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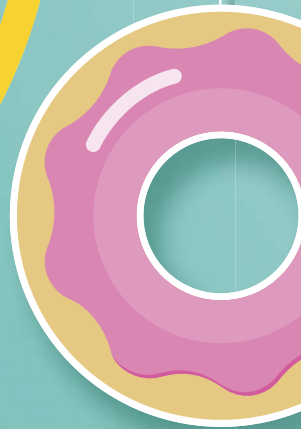
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For many years now, retail pundits have been predicting the demise of brick-and-mortar retail stores at the hands of e-commerce backed by the fact that the global e-commerce sector is dominating consumer spending worldwide with an impressive forecasted CAGR of over 19 percent by 2020.

With so much happening in the online space, it comes as a huge surprise then that major e-commerce players worldwide are pushing for the physical. International online giants such as Amazon, Warby Parker, Zappos and Bonobos have been opening stores for some time now. The shift towards physical has become more noticeable over the last few years – across the globe including India. It seems that while the Internet may have penetrated the heart of India, the hearts of Indians still lies with the brick-and-mortar model.

In the May 2018 issue of IMAGES Retail May, we bring you an in-depth analysis into why successful e-commerce portal are opening physical stores. We tell you why pure-play e-commerce companies now have an offline strategy and are rushing into the traditional retail space. The feature analyzes the market, the challenges, as well as the approach of the big players of the Indian e-commerce industry along with their expansion plan, while bringing you a roundup of the revenue and footfalls the O2O method has managed to rake in.

Adding to the O2O debate, in the My Thoughts corner, is an article from Amit Chaudhary, Co-Founder & COO, Lenskart, who gives a detailed account of why the firm took the offline route after becoming the number one online player in the Indian eyewear market.

In keeping with the brick-and-mortar focus of the issue is an article on in-store retail executives in our new section The Front Desk. Written by BS Nagesh, Founder, TRRAIN, the article focuses on the role of the front-end retail associate in identifying and solving consumer problems.

Finally, we bring you an exclusive interaction with Gunjan Soni, Head of Jabong & Chief Marketing Officer at Myntra, on how the two Indian e-commerce behemoths have revamped the country's online fashion retail sector, with the use of Vorta.

As always, we hope you find this issue informed and beneficial. Do log on to our website, www.indiaretailing.com, to read more informative articles and analyses on the state of the global retail industry, with an emphasis on India.



Amitabh Taneja

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Last Fiscal Year Marked India as the Fastest Growing Market for Celio*

Celio*, a leading menswear brand, works towards bringing in contemporary fashion at amazing prices, not only appealing to conventional style seekers but also progressive consumers



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Gunjan Soni Decodes the Future of Online Fashion Shopping

Gunjan Soni, Head of Jabong & Chief Marketing Officer at Myntra, talks about the big trends of the



online fashion industry and how technology has played a major role in revamping it

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'Lenskart is a Brand with a Vision'

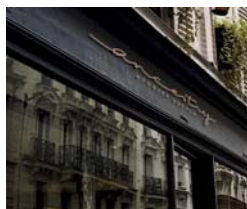
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ISCF 2018 turned out to be another milestone in redrawing the prototype of



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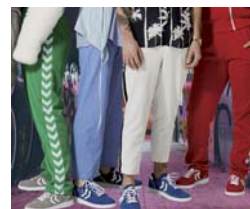
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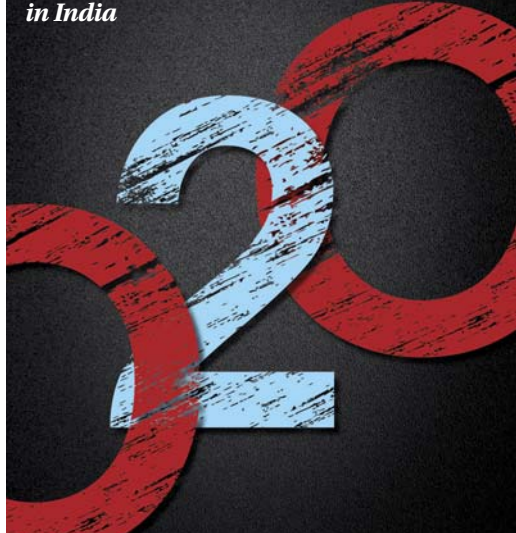


[COVER STORY]

ONLINE TO OFFLINE: PURE PLAY E-COMMERCE FIRMS GO PHYSICAL TO WOO CONSUMERS

[PAGE 28]

While international online giants such as Amazon, Warby Parker, Zappos and Bonobos have been opening stores for some time now, the shift towards physical retail has become more noticeable over the last few years, both in the world and in India





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Parle Products to Double Turnover, Cross ₹20,000 Crore in 5 years: Mayank Shah

→ India's leading biscuits and confectionery maker, Parle Products, is looking forward to consolidating its position in the Indian market. In an interview with Indiaretailing Bureau on the sidelines of India Food Forum 2018, Mayank Shah, Category Head, Parle Products said, "If you look at Parle as a company, we have always been known for biscuits and confectionery. But we have got into quite a few categories over the last two years. We have entered into the bakery items segment like cakes and rusk, high-end chocolates, snacks and of late into pulses. So, I think now is the time to consolidate before we move forward and get into new categories." He further added, "Quite a few categories are moving over from unorganised to organised segments since consumers have started moving from unorganised to organised segments. One category which has seen conversion is bakery items. Then there are categories like gluten-free products, which have small and niche markets. However, we are at least a decade away from getting into those kind of specialised offerings. These categories are too small for big players like us to cater to."



Another category which Parle is hoping will move from unorganised to organised is pulses. The pulses market is estimated at 27 million tonnes per annum and India's projected demand for pulses is set to grow up to 35 million tonnes by 2020. Parle Products had forayed into the pulses category last year with the launch of its brand, Fresh Harvest. The Fresh Harvest collection includes Toor, Moong, Urad, Channa and Masoor dals sourced from the best farms in Maharashtra and

Organised Retail Sector to see strong growth in India

– By IMAGES Retail Bureau

According to a Jefferies report Organised retail sector in India is expected to witness strong growth in the coming years, and segments like grocery and apparels are best positioned to reap the benefits. We bring you a lowdown of the secular journey retailers are making in India which is heralding in this crucial growth...

Karnataka. In the biscuits category, Parle Products is now tapping both retail as well as institutional markets (such as hotels, which buy in bulk) through its innovative offerings like Zeera Jeffs. The company is also expecting contribution from its Platina range of premium biscuit products to go up by 25 percent in the next three years. Currently, Platina contributes 65 percent of the total revenue in the biscuit category. It includes four premium brands including Hide & Seek, Milano, Mexitos and Simply Good. Parle Products is aiming to double its turnover and cross ₹20,000 crore in the next five years. The company also expects staples and snacks segments to be its growth drivers in the coming years.

"Parle Products, which is a privately held company, has a present turnover of ₹10,000 crore . By 2023-24, we are looking to double our turnover, with most of this growth coming from the snacks and staples category," said Shah. He added that this growth would be mostly be organic, rather than through acquisitions. Going further, the company aims to be a total food company by filling in the gaps in its offerings.

Lite Bite Foods Plans IPO to Tap Capital Market

→ Lite Bite Foods, which runs popular restaurant like Punjab Grill, Baker Street and Street Foods, is considering raising funds through an initial public offer (IPO). According to a PTI report: The company is promoted by Dabur's Vice Chairman Amit Burman and Rohit Aggarwal and runs close to 140 restaurant outlets through its portfolio of over a dozen



brands. "We are toying with the idea. Maybe next year we will be big enough to think of an IPO. We have met different bankers about how we should go ahead. We would rather go in for IPO than private equity. We are having discussions, but nothing is decided yet. May be next year," Amit Burman, Chairman, Lite Bite Foods told PTI. "As of now, it is all internal accruals from promoter funds," he was further quoted by PTI as saying. Lite Bite Foods has also bagged master concession right for development of eateries in 5-Tier and 2-Tier airports in India. The company plans to open close to 60 new outlets in India in the next financial year, mostly in these new airports, through a portfolio of its owned and franchised brands.

Blackberrys Eyes South India, Aims to Touch ₹500 Crore Revenue by 2020

➔ Menswear brand Blackberrys aims to grow over 60 percent in two years to register ₹1,500 crore turnover by FY 2020, as the company is expanding its sales network, said a top company official. The company, which operates three brands -- Blackberrys, Blackberrys Causals and Urban - has plans to add 100 new stores this fiscal. According to a PTI report, the company, which operates three brands - Blackberrys, Blackberrys Causals and Urban - has plans to add 100 new stores this fiscal.

“We are expecting 25 percent this fiscal and the next fiscal and we see ourself in the region of ₹1,500 crore by FY 2019-20,” Nikhil Mohan, Director, Blackberrys told PTI.



Blackberrys, which had started its journey from the bylanes of Chandni Chowk in 1991, had closed FY 2017-18 with a revenue of around ₹900 crore. The company presently operates 240 brand stores in which 185 are the company operated stores and rest are franchise operated. In the coming new 100 stores, which the company plans to open this fiscal, 35 will be company owned and rest 65 would be franchise operated. It is now planning for a push towards southern markets with its three brands.

“Our biggest focus is South India, which is a large market for the industry. Our participation is there low right now,” Mohan told PTI, adding that the company had created logistics infrastructures to help growth in the region.

Woodland Revamps Store Design; Launches Two New Stores in Delhi

➔ Woodland, the adventure and outdoor gear maker by Aero Group, is all set to woo its customers with its enthralling new interiors along with products par excellence.



The new store design is an innovative, thoroughly modern, dynamic retail environment that reflects the brand’s aesthetic, its commitment to craft and its ties to the English landscape. Featuring rugged roots amalgamated with environment friendly elements, the stores echoes it’s USPs in an all-new avatar reflecting a younger and trendier vibe.

Woodland has opened the two stores in Noida’s DLF Mall of India and GIP Mall. Situated at strategic locations, both the stores showcase new format interiors in line with their eco-conscious philosophy. The opening of these stores marks the beginning of the shift of all stores to the new store concept to maximize the ability to reflect the change in the pace of retail life and sector. The stores, spread over a visual canvas of 2,000 sq.ft. and 2,800 sq.ft. in DLF Mall of India and GIP Mall respectively, are built to attract customers to meander through the sections at their leisure.

“The new store concept and these store launches add to our brand’s repertoire of Pro-planet philosophy featuring eco-friendly elements like use of recycled wood, LED energy saving lighting amongst others with a warm colour palette. Known for the positive values we embody, we wanted to facilitate the

same into the fresh designs in our new format stores too. With an astounding result- the stores look stunning, displaying a beautiful mix of ethos and product.” said Harkirat Singh, MD, Woodland.

V-Bazaar Retail Begins Expansion, to Add 15 Stores by Next Fiscal

➔ Fashion and apparels retailer V-Bazaar Retail, which started its retail operations in May 2016, is aiming for a ₹500 crore turnover by 2020 on the back of their expansion plans majorly from Uttar Pradesh and Bihar. The company is aiming to nearly add 15 stores from the current 20 stores in Uttar Pradesh as part of its expansion strategy.



“We would add around 30 more stores by 2020 and take our store count to 50 in Uttar Pradesh by the end of FY 2019-2020,” V-Bazaar Retail Pvt. Ltd. Chairman and Managing Director Hemant Agarwal said in a press conference in Lucknow. The company will invest nearly ₹45 crore to add 23 new stores in Tier-II & III cities and untapped areas of Tier IV places in Uttar Pradesh.

Apart from Uttar Pradesh the group has a plan to open more stores in Bihar. This year the group has a plan to enter in Jharkhand. At present, V-Bazaar Retail is operating 29 stores in Uttar Pradesh and Bihar. In the financial year 2017-2018, the company had a revenue of ₹130 crore.

International Retail Majors Experience a Change of Guard

– By IMAGES Retail Bureau

International retail giants are overhauling their leadership. Some old hands are retiring, and retailers are bringing in fresh blood in the hope of revamping their businesses and raking in more profits. IMAGES Retail Bureau brings you a roundup of some of the prominent new appointments and exits in the international industry...

MARKS & SPENCER

M&S Overhauls Fashion, Home Leadership Team In A Bid to be More Relevant

➔ Marks & Spencer has unveiled a new clothing and home leadership team that will be responsible for overhauling the retailer's non-food division as part of its transformation plan. Marks & Spencer said that the Menswear & Kidswear Director, Michael Kerr, and the Womenswear & Lingerie Design Director, Queralt Ferrer, would also be stepping down from the group. The moves follow the appointment in October of Jill McDonald reporting to chief executive Steve Rowe. McDonald has been tasked with delivering the sustained sales and profit growth that has eluded Britain's biggest clothing retailer for a decade.

She has decided to merge the retailer's womenswear and kidswear teams in a move to attract more families to M&S, appointing Jill Stanton to the new role of womenswear and kidswear director. Belinda Earl, who has most recently been covering womenswear on an interim basis since Jo Jenkins left earlier this year, is stepping away from her commercial role with the retailer but will continue to work in an advisory role and sit on the board of the M&S Archive. She will hand over her womenswear responsibilities to Stanton over the summer. Stanton, formerly of Next, Dewhirst, Nike and most recently Old Navy, will start in July.

M&S also named Wes Taylor, Burton's managing director for 11 years, as its new menswear director, starting in May. He has over 30 years' experience in fashion retailing, having progressed through Arcadia to lead the Burton business as managing director for 11 years. Working alongside Stanton and Taylor will be Laura Charles and Neil Harrison. Charles has been a key member of the team driving M&S's lingerie position since 2014, and is promoted to the new position of lingerie director. Meanwhile, Harrison – who has 20 years of M&S experience – is currently driving the strategy for growth as home director and will pick up additional responsibility for beauty.

mothercare

Mothercare Appoints David Wood as CEO

➔ Mothercare has announced the appointment of David Wood as CEO with immediate effect. David's appointment ensures that Mothercare has in place fresh leadership to complete its transformation plan and return to growth. Mark Newton-Jones has stepped down as CEO. David has considerable experience gained across a number of international consumer facing brands, with a strong track record for turning around and growing retail businesses. David was previously Group President of Kmart

Holding Corp, a US \$3bn US grocery retail and pharmaceutical business, where he successfully transformed the customer value proposition and retail operating model, returning the business to sustainable profit growth. Prior to this, David held a number of senior commercial, marketing and general management positions at Tesco where he achieved similar results in the UK and internationally. David will join the Board as an executive director.

Alan Parker, Chairman, commented, "Mothercare is a great brand with a great future but it is facing a number of challenges, not least a highly competitive retail environment. Our transformation strategy is focused on improving the performance of the Group in the UK and internationally, ensuring Mothercare has the best store format, digital capabilities and customer offer as well as several actions to reduce central costs. We have made positive progress, but it is essential that we have the most effective leadership in place to meet our ambitions for our customers and our shareholders. David has a great track record in similar circumstances across international and consumer facing brands and is a highly effective operator of retail operations. I look forward to working with him and the team."

Parker added, "On behalf of the Board, I would also like to thank Mark for his contribution and for leading Mothercare over the last four years. We all wish him well for the future." David Wood, CEO, commented, "I am delighted to be leading Mothercare, a business with a

fantastic heritage and an exciting future both in the UK and internationally. My immediate focus is to ensure Mothercare is put back on a sound financial footing and deliver a successful plan to improve performance. Central to this will be our customers and their experience, securing Mothercare's reputation as the number one choice for parents. I look forward to working with the Board and with the management team to deliver on our plans."



Tapestry Appoints Anna Bakst CEO & Brand President, Kate Spade

→ Tapestry, Inc., a leading New York-based house of modern luxury accessories and lifestyle brands, has announced the appointment of Anna Bakst as Chief Executive Officer and Brand President of Kate Spade. She is expected to join the company on March 26, 2018 and will succeed Craig Leavitt, who in the wake of the Tapestry, Inc. acquisition, made the decision to exit the brand in 2017. In this role, Bakst will be responsible for all aspects of Kate Spade globally and will report to Victor Luis, Tapestry, Inc.'s Chief Executive Officer, who has been leading the brand in an interim capacity since Mr. Leavitt's departure.

"The appointment of Anna Bakst marks another key step in the evolution of the Kate Spade brand," said Victor Luis, Chief Executive Officer of Tapestry, Inc. "She brings a rare combination of business acumen, directly related fashion experience and strong leadership skills to the company. Together with recently appointed Creative Director Nicola Glass, we now have the right senior management in place to lead the talented Kate Spade brand team and drive the business globally."

Bakst has over 25 years of experience managing and cultivating businesses for global fashion houses, most recently at Michael Kors where, until January 2017, she held the role of Group President of Accessories and Footwear. In her role, she led the global design, production and merchandising teams, as well as overseeing domestic wholesale distribution. Bakst joined Michael Kors in 2003, leading the successful launch of the company's Accessories and Footwear businesses. Prior to Michael Kors, she had a 12-year career at Donna Karan International, ultimately as President of Accessories and Footwear. Bakst holds an MBA from Stanford University and a BS in Industrial Engineering from Purdue University. Bakst is on the Board of Directors of Modern Meadow. She is also an Associate Professor at Pratt Institute's Design Management program.



Macy's Chief Financial Officer Karen Hoguet to Retire in February 2019

→ Macy's, Inc has announced that Karen Hoguet, Chief Financial Officer since 1997, has decided to retire in February 2019, at the completion of the company's fiscal year. An external search is underway for Hoguet's replacement and the company anticipates a well-ordered transition. "Karen Hoguet is one of retail's most respected executives and is an outstanding Chief Financial Officer. For the past three decades, Karen has had a voice in almost every major decision at Macy's and its predecessor Federated Department Stores. She knows our business inside and out and, through good times and bad, Karen has been a steady and strategic hand in the CFO's seat. The company is grateful to Karen for her service. I am deeply appreciative of her partnership over the past year as we have worked together to return Macy's to growth, and I thank her in advance

for leading what I know will be a smooth transition," said Jeff Gennette, Macy's, Inc. Chairman and Chief Executive Officer.

Hoguet will continue in her role as CFO until her successor is appointed. She will then remain in an advisory role to support the company during a transition period until February 2, 2019. Hoguet began her career at Federated Department Stores in 1982 and was appointed to the role of Chief Financial Officer in 1997.



