer, TenderCuts

becoming the melting pot of India with a lot of people from different cities across the country settling in there. This most certainly gives a fillip to the food industry in the city. Yumlok, Bengaluru's street food restaurant plans to invest ₹50 crore in setting close to 50 stores by 2020. Yumlok serves specialty cuisines from across the country. For eg. Delhi *chaats*, Mumbai's *pav bhaji*, Bihar's *sattu paratha* etc, apart from other Indianised Western cuisine.

Exploring the Untapped Market of Meats

With Amazon Pantry, Amazon Now, BigBasket, Grofers etc., the genre of online food has witnessed an unprecedented growth. We see a lot many young minds entering the space with niche offerings like fresh meat, bakery and deserts etc. South Mumbai's Garten Fresh serves chicken and mutton delivered to the customer's doorstep, packed neatly in trays and covered well with cling film. A customer needs to just WhatsApp their order and the same is fulfilled the next morning.

Nishanth Chandran - Chief Executive Officer, TenderCuts shares, "Non-veg consumption has increased as most people are moving towards a healthy protein diet form carbs. The Chennai market alone has been estimated at potentially ₹2500 crore. We believe that the trend of increased meat consumption will get stronger. We will do everything we can to ensure that TenderCuts' success continues for the coming decade as we are getting around 4,000 customers every month and is growing at 100 percent rate for every quarter."

Chandran further adds,



"There is no denying that technology has changed the way we live and TenderCuts is 'tech driven' online meat delivery company and utilizes the latest technology for its betterment. We have launched - Refer a Friend! Where any customer can invite his friend through WhatsApp or Facebook and instantly both get 100 rupees off." 2018 shall see TenderCuts expand their base in Chennai along with entering Hyderabad.

To conclude, it wouldn't be an exaggeration to say that the dynamics of food retailing in India have not just introduced new brands to the country but the with the changing tides, we have also witnessed the local mom and pop stores and restaurants pulling up their socks and being at par with the change.

From offering home delivery option on orders placed on WhatsApp or through a telephone call or tying up with service providers like Scootsy, Grofers, Swiggy etc. they have been quick learners.



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THE NEXT WAVE OF CHANGE IN THE FOODSERVICE INDUSTRY

– By Charu Lamba

Now, diners can explore more than just menus in restaurants that come complete with little shops attached to them. They can take home the original taste of dishes and can also buy signature accessories that help define the identity of a restaurant...



Sorbis / Shutterstock.com

The retail industry is expanding, the fastest growing industry in the world. Technological and in-store innovations to attract the evolving consumer are fast becoming the main disrupters of the industry. The food

service industry, which makes up a major chunk of the Indian retail sector, is also innovating to stay ahead of the game. While technology gives it a leading edge, many restaurants have remodeled themselves to include separate retail sections in a bid to attract more and more Millennials. Now, diners can explore

more than just menus in restaurants that come complete with little shops attached to them. They can take home the original taste of the dishes served at the restaurants in the form of sauces or other condiments. They can also buy signature accessories that help define the identity of a restaurant.



WHAT YOU CAN BUY IN BEEROSPHERE

- The Sonic Foamer uses ultrasonic vibrations to create the perfect head. As a result, it ensures consistent taste throughout and delivers the ultimate aromatic experience.
- Chill Puck (patented) is like a cooling coaster. It is a plastic ice pack moulded to match the bottom of all standard cans. This mould maximises the amount of surface area connecting the freezing cold ice pack and the can, actually chilling your beverage while you drink.
- The USB Can Cooler is a tiny refrigerator which can be plugged into a laptop with a USB cable. As soon as it is switched on, the tray in the fridge begins to cool. This keeps a drink chilled for longer hours. The downside: it can only fit one can at a time.
- Another gadget is the Beer SealLED — a cork-shaped super bright LED that recharges via USB and gives a strong glow for up to three hours in one single charge.
- The Sonic foamer costs ₹3,750, the Spin Chill is available for ₹2,990, Beer SealLED is priced at ₹390 and the USB Can Cooler can be purchased for ₹1,950 from select Beer Café outlets.

