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Future of Businesses

DECEMBER 2018

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DRIVING THE CHANGE TOGETHER

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2018 is drawing to a close. This is the year which saw Indian retail emerging as one of the most dynamic and fast-paced industries in the country due to the entry of several new players. The year has been lively, with the Indian Retail Industry growing at a CAGR of 13 percent to reach US \$950 Billion. Moreover, the industry was at its peak as far as technology was concerned. Humanoid Intelligence, Artificial Intelligence, Bots, Cloud, Data, Magic Mirrors, Beacons ... every day there are additions to the list of new technologies in the retail industry.

While replacing manpower with technology is not a new concept in retail, the human touch of the business cannot be completely ignored. People have always been the appeal of the retail industry. Every shopper wants special treatment in a store. They want to talk to retail associates who are attentive and well-informed about the product, while helping them choose what suits their requirements the most.

The cover story of the December issue will walk readers through creating a balance between technologies and human beings – an equilibrium which will ultimately help retailers achieve higher levels of customer satisfaction. Apart from retail expert views, there is also a detailed report on what companies are doing to ensure friendly HR policies for their employees to bring down attrition rates.

The issue also brings readers a special feature on Retail Employees' Day (RED), focusing on retail associates – the real brand ambassadors – who help businesses grow. In an exclusive interview, BS Nagesh, Founder, TRRAIN and the man behind RED talks about the initiative, conceptualisation and popularity of the day.

In our year-ender section, we bring you a curated list of some of the top fashion brands that debuted in India in 2018.

As always, we hope you find this issue informed and beneficial. We look forward to renewing our relationship with you in the coming year. We welcome 2019 and hope it brings with a plethora of new ideas, concepts, technology and innovations for the retail industry globally and India. Do log on to our website, [www.indiaretailing.com](http://www.indiaretailing.com) to read great features and analyses of the industry.



**Amitabh Taneja**

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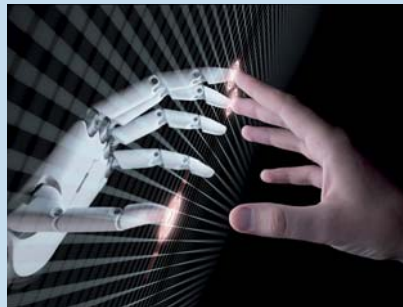


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While replacing manpower with technology is not new in retail, the human touch of the business cannot be ignored. People have always been the appeal of the retail industry. While shoppers enjoy technology, they want to talk to retail associates who are attentive and well-informed about the product, when helping them choose what suits their requirements the most

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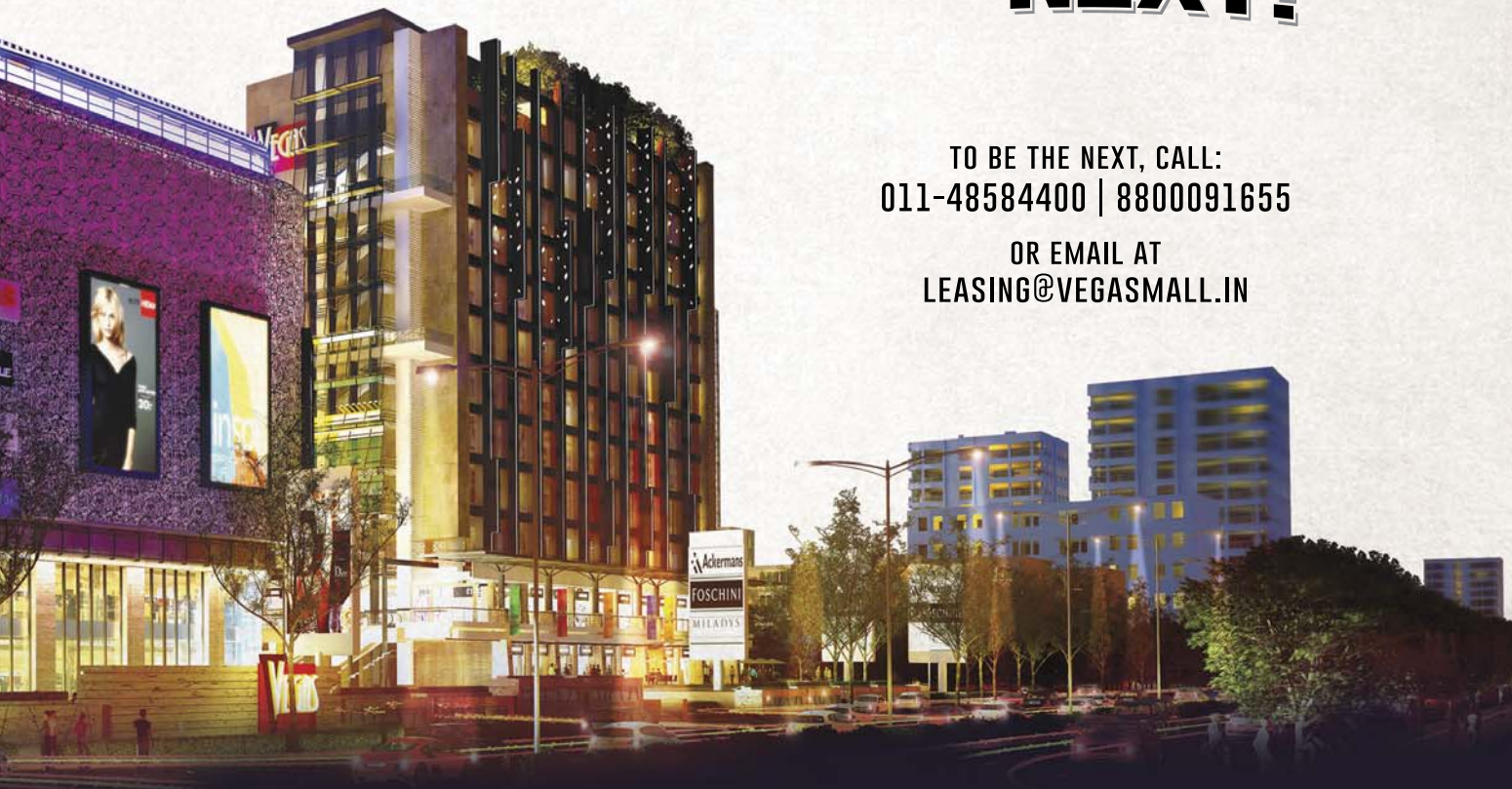
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### Amazon in Talks to Buy 9.5 Percent Stake in Kishore Biyani-led Future Retail

➔ Online retailer Amazon is in advanced stage of talks to buy around 9.5 percent stake in Kishore Biyani led Future Retail, according to sources close to PTI. According to a PTI report: A final shape to an agreement between the two parties is expected to take place in first half of December 2018, the sources said although in case of last minute hurdles the deal could be announced as late as January 2019. When contacted, Amazon declined to comment to PTI while messages sent to **Future Group Founder and Group CEO Kishore Biyani** remained unanswered by the time of filing story.



The Amazon-Future Group deal is initially estimated to be around ₹2,000 crore executed under foreign portfolio investor (FPI). The agreement could also include Amazon buying out Biyani and promoter group's entire holding in future subject to applicable regulations in India. As of September 2018, promoter and promoter group had 46.51 percent share of Future Retail Ltd, which operates hypermarket and supermarket under brands which include- Big Bazaar, Easyday, Foodhall, HyperCity, FBB, Heritage fresh, e-zone and WH Smith.

According to market watchers, this deal is expected to help Amazon strengthen its play in the Indian retail market that is still dominated by offline retailers. The move would also intensify competition further between Amazon and Walmart-backed Flipkart that are locked in an intense battle for leadership in the Indian e-commerce market. Walmart had picked up 77 percent stake in



## Big Brands End 2018 on a High Profit Note

– By IMAGES Retail Bureau

November 2018 has turned out to be a busy month for Indian retail brands who made steady moves focusing on expansion and imports...

Flipkart for US\$ 16 billion, the largest deal in the Indian e-commerce space so far. Both Amazon and Flipkart are pumping in millions of dollars towards building infrastructure and expanding operations in the country.

### Infiniti Mall adds Miniso, MI, Home Centre, Tom Tailor, Ray-Ban to its Portfolio

➔ Infiniti Mall is famed for an array of record-breaking attractions, one-of-a-kind leisure experiences with many fashion and retail outlets at both the Malad and Andheri branches in Mumbai. This year, the mall has been the hub of a shopping and entertainment extravaganza, the likes of which have never been seen before. The mall has high-end to mid



segment brands across fashion and retail categories like Zara, Big Bazaar Gen Nxt, Trends, Reliance Digital, Croma, Lenskart, Charles & Keith, Aldo, Metro, Skechers, Blackberrys, Calvin Klein, Jack & Jones, Mufti, The Raymond Shop, Biba, AND, Neeru's, W, Allen Solley, ED Hardy, Marks & Spencer, Van Heusen, Ethos among others, the mall recently added Miniso, MI, Home Centre, Tom Tailor, Ray-Ban to name a few for that lavish shopping experience.