Walmart Names Tesco Grocery Head as Jet.com President

→ Walmart's Jet.com division on Monday named Tesco veteran Simon Belsham as its new President, reporting to CEO Marc Lore. "With Jet grocery being an integral part of the strategy, Simon brings incredible experience in scaling grocery delivery and his unique background in converging technology and retail," Lore said in his message to staff. Belsham will be responsible for expanding the company's online grocery business. Belsham spent seven years at Tesco, one of Britain's top grocery retailers, and worked at U.K.-based Ocado, helping the online supermarket company expand its nonfood business.

He replaces Liza Landsman, who recently left the company, as president of Jet.com. "There are so many ways technology can change retail and be a force for good in our lives," Belsham said in a statement about his new position. "In my view, there is no business better positioned to take advantage of the opportunity ahead than the combination of Walmart and Jet."

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Last Fiscal Year Marked India as the Fastest Growing Market for Celio*

– By Surabhi Khosla

Celio*, a leading menswear brand, works towards bringing in contemporary fashion at amazing prices, thus not only appealing to the conventional style seekers but also progressive consumers.

Celio*, a leading menswear brand, was founded by Maurice Grosman and his wife in 1985 in France. Interestingly, Celio* began as a women’s ready-to-wear boutique, CLEO 3000. Grosman soon realised that the menswear segment was a more lucrative business in Paris and changed his target audience, rechristening the brand, Celio*.

His sons, Marc and Laurent Grosman, joined their father in the business and thus began the era of expansion. A second store came up in Paris in 1981, and a third followed quickly. Today, the retail-driven company has more than 500 stores in France, including its headquarters, and 1,140 stores in more than 50 other countries.

Celio* offers a complete wardrobe of effortless fashion for today’s active and urban men through four fashion

lines – essentials, casual, denim and smart – including shoes and accessories.

It works towards bringing in contemporary fashion at amazing prices, thus not only appealing to the conventional style seekers but also progressive consumers. And it’s not just great designs that are responsible for the brand’s growth in India. Over the years, Celio* has also innovated in several diverse aspects directed at building a better business as well

as creating a more socially accountable organisation – all of which up its appeal for the Indian consumer.

“Celio* has grown consistently over the last nine years, with the last fiscal year marking India as the brand’s fastest growing market. The brand stands for high-quality fashion merchandise offered at very sharp price points, making it an attractive proposition for today’s discerning male consumer. This has also helped us garner a huge fan base from conventional style seekers while also appealing to the progressive consumers,” says Satyen P Momaya, CEO, Celio* Future Fashion Pvt. Ltd. India.



“THE BRAND STANDS FOR HIGH-QUALITY FASHION MERCHANDISE OFFERED AT VERY SHARP PRICE POINTS, MAKING IT AN ATTRACTIVE PROPOSITION FOR TODAY’S DISCERNING MALE CONSUMER.”

– Satyen P Momaya, CEO, Celio* Future Fashion Pvt. Ltd. India.

Expansion & Engagement

Last year Celio* India embarked on making some big changes in the operating model to support its ambitious growth plans, to strengthen both the retail footprint as well as local operations. While earlier the brand operated through EBOs, online stores and Shop-in-Shop formats, a year ago they introduced the master franchise model in the country. It currently has 310 (and growing) points-of-sale in India.

“We also have started our SIS presence in regional multi brand outlets along with strengthening our presence

in large format stores including department stores like Lifestyle, Shoppers Stop, Central and Pantaloons – all this in concurrence with our online presence on all leading e-commerce portals of the nation,” says Momaya.

To support the aggressive footprint expansion across channels and to continue to drive productivity in the existing business, the brand also stepped up its engagement with consumers, while strengthening its team by attracting some of the top retail talent in the country.

While the brand is pursuing an **aggressive expansion policy** in India, Momaya is quick to admit that the top

five metro cities in India are the biggest contributors of revenue for the brand – nearly 70 percent – and online currently rakes in 10 percent of the revenue, but the medium is experiencing fast growth.

However, he adds, “With disposable income growing and with digital breaking all boundaries, consumers across cities are becoming more and more aware of the global trends in fashion and hence brands like us who believe in launching any new innovation and global fits across all markets / cities see a huge opportunity. Our recent expansion and entry into 24 new cities –primarily

Tier II & III cities and towns – has received an outstanding response. We are bullish on growth in Tier II & III and will continue to push growth here.”

Despite its expansion plans into Tier II & III cities and towns, the brand will focus on opening stores in malls. It is also in the process of increasing its India sourcing from the current 40 percent to 50 percent+ in the next season. Last year, Celio* recorded double digit like-to-like growth and is trading even better this financial year, as per Momaya.

“We have been present in France for more than three decades now and are market leaders in the country and thus have a larger high street presence in that country. In India on the other hand, we are primarily present in malls and this will continue to be our location focus. We will of course look towards upping our presence in established high streets in India as well, but Celio* as a brand feels that India does not have many high streets which have been able to reinvent themselves keeping changing consumer requirements in mind,” says Momaya.

Milestone Moments in India

2008

Celio* launches first store in India

2011

The brand crosses 100 doors in India across channels and completes 1,000 stores globally

2017 – 2018

Celio* goes Omnichannel and with the change in the business operating model and increased investments, it helps increase the footprint by 107 doors in just one year and increase the number of cities presence to 121 from 90 with 500+ employees.

2018

The brand continues to witness aggressive expansion both in terms of footprints as well as increased level of consumer engagement



WHILE EARLIER THE BRAND OPERATED THROUGH EBOS, ONLINE STORES AND SHOP-IN-SHOP FORMATS, A YEAR AGO THEY INTRODUCED THE MASTER FRANCHISE MODEL IN THE COUNTRY. IT CURRENTLY HAS 310 (AND GROWING) POINTS-OF-SALE IN INDIA.



Customer is King, Product is Core

All of the brand’s stores rely heavily on **visual merchandising** to attract consumers.

“We provide a complete wardrobe solution for men with a Celio* twist and hence it’s very important we showcase the key looks to the consumers. Visual merchandising plays a vital role in this,” says Momaya.

He says the brand has a team of visual merchandising specialists which works across stores and also for Celio*

shop-in-shops. “Their aim is to bring the product to life by providing a consistent consumer experience,” explains Momaya.

The brand has also adopted a healthy **Omnichannel strategy** towards a better consumer experience. “We use the rich data and analytical insights to constantly improve our merchandise assortment and devise customized marketing communication through both traditional and new age mediums. For supporting our store staff, we have enabled the **‘inventory one view’**. We have also empowered our associates with **‘save the sale’** and enabled **‘click-and-collect’** options for consumers – all this to deliver a better shopping experience to the consumer,” shares Momaya.

‘IN THE NEXT THREE TO FOUR YEARS, WE EXPECT IT TO BE THE THIRD LARGEST SUBSIDIARY OF THE 50+ COUNTRIES CELIO* IS PRESENT IN. IN THE NEXT FIVE YEARS, THE BRAND WILL CONTINUE TO EXPAND ITS FOOTPRINT IN INDIA BOTH – ONLINE AND OFFLINE.’

Celio* as a company is of the opinion that its biggest strength is product. The brand believes the key to unlock growth in India is to create the right emotional triggers for the consumer using product to build awareness and aspiration.

“We have ensured all our communications are rooted in product – something which has sat well with consumers resulting in a positive impact on the draw to our stores.



We also understand the need to strike a balance in using traditional and new age mediums to engage consumers, so where we have simple consumer loyalty programs, we also have **gamification** to engage our patrons,” states Momaya.

One innovative digital campaign launched was the **Celio* Fantastic Football League** whereby members played a game in order to win various promotional offers at stores. The program

crossed 70 lakh+ impressions and broke all previous engagement records.

Celio also has its own loyalty program called the Celio Fantastic Program with a base of 4 lakhs+ members. A lot of marketing activities are undertaken on a targeted basis by crunching huge amounts of data to understand each customer. On the basis of data analytic, dynamic customer segments are created to identify various cross-sell and up-sell opportunities.

In addition to these platforms press relations form an integral part of the marketing strategy. By constantly doing fashion events with the fashion media, bloggers and various celebrity stylists, Celio* ensures a healthy top of mind recall among the influencer segment.

On the basis of this consumer engagement, Momaya is confident that Celio* India will be the fastest growing subsidiary of the brand in the next five years.

“In the next three to four years, we expect it to be the third largest subsidiary of the 50+ countries Celio* is present in. In the next five years, the brand will continue to expand its footprint in India both – online and offline.”

“We will continue to build stronger engagement with existing consumers and also aggressively acquire new consumers. We would like to be the brand of choice with the partners we operate with and also be the employer of choice,” concludes Momaya. 



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Decoding the Future of Online Fashion Shopping with **Gunjan Soni**

– By Charu Lamba

The increasing spectrum of Internet reach across geographies of India coupled with corporatisation of apparel sector is paving way for growth of e-commerce sales to new levels. With digitalisation of India, retailers and brands have better access to Tier II and III, cities and rural India through media and Internet exposure. This has resulted in changing fashion trends much faster than anticipated...



The Indian retail market was estimated at ₹46,15,000 crore in 2017 and is expected to reach ₹1,08,58,000 crore by 2027, growing at a Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) of 9 percent, according to the Indian Fashion Report 2018. Within this, it is estimated that the current fashion retail market is worth ₹3,22,209 crore and is expected to grow at a promising CAGR of 7.7 percent to reach ₹6,74,037 crore by 2027.

Exposure to global fashion trends, the rising disposable incomes of the Indian middle class and the presence of foreign brands has been acting as a catalyst for the growth of the fashion retail market in the country. Meanwhile, the increasing spectrum of Internet reach across geographies of India coupled with corporatisation of apparel sector is paving way for growth of e-commerce sales to new levels. With digitalisation of India, retailers and brands have better access to Tier II and III, cities and rural India through media and Internet exposure. This has resulted in changing fashion trends much faster than anticipated.

Speaking to IMAGES Retail Bureau, **Gunjan Soni, Head of Jabong & Chief Marketing Officer at Myntra** said, “The four big trends that will become really big this year are - sustainable

“**THE FOUR BIG TRENDS THAT WILL BECOME REALLY BIG THIS YEAR ARE - SUSTAINABLE FASHION (SPECIALLY WITH EDGE IN ETHNIC WEAR), FAST FASHION, LUXURY WHICH IS EXPECTED TO GROW 3X-4X IN A COUPLE OF YEARS AND GROWING DEMAND FOR ACCESSORIES.**”

fashion (specially with edge in ethnic wear), fast fashion with the likes of Vorta technology, luxury which is expected to grow 3X-4X in a couple of years and growing demand for Beauty & Personal care, Home décor along with accessories.”

Each of these trends are already doing great on Myntra and Jabong.

“As far as fast fashion is concerned, we have leap-frogged a lot and we have created brands where we are actually not using designers but using artificial intelligence and machine learning to be able to depict how next wave of fashion is going to be much faster and then work with other manufacturers to bring them to life also much faster. So, within a span from conception to execution and to be

available on our platform is only a span of two months. And that is how fast we are taking fast fashion to be,” she added.

Betting Big On Luxury

Then there is luxury, a segment that Jabong is betting big on this Spring. The brand is launching two new online stores soon - a luxury store and a designer store, both of which will concentrate on the premium fashion segment, luxury brands, global brands.

“Jabong is making a lot of waves when it comes to the luxury segment and soon we expect to launch both a luxury store and a designer store in line with the expectations of our consumers. The launch of the stores is in line with our belief that the Indian customer is ready to experience both these segments online. The luxury store will see several innovations because if we are bringing luxury online, we actually want to create an experience that is different,” asserted Soni.

She added, “The luxury store will see several innovations because if Jabong is bringing luxury online, the idea is to actually create an experience that is different.”

Luxury as a category will be available on both the platforms



but these stores will be launched exclusively on Jabong. Meanwhile, Myntra will continue to lead as a mass premium platform and will focus on driving the next wave of adaption.

“We have been the leader in the fashion category, we want to make sure that the next wave of adaption in online fashion happens in India on our platforms,” she further stated.

Both Myntra and Jabong today have a combined base of 12 million customers. However, the customer overlap between both the brands today is 28 percent.

Despite having overlapping customers, just like Myntra, Jabong has no plans to take offline route and open brick-and-mortar stores.

Reinventing Experiences Using Technology

To enhance the customer experience, Soni said the brand is using technology at every step.

“The key is to personalise experiences using technology over the next two years,” she said, adding, “Personalisation is not really talked about a lot when it comes to supply chain and logistics. We take the technology to help predict consumer behaviour. Fashion is not very a high depth category, so to store products at multiple warehouses we need to plan in advance. We apply forward prediction algorithms that tell us which geography is likely to buy which product on the basis of past trends. Using these algorithms, we pre-stock our merchandise and are hence able to make deliveries with speed.”

“We are also personalising the end experience of the consumer. Last year, we launched ‘Try and Buy’ which

JABONG COM

Tracing Jabong's Journey

2012

Backed by Germany-based Samwer Brothers company, Rocket Internet, Jabong was launched in 2012. Founded by Arun Chandra Mohan, Praveen Sinha, and Lakshmi Potluri in 2012, others including Manu Jain and Mukul Bafana also joined Jabong. The company had a hybrid e-commerce model with both inventory-based business and third-party merchants selling through its marketplace.

The company rolled out several categories like shoes, apparel, accessories, sports equipment, jewellery, beauty products, fragrances, home décor and toys in record time. It embarked on a huge mass communication campaign and ensured a significant presence in the market within a very short span while others took at least two-three years to build them up.

According to a ComScore report in 2013, Jabong.com had the second highest amount of traffic on its website within a few months of its launch. It also ranked 10th in Google Zeitgeist India trends making it 10th most searched term in 2012 in India.

In less than 20 months, Jabong.com managed to become the third-most visited online shopping website after Myntra.com and Flipkart.com in India.

2013

During September 2013, Jabong shipped 14,000 orders on a daily basis out of which 60 percent were from small towns. It was one of the most visited e-commerce sites during the Great Online Shopping Festival 2013.

In 2012-13, the company's revenue soared 50 times – to ₹202 crore from ₹4 crore the previous year – and its loss narrowed to ₹16 lakh from Rs 64 lakh in 2011-12, according data from the registrar of companies. By comparison, Flipkart's loss in 2013-14 doubled to ₹ 400 crore, while Amazon's net loss stood at ₹320 crore.

2014

The company, which matched larger rival Myntra in sales until early 2014, ceded market share since then. It struggled at multiple fronts, starting from senior-level churn at the organization to continuous erosion of market share. Rumours about both co-founders' – Praveen Sinha and Arun Chandra Mohan – exits started doing the rounds this year. They finally left the company in 2015.

After Flipkart acquired rival Myntra in a ₹1,800-crore stock-and-cash deal in May 2014, the former significantly increased its market share pumping in hundreds of crores of rupees to grow its offering and give deep discounts to boost sales growth, which added to the loss of Jabong's market share.

Simultaneously, talks of a potential deal between Amazon and Jabong gained momentum, witnessed as Amazon's move to counter Flipkart's acquisition of Myntra.

During the same year in September, Rocket Internet merged Jabong with four other online fashion retailers in Latin America, Russia, the Middle East, South-east Asia and Australia to create Global Fashion Group (GFG).

Swedish investment firm Kinnevik also owned a large stake in Jabong's parent (Global Fashion Group).

2015

The company's losses, on the back of heavy discounting, for the first six months of this year stood at ₹ 227.4 crore compared to almost ₹ 155 crore in the corresponding period last year. Net revenue also did not see a

VORTA

is powered by both technology and consumer buying behaviour. For this year, we will be exploring services like *Concierge*.

For example: can we give you an appointment booking experience, can we vary speed by the type of consumer we are getting to? We will be applying technology in unconventional areas and of course, in traditional areas, we are already using 10X of the technology we will be using in launching newer services.”

Just like last year, Jabong will be launching the second version of its *Mood Store*, a comprehensive fashion store that allows users to shop an entire look per their mood. Mood store was created to the Urban TrailBlazer segment - which the relevant target group segment for Jabong. These are movers and shakers of India, with high affluence and discerning choice in fashion etc. The store is based on deep consumer understanding and analytic around preferences of the Indian fashion customer.

According to Soni, the Mood Store is all about shaping experiences through technology and being able to offer the consumer a selection not led by category. Apart from this, Jabong is credited with launching several technologically backed industry-firsts in Indian fashion e-commerce.

Tier II & Beyond: A Storehouse of Opportunities

Tier II and beyond is a very large market already, so across both Myntra and Jabong close to 50 percent of sales now come from beyond Tier I or the top ten cities.

“In particular, we are seeing adoption of the latest trends happening there. Trend of adopting active wear is happening faster in Tier II and beyond than the metros. Similarly, in the luxury segment - which is largely considered only for super affluent and therefore proxy metro consumers - we see that almost 40 percent of our sales (even for higher price points) are actually coming from Tier II and beyond. And within that geography, places like the Northeast are shopping their fair share,” revealed Soni.

Intelligent Marketing & Myntra TV

“Last year we did a personalised campaign for Myntra’s End of Season Sale where we ran 40,000 different creatives for 40,000 different segments. We used the help of a Silicon Valley-based startup to personalise ads/campaigns. We used four basic variables to target consumers - gender, geography, preferred language and whether they had been a consumer in the past. The end result - everyone who accessed the campaign got an individual look. All these campaigns saw 3X higher performance as compared to others that we have done in the past.”

She believes that the future of marketing is also going to change dramatically - a lot more personalised with a higher bar on creativity

Another element which the brand is banking on is content. They are confident content is going to become the big enabler for e-commerce and are in the process of building ‘*Myntra TV*’, which will host ‘shopable videos.’ 

healthy rise as online retailer saw sales grow moderately by 26 percent to ₹ 410.7 crore compared to ₹ 324.7 crore in January-June last year.

Amidst this, the speculation about Amazon buying Jabong took a U-turn with Amazon pulling out when Jabong asked for US \$1.2 billion in valuation. If the deal had progressed, it would have been a landmark development and the largest M&A in the e-commerce sector in India. It could have pitched Amazon as a much stronger competitor for Flipkart-Myntra combine.

After Amazon, rumours of Vijay Shekher’s Paytm emerging as a potential buyer surrounded, but didn’t take off.

In December 2015, in a bid to turnaround Jabong’s fate, company announced the appointment of former Benetton India head Sanjeev Mohanty as its CEO and Managing Director. This followed various series of top management appointments. But nothing seemed to work for e-tailer.

After Mohanty’s joining, the company even said that it is looking to transact a gross merchandise value of US \$800 million by December 2016. It claimed it had achieved a GMV of US \$66 million in January this year.

2016

In July of this year, news broke out of players like Flipkart, Snapdeal, Alibaba, Abof.com, among others in a race to buy Jabong. This was followed by speculation that CEO Sanjeev Mohanty was quitting the ailing company to join Levis Straus.