Collecting Souvenirs

According to Rahul Singh, President, NRAI and Founder and CEO, The Beer Café, “We have introduced merchandise across categories such as gaming, gadgets, décor, glassware, personal and office products. Christened Beerosphere, it is an extension of The Beer Café

that patrons can take home, to work, use as gifts or collect as souvenirs. Targeted at the brand's loyal clientele, this line aims to carve a niche in the retail space."

Beerosphere, The Beer Café's new range of quirky and utilitarian products, offers various unique gadgets like Spin Chill, Chill Puck and USB Can Cooler, besides other merchandise.

The battery-operated Spin Chill (patented) helps to chill your beer in two minutes. All one needs to do is to fix the beer bottle in the cavity and spin it for a minute in an ice bucket. Remove it and serve the beer chilled.

Another interesting gadget is the Sonic Foamer (patented). It comes in handy when you leave your carbonated beverage out for too long and it loses its froth. Pour two teaspoons of water in the cavity, switch it on, place your drink on the plate and you can see the bubbles rise up. The drink gets its froth back.

A number of other gifting products such as cushion covers, playing cards, glassware, candles, laptop sleeves, etc are also available.

Restaurant Standard Dishes at Home

South African restaurant chain, Nando's has recently introduced its sauces in India with the idea of letting customers replicate restaurant taste at home.

Sumeet Yadav, CEO, Nando's Restaurant India said, "Globally, we have something called the grocery division which specialises in FMCG business. So, our job in that sense is that we project the brand as it is, and sauces fill the big gap. We also retail them online."

The six Peri Peri sauce



flavours which Nando's sells in India are priced at ₹390 for 250 ml and ₹250 for 125 ml.

Engaging Customers

Ciclo Café, a haven for cycling enthusiasts and already a popular name within hospitality and cycling circuits, is also retailing high-end cycles, along with delectable food.

Ashish Thadani, CEO, Ciclo Café, revealed, "Apart from just attracting customers with merchandise retailing, the idea is also to engage with the dine in customers. While they are waiting for a meal or while walking through the outlet, the merchandise creates curiosity and engages the customers further."

"The concept of Ciclo Café is not just to have a cycling-inspired cafe adorned with furniture, lights and other artefacts inspired by bicycle parts but also to bring bicycle culture and a lifestyle centered around cycling. We aim to give Indian cyclists world class equipment to enable them to improve their skills and eventually do well nationally and internationally in this sport," he stated.

The café is a one-stop-shop for the sales and service of premium bicycles, cycling merchandise and accessories, expert advice on cycling, and customized cycle rides – all accompanied with world-class hospitality in the form of

premium F&B services with multiple cuisines on offer.

Making the Whole Restaurant Profitable

Retail stores in restaurants not just attract consumers, but also helps restaurants make every nook and cranny profitable. Take for example Too Indian, which has tied-up with organic farmers, home chefs and small-scale entrepreneurs like Little Farm, Home Bakery, Miss Sue for an uninterrupted supply of retail products.

"The basic reason of introducing food retailing at my restaurant 'Too Indian' is that we are paying rent for every bit of space of the restaurant. We are paying equal rent for the floor as well as walls. So, we thought of utilising the walls and introducing a modern-day shopping area within the restaurant," said Varun Puri, Owner, Viva Hospitality.

"Apart from tableware, glassware and cutlery, the walls showcase more than 500 products including organic quinoa, savouries, organic matthis, pickles, jams, marmalades and spices – to name just a few – which customers can buy when they come in to dine," he added.

Additional Revenue


Retail outlets at restaurants also bring in extra revenue for owners. "Our retail



section contributes around 10-15 percent of the actual restaurant sales," revealed Puri. Resonating the same, Singh said, "We see the retail business in restaurants growing in the coming years. Five years from now, the product retailing business branded Beerosphere is expected to generate ₹150 crore. We have around 1500 SKU's at the moment and will add 100 more products soon this year."

Similarly, the retailing business contributes between 5-10 percent of the overall sales at Ciclo Café.