There is also a Family Entertainment Centre consisting of a gaming zone with exciting games, fun rides for kids including an in-house roller coaster, a food court with top notch F&B brands, a recreational area and a multipurpose hall amongst other state-of-the-art facilities. In keeping with its theme of having something for everyone, the mall has launched a multiplex with five screens at its Malad branch along with PVR - ICON at Infiniti Mall Andheri where numerous movie premiers and promotions offering best movie experience to visitors are hosted.

When it comes to engaging with customers, Infiniti mall is quite innovative in its approach and always tries to stay a step ahead of the game, bringing every retail category to life. For instance, gauging the interest for the true-blue community, Denim Fest has made the mall an ideal destination to denim enthusiasts. Shoe Fest was an attraction for people to try various footwears from different brands to check out and walk comfortably. Countless entertainment activities and an array of innovative events such as Mast Monsoon, Yum Food Fest, The Big Binge and more have made this place an ideal destination for people to spend some quality time together with family and friends. Moreover, Infiniti Mall is continuously focusing to participate in community-led events and holds multiple CSR initiatives to create awareness. Partnering with local NGO's and charity groups, the mall has always supported various social and noble causes through activities like The Street Store, International Yoga Day, Organ Donation Awareness, etc. It didn't take a step back when Kerala needed support during its tough time and sent loads of happiness.

Located with easy access, the mall is continuously rambling to attract people from every corner of the city and there is no doubt that every single moment lived here is one experience to add as Well spent Day of Life. Infiniti mall offers something new to discover at every turn. A day at Infiniti, has lots of surprises in store for consumers<sup>2</sup>

## Snapdeal Unveils 'Brand Shield' to Help Firms Fight Counterfeits

 E-commerce major Snapdeal Monday said it has launched 'Brand Shield,' an anti-counterfeiting programme to help brands report counterfeit products being sold on its platform. The programme has been designed based on the inputs received from various brand owners, Snapdeal said in a statement.




The programme is aimed at enabling a structured interaction between the platform and brands with regard to any intellectual property (IP) issues flagged by the brand, it added. Under Brand Shield, there will be an online, triple-check point process for brands to report any violation of their IP rights in terms of trademark, copyright, patent or concerns related to design. Brands can also list specific issues relating to unlawful copying of logos, brand images, design features and packaging by sellers listed on Snapdeal's platform. Brands will be required to establish their ownership of the IP, identify the listing of concern through proof and state their claim of infringement.

The statement said designated teams at Snapdeal will review every report of IP infringement submitted through Brand Shield. Upon verification of the accuracy and adequacy of the information provided by the brand, Snapdeal will take down the listing within one business day, it added. In continuation of current practice, Snapdeal will also continue to de-list products/ listings in compliance with any directions or orders passed by the courts and other relevant authorities, the statement said.

"The issue of unscrupulous sellers misusing online marketplaces to sell fake goods is a global problem. Brand Shield is part of our ongoing initiatives to collaborate with brands owners to combat counterfeits and infringement offences," a Snapdeal spokesperson said.

## Welspun India aims 50 pc revenue from innovation-based products by 2022

 Home textiles maker Welspun India is eyeing about 50 percent of its revenue from innovation-based products by FY2021-22, a top company official said. According to a PTI report: The company, which offers bath, bedding and flooring solutions, has 29 active patents globally.

"We expect revenue from innovation-based products to grow significantly in the years to come. We see at least 50



percent of our revenue from innovation-based products. We see this happening by year 2022. Our innovation-based products are relevant to the customers," **Dipali Goenka, Welspun India CEO and Joint Managing Director**, told PTI. At present, around 25-30 percent of Welspun India's sales come from innovation-based products. For the half-year ended September 2018, the company had reported a total income of ₹3,375.6 crore. When asked if the company has any major capital expansion plans for the textiles business, Goenka told PTI: "Not for Welspun India. We have had a great share of investments. Now we are looking at optimizing for the next 2-3 years." Earlier this month, in an investors' presentation, the company said it plans to invest around ₹900 crore in the current fiscal. Of this, ₹320 crore has been invested in the first half of this financial year. A major chunk of the investment will be towards flooring solutions project, it added.

**H&M Group Streamlines & Focuses On Core Business**



The fashion industry is in a period of extensive change as a result of ongoing digitalisation. At the same time the H&M group's transformation work is continuing at a fast pace, with the company prioritising and focusing on its core business.

Cheap Monday has a traditional wholesale business model, which is a model that has faced major challenges due to the shift in the industry. There has been a negative trend in the Cheap Monday's sales and profits for a long time. The H&M group therefore intends to close down Cheap Monday.



This will unfortunately affect all Cheap Monday employees and operations in Tranås and Stockholm, Sweden. Approximately 80 employees are affected. Dialogue with union representatives has started and the company plans for all employment contracts to be terminated during 2019. All employees will be provided external career support and will be given guidance in how to apply to continue working within the H&M group.

"We need to constantly develop our business and what we choose to invest in. We see very good opportunities and great potential for all of the other brands within New Business, which all are developing positively both digitally as well as through physical stores," says Anna Attemark, Head of New Business at the H&M group. The closure is planned to start immediately, with the aim of being complete by June 30, 2019. The Cheap Monday store in London and Cheap Monday's online store will close on December 31, 2018.



**Retail Transformation Continues to Grow in Last Quarter of 2018**

- By IMAGES Retail Bureau

The year 2018 has so far proved to be a happy hunting ground for global retailers with the month of November spelling growth across all formats for international retailers at a steady pace in all segments of the industry...

**Amazon to Invest US\$ 5 bn For 2 New Headquarters in NYC, Virginia**



Amazon on Tuesday announced it will invest US\$ 5 billion to build two new headquarters in New York City and Arlington, Virginia. The move will create more than 50,000 jobs across the two new headquarters locations, with more than 25,000 employees each in New York City and Arlington, the company said in a statement. The new locations will join Seattle as the company's three headquarters in North America.

"These two locations will allow us to attract world-class talent that will help us to continue inventing for customers

for years to come. The team did a great job selecting these sites, and we look forward to becoming an even bigger part of these communities," said Jeff Bezos, Founder and CEO of Amazon. Amazon also announced it has selected Nashville for a new Center of Excellence for its Operations business that will create more than 5,000 jobs.

The new Washington, D.C. metro headquarters in Arlington will be located in National Landing, and the New York City headquarters will be located in the Long Island City neighbourhood in Queens.



Sundry Photography / Shutterstock.com

As part of Amazon's new headquarters, New York and Long Island City will benefit from more than 25,000 full-time high-paying jobs and approximately \$2.5 billion in investment. "Today, with Amazon committing to expand its headquarters in Long Island City, New York can proudly say that we have attracted one of the largest, most competitive economic development investments in US history," said Governor Andrew M. Cuomo of New York.

As part of Amazon's new headquarters, Virginia and Arlington will benefit from more than 25,000 full-time high-paying jobs and another \$2.5 billion in investment. "This is a big win for Virginia - I'm proud Amazon recognises the tremendous assets the Commonwealth has to offer and plans to deepen its roots here," said Governor Ralph Northam of Virginia. With more than 610,000 employees worldwide, including over 250,000 in North America, Amazon ranks No. 1 on American Customer Satisfaction Index and also No. 1 on LinkedIn's "US Top Companies" list.



**J. Crew Announces CEO transition**

 J. Crew Group, Inc. has announced that a mutual agreement has been reached by the Board of Directors and Chief Executive Officer James Brett, who will step down, effective immediately.

“Jim’s passion and experience brought new energy to J. Crew and enhanced our ability to relate to a broad range of consumers, and we thank him for his hard work and thoughtful contributions to position our company for long-term success,” said the Board of Directors in a statement. “Building on Jim’s early progress, the leadership team remains committed to driving performance and results, as well as continuing to strengthen operations, enhance customer loyalty and extend brand reach. Returning J. Crew to its iconic status required reinventing the brand to reflect the America of today with a more expansive, more inclusive fashion concept,” said Brett. “However, despite the recent brand relaunch already showing positive results, the Board and I were unable to bridge our beliefs on how to continue to evolve all aspects of the company.”



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Brett’s responsibilities will be assumed by an office of the CEO, comprised of four senior J. Crew executives who have significant operational and merchandising experience with successful retail brands: Michael Nicholson, President & Chief Operating Officer; Adam Brotman, President & Chief Experience Officer; Lynda Markoe, Chief Administrative Officer; and, Libby Wadle, President of Madewell Brand. The office of the CEO will manage the company’s operations as the Board works to establish a permanent management structure.

**Alibaba Generates Record US\$ 31 Billion During Singles’ Day Sale**

 Chinese e-commerce giant Alibaba on Monday announced generation of whopping US\$ 30.8 billion in terms of Gross Merchandise Value (GMV) during Singles’ Day sale — the 24-hour annual shopping event — held on November 11, beating the last year’s record of US\$ 25 billion.




zhu difeng / Shutterstock.com

Around 180,000 brands had participated in the sale on all retails platforms of the company. Apple, Xiaomi, Pampers were among the top brands that were sold to customers spread across 197 countries. The 10th edition of the Global Shopping Festival 11.11, which is also called ‘Double 11’ event as it falls on November 11, kicked off on Saturday midnight providing huge discounts on goods ranging from diapers to mobile phones. It started with a bang as products worth US\$ 3 billion were sold in the first five minutes and the US\$ 10 billion figure was achieved in little over one hour.