Flipkart Ltd finally acquired Jabong through its unit Myntra in a cut-price deal that values the online fashion store at US \$70 million, moving to preserve its position as India’s No.1 e-commerce marketplace.

As per a Rocket Internet investor presentation, Jabong had a net revenue of 32.6 million euros in Q1 2016, up 14 percent from 28.6 million euros in the year-ago period. For FY2015, its revenues were at 122.1 million euros.

2017

Brands like WROGN, Forever 21, YWC, Aèropostale, New Era Caps, Mothercare, Roadster, Cover Story, AAY, Zivame, HRX and Mast and Harbor were launched on Jabong.

Jabong also forayed into toys segment with the launch of Hamleys - the finest toy store in the world.

Jabong also invested in expanding range of products to give consumers more options to buy, made mobile application more engaging and invested in marketing to create more awareness among consumers about the brand.

The apparel category contributed around 45 percent to the Jabong business, followed by footwear around 11-12 percent.

2018

Jabong has added brands like Marks & Spencer and Splash to its repertoire.

The Big Brand Sale by Jabong was huge hit as it opened to a record-breaking start with a 40x revenue over baseline within the first hour. 8 million products were wishlisted, with premium international brands dominating the share, followed by sports and footwear. All the orders placed during slots with promised next day deliveries are on track for deliveries.

Gunjan Soni said, “The Big Brand Sale received a tremendous response with traffic to the platform rising by 4x and new customer acquisition ahead of our plan. Our innovation of VIP slots for loyalists created huge excitement with 1.3 million products getting sold even before the formal start of the sale. Our customers also embraced our offerings on the premium international brands, thereby increasing their share by 40 percent.”

And now, Jabong will be soon introducing luxury and designer stores.



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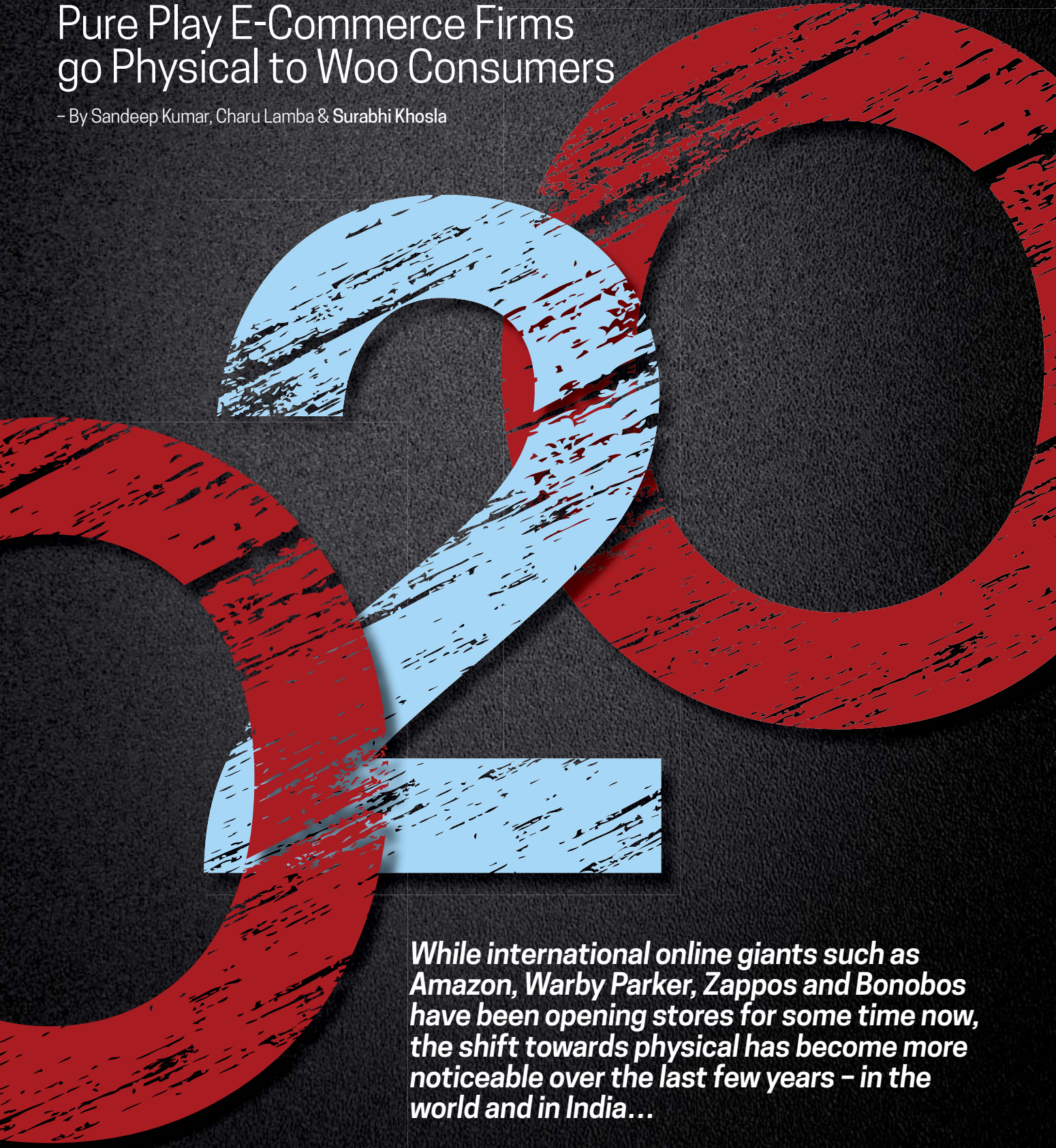
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Pure Play E-Commerce Firms go Physical to Woo Consumers

- By Sandeep Kumar, Charu Lamba & Surabhi Khosla



While international online giants such as Amazon, Warby Parker, Zappos and Bonobos have been opening stores for some time now, the shift towards physical has become more noticeable over the last few years - in the world and in India...

In the late 90s and early 2000s, the retail industry was all gung ho about going online. Retailers wanted to get connected, design and run innovative e-commerce portals. The idea of selling the product online and delivering it in no time was being considered as a decisive move in-order to succeed. Retailers realised that hopping onto the 'e-commerce superhighway' was the future. Everyone hoped to become the next amazon in their chosen fields.
















Cut to today and India came into

2017 on the heels of demonetisation. A country that by and large depended on cash was forced to go online. And even as the digital payments space exploded, the business of e-commerce in the Indian sub-continent received its biggest boost ever. E-tailers grew significantly to tap the burgeoning online audience through offers and innovations including easy accessibility and affordability.

In India, Flipkart is at the top of the online game with the highest top-of-mind recall among consumers, Amazon has been closing the gap fast, and both

companies are preparing to go to war with Alibaba, which is all set to tap the serious potential of the Indian market.

With so much happening in the online space, it comes as a surprise winds of change are breezing through the retail industry, pushing retailers towards physical stores. While international online giants such as amazon, Warby Parker, Zappos and Bonobos have been opening stores for some time now, the shift towards physical has become more noticeable over the last few years - in the world and in India.

Indian E-Commerce Brands with Physical Stores						
Brands	Number of Stores	Area (in sq.ft)	Categories of Product Sold	Annual Turnover from Stores	Location	Future Expansion plans (by 2019)
 Myntra	11	4,000	Apparel, Accessories (for Men, women & kids)	8% of the total revenue	Bengaluru & Delhi	15
 Urban Ladder Let's Create	4	4,000-6,000	Furniture (Living, Bedroom, Dining)	90% growth	Bengaluru & Pune (50,000 walkins)	20
 lenskart.com	415	700-800	Eyewear & Sunglasses	2X growth	Tier I & II Cities	700
 NYKAA	17	1,000-1,200	Cosmetics & Beauty products	2X-2.5X	Tier I & II Cities	55
 VOYLLA FASHION JEWELRY	240+	1,500-2,000	Jewellery - Women & Men	30% growth	Tier I & II Cities	500
 FABALLEY	5	500-750	Women-Clothing, Accessories, Shoes, Belts, Sunglasses	25% growth	Tier I Cities	15
 CARAT LANE	38	750-1,000	Jewellery	10% growth	Tier I Cities	100
 Clavia	6	800-1,000	Lingerie	15% growth	Delhi and Mumbai	15
 zivame	26	750-900	Lingerie	2X	Tier I & II Cities	100
 JAYPORE	1	1,400	Home Decor, Accessories, Jewelry, Apparel, Gifts	NA	Tier I Cities	4-8
 PRETTYSECRETS	23	600-900	Lingerie	2X-3X increase	Tier I Cities	300
 firstcity	300+	1,000-2,000	Kids & Baby Products	90% sales happen offline	Tier I, II and III Cities	500
 STYLOR BE UNDOLE	1	700	Men Suiting, Shirts & Formals	NA	Tier I	2-3
 VAJØR	3	1000	Women- Apparel, Footwear, Accessories	30%	Metro & Tier I Cities	20
 pepperfry.com happy returns 100%	29	2500-3000	Furniture	20%	Tier I cities	45

The Indian Scenario

While the Internet may have penetrated the heart of India, the hearts of Indians (and their trust) still lies with the physical retailer. In fact, a recent *AT Kearney Study* states that 95 percent of all retail sales are captured by retailers with a brick-and-mortar presence while two-thirds of consumers who purchase online use the store before or after the transaction.

Buzzword Phy-gital

"Despite the rise of e-commerce, the physical stores still draw a significant shopping crowd. In fact, 91 percent of all retail sales are still being generated in brick-and-mortar stores," a study released by Zebra Technology says.

Zebra Technology interviewed nearly 1,700 retail decision-makers across various retail segments, including speciality stores, department stores, apparel merchants, supermarkets, electronics, home improvement and drugstore chains, globally in 2016.

Future Group CEO, Kishore Biyani, who is a firm believer in brick-and-mortar retail, feels that there will be no competition between channels in the future since all mediums of sale will converge. By unveiling the 30-year vision titled as Retail 3.0 in 2017, Future Group would become Asia's largest integrated consumer retailer by 2047 with revenue of in excess of ₹1 lakh crore.

It added that 73 percent of retailers will reinvent their supply chain with real-time visibility enabled by use of automation, sensors, and analytic in their stores. In Asia Pacific, retailers are looking to create a seamless shopper experience with 76 percent of APAC respondents reporting that it is important or business-critical to integrate e-commerce and in-store experiences.

"By 2021, nearly 76 percent of retailers in APAC will be able to customize a store visit for customers as a majority of them



Like Biyani, a number of online retailers are branching out into the traditional, turning towards physical retail in order to gain a share of the Indian brick-and-mortar pie, which is estimated to be ₹28 lakh crore by 2019.

What Research Says

A *KPMG study* titled '*Global Retail Trends 2018*' states that by January 2019, 90 percent of all retail will still be done in physical stores. Iconic retail brands like Apple, Sephora and Costco continue to succeed, despite relying mainly on brick-and-mortar stores.

As a consequence, new classes of retailers are emerging. There are retailers who started online and are moving to physical brick-and-mortar and others are merging 'bricks and clicks.' Retailers are seeking to understand their share of consumer spending, and how their consumers search, shop and buy in order to devise new retail models. Simply put, as per the KPMG study, stores that are doing well offer a customer experience that meets or exceeds customer expectations. Leading retailers take advantage of their physical spaces to maximise experience per square foot and the real-life interactions customers have there.

Vend's Retail Trends and Predictions for 2018 says that technology will fuel – not curb – the rise of brick-and-mortar retail. Thanks to modern point of sale and retail management systems, it's never been easier to open a retail business. The study also adds that mobile applications and cloud-based solutions are enabling merchants to quickly set up shop with a minimal investment.



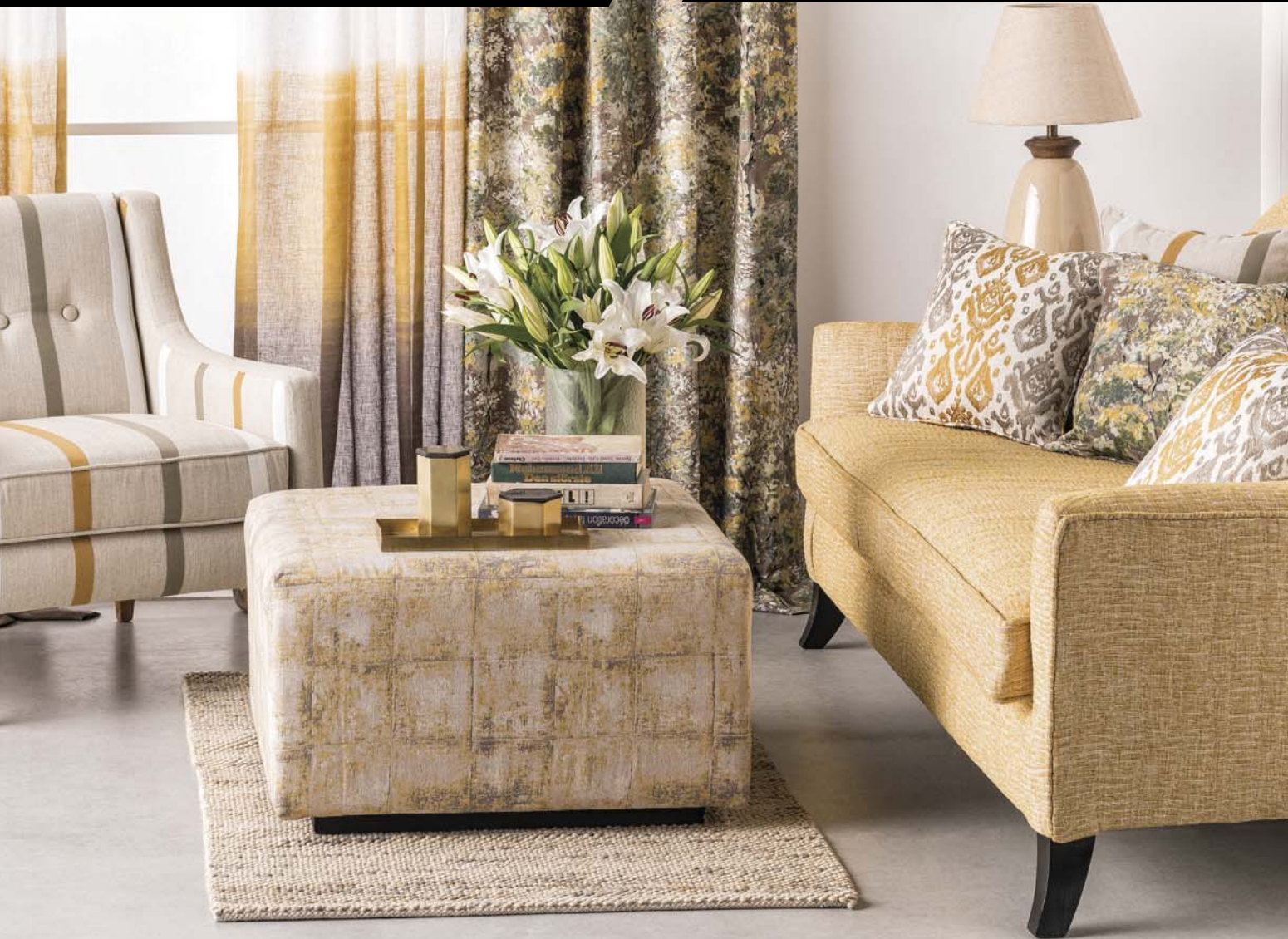
"Around 28 percent of the sample size was taken from Asia Pacific. Findings at Asia Pacific level are reflective of trends in India," says Deep Agarwal, Zebra Regional Sales Director for India and Sub-Continent. The study said that retailers are implementing an Omnichannel approach by which the online and physical platforms are no longer at loggerheads but complement each other in driving customer satisfaction.

will know when a specific customer is in the store. This will be enabled through technology such as micro-locationing, allowing retailers to capture more data, accuracy and customer insights," the study said. It also said that micro-locationing is gaining foothold in the retail space as such platforms help retailers gain insights into shoppers' behaviours and paths in a given store, allowing them to make smarter merchandising and marketing decisions.

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Going Offline

Roughly 70 percent shoppers research online before they hit a physical store, and 1 out of every 4 consumers pulls out their mobile phone while in a store to research the products they see in store. Offline retail serves to give a consumer instant gratification, and a level of variety and novelty that they don't find online.

According to *TimeTrade's State of Retail Report*, 85 percent of consumers prefer to shop in physical stores because they like to see, touch and test products in person before buying them. The report also reveals that one third of customers like to receive product advice from sales associates, and a whopping 90 percent of shoppers are likely to buy after receiving help from knowledgeable staff in-store.

According to *LSRetail*, by moving offline, online retailers use physical stores to create an immersive brand experience. Their showrooms and concept stores are first and foremost



places where customers can be immersed in the brand culture. These retailers know it: in-store atmosphere is a key differentiator for brands, and if done right it can be a great way to create lasting impressions – and returning customers. The report also says that smart online retailers are using physical stores as part of their supply chain, to cut costs of inventory management and speed up delivery. By using the shops as warehouses and fulfillment centers, online retailers can improve their distribution across the territory, and make product shipment faster and more effective across more geographical areas.

Also, when retailers open physical stores, the traffic to their e-commerce store increases dramatically, so do the numbers of people mentioning the brand and searching for it online, leading to better returns.

As per a *Google-AT Kearney India Report*, selling online is a difficult task and especially for a new brand. The newly-launched brand lacks instant gratification, as well as consumer trust for shoppers are uncertain how capable the delivery of the product – or the genuineness of the product is.

With all these studies at hand, one wonders why traditional retail is dying. The only reason traditional brick-and-mortar stores and malls are shutting shop is because many aren't modernising their business models. In order to stay relevant, physical retailers

So, What is O2O?

Online-to-offline commerce is a business strategy that draws potential customers from online channels to make purchases in physical stores. It is a combination of payment model and foot traffic generator for merchants (as well as a "discovery" mechanism for consumers) that creates offline purchases.

Online-to-offline commerce, or O2O, identifies customers in the online space, such as through emails and Internet advertising, and then uses a variety of tools and approaches to entice the customers to leave the online space. This type of strategy incorporates techniques used in online marketing with those used in brick-and-mortar marketing.

The goal of online-to-offline commerce is to create product and service awareness online, allowing potential customers to research different offerings and then tempting them enough to visit the local brick-and-mortar store to make a purchase.

need to connect with their customers, enhance consumer experience to a degree that the shopper should expect the unexpected when he walks into a store.