Sameer Lamba, Managing Director, Kwal's Group is also of the same opinion. "Retailing at restaurants is just going to grow and soon at IHOP and Potbelly we are planning to launch our merchandise as it helps us earn extra revenue," he said.

"The things we will be retailing include IHOP Pancake Mix, Potbelly Chilli and Mustard Sauce. We are looking forward to drive brand home and get traffic to our restaurants," he concluded. 



HIGH TIMES FOR SOUTH INDIA'S THRIVING RETAIL MARKETS

– By Pankaj Renjhen,
Managing Director – Retail Services, JLL India

Various international fast fashion retailers like H&M, Zara and Forever 21 now have their stores in Bengaluru, Hyderabad and Chennai. Springfield and Women's Secret entered India in 2017 by opening their first store in Bengaluru. Meanwhile, IKEA has chosen to open its first store in India at Hyderabad...

The South India retail market and shopping mall industry is witnessing sustained growth over the last few years. The larger cities of Bengaluru, Hyderabad and Chennai are attracting more and more global retailers, apart from the steady expansion by national retailers. In recent times, even Tier II & III cities such as Coimbatore, Vijayawada, Madurai, Kochi, Mysore, Mangalore, Vishakhapatnam and Trichy have also been seeing accelerated growth in their retail space markets.

Various international fast fashion retailers like H&M, Zara and Forever 21 now have their stores in Bengaluru, Hyderabad and Chennai. Springfield and Women's Secret entered India in 2017 by opening their first store in Bengaluru. Meanwhile, IKEA has chosen to open its first store in India at Hyderabad.

These are resounding statements on the attractiveness that retailers see in the main cities of South India, where both traditional and organised retail continue to flourish together. While international brands certainly perform well in these markets, there is also a huge demand for local and regional players such as Pothys, Neeru's, The Chennai Silks, Nalli, Sangeetha Mobiles, etc.

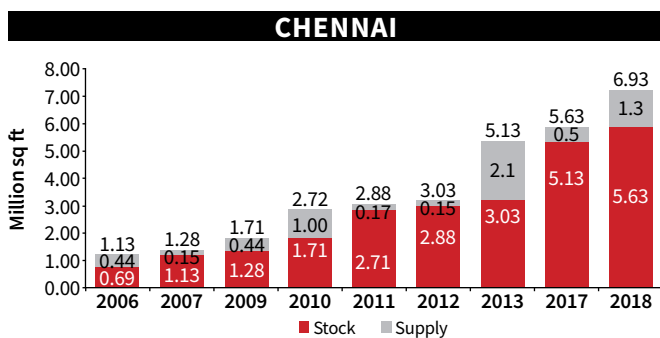
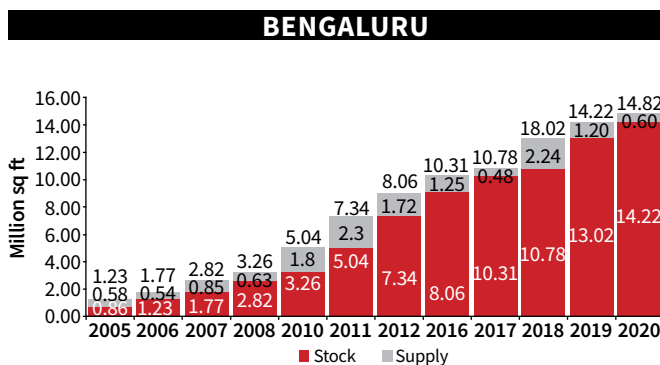
A significant supply of quality retail developments is coming up in Bengaluru, Hyderabad and Chennai over the next few years.



Nagar and Adyar are equally preferred and experience high leasing activities due to the limited number of quality mall developments currently present in the city.