Jack Ma, Executive Chairman, Alibaba Group was present at the countdown gala here. Los Angeles, Tokyo, Frankfurt, were among the global cities that saw orders being placed for goods ranging from diapers to mobiles. Alibaba has invested in Indian digital payment platform PayTM. According to Joseph Tsai, Executive Vice Chairman of Alibaba Group, the investment in the payment platform helps them understand the Indian market. “It is a difficult market for everyone. We do not want to rush... we have time,” he told reporters while talking about the company’s plans for India.

Alibaba Group CEO Daniel Zhang said the Indian market was big and it was seen by many big companies as strategic location. Alibaba will help local companies grow rather than putting business itself there, he said.

**US Cyber Monday online sales to reach record US\$7 billion**

 American consumers were on track to spend US\$ 7.8 billion in online shopping on Cyber Monday, up 18.3 percent from last year, according to Adobe Analytics, which tracks 80 percent of online transactions at 100 of the largest retailers in the US.

Cyber Monday, which falls on the first Monday after Thanksgiving Day and Black Friday, is considered the biggest online shopping day of the year, reports Xinhua news agency. Last year, it hit a record US\$ 6.6 billion in online sales. With growing online sales, Black Friday might be stealing Cyber Monday’s thunder. Online sales for Black Friday reached US\$ 6.22 billion, up 23 percent compared with last year.



Smartphone-enabled purchases amounted to US\$ 2.1 billion, accounting for one third of the overall sales. Figures from Internet Retailer, a publisher of e-commerce news and analysis, predicted that the total amount to be spent over the period between Thanksgiving Day and Cyber Monday will reach US\$ 21.6 billion. For the whole holiday season, which will last until end of December, online sales could hit a record US\$ 124 billion, up by 15 percent from last year, Adobe Analytics said.



# *Be seen at Lulu Mall, be seen above the rest.*

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**For Kochi, Aravind Chandran: 759 381 2192**







# Year- Ender: Fashion & Accessory Retail Brands Launched in India in 2018



– By IMAGES Retail Bureau  
with Inputs from  
Charu Lamba

*The Indian fashion retail industry has had a positive year in terms of welcoming new domestic, celebrity led and international brands in the country. IMAGES Retail has curated a list of some of the top fashion brands that debuted in India in the year 2018...*

India's fashion retail industry is poised to cross €85 billion by the end of 2022. According to a Technopak study, the men's share of the fashion market is substantially higher than that of women, though the gap is reducing, and by 2022, both men's and women's share of the total fashion market is likely to be 39 percent each. The kids segment will account for nearly 22 percent of the total fashion market by 2022.

Figures aside, the Indian consumer is also spending more. Increased disposable income and working women are keeping the fashion retail industry in India on a high. With these factors in mind, it is safe to say that India offers great opportunities for new domestic brand launches as well as for international brands. This was evident in 2018, the year in which the Indian fashion retail industry welcomed a flurry of new domestic, celebrity-led and international brands into its fold.

***We bring you a curated list\* of some of the top fashion brands that have debuted in India in the year 2018.***

## >> Usha Silai

Usha International, one of India's leading manufacturer of sewing machines, fans and home appliances, launched a curtain raiser of the sustainable fashion label Usha Silai in collaboration with IMG Reliance, through a powerful fashion forward initiative #ReimagineFashion.

The initiative aims to empower women in rural areas with skills and resources to create clothes and accessories that can be retailed in the urban fashion market. The proceeds generated from the sales of these garments under the Usha Silai label will go back to these rural women. This will not only create long-term opportunities for them but also give them an identity within their cultural and socio-economic realities.



## >> PROWL

Tiger Shroff unveiled a new active lifestyle brand called PROWL. The brand is jointly created and owned by Tiger Shroff and Mojostar. This is the first brand launch, for Mojostar, which is creating a house of lifestyle brands with celebrities. For Tiger, this marks his entry into the active lifestyle business, a space he is known for.

PROWL is a brand targeting young consumers who lead a high activity lifestyle, and are constantly on the move. They regularly transition from one activity to another and want to look awesome while doing it. PROWL aims to provide functional yet highly stylish clothing and accessories to fit the target consumer's active lifestyles. The brand captures its purpose and proposition to consumers, in the tagline - 'READY TO MOVE.'



## >> Berluti Paris

Berluti Paris, a luxury shoe brand from Paris, has entered the Indian market in partnership with Bequest Group. The boutique in DLF Emporio displays the complete lifestyle range of shoes, leather goods and ready-to-wear pieces amongst which are the emblematic Alessandro shoes, Un Jour or Deux Jour briefcases and Playtime sneakers. Berluti was established in Paris in 1895 and has been built by four generations of shoemakers. In 2005 fine leather goods were introduced and a complete clothing collection followed in 2011.



## >> Raymond Khadi – The Story Respun

Raymond has tied up with the KVIC board to sell khadi products through a newly introduced brand called Raymond Khadi – The Story Respun.

As khadi is a difficult fabric to work with, Raymond Khadi has applied techniques and processes to make it wearable and desirable – be it in the terms of look and feel of the fabric, prints that the brand has introduced or the cuts and the silhouettes that the brand has done.

Raymond Khadi has an expansive range of products like trousers, short *kurtas*, long *kurtas*, *bandhgallas*, shirts and a lot more. The price range of the products ranges between ₹3,000-14,000.

Apart from EBOs of Raymond, the brand is available at Raymond franchise outlets, MBOs and exclusive brand outlet of Raymond Khadi.







### >> Power

Global footwear giant, Bata, riding on India's growing demand for footwear that supports a healthy and active lifestyle, has launched Power – its international sportswear brand in India. Launched in 1971, Power is the international sportswear brand from Bata. It is designed in Canada and sold all over the world. Style, Technology, Comfort and Durability are the key qualities found in every Power Athletic shoe. Runners, team players, fitness enthusiasts, recreational athletes and adventurers who demand technically advanced footwear with superior quality and value can put their trust in Power.

### >> GoS

The iconic Swedish luxury watch brand, GoS, formed a strategic alliance with New Delhi based ExcedoLuxuria, to retail GoS watches in India. Under this exclusive agreement, ExcedoLuxuria, the Ultra Luxury Brand Distributor & By Appointment Luxury Specialist has exclusive marketing and distribution rights for the GoS brand across the Indian sub-continent. This partnership establishes ExcedoLuxuria as the exclusive retail store and online partner for GoS watches in India. With more than 80 percent of the GoS production exported outside Europe, mainly to the United States, China & the Middle East, GoS noticed a growing interest from India. GoS began a search for a partner who understood the level of luxury GoS Watches offers and appointed ExcedoLuxuria as their exclusive representative and consultant for GoS watches in India.



### >> Surkhab

Shilpi Gupta Surkhab, a Dubai-based high-end womenswear label which exemplifies the love for heritage techniques and craftsmanship, was launched in India. 'Shilpi Gupta Surkhab' is Shilpi Gupta's poetic ode to the wondrous world of art and design, something that has always driven the creative instincts in her. With its 'customisation trunks', the label addresses every fashion need of a woman who wants to make a chic turn and is much sought after for its bespoke tailoring services for limited edition couture.



### >> Melissa

Brazilian brand Melissa, famed for its 'fashionable shoes,' forayed into India with its first ever flagship store at the DLF Promenade Mall. The international brand has presence in over 96 countries including key fashion cities such as New York, London, and Hong Kong. International design brand Vivienne Westwood, one of the champions of fashion sustainability, has been collaborating with the brand since 2008. The brand also collaborates with Karl Lagerfeld, Jean Paul Gaultier and many more.



### >> Ted Baker

British menswear, womenswear and accessories brand Ted Baker forayed into India in partnership with Aditya Birla Fashion and Retail Limited. All of Ted's store interiors are bespoke to their location, taking into account the surroundings and local culture. Starting with the rich jewel tones in traditional Indian dress, Ted has juxtaposed these with inspiration drawn from the Crown Jewels for a uniquely British twist. Created using traditional and locally-sourced Indian textiles and embellishment, this is thoroughly contemporary take on Ted's travels. A diamond formation timber floor welcomes guests to the space, whilst the ornate