As a result, going from an online business model to bringing offline seriously into their strategy (Offline to Online – O2O), is becoming the new norm for e-tailers. On O2O approach is fast becoming the new norm for running a successful retail business.

E-Commerce Titan Amazon Goes Offline

Amazon the largest e-tailer in the world – as measured by revenue and market capitalization – started as an online bookstore for physical and electronic books and later expanded into almost every conceivable retail category. These include electronics, apparel and accessories, furniture and furnishings, food, toys and of course books.

In 2015, amazon opened its first physical bookstore in the University Village shopping mall in Seattle. 'amazon' eventually plans to roll out 300 to 400 bookstores around the country as well as in Germany.

In 2017, amazon acquired Whole Foods Market – a high-end supermarket with over 400 stores – for \$13.4 billion, which vastly increased amazon's presence as a brick-and-mortar retailer.

In October 2017, amazon reported \$1.3 B in physical store



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sales, breaking out brick-and-mortar business for first time, although still dwarfed by \$26.4 B online sales.

In January 2018, amazon in its bid to explore the offline space further, introduced a new kind of physical store concept called 'amazon Go', whose main feature is a cashier-less check out system of purchase with the 'just-walk-out' technology. Customers scan their phone when they enter the store, grab what they need and just walk out.

The shopper's amazon account gets automatically charged. amazon plans to open as many 100 amazon Go stores by the end of 2019.



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CLICK-AND-MORTAR

Studies have predicted that the future will be all about the union of offline and online commerce. Digital transformation, and to an extent the mobile revolution, have both played a major role in seamlessly connecting two branches of retail which were earlier considered competition to each other. Taking this into account, Internet-based commerce companies are adopting the strategy of expanding offline to reach out to every last customer.

Some Indian companies which have successfully branched out into the offline space are:

MYNTRA

On March 16, 2017, Myntra launched its first physical retail store for its lifestyle private label, Roadster, in Bengaluru. Myntra set an offline stage for the established online brand, which has contributed over 8 percent to the overall revenue of the platform. Loaded with technology at every step, the store provides a complete brand experience with a mix of technology in fashion and lifestyle.

“Roadster witnessed phenomenal growth at over 80 percent YoY and is well on its way to achieving a run rate of ₹1000 crore by FY19. Its entry into the offline segment will further boost its prospects. With this move, customers will receive an exceptional brand experience transformed by technology and a new avenue for shopping,” Ananth Narayanan, CEO Myntra and Jabong was earlier quoted as saying.



“We are offering offline touchpoints through brick-and-mortar experience stores. Our stores will not be typical. Technology will be the major driver in these stores and you will see a clear difference between these stores and other, regular brick-and-mortar stores. We are planning on opening more Roadster stores this year with very engaging technology experiences,” adds Manohar Kamath, Chief, Myntra Fashion Brands. Myntra reportedly posted a turnover of ₹2,000 crore in the fiscal

year 2016-17 and Roadster played a significant role in garnering this revenue. Roadster, one of Myntra’s largest private brands, will be a ₹650 crore brand by the end of this fiscal year.

The brand already has one Mango store, and they hope to take this number up to 25 over the next three years. Apart from this, Myntra has also tied up with international retail giant Esprit and will open an Esprit store in June in India. Myntra hopes to open 15 Esprit stores in the next three years in the country.

The e-commerce major is also planning to open offline beauty and wellness stores. The company at present sells more than 100 beauty and cosmetics brands, including MAC, Clinique, Bobbi Brown, and Estee Lauder. Myntra plans to sell these products via a chain of multi-brand physical stores.

Going forward, Myntra plans to open multi-brand experience centres, on consolidation and India’s fashion sense. The idea behind opening stores is to give consumers a physical feel of the product and then drive them online, building a great Omnichannel experience.

URBAN LADDER

Founded in 2012, furniture and decor retailer Urban Ladder currently has three stores in Bengaluru. The stores – in Domlur, Whitefield, and HSR Layout – have seen over 50,000 walk-ins till date, with an average conversion rate of 35 percent.

The reason behind opening physical stores – according to Urban Ladder’s internal research, 21 percent of customers didn’t get a full sense of the products online. The data also suggested that 45 percent of customers feel that experiencing the products offline validated the price point of the offering.

Based on this data, Urban Ladder set about planning and building multiple experience centers across the country,

which will also be the primary hub for new product ranges and collections.

The brand’s business in Bengaluru has grown by 90 percent from the last financial year, with the offline push promising a successful year as far as revenue goes.



The brand is using innovative experience-enhancing technologies at its experience centres – which are approximately 3,500 sq.ft. in size – to make it a virtual extension of its online store. Customers can experience the products in actual house settings through AR and VR gear technology. The idea is to leverage the cross-flow of its online and offline channels to create a fantastic retail experience.

“We have optimized the retail floor through stunning visual merchandising and creative messaging, the store’s retail experience is a delight for customers visiting the location. Seamless integration of technology through QR codes, VR, and AR help customers visualize the look, fit, and feel in the offline store delivering the promise of an infinite catalogue,” says Ashish Goel, CEO & co-Founder, Urban Ladder.

Urban Ladder, which obtained a single-brand retail license last year, hopes to take the number of its offline stores to 20 pan India by March 2019. The brand hopes to experiment with different formats and category specific stores in different cities.

LENSKART

In 2014, eyewear brand Lenskart, decided to venture into offline retail. "Going offline significantly increased accessibility to the brand. We did a small experiment in 2014 by opening a store at Delhi and customers loved the experience. Our stores are unique because we don't sell in the store, but only take orders. We are solving the problem of trial. We wanted to be wherever our consumers are and provide them with a unique and differentiated retail experience. We now have over 450 stores across 100 cities," said Amit Chaudhary, co-Founder & COO, Lenskart.



Lenskart currently operates five John Jacobs stores in India and is looking to add 20 more for the brand by the end of 2018. Overall, Lenskart aims to expand its offline presence from 300 stores to 600 stores by the end of 2018.

PEPPERFRY

Furniture and home furnishing giant, Pepperfry – the brainchild of Ambareesh Murty and Ashish Shah, which has a tremendous online presence and popularity – opened its first offline 'concept store' in Hyderabad, five years after its launch in 2012. The brand wrapped up FY17 in style, clocking ₹127.5 crore in total revenue in the fiscal.

The revenue witnessed a growth of 30 percent higher than last year, buoyed through its offline expansion that was initiated last year.

"In the next three to five years leading home players are set to reach the global standards. Pepperfry sees a huge opportunity to lead this growth. Omnichannel is going to be a key growth driver for improving the customer

experience. Pepperfry is geared towards scaling the Studio presence and has recently rolled out a franchise model with an aim to build the largest Omnichannel network in the country. We will open 46 studios by March 2018," Shah told IMAGES Retail Bureau in an interview last year.



In the last two years, the studios have emerged as key touchpoints for consumer engagement and a great marketing channel. They are present at key shopping hotspots across Mumbai, Bengaluru, Delhi, Gurugram, Pune, Ghaziabad, Chennai, and Hyderabad which has resulted in a high number of customer walk-ins at the studios. Customers can experience Pepperfry's differentiated furniture and home product portfolio, and place orders online. Additionally, they can also seek interiors related advisory from Pepperfry's design experts.

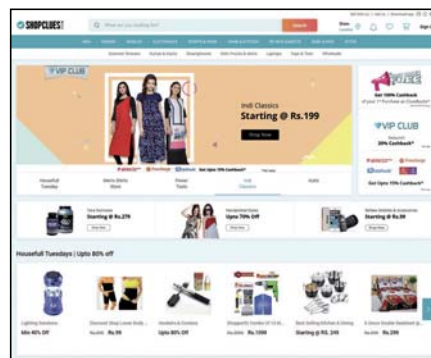
"We are an online company with studios that are built as an experience centre. We do not have POS at any of our studios," says Shah. "We have studios at key high-streets across major cities in the country and thus our Studios attract large number of walk-ins. The conversion rates are as high as 20-25 percent. These are sales that happen after the customer visits our studio to make his/her purchase. We don't directly attribute these sales directly to our studios as these customers might have seen the product on our e-commerce portal," he further added.

Today, Pepperfry has 23 studios across 11 cities with 20 percent of the overall business driven by offline channel. The firm is looking to open another 25 studios by the end of FY18.

SHOPCLUES

Established in 2011, ShopClues, the online market owned by Clues Network Pvt. LTD. is all set to launch its first offline store in Lucknow. The brand is set to enter the brick-and-mortar segment after reportedly having raised about ₹65 crore on from existing investors.

The new store will feature Shopclues' private labels and products in categories across fashion, accessories and entry-level smartphones. Post launch, the brand will take stock of ROI and then consider opening more stores going further.



Valued at ₹6,500 crores, ShopClues claims to have over 6 lakh merchants and 2.8 crore products on its platform, serving over 32,000 pincodes across the country.

VOYLLA

Fashion jewellery brand Voylla which started as an online player in 2012 and ventured into offline retail in 2015, now has around 250 retail touchpoints in the country. It is currently eyeing a larger play area in Tier I and II cities all over the country.





“FOR ANY OMNICHANNEL BUSINESS, A MAJOR CHUNK OF THE CUSTOMER BASE IS STILL SHOPPING OFFLINE, THE BRICK-AND-MORTAR CATEGORY. THIS IS MAINLY BECAUSE OF THE TOUCH-FEEL FACTOR WHICH IS VERY IMPORTANT FOR THE BUYERS AND ONE OF THE PRIME REASONS WHY WE DECIDED TO EXPAND OFFLINE”

– Vishwas Shringi,
Founder & CEO, Voylla Fashions Pvt. Ltd.

As part of its retail expansion, Voylla has also added ‘Dare’ outlets that cater to the men’s jewellery and accessories segment. The brand currently has two ‘Dare’ stores in the country in Noida and Cochin.

“Despite the initial rush, e-commerce still needs time to live up to the projections and expectations level of the consumers. For any Omnichannel business, a major chunk of the customer base is still shopping offline, the brick-and-mortar category. This is mainly because of the touch-feel factor which is very important for the buyers and one of the prime reasons why we decided to expand offline,” says Vishwas Shringi, Founder & CEO, Voylla Fashions Pvt. Ltd.

“Our stores are complementary. While an extensive product catalogue gets explored digitally, the trust is built post the touch and feel of offline retail, which helps in pushing the online sales by a good margin,” he adds.

As per Shringi, Voylla is in expansion mode with a target of opening 500 stores soon.

CARATLANE

Founded by Mithun Sacheti and Srinivasa Gopalan in 2008, CaratLane began as an online portal for selling jewellery. The brand launched its first brick and mortar store in Bengaluru at Phoenix Market City in 2014 in order to provide touch and feel experience to the people of Bengaluru. Today, the brand boasts of 38 retail stores across India and is planning to open more in coming months.

In July 2016, Titan purchased 62 percent stake in CaratLane for ₹357.24 crore

With Titan acquiring a majority stake and stores adding ‘a Tanishq partnership’ as a part of its communication strategy, CaratLane is now banking on the offline model to shore up revenues. The majority of its stores are already profitable, and each store generally breaks even in the second year of operation.



For the next phase growth, CaratLane will focus on Tier-II cities that include Guwahati, Ranchi, Patna and so on. Some of the Tier-II cities that it already has a presence include Chandigarh, Pune, Dehradun, Lucknow, Indore, etc.

“There is an opportunity for online and brick-and-mortar set-up to leverage each other’s strengths. Our stores are very different from the typical Indian jewellery store, which tend to be very large, with a guard and an usher who walks you in. Our stores are designed for the customer who walks into a mall or a duty-free shop. There is no glass and you can walk right up to the products. You can touch, feel and experience the jewellery without any pressure. It’s more inviting than what the retail store environment currently is in India. We display the latest and bestselling



“OUR STORES ARE DESIGNED FOR THE CUSTOMER WHO WALKS INTO A MALL OR A DUTY-FREE SHOP. THERE IS NO GLASS AND YOU CAN WALK RIGHT UP TO THE PRODUCTS. YOU CAN TOUCH, FEEL AND EXPERIENCE THE JEWELLERY WITHOUT ANY PRESSURE.”

– Atul Sinha,
Senior Vice President, Marketing,
CaratLane

collection at our stores and everything is accessible to the consumers. We allow our customers to touch, feel and experience the brand and with such format it only helps our business. Our brick-and-mortar presence complements our online presence rather than compete with it,” says Atul Sinha, Senior Vice President, Marketing, CaratLane.

“The brand CaratLane stands for democratising access to beautiful jewellery. A lot of our customers discover us online and buy at the stores or vice versa. Online & offline definitely complement each other, and we are able to widen our audience base. Our biggest hurdle was to build trust and to be able to get consumers a ‘touch and feel’ experience even though we started as an online jeweller. Over the years, we rolled out various initiatives such as our ‘Try @ Home facility’ that allows customers to shortlist items online and then request for a free trial at their home and the ‘Perfect Look App’ which is the world’s first virtual 3D jewellery try-on app that allows the customers to virtually try on earrings and see how it will

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actually look on them. More recently we started opening stores making us a truly Omnichannel retailer,” he adds.

By FY-19, CaratLane aims to be an ₹500-crore business (in terms of turnover) with a stronger Omnichannel presence (both brick and mortar stores and e-tailing).

VAJOR

Luxury fashion and lifestyle brand Vajor is a platform for women’s apparel, footwear and accessories. The brand opened its first offline store in January 2018. Since then it has opened two more physical stores taking the number to three, within a short span of three months.



“While diversifying from only online lifestyle brand to offline stores now, our emphasis has been to create experiential zones. Our stores will be the ultimate destinations for consumers to be part of various events being hosted by us and engage in community related initiatives,” explains Nathasha AR Kumar, Founder & CEO of Vajor.

The offline stores are designed to serve more as experience centers, which shall enable customers to get a ‘Touch & Feel’ of the product and build their confidence in the brand and product. Meanwhile, the online portal gives the audience a much wider collection as compared to physical stores.

“Both online and offline stores complement each other especially in case of apparel and decor. Offline stores help in building customer faith in the product which triggers the buying decision. Thereafter customer need not visit the stores every time for buying. This can be done online,” says Rajinder Mattoo, Retail Head.



“OUR STORES WILL BE THE ULTIMATE DESTINATIONS FOR CONSUMERS TO BE PART OF VARIOUS EVENTS BEING HOSTED BY US AND ENGAGE IN COMMUNITY RELATED INITIATIVES.”

– Nathasha AR Kumar, Founder & CEO of Vajor

ZIVAME

Online lingerie portal Zivame, founded by Richa Kar, re-strategised its sales policy to include offline stores a couple of years ago. The company has established 26 brand stores over the last one-and-a-half years and is reportedly planning to set up around 100 stores by FY19-end with an invested of approximately ₹40 crore.



According to Shaleen Sinha, CEO, Zivame, the company dynamically relocates stores using AI, one reason why customer conversions at the stores are far higher than online.

Zivame claims the conversion rates at stores are 2X higher than online sales with the average order value being at least 1.2X higher. The brand hopes its offline push will help it overturn the dip in revenues it saw last year.



“THE INTENT WAS TO MAKE PRODUCT TOUCH-POINTS THAT CAN BE BRAND BUILDERS AND SELF-SUSTAINING AT THE SAME TIME. WHILE ONLINE CONTINUES TO GROW PROFITABLY, OFFLINE HELPED US CAPTURE A COMPLETELY COMPLEMENTARY USER BASE, WHILE CONTINUING TO BUILD THE BRAND.”

– Neha Kant, Founder and CRO, Clovia.

CLOVIA

Founded in 2012, Clovia is a premium online lingerie retailer. The brand ventured into the offline retail space in 2017, opening its first store in Delhi.

“As a brand we want to be present at every customer touch point and offline was a natural progression for us. The intent was to make product touch-points that can be brand builders and self-sustaining at the same time. While online continues to grow profitably, offline helped us capture a completely complementary user base, while continuing to build the brand,” says Neha Kant, Founder and CRO of Clovia.



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“We have six exclusive stores in Delhi-NCR and are looking to expanding to 10 in the next months along with shop-in-shops in leading MBOs in the area,” she adds. The brand currently gets close to 15 percent of its business from offline channels and the its offline outreach program include shop-in-shops, airport installations as well as international exclusive brand outlets. Clovia is targeting 50 percent growth from these stores by FY 2017-18 and plans to launch 15 more EBOs by 2018 end.

FABALLEY

In 2016, online fast fashion retailer FabAlley identified its ethnic-fusion range, Indya, for its offline expansion. Indya is FabAlley’s affordable fusion label that pairs Indian heritage fabrics with western cuts and currently contributes to over 20 percent of its overall revenue. FabAlley first partnered with Future Group’s Central Mall in 2016 for their offline expansion, and since then has grown to 65 shop-in-shops across the country, apart from 5 exclusive brand outlets. The standalone stores are approximately 660 sq. ft. in size.

According to Shivani Poddar, Co-founder, FabAlley, the brand’s offline strategy is to expand Indya’s presence across the country creating a touch-and-



feel experience for the consumer.

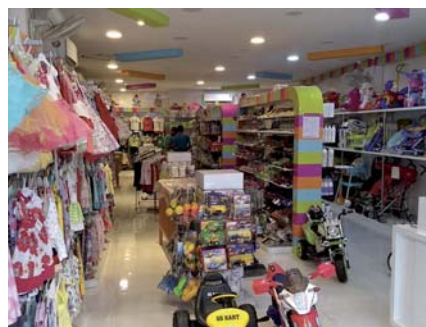
“After being fairly strong from an online point of view, we still felt that there a lot of customers who wanted to kind of touch and then buy the product as oppose to buying online. We felt if we have enough touch and feel points for customers to get familiar with the brand, it is easier for them to transition from online to offline. After reaching a certain stage, we felt the next level of growth will come from ensuring enough outlets offline, so that customers can shop on all channels,” she said in an interview to IMAGES Retail Bureau last year.

FabAlley is also looking to set-up separate shop-in-shops for its brand, Curve. It will invest over ₹6 crore this financial year on offline expansion and estimates that its offline revenue share will go up to 30 percent of the company’s total revenue by the end of FY19.

FIRSTCRY

Running high with its offline expansion spree, kids and baby care products retailer, FirstCry – which currently runs 200 brick-and-mortar outlets across India – plans to take this number up to 700 by 2020. The carpet area of stores range anywhere from 1,000 sq.ft. to 2,000 sq. ft. The stores act as experience centres, successfully tackling the touch-and-feel challenges faced in purchasing online.

Supam Maheshwari, CEO, FirstCry.



com feels that while the trend of buying online is increasing exponentially, tradition offline retail still remains the most preferred option for purchase for a large chunk of people.