Hyderabad

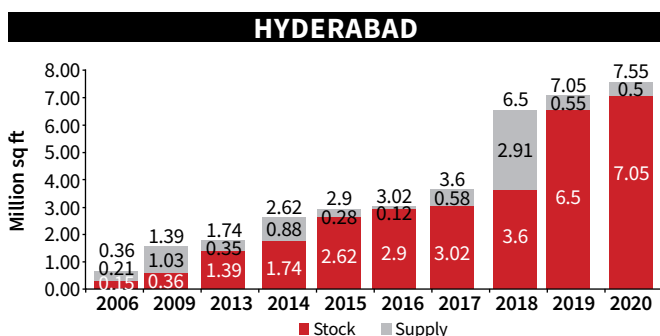
There has been a steady supply of organised retail real estate in Hyderabad. Over the next 3-4 years, 3.96 million square feet of mall supply is expected to be added. Mantra Mall at Attapur became operational in 2017. As the office and residential sectors are witnessing healthy



Bengaluru

Bengaluru will have a stock of 10.7 million square feet by end of 2017, and this is expected to rise to 14.8 million square feet by 2020. In H1 2017, a major mall addition in Bengaluru was GT Mall at Magadi Road, adding 0.30 million square feet to the mall supply in the city. Meanwhile, the major high streets of Bengaluru Brigade Road, Commercial Street and Indiranagar – continue to see sustained demand from retailers.

growth, retail in Hyderabad is also eliciting renewed interest by mall developers. The supply pipeline in the city looks promising, and some superior grade malls are expected to be developed in next few years. Hyderabad works equally well for strong local brands as well as national and international retailers.



Chennai

Chennai has 5.13 million square feet of retail space as of 2017, and around 1.3 million square feet of fresh supply is expected to be added in 2018. The city's major high streets T Nagar, Anna

L&T Metro Rail is a developing transit-oriented retail development at the Metro rail depots in the city. Two of these metro mall developments will become operational within the next few months. Hyderabad's major high streets Begumpet, Banjara Hills, Himayath Nagar and Jubilee Hills continue to maintain the attractiveness to retailers and shoppers. **IR**

WHY IN-STORE EXPERIENCE MATTERS MORE THAN EVER

—By IMAGES Retail Bureau

“If physical retail is really in trouble then why is e-commerce giant Amazon working on opening its second brick-and-mortar store? Why have other previously online-only brands such as Birchbox and Warby Parker made the jump to offline? The world’s most recognisable brands offer a feeling and an experience. Although Virtual Reality and Augmented Reality are making great strides in digital retail, so far nothing can compare to the real-life experience of shopping in a store.”

Today, in the age of online shopping, flash sales and convenience apps, some

retailers believe that digital strategy is their ‘silver bullet.’ Yet with all this newness and buzz, what sets truly innovative marketers apart is a single, counter intuitive insight: ***The in-store shopping experience matters now, more than ever.***

Broadly, three factors are driving the importance of the modern in-store brand experience.

- Inherent limit of e-commerce experience: People still want to see, touch and feel products, and share with others – ideally in a community of the brand loyal. Only a store can deliver that full experience.
- Shoppers are shopping less, but still they want their experiences to provide more.

- Brands merging online and real-world experiences with the help of the mobile phone as a bridge are seeing the benefit in their bottom lines.

The best stores create a brand experience that is completely unique and unforgettable for the customer. These are spaces that customers want to spend time in, that they look forward to visiting and know will always have something new for them to discover.

The challenge, then, for top companies is clear: How do you leverage the in-store experience to ensure brands grow and thrive? Retail leaders from different formats met to discuss: ***‘Why In-Store Experience Matters More Than Ever’*** at the IMAGES Retail Editorial Meet organised during India Retail Forum 2017 in Mumbai. The roundtable was powered by Philips Lighting.

The esteemed panel included ***Jitender Verma,***

Powered by

PHILIPS





Ameesha Prabhu,
TRRAIN

Chief Technology Officer at Inox Leisure Ltd.; **Kiran Komatla**, Head IT, Burger King; **Sukanto Aich**, Director and Head of Professional Sales, Philips Lighting; **Vikram Idnani**, Head IT, Reliance Retail; **Anil Menon**, Head IT at Trent Hypermarket Ltd; **Sandeep Mistry**, Head IT, Aditya Birla Fashion and Retail Ltd; **Kunal Mehta**, Head IT, Raymond Lifestyle Business. The roundtable was moderated by **Ameesha Prabhu**, CEO, TRRAIN.