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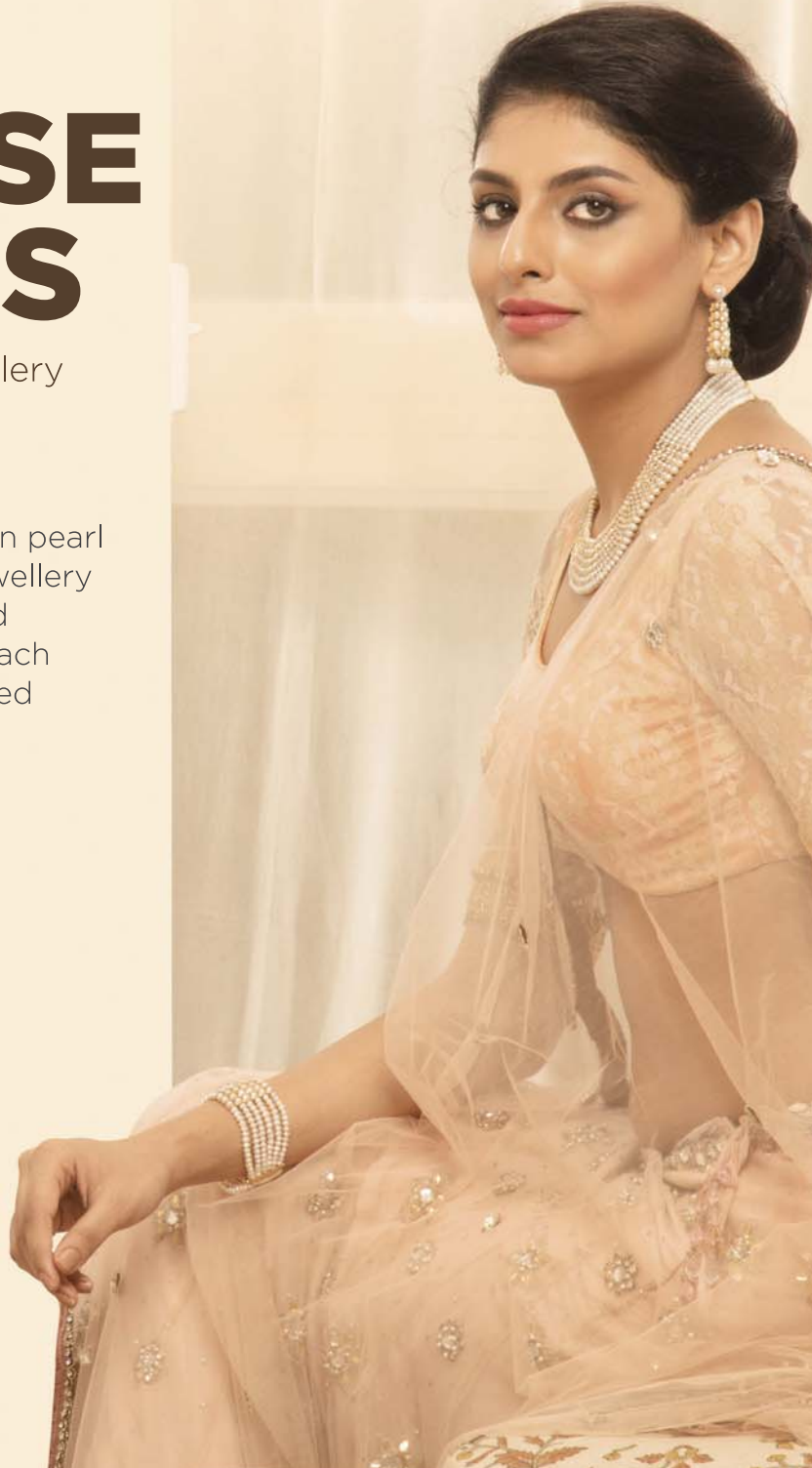
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ceiling features brushed and polished brass three-dimensional diamond shapes. Fitting rooms have intricate printed wallpaper and are upholstered in regal purple with opulent gold trims with wall-hanging jewel pendants. Props referencing the British monarchy are displayed in ornate frames throughout the store. Red oak timber-topped tables with gold stylised legs make for majestic feature furniture, while the remaining pieces draws inspiration from royal jewels, enhancing the magnificence of the store and creating a jewel-box backdrop for Ted's wonderful new collections.

### >> Disrupt

TV's popular reality show Roadies' ex-contestant-turned-VJ-turned-actor, Rannvijay Singh who has constantly floored us with his fashion fix and style picks; stepped into fashion couture with his label, Disrupt - Defy Ordinary. The brand-new fashion label has been exclusively carved out keeping Rannvijay's fashion sense - free, wild-spirited and originality - in mind.

The clothing label aims to 'disrupt' the fashion industry with styles that stand out from the crowd, are relatable and dominate the streets. Especially catering to the misfits, go-getters and the independent-minded, Disrupt is a brand that combines utility, street style, and quality, especially for all the casual wear outfits.

Catering to both men and women, Disrupt offers shirts, graphic tees, hoodies, joggers, denims and more! A feel-good combination of vibrant colours, quirky styles, and techniques, Disrupt aptly channels the raw and rugged trademark of free-spirited style.



### >> Just F

With an aim to bring the 'F' factor back into feminine fitness, Mojostar joined forces with leading Bollywood superstar Jacqueline Fernandez to launch Just F, a female-only fitness and fashion brand.

Just F is a move to redefine the female active-wear space in India. A combination of fresh design, functionality for fitness and trendy fashion Just F's offerings are unabashedly feminine. The products have been developed to meet the specific requirements of the style-conscious, trendy, and free-spirited 20-something Indian women. The brand has also paid great attention to detail in terms of construction and sizing, designing products which are better suited to the body type of Indian women. Crossover styling across the range helps women to fashionably achieve their fitness goals, while bringing the fun back into the mix.



### >> Disney & Me

Disney & Me stores, catering to lovers of Disney, Marvel and Star Wars merchandise, have opened up in India courtesy DLF Brands.

The stores carry exclusive fashion lines and a global range of toys and novelty items for kids between 3-12 years. The stores feature six uniquely designed, dedicated zones bringing to life the distinctive worlds of the popular franchises — Disney's Mickey Mouse & Minnie Mouse, Disney Princesses, 'Frozen', Marvel's Avengers, Spider-Man and Star Wars.



### >> Miss & Chief

E-commerce major Flipkart has launched its in-house label for kids, Miss & Chief.

Aimed at kids in the age group of 2-10 years, the 'Miss & Chief' brand offers variety from a mix of sporty apparel, colourful designs to princess party dresses. With the launch of Miss & Chief, the company is looking to address the needs of its youngest fashion consumers while at the same time offering great quality and value for money. The brand also has a range of STEM toys ranging from remote controlled cars to musical and educational toys.



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### >> Arvind Ready-to-Wear

Arvind Limited introduced its private label 'Arvind Ready-to-Wear.' As a result of the brand's drive to constantly innovate and transform the fashion landscape, the ready-to-wear collection is crafted to address the need of the customer, who is looking to balance aesthetics and functionality.

Arvind Ready-to-Wear is an amalgamation of elevated essentials with global aesthetics and contemporary innovation. The collection offers a wide array of work-wear, leisure and ceremonial wear.

As a brand, 'Arvind Ready-to-Wear' provides advanced stretchables in the work wear category that extend to the leisure line as well. The brand makes available the best of ready to wear for men, through revolutionary four-dimensional tailoring in finely crafted blazers along with lightweight, wrinkle free and dressed up options in work wear across categories. The versatile collection for men features linen blazers and bundis that are sewn to perfection, contemporary and elevated chinos, trendy fabric prints and a range of textured, soft and linen-blend summer plaids, attributing to its multi-faceted heritage.



### >> hummel

The inventors of the football stud, hummel, stepped into the Indian market. The brand has already been running a substantial part of its production from India.

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.



### >> Ancestry

Future Style Lab, the design studio arm of Kishore Biyani's Future Group launched the first store of its contemporary Indian lifestyle brand, Ancestry, at Ambience Mall, Gurugram.

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 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 Rs 3,000-7,000. 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.

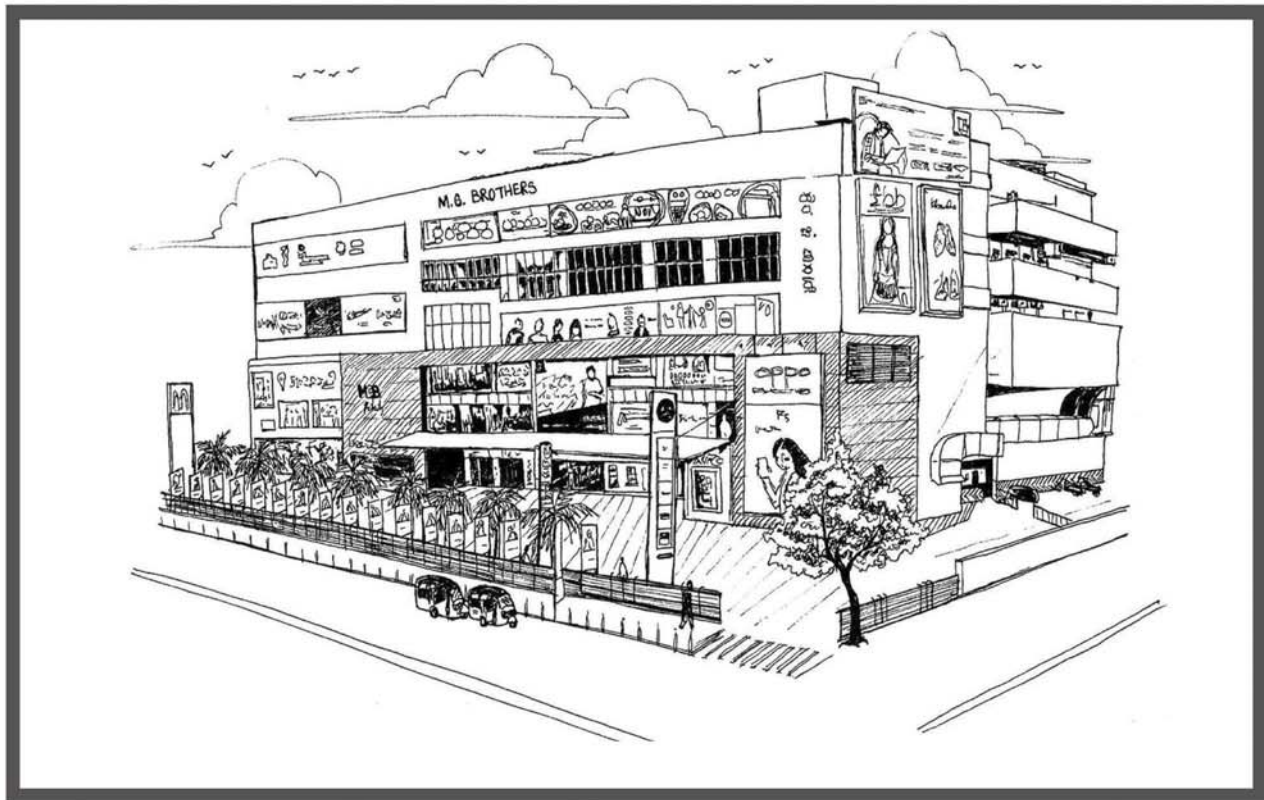


### >> Ylati

Italy-based sneaker brand Ylati has made its entry in the Indian market and Luca Martino, the founder of the company, feels that the 'promising country' has lot of potential for international brands like this one.