FirstCry initially started reaching out to its potential customer via the e-commerce route and has recently revamped its loyalty programme in a way that customers could earn points on both online and offline (in-store) purchases and redeem them on either platform.

TEABOX

Ratan Tata backed e-commerce startup, Teabox, is experimenting with offline experiential stores in an attempt to establish a deeper customer connects and as part of its Omnichannel strategy.



Teabox is a Bengaluru-based startup that sells premium tea across the globe through its website. The brand currently operates a physical shop-in-shop (leasing space in another store) in Cinnamon, a high-end destination for designer lifestyle products housed in a bungalow in central Bengaluru.

The firm expects to open four exclusive experiential stores over the next two years, one each in Bengaluru and Mumbai, and two in Delhi-NCR.

STYLOR

Stylor, a bespoke men’s clothing brand that offers customised formals, has been in operation since 2016 and has already opened a set of stores in Bengaluru. The firm plans to open six stores by 2018 end, and around 30-40 stores over the next five years.

Their store at Inorbit Mall, Bengaluru, is spread over 700 sq. ft., with a distinctive ambience. It is meticulously planned to give an enhanced tailored and personalised experience to patrons.

International E-Commerce Cos Make Inroads into the Indian Offline Retail Scene

- Through strategic investment and tie-ups, Amazon has started making gradual inroads into offline retail parlance in India. In September, it picked up a 5 percent stake in Shoppers Stop for ₹179.26 crore.
- Alibaba-backed Paytm Mall is also working on a similar approach. The online shopping platform will launch a brick-and-mortar store co-branded with Red Tape shoes in Delhi, where customers can walk in, scan product barcodes, browse and make purchases via its mobile app.
- Google is preparing to open brick-and-mortar stores in India to shore up sales of its Pixel smartphones in one of the world’s fastest-growing markets for the devices where the tech giant is lagging behind in competition. Reports suggest two prominent malls in the country have received requests from Google for space to set up Google stores.



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With the state of the art décor, customer friendly layouts, minimalistic fittings and attractive merchandise display, Stylior vows to provide their patrons a seamless shopping experience.

PRETTYSECRETS

Headquartered in Mumbai, PrettySecrets is a fast-growing lingerie brand in India. Created by Karan Behal in 2011, PrettySecrets started out as an offline women's sleepwear brand. With category diversification in 2012, the brand decided to go purely online and launched PrettySecrets.com.

In a span of five years, the portal gained a loyal customer base and also raised multiple rounds of private equity investment. In 2017, with a lot of R&D, inventory and supply chain planning and management and the right franchise partners, the brand changed again - from pure play e-commerce to physical stores to provide their customers with a seamless shopping experience.



It opened its first two exclusive brand outlets in Mumbai.

"Lingerie essentially requires touch and feel, and offline stores are the only relevant platform to create a wonderful customer experience. Since the intimate nature of the category requires a specific

sales environment and sadly the unorganised market could not provide the right platform, we then started with two exclusive brand outlets in Mumbai in April 2017.," says Karan Behal, Founder & CEO, PrettySecrets.

Today the brand has a current standing of 21 stores across 14 cities in the country, where 19 of these 21 stores are owned by franchisees.

JAYPORE

Founded in 2012 by Puneet Chawla and Shilpa Sharma, Jaypore's products include home decor, accessories, jewelry, apparel, gifts, vintage items and more. The brand focuses on products with unique, high-quality craftsmanship, unmistakably local designs that feel at home anywhere in the world.

Building an emotional connect with its target audience resulted in creating a unique value proposition for the brand and led to the opening of its first offline store in Delhi in February 2018.

"Following our website, we first ventured offline with a series of transitory pop-up exhibits, called the Jaypore Open House, where we brought a representation of our collections for



limited time showcases across Tier I & II cities in India. This was a sort of market dipstick to gauge the consumer and market response to us going offline and going by the highly favorable response, we then decided to open permanent offline stores," says Puneet Chawla, co-Founder, Jaypore.

"Following an immensely rewarding journey online, we thought that this is the right time for us to bring our story offline. We understood that a physical store will help us in reaching more customers, especially those who may be wary of shopping online. It's also for



"FOLLOWING AN IMMENSELY REWARDING JOURNEY ONLINE, WE THOUGHT THAT THIS IS THE RIGHT TIME FOR US TO BRING OUR STORY OFFLINE. WE UNDERSTOOD THAT A PHYSICAL STORE WILL HELP US IN REACHING MORE CUSTOMERS, ESPECIALLY THOSE WHO MAY BE WARY OF SHOPPING ONLINE."

- Puneet Chawla,
Co-founder, Jaypore

customers who want instant gratification and would want to walk out of a store with the products in hand," he adds.

The brand aims to open in between four to eight stores across the four Indian metro cities by the end of 2018. The store measures about approximately 3,000 sq.ft. and is company-owned. "We are hopeful for a steady growth in our offline market. Based on the customer response so far we are hopeful that our offline revenue share to grow up to 25-30 percent by the end of the fiscal year," says Chawla.

NYKAA

April 2012 marked the beginning of a journey that can be documented as a case study for budding Omni-retail entrepreneurs. This was the year that entrepreneur Falguni Nayyar created a niche in the online beauty space with her venture Nykaa. In an earlier interview, Falguni Nayyar - Founder & CEO of Nykaa - had told IMAGES Retail, "A natural extension in offering customers a holistic shopping experience is to allow a touch-and-feel of products in a physical store. In this way, we are available

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at every touch point for a customer, whether they would like to buy online or offline.”

The brand has two concept stores to its name - Nykaa Luxe with an average of 650 sq. ft. per store, which is dedicated to luxury plans and which Nayar plans to grow to 30 stores by 2020, and

Nykaa On Trend with an average of 350 sq. ft. per store, dedicated to trending products in the beauty industry. The six-year-old company is today valued at approximately ₹3,000 crore. Reportedly, Nykaa’s focus now will be on expanding its offline presence from the current 17 stores to 55 stores by FY19-end.



Tanay Agarwal, Director, Skipper Furnishings, on Why This East Indian Brand Went the E-Commerce Way

Do both the offline and online platforms complement each other in building the brand or are there is a healthy competition between them?

In terms of brand presence, both offline and online channels of sale are essential. Customers who are more comfortable buying products online are assured of the genuineness of the brand, easily verifiable in brick-and-mortar stores. Our offline stores act as experience centres for consumers, letting them touch and feel the product. For now, our online focus is mainly on brand building. It’s not just a medium to drive sales. We do not believe in massive discounting to promote the brand online, we keep the offers and prices same in our offline and online stores.

How do you work towards making the brand popular both online and offline?

Working for brand popularity is very different in the online and offline space, usually because the consumer base is different. Online, we usually see a very urban set of consumers, whereas offline stores attract semi-urban and rural consumers as well. Offline also has the advantage of the ‘touch and feel’ factor. We are currently splitting the budget for both offline and online, and we are hoping to drive consumers from the offline space on to our website.

How are you doing that?

We run our stores on a minimum inventory model, where the store is more of an experience centre with minimal stock – just samples. We help consumers place orders online and then get the goods delivered to them. This serves the dual purpose of converting our offline customer base, online and also provides customer satisfaction, in that the shopper can touch and feel products before they buy them.

How do you help in-store consumers place orders online?

Our entire business model is Omnichannel. We have revamped our e-commerce website and plan to promote it in our offline stores through kiosks, directing the customer to the in-store kiosk where he can explore a wider selection of products that may not be available in the store.

Apart from this, we are using a great deal of technology to connect with the consumer. We are developing a virtual trial room for the consumer’s home. This is a software where our entire library of products shall be fed online – including wallpaper, flooring and fabrics. A customer shall be able to see exactly how the drape and furnishing products look like in their homes. We also have an app for internal use which is handy to store consumer information, as well as their preferences, which can be used for personalisation and customisation the next time the consumer visits our store.

What are your expansion plans?

Apart from aggressively promoting our website, we are also looking to open 10 new stores this year, focusing on Tier II and III cities. We are also promoting our robust loyalty programs for customers, interior decorator partners and architects/builders. These programs are to boost sales for not only bulk purchases but also to build trust among customers, and to aid brand recall and loyalty.





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Marketing Challenges

When it comes to making a brand popular among the masses, it is important that any business takes the time to bridge offline and online marketing and branding initiatives in a way that makes users comfortable interacting and buying products or services both on and offline.

Making the jump from social media platforms and a consistent overall online brand identity to a brick-and-mortar store can be tricky, but there are many different strategies that can boost sales by increasing user trust and ease of interaction.

“This is something which can be extremely difficult, especially when we have 22 stores spread across 14 cities full of diversity. This is why we make sure all our store launches are marketed across all of our social platforms. We make sure we merge our in-store and online communications,” says PrettySecrets’ Behal.

Chawla of Jaypore says, “It can be tricky to create this balanced yet diversified portfolio of brand marketing activities for the different retail channels, but the main thing is to tailor your marketing plans for each channel keeping the core brand messaging intact and then building channel specific initiatives that cater specifically to the audience you are targeting through each medium. For example, for our offline initiatives, the main theme has been to build a personal face to the brand and to give a close-up experience for those of our audience who were not

necessarily engaging with us beyond one-off purchases. Coupled with special experiences we have created for our customers like Saree Draping Workshop with RtaKapoor Chishti at our New Delhi Open House, DIY Block printing Workshop in Mumbai etc., we have been able to build a deeper connection with our audiences.”

“Online and offline platforms are very different from each other. The vehicles of communication are very different in these two mediums. Online is primarily digital marketing driven and ends up more transaction-oriented in nature. Retail marketing tends to be more brand focused on launches, ATL, BTL activities,” says Shringi of Voylla.

According to CaratLane’s Sinha: “Most of the people who visit our stores have already experienced us online and we actually model our stores like our website – open and inviting with no restrictions to browse in-store. This has created a positive impact when it comes to our brand image. Our stores have only helped in building brand trust and to be able to get consumers a ‘touch and feel’ experience.”

The Right Systems

Reaching out to larger audiences consumes much more time, effort and money as far as offline retail is concerned, something which can be a major challenge if the right tools and personnel are not used.

Since this group of rapidly-growing digital native brands is defining an entirely different future for retail, they

need to ensure that they have the right tools and the right people for the job. The main aim is to have the best representation of the product offering and the brand story across all our retail touch points and that is the key driving factor for offline expansion as well.

“We have implemented lot of innovation in our stores to keep them small, lean and profitable. The stores are unique and they don’t store inventory and orders are placed through an iPad and served from a central warehouse. It is quite a unique model as we work all the way from manufacturing to front-end supply to provide affordable quality eyewear to our consumers,” explains Lenskart’s Choudhary.

“We want to supplement our online business with a deeper market penetration and also creating avenues for new customer acquisitions while providing a greater level of shopping satisfaction to our customers, all of which can only be possible with all our retail formats co-function hand in hand,” adds Chawla.

Reverse O2O – The E-Commerce Boom

According to a report by financial services firm Morgan Stanley, online retail in India is estimated to grow over 1,200 percent to ₹20,000 crores by 2026, up from ₹1,500 crore in 2016. That will be 12 percent of India’s overall retail market.

An unprecedented Internet and mobile phone penetration in the country has led to the number of India’s online shoppers crossing the 9 crore mark this year, a growth of over 8X from 2013 when online shopping began to take root in the country, says a BCG report. E-commerce has become the default shopping mode in big cities, slowing petering down to Tier II & III towns.

Convenience, better experiences including doorstep delivery have been some factors that have led pure-play physical brands to migrate to the online space. Another reason why brands are jumping on the e-commerce bandwagon is the fact that websites and mobile apps have leveled the playing field between small scale and big box retailers.

Shoppers are taking advantage of ease and convenience of shopping and researching by mobile, the



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OMNICHANNEL



personalisation and customisation options online as well as exciting loyalty programs. Take for example the Starbucks' app, which has combined loyalty and value-add options for consumers in one fell swoop and has managed to garner almost 19 million active monthly users globally, accounting for nearly 30 percent of total rush hour sales.

The Future = Omnichannel & Consumer Experience

Eventually, the route to success for both offline and online companies is customer experience. Shoppers will shape the path brands take in the coming future – offline or online. A returning consumer spells victory for a brand and this is possible only through creation and implementation of experiences, as well as a seamless connection between all channels of trade – traditional or e-commerce.

FROM CLICKS TO BRICKS

Why Luxury E-Commerce Brands Are Opening Physical Stores

- Brick-and-mortar retail is shifting to cater to evolving preferences, expectations, and shopping behaviours of modern consumers.
- Physical high-end stores help build legitimacy and brand awareness
- Digital-first luxury brands leverage online data to offer a personalised experience offline
- Successful luxury e-tailers are re-imagining the purposes of physical stores by taking cues from digital shopping experiences. They are using the opportunity to offer a compelling high-end experience that complements the digital one
- No inventory: Digital-first luxury brands can use stores as pure showrooms

Globally, the O2O trends has witnessed many more cases in comparison to India. Pure play e-commerce retailers are driving incremental sales by allowing multi-channel shopping, in the hope that shoppers using more than one channel will spend more on their brand. The other upsides are repeat purchases, increased average order value and interacting with the brand in person. Some brands which have successfully included traditional retail in their repertoire of sale channels are:



Amazon: In 2015, Amazon opened its first physical bookstore in Seattle featuring a tiny sampling of books available on the website. The brand eventually plans to roll out 300 to 400 bookstores around the country as well as in Germany. In 2017, Amazon acquired Whole Foods Market – a high-end supermarket with over 400 stores – for \$13.4 billion, which vastly increased Amazon's presence as a brick-and-mortar retailer. In January 2018, Amazon in its bid to explore the offline space further, introduced a new kind of physical store concept called 'Amazon Go.'



Alibaba: Chinese e-commerce retail giant Alibaba has been showing interest in brick-and-mortar retail for years now, with the company already investing an estimated \$8 billion in physical stores in the last two years. Alibaba acquired

department store chain Intime for around \$2.6 billion earlier this year. Additionally, Alibaba has introduced the company-owned Hema supermarkets since 2015, as a part of its 'new retail' vision. At these supermarkets, customers can shop, dine, order groceries for delivery from their smartphones, scan product information (including price) from their smartphones and make payments using Alipay. With the Cainiao delivery and logistics business under its belt, Alibaba is in a strong position to dominate the online-and-offline retail and grocery market segments in China.

BONOBOS

Bonobos: Launched in 2007, Bonobos is a portal that sells well fitted men's trousers and pants. In fact, the brand was viewed as one of the leading e-commerce pioneer, based on its unique online-only sales model and early use of social media marketing. The popularity of the brand pushed the company to open full service physical stores in Boston in 2011. Bonobos currently operates over 24 storefronts and the brand aims to open 100 by 2020.



BOLL & BRANCH™

Boll & Branch: Boll & Branch now belongs to a group of e-commerce, direct-to-consumer brands that have opened their own brick-and-mortar stores in the past year. In April 2018, the brand, which started out as an e-commerce retailer, decided to

extend to brick and mortar, allowing customers to touch and feel their sheet options before making a purchase. While originally the stores were meant to be experiential only, the owners realised that many customers were seeking instant gratification in taking home their sheets, blankets, or towels that same day. Since Boll & Branch was originally processing orders on an e-commerce platform only, this shift led to resolving pain points in tracking inventory, supply chain management, and providing the best customer experience possible. Their stores are a marriage of old-world shopping with new technology and concepts. Though the store will have Boll & Branch's full assortment on display, orders will be placed digitally and arrive, free delivery, to the customer the following business day.

WARBY PARKER

eyewear

Warby Parker: Founded in 2010 as an e-commerce startup, Warby Parker initially promised cheaper prices for fashionable eyewear based on its direct-to-consumer model. It opened its first physical storefront in Manhattan in 2013 and went on to open eight more stores by 2014 with average sales per square foot of \$3,000. The brand now operates 64 storefronts and is headed toward 100 in prime real estate locations. The brand has also tested pop-up shops and stores on wheels to reach customers.

EVERLANE

Everlane: Online fashion retailer Everlane has opened two physical stores, each a relatively small 3,000 sq.ft. in New York City's SoHo neighborhood and San Francisco's Mission District. The fact that customers want to touch and feel – no matter how much social media promotions the brand does – and also that many customers want to make returns and exchanges in person, were two of the primary reasons for the opening of the brand. Apart from the

latest collections, personal stylists help find and fit items for consumers and facilitate returns and exchanges.

SSENSE

Ssense: Online luxury retailer Ssense has built a new brick-and-mortar store around appointments, not inventory. Ssense Montreal, which opened in May 2018 in the company's home base, doesn't carry regular stock from any of the 200 brands it sells online. Instead, the store is organised into personal styling rooms, and customers who visit the store's standalone website are directed to book an appointment. With 24 hours' notice, customers can request any of the 20,000 items found online to try on in-store with a personal stylist. Items can be sent back, purchased at the store, or sent to an online cart or wishlist.

JUSTFAB™

JustFab: E-commerce apparel retailer and subscription service JustFab opened its first brick-and-mortar store in LA in 2013. Subsidiary Fabletics, which focuses on athletic apparel and was co-founded by actress Kate Hudson, opened its first store in 2015 and currently operates seven stores. Despite facing legal troubles, Fabletics recently asserted plans to open 75 to 100 stores over the next three to five years.

Casper

Casper: Mattress start-up Casper has opened its first permanent store in the heart of downtown New York in February 2018, on the outskirts of popular shopping destination SoHo. The direct-to-consumer business, which has been selling its items in Target stores and via its own temporary shops (16 of them), joins a growing list of e-retailers deciding to invest in bricks and mortar to build brand awareness and offer shoppers the opportunity to touch and feel products.

BIRCHBOX♦

Birchbox: Launched in 2010, as an online-only makeup subscription service, Birchbox offered monthly boxes of curated, sample-sized cosmetics from a variety of brands. In July 2014, it opened a brick-and-mortar store in Manhattan that aimed to let consumer's test and purchase full-sized products. The next year, it announced plans to open two more stores in 2016; however, the company retrenched in the face of difficulties in 2016, and its store count remains at one.



NastyGal: From its early days as an eBay store launched in 2006, Nasty Gal grew into a large online-based apparel brand. It opened its first store in LA in November 2014, followed by a second Santa Monica location in March 2015.

MODCLOTH

ModCloth: Founded in 2002, as an online-only retailer of vintage-inspired apparel and accessories. It edged slowly into the brick-and-mortar space, starting with a series of pop-up shops throughout 2015 and 2016 that leveraged a showroom model similar to Bonobos. ModCloth opened its first permanent storefront in Austin, Texas, in 2016, and may open more in the future depending on performance.