Ameesha Prabhu, CEO, TRRAIN, kickstarted the discussion by saying that the idea of the dialog was to figure out what a customer needed in-store, how should physical retailers enhance consumer experience in the age of e-commerce, Omnichannel and the online marketplace. She said the focus of the debate should be on how in-store customer experience was going to be the difference that would make a retailer – his stores and his brand – stand out.

PERSONALISATION, DIGITISATION & CUSTOMER CONNECT

Vikram Idnani, Head IT, Reliance Retail, said when a customer walked into a store, s/he typically didn't know whether they were there to buy something or just browse. Once they enter the store, they encounter



Vikram Idnani,
Reliance Retail

various touchpoints – the product, the assistant, support staff, check-out counter. “A lot of physical interaction points are getting digitized. The customer can use digital touchpoints to see where products are placed, what sizes and colours are available and get information about the fabric, design and stitching along with other parameters of the product etc. Retailers should improve digital interaction, without losing the personal touch.”

Jitender Verma, Chief Technology Officer at Inox Leisure Ltd. agreed saying that although it was great that retail touchpoints were being digitised, retailers still needed to tap into consumer information, connect with a customer in-store, clone their mobile phones to know their browser history and more. “Let the customer be self-enabled. Shift power into his hands, but ensure that you tap all information for a better experience.”

Kunal Mehta, Head IT, Raymond Lifestyle Business said that he believed today's consumer had evolved tremendously. “Today's consumer wants information and hence we have to train our retail staff accordingly. For eg: an employee should be able to scan a bar code and give the consumer the entire history of a particular product,” he stated.



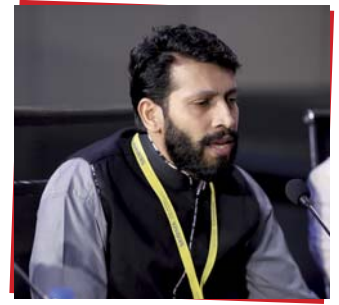
Jitender Verma,
Inox Leisure Ltd.

STAFFING, PRODUCT ASSORTMENT & PRICING

Kiran Komatla, Head IT, Burger King said that in the restaurant business, the touchpoint with the customer was not even two minutes. “We have to check out more than 1000-2000 customers in the worst of scenarios, so if you are unable to communicate everything about your product to the customer, you've lost the game even if you have a fantastic product and a great digital experience,” he explained.

According to him, employees must know everything about the product because customers in India have a ‘suggest to us’ mentality and hence, staff training was extremely important, albeit a tough task because of geography, cultural differences and differences in food habits.

Anil Menon, Head IT at Trent Hypermarket Ltd shared his experiences saying that the Millennial consumer was very well-informed and health conscious. “They buy things which they have read up on, which they think will have health benefits. This is the kind of customer information I want at my fingertips, so I can tap into it and give them the best experience possible – online or offline. Also, if a consumer can't find something in store, he should be able to order



Kunal Mehta,
Raymond Lifestyle Business

it online and we should be able to provide it to him at his doorstep. If I can give my consumers these things, they will come back to my website and to my store.”

He said the way to do this was to look at information through a bar code. The scanned bar code can give you a lot of information about a consumer – what he likes to buy and how often he buys it.

“The other important factor to keep in mind is pricing. Prices vary as per competitors and rivals in our industry. I need to make sure that when a consumer leaves my store, he should have the best and the most of everything possible in his budget. That's the secret to successful pricing and to keep consumers rolling in,” he stated.

LIGHTING UP A STORE: IS THIS IMPORTANT ENOUGH?

Sukanto Aich, Director and Head of Professional Sales, Philips Lighting said, “We are serving the B2B customer and who is extremely well connected on his mobile phone. Today, this Millennial customer has the shopping list on his phone. To peek into the shopper's mind LuLu mall in Kochi has developed an app for us. If you have this app, you walk into LuLu mall and you search for a product, our intelligent lights will quickly pick up that you are looking for that product



Kiran Komatla,
Burger King

and guide you to where it is being sold.” “We are trying to lure new technology-oriented Millennials and giving them convenient buying solutions through lighting, so Lighting is a very exciting field right now,” he added.