The brand has been brought to India by Superkicks. Ylati offers luxury sneakers at affordable rates starting from ₹13,000.



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### >> Fifty Degree

Fifty Degree gives classic yet versatile staple that could take customers from street wear to lounging at home, to even the most high-powered board room meeting. The brand is categorised into 4 styles: Formals, Basics, Sports and Casuals (T-shirts and Polos).

The brand has an array of basic solid t-shirts that are crafted to help patrons go effortlessly from day to night without compromising on their style.

### >> Antony Morato

Contemporary Italian fashion brand Antony Morato in partnership with Iconic Fashion marked its foray to India by setting up their first distinctive store at Palladium, Mumbai. Vibrant and contemporary, the brand's target is a new generation of fashion-conscious consumers who express their own identity through clothing. The collection is designed to meet the needs of the New Man all through the day. The innovative outfits are the perfect solution for men who are constantly looking for a modern and distinctive style.

### >> Meccaniche Veneziane

The Italian luxury watch brand Meccaniche Veneziane has forayed into the Indian market through an exclusive marketing and distribution partnership with ExcedoLuxuria. Meccaniche Veneziane offers high-precision mechanical watches with Swiss movements that are designed and manufactured in Italy with the utmost attention to detail by skilled craftsmen. In the Indian market, the brand introduced its complete range which consists of the series: Nereide, Redentore and Arsenale models. Positioned as an affordable luxury brand, Meccaniche Veneziane time-pieces are retailed in India between ₹45,000 and ₹75,000.



### >> Heel & Buckle London

After successfully housing both casual and formal footwear from some of the most revered international brands, Berleigh extended their gamut of operations into manufacturing with the launch of their first line of men's footwear, Heel & Buckle London. Conceptualised and designed by the team at Berleigh, the signature label exudes sartorial elegance, coupled with superlative quality, contemporary styles, sleek design elements and unparalleled comfort.

Catering to the quintessentially stylish man of today who is, personality and trend conscious, Heel & Buckle London boasts of timeless classic additions that are a must feature in every gentleman's wardrobe. Marrying superior craftsmanship with comfort fit, it assures to evoke a sense of savoir faire.

### >> BYOGI

Sri Sri Tattva, a leading brand in the space of health and wellness, has launched its new lifestyle brand BYOGI. BYOGI offers a range of ethnic wear, yoga wear and accessories for men, women and children. The brand endeavours to bring a line of quality clothing at very attractive price points.

"For Sri Sri Tattva, working on BYOGI is something that has been close to the heart. Our presence in the space compliments our goal to bring high quality products in the space of health, wellness and lifestyle. We have always been passionate about values of our ancient culture be it through the benefits of the science of Ayurveda, promoting Yoga and Meditation and even traditional art and design. Making the best available to as many consumers as possible will now also reflect in our offerings through BYOGI," said TejKatpitia, CEO, Sri Sri Tattva.





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### >> Cape & Cloth

Vajor, the women's fashion and lifestyle brand known for its free-spirited outlook, introduced a new brand 'Cape & Cloth' for working women. The product range comprises of pocket dresses, clean cut jumpsuits, effortless tops, versatile shirts, relaxed blazers and trousers that are made of minimal elements but, with elegance. The brand embodies the philosophy of 'less is more'. Accompanying the easy to wear clothing are stunning shoes that can survive the busiest days and bags that can hold the world in the most organized fashion. The entire collection, which is priced between ₹799 to ₹2,999.



### >> American Eagle Outfitters

Aditya Birla Fashion and Retail launched the international mid-to-premium deminwear brand, American Eagle Outfitters, in the country. The brand is targeted at customers aged between 15 and 27 years and this is a very big market size. The brand plans to open 25-30 stores in next three years.



### >> Love Moschino

Samar Lifestyle Pvt Ltd has expanded its portfolio in India and forayed into luxury retail with the launch of iconic Italian luxury fashion brand, Love Moschino. The store showcases handbags, accessories, shoes for women. And footwear will be introduced very soon! Talking on the brand expansion plans Mouli Venkataraman, COO, Samar Lifestyle - Love Moschino said, "We will be adding footwear to our range which will add more glamour to the brand in India. Nevertheless we are soon going to open one more outlet in Ambeince Mall, Gurgaon. We will concentrate our strategies in opening exclusive store to built the brand in India."



### >> D:FY

D:FY is a new Indian sportswear brand which has recently launched its flagship store in the Phoenix Market City Kurla mall spanning over 4,000 sq. ft. This store houses a complete range of brand's shoes, apparel and accessories. Additionally, the brand will be available exclusively online only on Amazon Fashion to ensure a pan India presence. The brand's key aims are to make great sports gear accessible with great technology and breath-taking looks. The brand announced India's defying cricket all-rounder Hardik Pandya along with upcoming Bollywood actress Nidhi Agerwal as its brand ambassadors. D:FY is also privileged to have the support of India's bowling legend Anil Kumble since inception as its mentor.



### >> Sztori

Myntra launched Sztori, its in-house plus size apparel brand, especially designed to suit a larger range of body shapes and sizes. It is essentially a designer wear in the plus size category, offering consumers, the perfect fit and multiple style options at affordable rates. The apparel is made to suit plus size body types rather than prove to be a mere extension in size on existing profiles, thus breaking the existing age-old norm in the Indian market. Post identifying a white space opportunity in the segment, Myntra set out to design and develop merchandise under a new brand to cater to the category and make wearers look fashionable with multiple style options at affordable prices, opening new avenues in the industry. The brand offers a range of products for men and women, including, tees, denims, tops, dresses and more in L to XXXXL (Large to 4 times Large) sizes. Shoppers can choose from over 225 styles and designs at prices ranging from ₹ 799-1,999.



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### >> House of Pataudi

Myntra launched 'House of Pataudi', in association with Saif Ali Khan. The ethnic wear brand is inspired from the sophistication and the rich heritage of the Pataudis and reflects a strong sense of culture and tradition.

'House of Pataudi' is co-owned by Myntra, Exceed Entertainment and Saif Ali Khan and exemplifies the latter's classic and contemporary style and taste.

It is a lifestyle brand for men and women that delivers fine taste and refinement to the discerning and the fashion conscious. Each piece not only exudes style, but also narrates the rich story and history of the Pataudi heritage. The collection comprises traditional Indian wear, conceptualized in the form of Rozana, every day wear with a contemporary ethnic touch, Jashn, festive finery with a regal charm, Riwayat, bespoke splendour for the classic Indian wedding and a Special Edition, comprising collections inspired by the Pataudi trousseau.

The range includes kurtas, sherwanis and Nehru jackets for men and kurta sets, lehengas and dresses for women. Products from House of Pataudi will be available exclusively on Myntra and Jabong from October 25, across a price range of ₹1,500-15,000 for men and ₹2,000-20,000 for women.



### >> Niza

Myntra launched contemporary, Spanish fashion brand Niza, in India. Niza is known internationally for its elaborate, original and sophisticated designs.

The launch of Niza marks Myntra's expansion of its international fashion brand portfolio. In India, the brand offers classic western wear apparel, adding just a slight desi flare to make it perfect for the modern Indian woman.

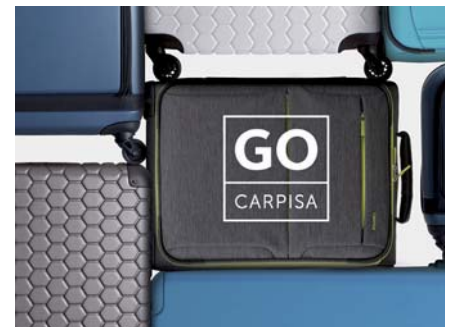


### >> Carpisa

Myntra introduced Carpisa, the Italian brand known for its fine collection of handbags, suitcases, wallets and accessories, exclusively on its platform. The brand is being introduced to shoppers in India for the first time exclusively on Myntra, through a range of handbags, crafted for the modern and fashion-conscious women.

The brand is known for its designs, quality of products and above all, represents Italian culture and lifestyle.

Catering to the affordable luxury segment, products from Carpisa are available at an average price of ₹3,600, targeting women in the age group of 25-40 years from Sec A and Sec A+ categories in metros and Tier I cities.