BOSTON PROPER

Boston Proper: After acquiring the online and catalog business in 2011, the brand decided to bring Boston Proper to the physical space. After initially opening four stores in Florida, the company now has 13 physical locations. Stores in Atlanta and Miami are coming soon.

“Lenskart is a Brand with a Vision”

– Amit Chaudhary,
Co-Founder & COO, Lenskart

Lenskart started out as an online player, with customer satisfaction at the heart of its business, but after gaining customer trust online, the brand went after the large segment of consumers offline, branching out into the traditional brick-and-mortar format...



The Indian eyewear market is largely unorganised, dominated by mom-and-pop stores, with only a handful of big brands vying for consumer attention. We, at Lenskart, capitalised on this gap in the eyewear market and introduced a brand with a vision to provide affordable quality eyewear to consumers at the ease of a few clicks – and now bricks.

Growth Story: From Online Success to Offline Triumph

We founded the brand in 2010, and we started off by selling just contact lenses. A couple of months later, spectacles / eyeglasses were included and in March 2011, we added sunglasses to the collection. Winning consumer trust was one of the biggest challenges we faced as an online player, but over

the years we have gained that trust and have managed to convert our biggest challenge into our unique selling proposition.

Lenskart started out as an online player, with customer satisfaction at the heart of its business, but after gaining customer trust online, the brand went after the large segment of consumers offline, branching out into the traditional brick-and-mortar format.

Going offline significantly increased accessibility to the brand. We did a small experiment in 2014 by opening a store at Delhi and customers loved the experience. Our stores are unique in the sense that we don't sell in the store, but only take orders. Essentially, by opening stores, we are solving the problem of 'trying before buying'.

We wanted to be wherever our consumers are and provide them with a unique

and differentiated retail experience. We now have over 450 stores across 100 cities and deliver to around 15,000 pincodes. Both our online and offline businesses complement each other and work with a single goal of maximizing consumer satisfaction. Recently, we also opened our new facility in Haryana which will help us scale our business to 10X of what it is today. At present, we are dispensing 10,000-12,000 spectacles daily and the new facility set-up will help us raise this number to 70,000 - 80,000 spectacles a day.

The Mantra of Success

A big aspect of Lenskart's success is in our Omnichannel approach which includes online, modern shops and home visits by optometrists on motorbikes. We are available wherever our consumers want us.

We have implemented lot

of innovation in our stores to keep them small, lean and profitable. The stores are unique, we don't have an inventory and orders are placed through an iPad and served from a central warehouse.

It is quite a unique model as we work all the way from manufacturing to front-end supply to provide affordable quality eyewear to our consumers.

The Loyalty Factor: Lenskart Gold

We recently rolled out a special initiative for our loyal customers, Lenskart Gold – an exclusive membership program to entitle our loyal customers with a special 'Buy One Get One' offer all year round.

Under this program, customers can enroll themselves in Lenskart's exclusive membership program for ₹500 and avail a 'Buy One Get One' offer

throughout the year. The membership benefits can also be availed by family members simply by using the same mobile number enrolled for membership at Lenskart stores as well as the website. The benefits of the loyalty program can be availed from their first purchase itself.

Technology Driving Brand Loyalty

Technology is in our DNA. It is the backbone of what we do. We offer unparalleled services like online eyewear selection, personalized services, stringent quality checks, prompt deliveries, one-year product warranty, 14-days no-questions-

Lenskart Lite, an android app which has been built specifically for the bandwidth strapped Indian consumer. With growing concerns about Internet speed in India, this lite version of our main app allows users to browse products and purchase them even in the absence of Internet. Being the first in the e-commerce industry, this app is almost 80 percent lighter than the regular app, which enables customers to download easily. It requires Internet only at the point of download. On completion, users can browse products, avail discounts and place an order even when there is no Internet.



asked return policy and convenient payment options to consumers. Our points-of-sale at stores are handled by iPads. Everything we do is possible because of superior technology. We also provide unique services like 3D try on, home trial, home eye check-up and the use of robotic technique that delivers glasses which are accurate to 3 decimal points. A lot of this has served to revolutionize the Indian eyewear industry.

We also recently introduced

Omnichannel: The New Retail Currency

Lenskart's Omnichannel presence enables the brand to reach out to people all over India, no matter where they are.

While we have done so much innovation around Omnichannel, other brands are still evaluating online-offline as a channel. We are exploring the next level of innovation of Omnichannel which includes an answer to how we can trace a

consumer's journey from offline to online and vice versa.

John Jacobs: The Brand Within a Brand

Only a very few, select brand in any country manage to become mass brands. When we started John Jacobs, we understood that this was one such brand. John Jacobs gave us the opportunity to bring affordable luxury into our distribution network.

Today, eyewear is no more a necessity. It comes under the tag of fashion, something in vogue, which people want to wear on their faces. We decided to push John Jacobs as fast-fashion and encourage customers to buy multi-frames and wear spectacles by occasion and voila, an affordable luxury brand was born.

At present, John Jacobs contributes towards 20-25 percent of our total sales, approximately. As a brand, it is trendy, aimed at Millennials and hence we have roped in Bollywood star Katrina Kaif as brand ambassador to promote the collection. We have also teamed up with Italian design house Mazzucchelli for material and design partnership. Currently, there are 5 John Jacobs EBOs and we plan to take it to 15 by this year end. For this particular brand, we are targetting only metro cities for now, including Delhi, Mumbai, Bengaluru, Chennai, Kolkata and Hyderabad. Sunglasses are priced at ₹3,500 onwards.

Why Lenskart is Investment Wise

Lenskart has earmarked about US \$2-3 million to invest in companies that are working on either products or technologies that can help

provide affordable eyecare solutions. The intent for investing in these early-stage startups is to collaborate in development of innovative products. As part of this strategy, we have invested US \$500,000 (about ₹3.3 crore) in US-based ThinOptics.


Previously, Lenskart has picked up minority stake in Israel-based 6over6 for US \$1 million. 6over6 allows consumers to determine the power needed for the lenses for their spectacles by using a smartphone application.

In September 2017, we had invested a similar amount in US-based Ditto. Lenskart is now using Ditto's technology to allow users to try on various frames on their picture before making the purchase.

Future Plans

At present, Lenskart has 5,000 SKUs and we aim to expand our footprint in Tier II & III cities. We are hoping to take the number of stores to 550 by March 2019.

Lenskart counts names like IDG Ventures, Ronnie Screwvala-led Unilazer Ventures, TPG Growth, TR Capital, IFC and Premji Invest as its investors and we have raised about US \$100 million in funding till date.

Since we reached our break-even point a few months ago, we are now at a run-rate of ₹600 crore, and next year we want to do close to ₹800-900 crore in terms of profit. The company does not require any immediate funding but listing on market will make our position stronger and will also create an option for existing investors to exit. As far as an IPO is concerned, 2021 is something we are aiming at. However, we are still learning, and this is just the beginning for us. 



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Future Style Lab, the design studio arm of Kishore Biyani's Future Group has launched the first store of its contemporary Indian lifestyle brand, Ancestry, at Ambience Mall, Gurugram. The brand has on offer, apparel for both men and women, home, gifting and beauty products along with food options, bound to appeal to a Millennial audience.

A touch of the rustic blends with modern luxury at exclusive store, which is spread across 1,200 sq. ft.

Manjula Tiwari, CEO at Future Style Lab says, "Ancestry as a brand excited us and the launch of the first store has been extremely thrilling. The brand offers Indian apparel and lifestyle products which have been re-imagined based on key international trends. The idea is to provide complete wardrobe and lifestyle solutions for modern Indian consumers."

Future Style Lab, which is known to continuously innovate and reinvent, has so positioned Ancestry after conducting an extensive market research and receiving insights into the current, contemporary Indian lifestyle and fashion markets.

Analytics Drive Ancestry Collection

A Future Style Lab team travelled across India covering metros and Tier II cities over a period of many months to deep-dive into consumer behaviour and buying patterns including:

- Market Visits and Focus Groups
- Wardrobe Audits
- Personal Interviews



Future Group's New Brand **Ancestry** Offers Indian Fashion & Lifestyle Products with an International Twist

- By Charu Lamba

The brand offers Indian apparel and lifestyle products which have been re-imagined based on key international trends. The idea is to provide complete wardrobe and lifestyle solutions for modern Indian consumers...

The company also took into account, the findings of a Technopak study which found:

- The ethnic wear market is estimated to grow robustly to ₹126,506 crore by 2019.
- Women dominate the category as 83 percent of the ethnic wear market is

women's wear.

- 8 percent of the ethnic wear market is men's wear and is largely driven by occasion wear.
- The balance 9 percent includes kids' wear and is totally driven by occasion wear.

Brand Opportunity: It was concluded that there are very few organised pan India brands like fabindia, Biba, W and Global Desi that have dominated this space. It also found that there is only one player in the lifestyle space currently and that is fabindia.



ABOUT **MANJULA TIWARI**

- Tiwari is an experienced retailer and brand professional in the field of fashion and lifestyle. She has held key leadership positions, building brands and retail businesses in her 23 years in the industry.
- She's worked closely with international brand - principals and e-commerce - during her tenure at Esprit, Benetton, Wills and Lee Cooper & Jabong, and now leads Future Group's Cover Story and Ancestry.
- She believes in staying ahead of the curve in anticipating customer needs and aspirations. She drives agility, innovation in a dynamic and swiftly changing market.
- She joined Future group as CEO of Future Style Lab in 2016, a subsidiary to develop and launch brands in women's fast fashion space, a fast-growing consumer space with a need to combine understanding of Indian consumer as well as global fashion trends.
- A post graduate in Apparel Merchandising and Marketing from National Institute of Fashion Technology, Delhi. She is a Mathematics graduate from Bhopal University.



Brand Collection: At Ancestry, Indian lifestyle and clothes are re-imagined based on key international trends. Indian textile details are revisited and refreshed. The collection comprises of exquisite Indo-western outfits for both men and women. It is an amalgamation of the Indian heritage with a modern twist, using

brands, which while feature great products, also come at very high prices," says Tiwari.

"Currently we are focusing on opening stores only in malls, but we believe the space is such that a brand like Ancestry would work just as well on a high street environment, so that is something we may explore soon," she adds.



The intense on ground study gave strength to the idea that an opportunity exists to create a brand can curate goods to the taste of the contemporary Indian albeit with traditional roots, become a strong challenger to existing brands in drawing the fashionable young Indian consumer.

Brand Inspiration: Ancestry has been inspired by the evolving face of the modern-day Indian consumer.

Brand Vision: Ancestry aspires to be a complete wardrobe and lifestyle solution for the modern Indian consumer.



sustainable materials and ease cotton. Along with its clothing line, the brand focuses on organic, ethical, and handcrafted beauty and home décor products. The price range of the collection ranges from ₹3,000-7,000.

Brand Audience: Ancestry targets men and women who are self-assured, professionally competent and curious to discover. They represent the evolving face of contemporary India but are innately Indian and driven by their cultural capital to appreciate design and aesthetics.

Brand Positioning: Ancestry is a premium retail experience at affordable prices.

"The brand caters to that sweet spot between extremely commercial brands that are more Indo-western and niche

Strategies to Boost the Brand

Talking about the marketing and promotion strategies of Ancestry, Tiwari says, "Since we are rolling out stores in a mall environment, a large part of our awareness will be tied with activities we do with the malls. Separately, we are also keen to talk about our brand within media and via influencers."

"This brand embodies international trends and we hope to showcase that through our curated events within stores for bespoke customers. One such event will be one-on-one time with our designers to get a better understanding of the new trends in contemporary Indian fashion," she explains.

"Later on, we hope to fortify Ancestry as a platform for young talent to feature their collections, collaborations

with the new age designers who also believe in keeping traditions alive. You will soon see capsule collections from various designers showcased at Ancestry."

Store Design Concept & Innovations

Ancestry has a modern contemporary aesthetic weaving in traditional elements. "Our Arch is a big part of the brand and comes across in the design concept of the store, bridging the gap between the old and the new. And our touch of copper as a colour within the store marries the old with the new," says Tiwari, adding, "Our stores will feature a video screen whereby we are able to retell the stories of our collections. We also believe customer service is a top priority in the retail environment and will be integrating tablets into the store soon, to capture customer feedback for us to serve them better."

The Way Forward

The brand plans to extend its presence by rolling exclusive brand outlets apart from building strong alternate channels of sale.

"Our website is under construction, and we should be ready to roll online soon enough. Apart from this, the potential for taking Ancestry across the country and also abroad, is huge – something that our e-commerce arm should be able to make easy. We are very active on social media and stay engaged with our consumers via Instagram," says Tiwari.

"Although our roll out will be contained to Delhi in 2018, there is huge potential for a brand like Ancestry. Within the next couple of years, our presence in Mumbai will be fortified," she concludes. **IR**

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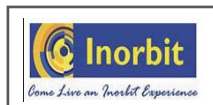
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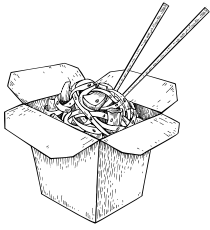
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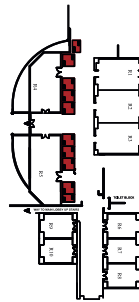


CONFERENCES ON RETAIL REAL ESTATE

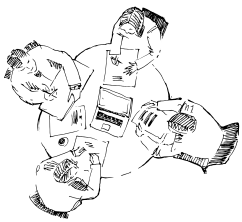
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Retail Real Estate 2.0 – Building India’s Next Generation Community Assets

– By IMAGES Retail Bureau

ISCF 2018 organised by Reed Exhibitions turned out to be another milestone in redrawing the prototype of real estate’s most promising asset class in India, thereby building the blueprint of success for the future of the Shopping Centre industry in India...

The 11th edition of India Shopping Centre Forum (ISCF 2018), organised by Reed Exhibitions was held on April 11, 2018 at Hotel Renaissance, Mumbai. Once again, ISCF presented India’s biggest opportunity to connect across the entire shopping centre design and development, leasing and management value chain. This edition witnessed 34 percent increase in the delegate numbers as compared with ISCF 2017 which reflects increased commitment of the industry to come together and deliberate upon burning issues and opportunities. ISCF is a market intelligence and business development destination shopping center developers and professionals engaged in any and every stage of the retail real estate ideation, design, construction, leading, marketing and management value chain.

The theme of the event was ‘Retail Real Estate 2.0: Building India’s Next Generation Community Assets.’ This year, the event witnessed stalwarts from the Shopping Centre industry, who shared notable insights on current trends through various interactive sessions..



Gregory Zairasky, CEO Reed Exhibitions firmly believes that Indian Retail Real Estate Market is becoming a hotbed with more and more international retailers planning to enter India. Their entry would automatically mean higher off-take for grade A retail real estate space. Reed Exhibitions understands this space very well through it’s expertise of running global events such as MAPIC – retail real estate focused event and MIPIM – 360 degree real estate event.



About the organiser:

Reed Exhibitions organises over 500 events in 30 countries. In 2017 Reed Exhibitions’ events brought together over 7 million participants from the Americas, Europe, the Middle East and Asia Pacific. Our wide range of events includes trade and consumer exhibitions, conferences and meetings.

/// SHOPPING CENTRES 2.0 - MASTERCLASS BY TERENCE SEAH ///

The event kick-started with a Masterclass conducted by Terence Seah, Head of Design Studio, Benoy (UK) who spoke about reinventing the approach behind building the future (next generation) community and shopping centres. Seah is vastly rated as one of the finest experts in the industry. He has an extraordinary background in international architecture and design, with extensive experience in project management. Having studied and practiced in Singapore and London, Seah has had exposure to a diverse portfolio across China, South East Asia and the UK. Skilled at

delivering projects from master planned, mixed-use developments to smaller-scale retail and residential developments, Seah has acquired valuable insight across multiple sectors. Seah guides Benoy's teams in Singapore, designing creative and technical solutions.

Applying his expertise to commercial, retail, hospitality, residential and mixed-use projects, Seah's work includes the Jewel Changi Airport in Singapore, encompassing interior design, retail planning and aviation facilities; master planning of the Subang Jaya City Centre, a modern lifestyle destination in Kuala Lumpur,

Malaysia; Raffles City in Shenzhen, China, a popular mixed-use development including retail, offices, residences, and a SOHO tower; and Royal Taruma City, Jakarta, a major lifestyle campus for UNTAR University. Seah pointed out on the importance of providing greater and better experiences to the consumer. The shopping centre that reinvents the services as per the consumer need never goes out of footfalls and popularity. The consumer experience could be anything that provides great returns (in form of walk-ins, sales conversation, profitable returns to the retailers and as well as



buyers. He also highlighted the role that immersive and experiential design element plays in lifting the brand image of the shopping centres.

/// THE NEXT-GENERATION OF RETAIL REAL ESTATE IN INDIA ///

The inaugural session titled 'The Next-Generation of Retail Estate in India' followed the masterclass. The panel discussed the future of the Retail real estate, ideally called as Retail Real Estate version 2.0. The session was moderated by Pankaj Renjhen, Managing Director-Retail Services, JLL India. The other panelists included **Abhishek Bansal**, Executive Director & Promoter, Pacific Malls; **Arjun Singh Gehlot**, Director, Ambience Malls; **Harsh Vardhan Bansal**, Director, Unity Group and Vegas Mall; **Javier Sotomayor**, MD, Cinépolis Asia; **Nikhil Chaturvedi**, Managing Director, Prozone INTU Properties and Provogue; **Nirzar Jain**, Senior Vice President - Operations and Projects, Nexus Malls (Blackstone Retail Portfolio); **Sonica Malhotra**, Joint MD, MBD Group (Radisson BLU, MBD Zephyr, MBD Neopolis (Ludhiana), MBD Neopolis (Jalandhar)) and **Vishal Mirchandani**, CEO-Retail & Commercial, Brigade Enterprises. The major points of discussion were:

- Rebooting the old shopping centres to develop a new era of Retail Real Estate 2.0?
- In addition to PE & Institutional funding what are the alternate funding model required - REITs, Debt-Equity financing, IPOs?
- Future lies in shopping centers being built as community destinations; how are Real Estate players progressing and what are the nuances to balance variables of tenancy vs the occupancy rates and profitability streams?
- To explore alternate revenue streams (Themed Festivals, Pop-up events, Product Launches, Product Placements, Flea markets, and more) does real estate need to account for it in



From L to R: Arjun Singh Gehlot, Abhishek Bansal, Vishal Mirchandani, Pankaj Renjhen, Javier Sotomayor, Nirzar Jain and Harsh Vardhan Bansal

design stage?