Kunal Mehta, Head IT, Raymond Lifestyle Business said that from an experience perspective, lighting played a very important role in their stores. “When you sell apparel, you want clothes to look good, the colour and fabric to show up prominently. This is where lighting and ambience comes into play,” he said.

Inox’s Jitender Verma added, “Lighting is part of the design from the time a store is conceptualised on the drawing board. From a cinema perspective, we really need to take care of the customer experience in terms of designing ambience and lighting. You are going to spend up to three hours with us in Inox. We need you to be away from the hustle bustle of the real world, be comfortable and happy in a soothing atmosphere—both for the eyes and the mind.”

Talking about his personal experience in the space of lighting, **Sandeep Mistry, Head IT, Aditya Birla Fashion and Retail Ltd** said, “We opened a new store some months ago and we saw a 44 percent jump just after renovation. The result was overwhelming for this used



Anil Menon,
Trent Hypermarket Ltd

to be one our most dull stores and it had completely turned around after the lighting and ambience was changed. Another store which we have opened in Bengaluru is looking so amazing with all the lighting that people are just being lured inside.”

Komal Komatla added, “Another part of lighting, which is extremely important, is digital experience— a larger display with HD and extra HD visuals showing how food is prepared. All of this makes for good customer connect.”

Sukanto Aich said, “There are other things to be careful of. Lighting which looks fantastic during the night wouldn’t look that great in the day. To overcome these challenges, we are providing new age lights. For example, to Raymond, we have given lighting options in the trial room so when a customer tries on a shirt, he can see how it will look when he wears it to work in the day, and then in a different light, can see what it would look like in the evening in party lighting.”

Ameesha Prabhu thought this concept of occasion lighting was very important in the cosmetic industry for makeup tends to look completely different in different lighting conditions.

CHALLENGES AT CHECKOUT POINT

The checkout experience in India is pretty sad— not just in terms of technological



Sukanto Aich,
Philips Lighting

advancement, but also in terms of trained staff and updated POS machines. Kiran Komatla said that to make sure that the last mile was seamless for customers, Burger King promises them a 2-minute checkout time – from the time they bill to the time they get the products in their hand.

Talking about Trent, Anil Menon said: “One big challenge the grocery sector faces is that of multiple MRPs floating in the market. A consumer picks up 45 products, out of which 40 are scanned but for five, the cashier has to run to the backend to ensure he has the correct price and enter the details manually, then chalk it up to bad consumer experience. Apart from this, our staff also needs to incorporate promotional work at the checkout points, which makes it complicated,” said Anil Menon of Trent.

Self-checkouts, the experts agreed were not in the near future for India.

Vikram Idnani of Reliance Retail said, “I have done a self-checkout at a Walmart store in USA, but I had to weigh the groceries myself and had to make sure that I selected the right product code when I was weighing them. In India, consumers are used to getting assistance, so self-checkouts are a far cry. Retailers can do self-checkouts in the fashion and lifestyle arenas.”

He also said that the



Sandeep Mistry,
Aditya Birla Fashion and Retail Ltd

concept of a ‘constant moving queue’ was something retailers in India needed to apply. “Customers should get the feeling that the queue they are waiting in at the checkout is constantly moving and is organized. This is very important in multiple line scenario, for it’s human tendency to feel that the other line is moving faster, which in turn leads to a lot of queue jumping leading to chaos.”

WHAT’S NEXT IN IN-STORE EXPERIENCES?

Inox’s Jitender Verma explained that for them, creating offline experiences inside cinema halls was very important. “People come with children, a very rich target audience for us. Families sometimes have to wait 20-25 minutes for a film to start once they buy tickets. This is the time for us to lure them into in-cinema playzones (in our lobbies). We have also used online to create offline digital experiences – for example we have LEDs with interactive digital displays where kids can explore and play with animals like dinosaurs and dolphins. Once children are hooked, we hope they will come back to us the next time they think of going to watch a movie. We are also experimenting a lot with multiple food counters, a self-service option, a fast-forward counter and have even installed food kiosks,” he concluded. ■



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