### >> Paridhan

Baba Ramdev-led Patanjali Ayurved forayed into the fast-growing branded apparel segment through its brand 'Paridhan'.

The Haridwar-based firm plans to open around 100 outlets of Paridhan by the end of this fiscal and have a network of around 500 stores by March 2020, mostly on franchise model.

It has introduced three brands — Livfit, Aastha and Sanskar- targeting customers across all age groups. While Sanskar is a range of menswear, Aastha is a women's brand and Livfit has a range of sportswear and Yoga dresses.



*\*The list is in ascending order of launch dates*

All businesses want to grow. Whether it's a business that has been in the market for long or a business that has just been launched. As long as the business is growing, the challenges – although existing – remain dormant. But once the initial gaps are filled, reaching a meaningful growth curve can be excruciating.

Let's take the case of a brand that has been in business for the past three years and is still struggling for growth. In such a situation, the obvious thought that most leaders have is that there is a lack of proper planning. Accordingly, they get involved and start micro-planning every aspect of the business including setting outlet-wise targets for the team.

This is essentially done by taking a particular area, understanding the store-wise throughput and then pushing teams. For example, If in one area a business of ₹10 Lakh is done in 1000 stores, then the throughput per store per month is ₹1000. The leader will now ask the team to increase the throughput of each store to ₹1500 per month. If they do this then, 50 percent of growth can be achieved and the sale number would zoom to ₹15 lakh.

Managers will be asked to make outlet-wise business plans and outline the support needed by them to reach their business goals. While everything looks doable on an excel sheet, most times, implementation is not easy. What's important here is to understand that there is a way in which outlets behave and if managers don't take this into account, then it becomes tough to implement plans

1. One of the basic challenges in retail is bringing in consumers. Most outlets have a fixed number of customers. People generally don't travel distances to fulfil their basic needs. If they do travel, it is just once a month for monthly requirements. For replenishment, people prefer going to outlets near their homes.



# SCICO: HELPING COMPANIES PLAN, LAUNCH, BUILD & GROW THEIR BRANDS

– By IMAGES Retail Bureau

**Vijay Sokhi, the Founder Director of Sharp Consulting and Implementing Company (SCICO™) believes that business has to make sense. Any product proposition that adds more meaning to the consumer by reducing his time, will do better than others...**

2. When business managers plan on an outlet basis, desiring incremental business from the same outlet, the numbers never increase exponentially. Most times, there is only a marginal increase.
3. The next stage is the support stage, which includes factors like visibility, offers etc. This induces action and as a result, the customer makes a purchase and tops ups for two-three months. Hence, what the offer essentially did is that it gave the store

higher sales for one month and then a dip over the next two months. Take the average of these months and one will find that numbers are almost the same as the usual trend of the store.

Most businesses find themselves in such situations at least once. **Vijay Sokhi, Founder Director of Sharp Consulting and Implementing Company (SCICO™)**, believes that businesses have to make sense. Any product proposition that adds more meaning to the consumer by reducing his time will do better than others.



Sokhi believes that creating loyal customers is a very important aspect of any business. Customers ensure consistency and once a loyal customer becomes a brand ambassador, they bring in more customers. However, this process is continuous and takes a long time and still leaves the most important question unanswered – How does an outlet bring about growth?

It becomes very frustrating when the growth of a business is in shackles. However, experts like SCICO™ are always around to ease business problems.

SCICO™ understands that there are only two ways in which a businesses can grow – by increasing their presence and increasing their range. Sharp's Map Tap Adapt and Sharp's Pentagon are the two jewels that can act as growth propellers to any business.



## RETAIL DEBUT



# American Eagle Outfitters Bets Big on Indian Market; To Open 25 Outlets in Three Years

– By Charu Lamba

*American Eagle Outfitters is a leading global specialty retailer offering high-quality, on-trend clothing, accessories and personal care products at affordable prices...*

**U**S-based mid-to-premium denim wear brand, American Eagle Outfitters entered India in the summer of 2018 through a licensing agreement with Aditya Birla Fashion and Retail Ltd. The brand expects India will be its top three international markets in the next five years.

In an interview with IMAGES Retail, **Guillermo La Rosa, Vice-President, International and Business Development, American Eagle Outfitters** says, “Our brand has been in India for the past few months and it has been performing well. We are learning a lot about the Indian consumer as we plan to expand within the market and as we will get these learnings under our belt, it will help us grow and offer the right products to consumers.”







assortment is global; however, the category mix varies from location to location. For example, in DLF Promenade, the penetration is around 60 percent men and 40 percent women products whereas in Mall of India, it is 50-50.”

In the Indian market, Denim is the Number 1 category for both men and women followed by other categories like woven shirts, polo shirts, fleece and sweaters.

“In India, there have been a lot of learnings for us, like in the women’s category, the customer prefers more of boot-cut whereas outside India it is more about skinny and super skinny. Skinny and super skinny is little bit slower than what we had anticipated. Similarly, in the men’s category, slim and skinny are very important globally whereas here in India it is more of slim and straight denim. It seems like here in India the customer wants more clean-cut denims. We will continue with what the consumer wants as we grow,” he adds.

**Decoding the Store**

The average size of the American Eagle Outfitters’



store spans across 2,500-3,500 sq. ft. in India.

According to La Rosa, the store size of the brand in India is smaller as compared to that in the US. “In the US the store size ranges from 4,500 sq. ft. to 10,000 sq. ft.,” he says.

Despite the smaller spaces, the brand is hoping to launch more stores in more cities soon. Apart from this, the brand will also launch bigger flagship outlets.

“We are looking forward to opening more flagship stores in key cities like Delhi, Mumbai and Bengaluru and these stores will be bigger

than the average store. In addition to this, after the launch of Aerie in India, we expect to have bigger stores,” he adds.

Aerie is a lingerie retailer and intimate apparel sub-brand owned by American Eagle Outfitters. In the US, Aerie targets the 15- to 25 year-old female demographic.

**Expansion Plans**

At present, the brand has three operational stores spread across Delhi-NCR and Chandigarh. Apart from this, it is available through its own website and also on fashion portal Myntra.

“By this year-end, we are looking to open six to nine more outlets. In the next three years, we are looking at a total of 25 locations.

For some of the new stores, we have got locations in Hyderabad, Chennai, Pune, Mumbai, Delhi and we are also exploring other options,” La Rosa reveals.

“We are not here to be in every single mall and exploit the brand. We want to be very meticulous and calculative in the partnerships that we have with malls. We will be launching the Mumbai outlet in the upcoming months,” he adds.

The brand may also look at having a presence through multi-brand stores and in Tier II markets in the future. It will also open Aerie stores across India in partnership with the Aditya Birla Group.

“We believe that in the next five years India could emerge as the top three markets outside the US,” La Rosa asserts.

American Eagle Outfitters merchandise also is available at more than 190 international locations operated by licensees in 24 countries. 

**Target Customers**

American Eagle Outfitters is a leading global specialty retailer offering high-quality, on-trend clothing, accessories and personal care products at affordable prices.

The brand is betting big on Generation Z, who are between the age group of 15-25 year-old.

“India’s rapidly developing and vibrant economy, anchored by the world’s largest youth population, provides an exciting growth opportunity for our brands and expanding our global reach,” says La Rosa.

**Category Mix**

The category mix of American Eagle Outfitters comprises of jeans, shorts, joggers, t-shirts, tops, woven shirts, sweatshirts, jackets and hoodies along with accessories like shoes, socks and belts.

Elaborating on this, La Rosa says, “The breadth of our

**American Eagle Outfitters’ India Plans**

- American Eagle Outfitters has big plans for India, firmly believing that in the next five years, India could emerge as the top three markets outside the US.
- The brand may also look at having a presence through multi-brand stores and in Tier II markets in the future.
- It will also open Aerie stores across India in partnership with the Aditya Birla Group.
- By 2018-end, American Eagle Outfitters is looking to open six to nine more outlets in the country, including bigger flagship stores in key cities.
- In the next three years, it is looking at expanding to a total of 25 locations.



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↑ Anand Aiyer, SVP & Business Head – Easybuy (Max Retail Division)

# REVOLUTIONIZING INDIA'S VALUE FASHION INDUSTRY

The brand's clear mission is to tap opportunities in small towns and metro suburbs, serving the biggest consumer segment of India, proved to be a hit, Easybuy today is revolutionising the value fashion space in India...

– By Sandeep Kumar

Landmark Group's youngest and most trending format – Easybuy – is on a growth spree. With a clear mission to tap opportunities in small towns and metro suburbs, serving the biggest consumer segment of India, the brand started its journey in 2014 with its first store in Karimnagar, Telangana to test the format and received an excellent response.

The actual journey started in 2015 after refining the format based on consumer insights and today within 3 years it's one of the fastest growing value fashion format in India with 60+ stores pan India. Incidentally, their 60th store which opened recently also earmarked their first store in Eastern India. Easybuy is the new buzz in the market which is revolutionizing the Indian value fashion space in India. **Anand Aiyer, SVP & Business Head – Easybuy (Max Retail Division)** says "Our vision is to become the most preferred value fashion destination for

## Easybuy's Unique Franchise Model

→ Easybuy is the only format in India which offers value apparel for the entire family, including footwear and accessories, all in one 5,000 sq.ft. store. This brings in good footfalls and but ensures better ROI.