- Is India ready for new and innovative real estate concepts, such as pop-up shopping centres with good examples being 'Boxpark' in London and 'Common Ground' Shopping Centre in Seoul. Because this is new, and this is experience, does this tie-in with the economics?
- Benchmarks and institutionalizing best practices we can learn from the West, such as USA and Europe, and closer home from Dubai, Singapore, Thailand?
- Innovation and new ideas into malls - specialized innovation and research centres like Westfield Labs to develop original ideas - do we have scale, is it cost-effective, is India primed for it yet? Does size matter - is big necessarily better - do we need to get more ambitious on size and scale? The largest mall in India - DLF Mall of India (2 million sq.ft.) vs Dubai Mall (13 million sq.ft.)

/// ROLE OF INNOVATION & OPERATION IN RENEWAL OF A SHOPPING CENTER ///

The next session was themed on the role of innovation, operation excellence, strategic design and repositioning in order to revive and renew a shopping mall. Many shopping centers and malls currently are distressed, in serious trouble and searching for turnaround and workout strategies to become viable again. The panel offered solutions to the problem by analyzing the mall including its tenant mix, its trade area and capture rates, its physical facility, its competition and other factors impacting its performance, is required to get to the root cause. The panel talked about the five key factors which would help in developing an overall strategy to redefine the future and success of the mall. The five key points were:

- To re-tenant or Redevelop
- Curated mix- one for all,



From L to R: Amit Sharma, Manish Vig, Bipin Gurnani, Anshul Jain, Jeremy Salmon, Mahesh M, Muckth Dograa, Surjit Rajpurohit and Shriram Monga

- and all for one
- Transforming the mall experience by leveraging technology and multichannel strategies.
- Differentiating the consumer offering, with a focus on experience and convenience.
- The urban-Suburban – draw a difficulty line between a city and the mall

The panel had **Amit Sharma**, Managing Director, Miraj Entertainment; **Anupam Tripasuri**, Vice President, Oberoi Mall; **Bipin Gurnani**, CEO, Prozone INTU Properties; **Jeremy Salmon**, Main Board Director, Broadway Malyan; **Mahesh M**, CEO, Ishanya Mall; **Man Mohan Bagree**, Vice President & COO, South City

Group; **Manish Vig**, Retail Business Development (Head – Malls), Aditya Birla Fashion and Lifestyle; **Muckth Dograa**, Head, DLF Place; **Shriram Monga**, Co-Founder & Principal Consultant, SRED Advisory; **Surjit Rajpurohit**, CEO, Amanora Mall. The session was moderated by **Anshul Jain**, Country Head & Managing Director, C&W.

/// SHOPPING CENTRES PORTFOLIO ///

The post-lunch session was themed on how to enhance the shopping mall portfolio, focusing on new

assets, target market, new investments, partnership and payoff strategies. The new assets category highlighted

the trends concept themed malls such as Specialty Malls, Lifestyle Centres, Strip Centres and Outlet Malls

focusing on the Transit-Oriented- Developments (TOD), the exciting fast-growing trend in creating vibrant, livable, sustainable communities with high-density development around transport hubs.

The panel further talked about the ‘Mall positioning’; whether they are being designed and managed to cut through all age groups and cult preferences. Malls should be capable to capture the bridge between the both the Millennials and Traditionalists. Other questions that the panel discussed were:

- What are the right ingredients to build a footfalls and conversion strategy for every age group



From L to R: Shabnam Singhal, Akshat Agarwal, Mukesh Kumar, Prashant Vashisht, Siddhartha Natu and Sanjeev Mehra

- age group of 8-to-80?
- What is the current time to make future investments?
- What are the fixed and variable investments that can be pruned or stretched?
- Where will the balance be – Profitability or loyal Customer Experiences?
- How to optimize the mall resources in both crowded Sale season and empty or less footfall scenarios?
- How to make shopping centres work at full capacity and lean periods

The session was moderated by **Sanjeev Mehra**, VP,

Quest Properties India. The other panelists included **Max KORDYLAS**, Managing Director, Yellow and Co (France); **Akshat Agarwal**, Head - Business Development, ITC Lifestyle Retailing; **MV Krishna Rao**, Head - Retail & Commercial, L&T Metro

Rail (Hyderabad); **Mukesh Kumar**, Senior VP, Infiniti Malls, **Pramod Arora**, CEO, Future Market Networks (Future Group) **Shabnam Singhal**, Managing Partner, SIRIUS D&E; **Sharad Sachdeva**, CEO, Lite Bite Foods; **Siddhartha Natu**, Head, DLF Promenade.

/// MALLS FOR THE NEXT DESTINATION ///

The second post lunch session was based on 30 Tier II and III cities, which have the capacity to catapult a series of new growth centres for malls. The panel discussed what retailers and developers are and should be doing to bring the next level of development in growing Tier II and III markets.

Small cities are witnessing a new level of urban renewal and growing affluence. The tag, 'Smart Cities' – which include urban housing, infrastructure and development – mean a huge opportunity for developers to come out with community centres and malls.

Cities like Jaipur, Ahmedabad, Lucknow, Nagpur, Vadodara, Chandigarh, Thiruvananthapuram, Indore, Kochi, Bhubaneswar, Coimbatore and Patna are emerging as the top potential markets for upcoming malls.

The panel sought to answer the following questions:

- How can developers create niche experiences in their Shopping Centres to draw shoppers to stores?
- What are the top propositions which make mall developments offer higher profitability in Tier II and III cities - lower rentals, experimentation with new leasing formats, less competition as a handful of
- What is the research that developers undertake to decide which cities to target building their malls into (CSO or Census estimates, population demographic, per capita purchasing power, smart-city recognition, airport connectivity, good availability of real-estate, catchment size)?
- How have the investments worked out for Blackstone (Ahmedabad's One mall, Elante mall, Chandigarh, Treasure Island Mall, Indore; Virtuous Retail (Surat, Mohali); Lulu Mall (Kochi)?

The panelists included **Ajay Nayyar**, Director and Promoter, FMI Limited (Silver Arc Mall, Ludhiana);



From L to R: Anuradha Singh, Terence Seah, Jermina Menon, Manik Dhodi, Vivek Kaul, Sanjeev Rao, Varun Shrotriya and Ajay Nayyar

Anuradha Singh, GM – Leasing, Runwal Group; **Jermina Menon**, Vice President - Marketing, Virtuous Retail; **Manik Dhodi**, Head - Real Estate, adidas Group; **Munish Baldev**, CEO and Founder, JS Martin & Co.; **Sanjeev Rao**, Director - Sales &

Distribution, International Sales and Development, Raymond; **Terence Seah**, Director & Head of Singapore Studio, Benoy; **Varun Shrotriya**, Director, Studio 13 Design. The session was moderated by **Vivek Kaul**, MRICS, Head - Retail Services India, CBRE South Asia.



A case study on 'Digitalisation in Parking for Shopping Centres' was presented by **Christian Grzona**, Regional Manager Asia-Pacific, Scheidt & Bachmann GmbH. Grzona highlighted the benefits of fully integrated parking from both mall operator and customer perspectives, in order to create a competitive edge and a customer centric experience.

/// THE NEXT-LEVEL: TECH-BUILDINGS ///

The second last session of the ISCF was themed on the technical aspect of the shopping industry and modern retail. The question that was being asked in this session was: how next level technologies are being the big differentiator in malls, how technology related to Augmented Reality (AR), Virtual Reality (VR) and digital tech can build greater visibility, engagement and profitability for the shopping centres.

The session was co-moderated by **Rajendra Kalkar**, President – West, The Phoenix Mills and **Alexander Köth**, Managing Director & Founder, Minodes GmbH (Germany). The other experts in the panel were **Alok Tandon**, CEO, Inox Leisure; **Amit Chaudhary**, Co-Founder & COO, Lenskart; **Kumarswamy Hiremath**, Head - Retail Technology,



From L to R: Amit Chaudhary, Alexander Koth, Alok Tandon, Vasanth Kumar, Rajendra Kalkar, Shashank Pathak, Sanjay Kumar Jain and Kumarswamy Hiremath.

DELOPT; **Nishank Joshi**, Chief Marketing Officer, Nexus Malls (Blackstone Retail Portfolio); **Sanjay Kumar Jain**, Vice President, DB City (Bhopal); **Shashank Pathak**, Executive Director and CEO, Westend Mall; **Vasanth Kumar**, Managing Director, Lifestyle International (Landmark Group).

The panel talked about how AR and VR can exponentially increase the value that

shoppers draw from the mall and leave a desirable customer impression. Some of the key questions that were asked and answered were:

- How to build higher levels of engagement with the customers to draw them to your mall and ensure a constant buzz and high levels of footfalls at all times – weekdays, daytimes, and non-Sale seasons?
- Malls are getting bigger in size, so how can AR/

VR make navigation easier once they are inside the mall – finding a store, finding offers they need, personalization notifications which help them buy?

- How can then AR/VR help you build the USP and differentiated / premium positioning for your mall
- Cutting-edge shopping experiences and marketing initiatives - driven through AR and VR

/// PLANNING, DESIGNING & DEVELOPING A MALL ///

The 11th edition of ISCF 2018 concluded with a session on themed on planning of the shopping mall.

The lead context presentation was given by **Chua Zi Jun**, Director, DP Architects (Singapore). The session as moderated by **Kaisar Kazi**, Senior

General Manager (Interior Design), Reliance Industries. The panel lists included **Gajendra Singh Rathore**, Centre Director, Phoenix Marketcity (Bangalore); **J P Biswas**, Head – Leasing, Nexus - Blackstone Retail Portfolio; **Lalit Jain**, VP and Head - Properties, Planning

& Projects, Spencer’s Retail (RP-Sanjiv Goenka Group); **Manoj Agarwal**, Head of Operations, L&T Metro TOD - L&T Metro Rail (Hyderabad); **Nimish Shah**, President - Retail Operations - West, Lifestyle (Landmark Group); **Rehan Huck**, Head - Leasing and Business Development,

DLF Premium Malls; **Shibu Philips**, Business Head, LuLu Shopping Mall; **Sunil Shroff**, CEO - Malls, Viviana Mall (Sheth Developers).

The panelists spoke about the factors that should be taken care of in respect to the developers, architects, town planners, retail designers while constructing a shopping mall.

The panel also discussed the importance of conceptualizing, drawing up a blueprint, marketing and promotions, the importance of building a family entertainment centre and installing essential services for patrons – all of which centered around latest trends in creating the right space and environment for malls of the future.



From L to R: Nimish Shah, Lalit Jain,, JP Biswas, Chua Zi Jun, Kaisar Kazi, Gajendra Singh Rathore and Shibu Philips

How Brands can Communicate with Consumers across Physical & Digital spaces?

In recent years, consumers have started to experience 'phygital' retail – which, like its sibling term “omnichannel,” refers to the act of creating a seamless integration between the physical and digital shopping experiences. Phygital communications can help Brands get even closer to their customers and drive a strong ROI. However, doing this effectively is a challenge for many Brands and retailers alike.

Getting 'phygital' means more than just using data to drive consumers in store. It also means crafting incredible digital experiences that make the whole trip to the store worthwhile. As a matter of fact, those born post 1999 do not distinguish an offline and online world – for them, there is no line! The experiences and interactions blend across these spaces, whether they be communicating with friends or interacting with their favourite brands.

Hence the next generation of successful marketing depends upon creating an ecosystem between the brand and consumer across physical and digital spaces. Understanding that this is a symbiotic relationship where activating the consumer as part of the activity is critical, otherwise the brand message and experience simply won't work as well as it could or should.

“Brands need to adopt storytelling, entertainment, fun and utility where consumers really are part of the experience itself”.

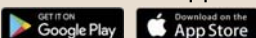
Paco Underhill

Ensuring your brand is available in the right place at the right time is a key consideration and that's where connecting the dots between physical and digital becomes crucial. Modern retail needs a genuine move beyond delivering an one-dimensional brand communication cascaded through a series of channels. QOIE is a Brand's best bet to communicate with Consumers and Retailers in today's **PHYGITAL WORLD**

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IMAGES SHOPPING CENTRE AWARDS 2018

– By IMAGES Retail Bureau

Innovative Campaigns, Promotions & Concepts of Pioneering Shopping Malls

The 11th annual 'IMAGES Shopping Centre Awards 2018 (ISCA 2018)', were held on April 11, 2018 at Hotel Renaissance, Mumbai. This year ISCA 2018 honoured the giants of the Shopping Centre Industry – those who upped the ante and many an eyebrow in the calendar year 2017, setting benchmarks and creating landmarks at a time when the digital commerce explosion is challenging retail businesses to reinvent and redraw their approach to consumers. Independent analysts and IPCs – who have been key observers of the developments in this industry – were invited by IMAGES Group to participate in ISCA 2018's decision-making process.

THE PROCESS

Over 200 top brands and retailers – including their respective Business Development/ Operations/ Marketing & Retail team members and associates – were involved in the selection process to shortlist the best performing malls this year. Tenants in shopping centers with different retail verticals, formats and consumer segments joined in to rank malls on the basis of their overall performance including metrics such as marketing promotion initiatives, trading density and ROI. Nominations were invited from across the industry, which was then carefully evaluated and scrutinized in accordance with given parameters – innovative campaigns, promotions concepts and consumer experience – before being finally presented to a jury consisting of eminent personalities who gave the final verdict. The coveted trophies were then presented to malls for their achievements in the year 2016-17 in a glittering ceremony. The event was attended by the who's who of India's Shopping Centre Industry, prominent organisational, business and category heads from the country's leading shopping malls, fashion and retail companies.

The jury comprised of distinguished personalities in the field of research and consulting retail support and advisory including Anuj Puri, Chairman, Anarock; Anshul Jain, Country Head & MD, Cushman & Wakefield; Pankaj Renjhen, MD – Retail Services, JLL India; Harminder Sahni, Founder, Wazir Advisors; Shishir Bajjal, CMD, Knight Frank India; Anshuman Magazine, Chairman, India and South East Asia, CBRE; Bijou Kurien, Strategy Board Member, L Catterton Asia Holding.

The retailers who were a part of the jury included Harmeet Bajaj, Director, Impresario Entertainment & Hospitality; Rishab Soni, MD, SSIPL; Vasanth Kumar, MD Lifestyle Int.; Abhishek Ganguli, MD, Puma India; Sumitro Ghosh, CEO, Tata, Starbucks; Vineet Gautam, CEO, Bestseller Group India; Rahul Singh, President NRAI and Founder Beer Café; Sahil Malik, MD, Da Milano; Dilip Kapur, Founder & President, Hidesign; Kavindra Mishra, CEO & MD, Pepe Jeans London (India); Manish Mandhana, CEO, Mandhana Retail Ventures (Being Human); Shriti Malhotra, COO, The Body Shop India; Sanjeev Mohanty, MD & SVP – South Asia, Middle East & North Africa, Levi Strauss & Co; Siddharth Bindra, MD, Biba; Janne Einola, CEO – Country Manager, H&M India; Vikram Bhatt, Founder – Enrich Salons & Academies; Anant Daga, MD, TCNS Clothing Co; Sanjay Behl, CEO, Lifestyle BusinessRaymond; Anupam Bansal, ED, Liberty Shoes; Shashwat Goenka, Sector Head – Spencer's Retail, RP-Sanjiv Goenka Group; Amin Kassam, Chief Retail Officer, Shoppers Stop Group; NP Singh, Director, Business Development, South Asia, Samsonite; Tushar Ved, President, Major Brands; Suresh J, MD & CEO – Arvind Lifestyle Brands and Arvind Retail; R.A. Shah, Head Property, Trent (Westside, Landmark, Star Bazaar); Sanjay Vakharia, Director & COO Spykar; Mohit Khattar, CEO, Graviss Foods (Baskin Robbins); S Ravi Kant, CEO – Watches & Accessories & EVP Corporate Communications, Titan Co.; Avijit Mitra, CEO, Infinity Retail (Croma); Rahul Vira, CEO, Skechers South Asia; Sandeep Kataria, CEO, Bata India; Vijay Jain, CEO – ORRA; James Munson, MD, Marks and Spencer India; Satyen Momaya, CEO, Celio (India); Sundeep Chugh, CEO, Benetton India; Darshan Mehta, President, Reliance Brands; Amit Jatia, Vice Chairman, McDonald's India – West and South; Shailesh Chaturvedi, MD & CEO, Tommy Hilfiger; Farah Malik, ED, Metro Shoes; Nitin Saluja, Co-founder, Chaayos; Shital Mehta, CEO, Max Fashions; Mohit Kampani, CEO, Aditya Birla Retail; Rajeev Krishnan, MD & CEO, SPAR India; Unnat Varma, MD, Pizza Hut – Yum! Restaurants (Indian sub-continent); Ashish Dikshit, MD, Aditya Birla Fashion and Retail; Javier Sotomayor, Managing Director, Cinopolis Asia; Sunaina Kwatra, Country Manager, Louis Vuitton India; and Pradeep Hirani, Chairman, Kimaya Fashions Pvt Ltd.