→ Easybuy not only enables franchisees to manage operations but leverages their local knowledge to grow the business.

→ The brand's technology enables replenishment at store level to ensure local preferences are well met. They even take into account varied store preferences in the same city.

the aspirational “Navbharat” families who are seeking “super styles at super prices”.

“We will successfully close this year with a turnover of over ₹330 crore+ with over 75+ stores and by 2022, we aim to achieve ₹1000+ crore turnover with over 200+ stores” Aiyer adds.

**The Revolutionising Journey**

A few years before, Landmark Group sensed an untapped opportunity in emerging India after understanding the specific needs of customers in this segment. The brand’s research showed that while this segment aspires for trendy fashion, their affordability factor is very different from other Tier I segments of the country and the ‘value



for money spent’ is of key essence to them. To penetrate into these small towns and satisfy the needs of aspirational Navbharat India, Easybuy was launched in 2014.

“Easybuy was created with a very unique proposition. It is the only ‘compact family format’ in India that offers trendy fashion for the entire family – including footwear and accessories – under one roof, in 5000 sq. ft. of retail space. The prices offered by us are lower by anywhere between 20- 25 percent from nearest competition. So, in a nutshell, our USP is ‘providing in-trend styles at delightful prices with high productivity’” says Aiyer.

The brand’s other USP is to offer custom ranges and store assortments basis regional requirements. Easybuy doesn’t offer one merchandise across the country, but customizes according to the needs of specific regions and markets. The brand offers more than 1000 styles which are relevant and aspirational to Navbharat consumers.

**A New Dimension to Franchising**

Easybuy has a vision to open one store in every district headquarter in the country. Since India has over 500 district headquarters, this is a huge opportunity which is in front of the brand.

“We are building an FMCG model in fashion, where scale is critical for profitability and hence we need to expand faster. For faster expansion and local understanding, franchising is the best model, and so we chose the franchisee route. Today, we are one of the fastest growing businesses in India,” says Aiyer.

**“ We are building an FMCG model in fashion, where scale is critical for profitability and hence we need to expand faster. For faster expansion and local understanding, franchising is the best model, and so we chose the franchisee route. Today, we are one of the fastest growing businesses in India ”**



“India is a land of opportunities and the franchising model works best, but one must carefully understand market barriers and challenges to ensure this model is built for profitable growth,” he adds.

**Some of the market nuances which Easybuy takes into account are:**

- Geographically changing market preferences
- Urban and rural variations
- Lean cost model structures
- Logistics setup
- Merchandise width
- Pricing
- Local marketing strategies

→ The uprising digital journey of consumers

“We consider franchisees as our success partners and hence they play a very critical role in our model. Apart from choosing the right location, we work very closely with franchisees in staffing, recruitment and store operations, apart from leveraging their local knowledge as input into our local marketing plans,” says Aiyer.



“Franchisees bring in a lot of expertise in customer understanding and also enable us to customize merchandise, marketing and promotions for the respective locations and clusters,” he further adds.

**Super Style, Super Price**

Indian consumers are aspirational but value-conscious at the same time. New-age consumers, especially the youth, are experimenting with their fashion choices. Their wardrobes have expanded to include different choices ranging from occasion wear, casual wear, work wear to athleisure. Shopping for fashion is more frequent than just being occasion/festival-based.

Younger audiences want a wider yet ‘curated’ choice when it comes to fashion, and this is where Easybuy’s proposition of ‘Super Styles at Super Prices’ comes into play.

“About 90 percent of our products, presents over 1000 styles to choose from in the price range of ₹69 to ₹699 making them extremely affordable. The ₹400-500 price band is the most popular among the customers and the average ticket size is ₹900- ₹1,000,” Aiyer states. Easybuy has an extensive product range with more than 1,000 styles. Aside from this, the brand churns out four style seasons in a year.



Easybuy's proficient in-house design team ensures international trends are picked and then adapted to the market needs. Currently their merchandise portfolio mix is balanced with 40 percent coming from menswear, 30 percent from womenswear, 25 percent from kidswear. The remaining 5 percent comes from footwear and accessories. To cater to this audience, the brand is present both in malls as well as on high streets in equal amounts.

"Predominantly, our choice of location is based on the type of city or town



and local shopping preferences and hence our presence is a balanced mix of malls and high-street stores. In terms of preferences, we always opt for malls since impulse buying is higher in malls, while you need to build a brand on a high street," Aiyer explains.

### Technology Integration

And the store front is not the only area where Easybuy aims to excel. Two years ago, the brand adopted the Dynamic Automatic Replenishment System for its backend supply chain. "Everyday orders get generated and products are dispatched automatically replenishing at style, color and size level. Agility in supply chain is critical given our major presence in small towns where logistics lead time is more," says Aiyer, adding, "We also introduced 'stylus' at our stores and this gives us real time data on the availability of stocks, not only in the back room but at a nearby store too to satisfy consumer needs."

In addition, the brand's loyalty reward program is unique and differentiated. "Given that our format is different, we decided not to be part of the group loyalty program, but created our own

loyalty program 'EB Rewards'. We understand our consumer behavior and our consumer insights which enable us to develop promotions that suits our shopper needs," says Aiyer.

### People-Focused Organisation

Easybuy operates in a start-up culture and being a unique business format, it is imperative for new employees who come from varied organisational backgrounds to align to the brand's vision, its key components of work culture thought processes and ways of working.

### Easybuy's training focuses on 5 core aspects that drive business:

- Product
- Process
- Development of Self
- Customer Service
- Sales

Class Room Training(CRT) and On-Job Training(OJT) are conducted, with an emphasis on a practical and holistic approach to ensure that the training program is effective and provides clear expectations. It encompasses video-based training, presentations, team building activities, role plays, etc. A refresher training program is planned within three months to further reinforce the learnings of the core aspects. To add as aspiration value to the roles, the training also includes discussions with role models and an orientation on career progression in the organisation. Further objective assessments are done before and after the training program to measure the training effectiveness.

"From its inception, Easybuy has been an organisation that was focused on its people. Easybuy has adopted established HR practices of its

## About Landmark Group

- Founded in 1973 with a single store in Bahrain, Landmark Group has successfully grown into one of the largest and most successful retail and hospitality conglomerates in the Middle East, Africa and the Indian subcontinent, with a significant global footprint.
- Easybuy is the newest value retail format from Landmark Group.
- Consistently striving to deliver exceptional value, Landmark Group has over 55,000 employees, operates over 2,300 outlets with a retail presence of over 30 million sq. ft. across 22 countries.
- In India, Landmark group operates leading retail formats like Lifestyle, Max, Easybuy, SPAR, Home Centre and Splash.

parent company, Landmark Group, and adapted them to its fast-paced & agile franchise-based business model. A testimony to the importance that Easybuy places on its people is evident from the fact that every employee – whether in self-owned or franchised stores – is a part of the same engagement program and get the same benefits and HR initiatives. Landmark Group was also awarded "Images Most Admired Retailer of the Year 2018 – Employee Practices" in recognition to its strong employee practices.

"Retail success is about getting and retaining repeat customers. Consistently delivering in-trend merchandise that customers want with a sharp focus on quality and product, great prices and excellence in customer service will ensure loyal consumers and a very positive word-of-mouth, which in turn will bring in new consumers," Aiyer says.

The brand plans to expand faster in East and North in 2 years apart from strengthening its presence further in South.



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# Humans & Technology:

## Revolutionising Retail, Influencing Consumption & Driving the Change Together

– By Sandeep Kumar & Charu Lamba



*While replacing manpower with technology is not new in retail, the human touch of the business cannot be ignored. People have always been the appeal of the retail industry. While shoppers enjoy technology, they want to talk to retail associates who are attentive and well-informed about the product, while helping them choose what suits their requirements the most...*

**T**echnology has revolutionised retail in the last decade or so. It is influencing retail consumption like never before and is driving the change to make the shopping experience faster, more convenient, transparent and reliable. Humanoid Intelligence, Artificial intelligence, Bots, Cloud, Data, Magic Mirrors, Beacons ... every day there are additions to the list of new technologies in the retail industry.

Phygital and Omnichannel retail, digital alterations, cashless self-check-outs are all making life easier at shopping malls and stores. In this technological era, brands which are not paying attention and keeping up with the latest in tech are losing popularity, business and consumers every day.

Retailers are investing huge amounts of capital in developing and implementing IT solutions and software to influence customers' buying behaviour. Some brands are globally transforming themselves into nearly human-less stores.

The first supermarket self-checkout system was installed in 1992 in the Price Chopper Supermarket in New York by the man who invented the system, Dr. Howard Schneider. Amazon's new futuristic convenience store- Amazon Go - has no lines, no waiting time and little-to-no human interaction and is the new talking point of the retail industry.



### The Human Touch

While replacing manpower with technology is not a new concept in retail, the human touch of the business cannot be completely ignored. People have always been the appeal of the retail industry. Every shopper wants a special treatment in a store. They want to talk to retail associates who are attentive and well-informed about the product, while helping them choose what suits their requirements the most. Retail staff – apart from providing customers with a positive experience – also plays a vital role in advising on delivery options or even in helping

them use tablets in-store to order out-of-stock items. They are trained to offer the highest level of support, along every step of the customer journey.