RETAILER'S CHOICE

IMAGES MOST ADMIRED SHOPPING CENTRE OF THE YEAR: **BEST ROI & SALES PER SQFT**

Best Roi & Sales Per Sqft (East)
★ **Quest Mall, Kolkata** ★



Best ROI (West)
★ **Ahmedabad One** ★



Best Sales Per Sqft (West)
★ **High Street Phoenix, Mumbai** ★



BEST ROI (North)
★ **DLF Mall of India, Noida** ★



Best Sales Per Sqft (North)
★ **Select CITYWALK, Delhi** ★



Best ROI (South)
★ **Orion Mall @Brigade Gateway, Bengaluru** ★



Best Sales Per Sqft (South)
★ **The Forum Mall, Koramangala, Bengaluru** ★



JURY AWARDS

IMAGES MOST ADMIRED SHOPPING CENTRE OF THE YEAR: **MARKETING & PROMOTIONS**

★ **Select CITYWALK, Delhi** ★



IMAGES MOST ADMIRED SHOPPING CENTRE GROUP OF THE YEAR: **MARKETING & PROMOTIONS**

★ **Phoenix Group** ★

Phoenix Group

★ **Nexus Malls** ★



IMAGES MOST ADMIRED **SHOPPING CENTRE LAUNCH** OF THE YEAR

East ★ **P&M and Hitech City Centre Mall, Jamshedpur** ★



West ★ **Seawoods Grand Central Mall, Navi Mumbai** ★



North ★ **Omaxe Connaught Place, Greater Noida** ★



Metro (South)

★ **Vega City Mall, Bengaluru** ★



Non Metro (South)

★ **Prozone Mall, Coimbatore** ★



IMAGES MOST ADMIRED **SHOPPING CENTRE** OF THE YEAR

Metro (West)

★ **High Street Phoenix, Mumbai** ★



Non Metro (West)

★ **Phoenix Marketcity, Pune** ★



Metro (East)

★ **Quest, Kolkata** ★



Non Metro (East)

★ **City Centre, Siliguri** ★



Metro (South)

★ **Phoenix Marketcity, Bengaluru** ★



Non Metro (South)

★ **Lulu Mall, Kochi** ★



Metro (North)

★ **DLF Mall of India, Noida** ★



Non Metro (North)

★ **Elante Mall, Chandigarh** ★



IMAGES MOST ADMIRED SHOPPING CENTRE OF THE YEAR: **TURNAROUND**

East

★ **Acropolis Mall, Kolkata** ★



North

★ **VR Punjab, Mohali** ★



South

★ **Mantri Square Mall, Bengaluru** ★



LUXURY

★ **DLF Emporio, New Delhi** ★



CSR INITIATIVES

★ **Infiniti Mall, Malad, Mumbai** ★



GREEN INITIATIVES

★ **Inorbit Malls** ★



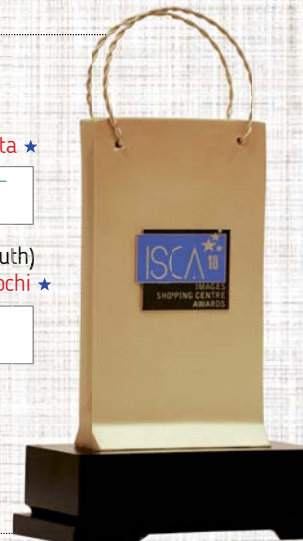
IMAGES EXCELLENCE AWARD FOR **OPERATIONS MANAGEMENT & BUSINESS TRANSPARENCY**

★ **Pacific Mall, New Delhi** ★



IMAGES EXCELLENCE AWARD FOR **MALL OCCUPANCY OPTIMISATION**

★ **MGB Felicity Mall, Nellore** ★



The inventors of the football stud, hummel, have recently stepped into the Indian market.

The brand, which has already been running a substantial part of its production from India, has now decided to sell its wares in the country as well. Currently available in India on Jabong and Myntra, hummel is a Danish footwear and sportswear brand with deep roots in making shoes for football and handball players.

Unlike most brands, which first look at China and then consider moving into India, hummel has decided to go the other way around. The brand has forayed in the e-commerce space in India to test waters and now after a couple of successful 'beta testing' months, has sought to launch itself in China in a couple of months' time.

In an interview with Indiaretailing Bureau, **Christian Stadil, Owner Thornico Group and hummel International** said, "India is a broad prospect for us. We want to explore the diverse culture and ethos of the country, which are a part of the Karma that we so believe in at Thornico. The progress of India as an economy excites us a lot. The GDP growth of India as compared to other markets is highly impressive. Most importantly, there is a huge potential for an alternate sports brand with a different offering than the existing mainstream sports brand."

Under the leadership of Stadil, who took charge in 1999, hummel has incorporated 'Company Karma'; a business model which looks to utilise sports to promote change in some of the world's most



Danish Footwear Brand 'hummel' Looks to Gain Strong Foothold in India

– By Charu Lamba

Currently available in India on Jabong and Myntra, hummel is a Danish footwear and sportswear brand with deep roots in making shoes for football and handball players...



disadvantaged communities. This move has transformed the company from a simple sports brand into one of the most socially responsible corporate entities on the planet. With a very high retention rate, hummel ranks in the top league of all available sports brand selling on both Jabong and Myntra.

In addition to its existing collection, considering India's diversity, hummel is looking to come up with a more vibrant collection to cater to the colorful palette of the Indian audience.

CEO Allan Vad Nielsen said, "India is one of the top most focus market for the brand, hummel. We will create branded content and products for the Indian market because we are here to stay." Elaborating further, he said, "India ranks very high in our list of priorities. With rising sports and fitness consciousness among Indians, it is our mission to introduce the best sportswear apparel in India. Our products have evoked huge response

on e-commerce platforms such as Jabong, Myntra and have been able to grow the brand which is based on trust, resilience and durability among our fitness conscious Indians. We aim to build the highest-quality sportswear brand and are committed to the competitive athletes and teams who value high-quality fabrics with functionality to create the ultimate performance gear.”

The SS'18 collection of the brand is inspired by colors and the spirit of 'anything goes.' hummel is all set to feature two new premium colorful collections this summer, namely Diamant and Fay. Both the collections are ideal for an active lifestyle. Starting from a range of ₹1,099 to ₹5,499, the brand has all options available on their e-commerce partners platforms. Going forward, the brand is looking forward to source 100 percent from India and is scouting for offline retail partners to set up brick-and-mortar stores. Initially, hummel will be setting up shops in major malls of the country.

Strong Foothold in India

To carve a niche for themselves in the Indian retail industry, hummel has recently appointed Soumava Naskar (Som), Head Business Development, India. In his last tryst as Head, Brand Marketing at Jabong, Som has been awarded 'Most influential Martech Leaders' by the World Marketing Congress and Top 50 most influential e-commerce professionals in India' at the 14th edition of the Asia Retail Congress (CMO Asia).

Speaking about his new role, Som said, “hummel is one of those rare sports brands with a strong

character, it's my privilege to be part of the India story.” In his new role, Som will report to Henrik Svenning, Chief Business Development Officer, hummel. Svenning said, “We are excited about the Indian market and are looking to invest in becoming one of the major players in the sports and lifestyle category in coming years. As a brand, we see many collaboration opportunities in India.”

Tracing hummel's History

Established in 1923, hummel has a long history of creating sportswear. Both defining and defined by the Danish design tradition, hummel works with clean lines, but also with a mad love for the edgy look and strong color combinations. Since 2006, the brand has also been engaged in producing fashionable trainers and today, hummel shoes stand as a strong alternative to the convention with a passion for fun and catchy designs and vibrant colors. The collections also reflect the significant sports heritage drawing on classic sports styles from the brand's own archives.

Christian Stadil revealed, “It is one of the oldest sports brand in the world. One rainy afternoon back in 1923, Albert Messmer, a football fan and a fine boot maker, was distraught seeing the conditions of the players who had no control on their moves and were rendered helpless in the muddy waters of the field. He worked tirelessly to perfect the shoe that would make the footballers akin to the bumblebee, known as hummel in the German language. Thus, came the first ever football studs and is a tribute to the bumblebee that never gave up despite its weight.”

‘hummel’ currently

manufactures apparel for football, futsal, handball, basketball, shinty and volleyball. The company also produces footwear for football and handball. According to Stadil, hummel sponsors internationally recognised football teams like the Danish and Afghan national football teams, Charlton Athletic FC, SC Freiburg, Christiania SC, Brøndby IF, V-Varen Nagasaki, Jeonbuk Hyundai and SpVgg Greuther Fürth. “In the world of handball, hummel sponsors star players like Mikkel Hansen, Daniel Narcisse, Paul Drux and Victor Tomás, while teams like Vive Tauron Kielce, Füchse Berlin, MVM Veszprém KC, and RK Vardar all play in hummel chevrons.”

What Makes hummel Stand Apart?

Over the years, hummel has initiated and supported several projects focusing on changing the world through sport by sponsorship in poor and war-torn countries; always with the hope to build bridges and help pave the way for a better tomorrow. For hummel, sport is more than a physical activity. It is a universal language with the strength to eliminate differences in politics, culture, religion and beliefs.

The brand trusts that it can make a real change in the world by using sport to create borderless understanding, respect and unity. From Afghanistan to Sierra Leone, it supports projects that help people live out their passion for sport. In a connected world, the leadership at hummel believes this will act as a boomerang of positive change for all. ‘hummel’ operates on the motto to ‘Change the world through sport.’ This has taken the brand to uncharted territories,



places where other brands have not ventured. While many brand campaigns feature underdogs, the focus is always on winning, but for hummel sport doesn't only mean winning. The brand says sport isn't about finishing first, it's about finishing together.

“Overcoming boundaries and parameters set by communities, hummel has broken all stereotypes where other brands fail. This is majorly reflected in their sponsorship for the National Amputee team of Sierra Leone and also by designing the first ever *hijab* jersey to encourage the women of Afghanistan to play football and again bring hope where it seems bleak. Path breaking, is not a new term for hummel, it is engrained deep in our nature as well as culture,” concluded Nielsen. **IR**



Remarkable Growth Spurs Expansion Plans For Ethnic Wear Brand Shree – **The Indian Avatar**

– By IMAGES Retail Bureau

The brand, which was adjudged Emerging Franchiser of The Year at IMAGES Fashion Awards 2018, started operations two years ago and today boasts of 2,500+ PoS including 28 EBOs and 150 MBOs...

Shree - The Indian Avatar, is a fast track ethnic wear fashion brand catering to the modern Indian woman. Unlike many other brands Shree celebrates womanhood and continuously works towards bringing the rich culture of India to its customers through its collections. Designers, inspired by various Indian cities, strive to nurture all things India, and showcase them in the store ensembles.

The brand, which was adjudged **Emerging Franchiser of The Year at IMAGES Fashion Awards 2018**, started operations two years ago and prides itself on revealing a new story through clothes to its consumers every week.

Going from strength to strength, Shree, today, boasts of 2,500+ PoS including 28 EBOs and 150 MBOs, making it one of the fastest growing independent clothing brands in India at present.

Unique Business Model

The brand operates its business in a unique way. Following a points-of-sale-based strategy, Shree manages to curtail a lot of its marketing spend. For the coming fiscal year, FY 2018-2019 the brand plans to limit its marketing spend to about ₹3.5 crore – at least initially.





“The last fiscal year, 2017-18, was a remarkably impressive year for the brand, which recorded an unprecedented growth of 68-70 percent – something that they aim to maintain going forward. Consecutively, we also recorded a growth of 35 percent annually, and has already hit its five-year Compound Annual Growth Rate target of 43 percent,” says Sandeep Kapoor, Managing Director Shree – The Indian Avatar.

The extraordinary growth has spurred expansion plans, with the brand hoping to double its store count to 56 this fiscal. For now, the average size of a Shree store is around 400 sq. ft., but the brand is looking at adding larger outlets to its existing cluster, measuring up to 1,500 sq. ft. per store.

The brand started retail operations in North India, since the North is ideal for ethnic wear. The market has brought them the largest number of consumers till date. This year, with the vision of making Shree a household name and connect with consumers through its fine craftsmanship, affordable pricing and high-quality products, the brand plans to expand pan-India.

“In the next two years, we see ourselves expanding

to at least 200 outlets pan-India. We plan to swell our retail reach in Maharashtra, Gujarat, Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Punjab, Uttar Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, Haryana and Madhya Pradesh,” says Kapoor.

“We are already present in many smaller cities through our proficient distribution



“THE LAST FISCAL YEAR, 2017-18, WAS A REMARKABLY IMPRESSIVE YEAR FOR THE BRAND, WHICH RECORDED AN UNPRECEDENTED GROWTH OF 68-70 PERCENT – SOMETHING THAT THEY AIM TO MAINTAIN GOING FORWARD.”

– Sandeep Kapoor, Managing Director Shree – The Indian Avatar.

channel. Last week, we successfully launched a store in Nawashehar, Punjab and one store in Greater Noida. We are primarily focussing on smaller cities this year, with the aim of opening up more than 20 stores in Tier II and Tier III cities and towns,” he explains.

Here, he further states, the store size will be different, depending on space availability and customer demand for the collection. Stores will ideally be sized anywhere between 300 to 800 sq. ft.

The brand’s main focus is to remain affordable and relevant to the consumer by ensuring their operating costs are lower than the actual price they sell clothes at.

“We offer up to 120 new styles every month without compromising on quality. The price range of our casual wear range starts from ₹799 and goes up to ₹1599 and evening wear starts from ₹1599 to goes up to ₹2999,” says Kapoor.

In an effort to keep a handle on operating costs, Shree prefers high streets in terms of location.

“High street pretty much guarantees footfalls all seven days in a week. We don’t need to fluctuate customer attention, and we are able to leverage our brand better. Our ideal location is main markets

that are crowded with women who are shopping for their daily needs and are regular visitors to that market,” states Kapoor.

An Omnichannel-Friendly Strategy

The future of retail is Omnichannel. An Omnichannel strategy will enable a brand to grow, tap the best of both worlds and maximise on footfalls.

“Omnichannel has been termed as the new format for staying ahead in the game. We certainly plan to be a part of this evolving strategy and have begun creating a totally flawless shopping experience, whether it’s in store or through our website. We have worked towards welcoming the e-commerce era with open arms, seeing it as a part of retail and not as a challenge since we understand it is essential to creating a robust business strategy,” says Kapoor.

Currently, Shree uses centralised inventory management systems. It has also ramped up on the technology front. From end-to-end ERP system to monitor procurement, production, inventory, warehouse management, billing and distribution, finance and payroll to cloud-based retail POS systems, Shree is in line with all modern technologies.

“Our entire tech mechanism is well-planned and constructed in a manner that ensures all departments are synced for maximum output. We do use various BI tools and are currently in the process of implementing SAP B1. We are also planning to invest a marginal amount of ₹60 to 70 lakh this year in upgrading all our existing technologies,” Kapoor concludes. **IB**

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Front-End Retail Executives & How They Can Help Increase Sales

– By BS Nagesh, Founder, TRRAIN

Identifying the problem and giving a solution is the biggest job opportunity for the retail associate. The retail associate is now empowered to solve the problem of a customer and give them an alternate solution...

The power of the Retail Associate is not understood in most retail businesses, with the exception of a few service businesses, like beauty parlors, restaurants, high end electronics or made to measure apparel.

Today, every customer, whether online or offline, is looking to solve some problem of their own.

Identifying the problem and giving a solution is the biggest job opportunity for the retail associate. Artificial Intelligence and online technology is solving the problem by offering multiple solutions to an unknown problem by asking the customer to choose the solution as per her needs. The retail associate is now empowered to solve the problem of a customer

and give them an alternate solution.

Noteworthy is the story of an international winner of the IGDS 2017, Segio Diaz from Harvey Nichols, Dubai. Diaz helped a busy customer do up his entire house over a period of time. He understood the customer's requirements, kept suggesting various alternatives on e-mail, getting the customer's approval to place orders and then

getting the same installed in the customer's house, thus helping him re-decorate the entire house and in turn building a huge revenue for the retailer as well as a big commission.

For his initiative, Diaz was adjudged the winner of the prestigious award for the Best Sales Associate in the World.

Retail associates like Diaz help build trusted brands, all the while aiding the company in gaining the trust of customers and increasing business across the chain.

The national winner of the TRRAIN Retail Awards 2018 – from Titan Eye Plus – has a story a lot like Diaz's. When Juthika Talapatra – a customer – visited the Kalkaji outlet of Titan Eye Plus, Nitin, the associate who was helping her, noticed that she could not open her eyes properly. Having lost natural elasticity in her eye with age, the customer's eyelids slouched to cover more than 60 percent of her eyes. She had to consciously lift her eyelids with her hands to keep her eyes open, which was an ordeal for her.

Nitin discussed this with his colleague Mohd. Irfan and came up with a solution for Juthika Talapatra. After mutually discussing many ideas, and rejecting most of them, the two of them came up with a design of adding a support system for the eyelid in the frames itself. It was challenging for the team as





The national winner of the TRRAIN Retail Awards 2018, Nitin & Mohd Irfan from Titan Eye Plus Gold receiving award from Kishore Biyani & B S Nagesh



International winner of the IGDS 2017, Segio Diaz from Harvey Nichols, Dubai

this was a product innovation and they had never attempted something like this.

It was time consuming, yet

they did not stop trying and eventually were successful in finalising a design. Correct measurements were taken

and Juthika Talapatra received a new pair of spectacles that not only enhanced her vision, but also supported her eyelids and prevented them from dropping. She says Nitin and Mohd Irfan gave her back her old hobby of “writing” with their innovation.



RETAILERS NEED TO TRAIN AND SKILL THEIR EMPLOYEES TO GET INTO CONVERSATION WITH THEIR CUSTOMERS SO THAT THEY UNDERSTAND THE PROBLEM THEY ARE TRYING TO SOLVE OR THE NEED THEY ARE TRYING TO FULFILL.

Two creative retail associates together solved the problem of an elderly lady customer through product innovation although it was not part of their job. But for them it was their duty to help the customer buy and solve her problem. Their story got them a standing ovation and Titan Eye Plus brand endorsement.

We can only get the best from our Retail Associates if we believe their role and accept the fact that they are the best and the most important last mile connect



The Human Touch

With the right strategic approach, front-line workers can be empowered by technology. With the right technology in place, retail workers stand to benefit from increased efficiencies, the benefits of automation, and instant access to information that can help them provide better experiences for customers.

While embracing technology is central to transformation in the space, the human element must not be overlooked.

BS Nagesh’s TRRAIN identified some areas of work directly connected to the way the retail employee has felt in the past. With an idea to upgrade the lives of people in retail, both at work and at home, the organisation then worked towards converting all these areas into projects that have moved into the execution phase. These areas were:

- Creating pride for staff with Retail Employees’ Day celebrations
- Generating respect through the TRRAIN Retail Awards, which recognise the front-end heroes of India’s booming retail industry
- Inclusion through the Pankh – Wings of Destiny program which helps create livelihoods in the field of retail for persons with disabilities
- Upskilling employees through TRRAIN Aptech Retail Education Program
- Help workers earn more with the TRRAIN Circle project

for our companies.

Retailers need to train and skill their employees to get into conversation with their customers so that they understand the problem they are trying to solve or the need they are trying to fulfill. Once the retail associate is equipped, there is no stopping and the till will keep ringing forever. **IR**

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Orion Mall in Bengaluru has now achieved the cult status accorded to major landmarks of a city. With over 20 million footfalls a year, the mall is a preferred destination for its assortment of shopping, food, lifestyle & leisure brands. Home to exclusive fashion brands like ZARA, Forever 21, GAP, Shoppers Stop, Sephora, Calvin Klein, Tommy Hilfiger, Lacoste, Skechers and Aldo. Foodies too have an interesting range of restaurants such as Toscano, Cafe Noir, Beer Cafe, Nando's, Punjab Grill, Chili's, etc. Besides these, the mall's unmatched location within the iconic Brigade Gateway campus makes it a community hub with access to a man-made lake.

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