A report titled Retail Perceptions by Interactions, the retail solutions and experiential marketing unit of retail branding and sourcing firm Daymon, surveyed more than 1,000 adult shoppers, and found that while 84 percent expect retailers to use technology to improve the shopping experience, 62 percent prefer to be greeted in-store by a real person.

“We, at Danube Home, know and believe that success is never bought from outside,

it must be home grown. That is why we prioritize the well-being and work satisfaction of our employees and along with that, we invest our best time and effort in encouraging, supporting and promoting the social needs and aspirations of our people. We facilitate maximum internal communication between employees and management and encourage a very open feedback-based work culture. Danube Home’s workplace environment is friendly and welcoming, and we lend an ear to every employee who can add value to our existing pool of knowledge. Our interactions are both formal and informal, so much so that, our people feel at home, because we believe, in order to win the hearts of customers, we must first build a home in the hearts of our employees,” says **Shubhojit Mahalanobis, General Manager, Danube Home.**

“From its inception, Easybuy has been an organisation that was focused on its people. Easybuy

has adopted established HR practices of its parent company, Landmark Group, and adapted them to its fast-paced, agile and franchise-based business model. A testimony to the importance that Easybuy places on its people is evident from the fact that every employee – whether in self-owned or franchised stores – is a part of the same engagement program and get the same benefits and HR initiatives,” says **Anand Aiyer, SVP & Business Head – Easybuy (Max Retail Division).**

“To build a strong corporate brand, you need brand ambassadors – employees who are thoroughly engaged, connected and committed. It is our constant endeavor to empower each of our 1,395 employees to take strategic business decisions. We believe that when our employees are at their ‘authentic best selves’ in the workplace, productivity and retention increase. We help our employees unearth their greatest strengths



“Danube Home’s workplace environment is friendly and welcoming, and we lend an ear to every employee who can add value to our existing pool of knowledge. ”

– Shubhojit Mahalanobis



“Easybuy has adopted established HR practices of its parent company, Landmark Group, and adapted them to its fast-paced, agile and franchise-based business model. ”

– Anand Aiyer



“We help our employees unearth their greatest strengths and integrate them into everything they do as we believe that this is essential to our success and the success of our team. ”

– Neha Shah



“We have a driven, ambitious and dedicated team of employees who align themselves to the company’s vision and become an integral part of the brands success. ”

– Sandeep Goenka



“We are working towards building a culture of openness and service excellence, with our philosophy of ‘Victory’ at the core of everything we do. ”

– Sameer Singh



and integrate them into everything they do as we believe that this is essential to our success and the success of our team,” explains **Neha Shah, Assistant General Manager-Marketing- Pepe Jeans India.**

“The most crucial aspect of any business is its people. They are the driving force that keeps the wheel churning. Humans are the most important, yet the most complex, facet of any organisation and this also lies true for our company. We have a driven, ambitious and dedicated team of employees who align themselves to the company’s vision and become an integral part of the brands success,” says **Sandeep Goenka, Chief Operating Officer, Bagzone Lifestyles Pvt Ltd.**

“At LOTS Wholesale Solutions, we believe the human element is a critical factor in executing our business ideas and strategy.



We are working towards building a culture of openness and service excellence, with our philosophy of ‘Victory’ at the core of everything we do. Victory stands for seven key values - Vision, Integrity, Challenge, Teamwork, Ownership, Result-orientation and believing Yes we can. These values not only define the organisation but our employees and their interactions with the consumers. Our purpose also inspires us to enhance people’s lives by working closely with suppliers

and farmers to produce environment-friendly products and to improve food safety supplies. One of the key pillars of Makro Capabilities Engine for sustainable mutual growth is local love, which empowers us to source a large majority of assortments locally and help our partners grow,” adds **Sameer Singh, Director -Operations, Business Development & Expansion, LOTS Wholesale Solutions.**

“At Shingora, we value our employees. To transform the lives and to provide quality

education to underprivileged girl children of economically disadvantaged families, Shingora- which prides itself on not only adhering to all social and employee rules - runs a foundation called the ‘Shingora Family Foundation’. This foundation advocates for and educates the underprivileged girl child. At present, the foundation provides education to over 50 girls,” says **Amit Jain, Managing Director, Shingora.**

“We believe that we need to do our bit in contributing to the ultimate well-being of the society in large and connect to every individual within the organisation with the same message. Therefore we treat our employees as important pillars of the business and even Sudhakar Pai, CMD, Kurl-on happily involves himself in every problem related to the staff making Kurl-on one of the most popular and loved brands in India,” states **Ashutosh Vaidya, Chief Marketing Officer, Kurl-on.**

“At Soch, our belief is ‘happy employees lead to happy customers’. More than 32 percent of our employees have been with us for more than three years. Other than salary and incentives, employee benefits at Soch include paying school fees, contributing to big personal milestones like marriage, term and medical insurance, leave policy etc. We strongly believe in grooming internal talent and giving opportunities to people in the company. Many of our store managers and area managers joined us as CCAs and have grown with Soch though performance and learning,” explains **Vinay Chatlani, Director and CEO, Soch India.**



“To transform the lives and to provide quality education to underprivileged girl children of economically disadvantaged families, Shingora runs a foundation called the ‘Shingora Family Foundation’.”

- Amit Jain



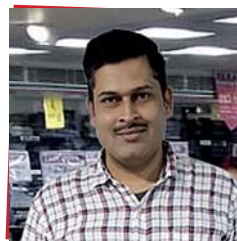
“We believe that we need to do our bit in contributing to the ultimate well-being of the society in large and connect to every individual within the organisation.”

- Ashutosh Vaidya



“At Soch, our belief is ‘happy employees lead to happy customers’. More than 32 percent of our employees have been with us for more than three years.”

- Vinay Chatlani



“We motivate staff with gifts and incentives so that they can achieve the company’s targets as well as their personal goals.”

- Ravi Prakash Singh



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### Technology vs Humans

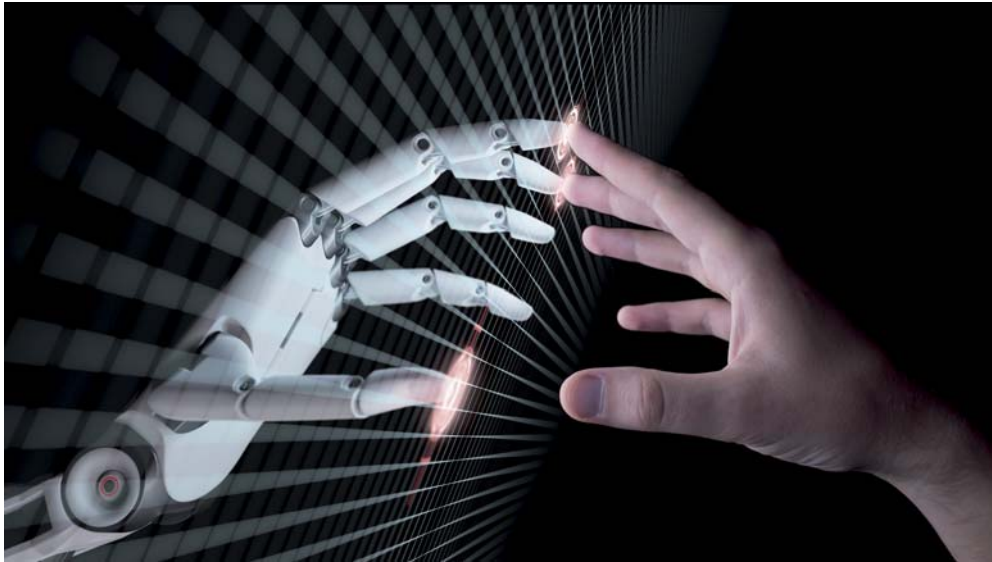
Even as technology has started playing a larger role in day-to-day retail operations, the most successful retailers understand that employees

iPads enabled with product information are the newest offerings are specifically made to get the customers' attention. They offer personalised content to shoppers. However

while we use technology, we should not forget softer aspects which we feel will drive growth in future," adds Ashutosh Vaidya.

"Every coin has two sides.

retailers to provide the right information to relevant customers. They help us collect important data which can enhance customer experience, and these tools make the billing experience smoother and faster. Digital tools are more mobile driven which help to target the right customers. Though people may get eliminated at a few stages of the retail shopping experience, the store team is required as they are a key human link to customers. In offline shopping, customers actively seek out the human touch and the satisfaction from human involvement is higher. The complexities of human nature can be studied and understood by a trained store staff which provides insights that technology can miss out," adds Sandeep Goenka.



are the connecting tissue in retail experience. The risk of not getting the human element right is significant. As per Pricewaterhouse Cooper's CIS survey, 56 percent of shoppers will turn away from their favorite products or brands after bad experiences with brands, and 32 percent will walk out from the store with just one bad experience.

"Technology has revolutionized retail in the last decade or so. Staying up-to-date with technology in the retail industry is essential to stay ahead of the curve. Retail operations are increasingly dependent on information technology but continue to require the 'human touch'. Digital tracking, interactivity and immediacy are important tools, but physical retail remains the lynchpin of a brand's experience and its relationship with its customers. These days, innovations such as smart screens, magic mirrors and

when it comes to fashion retail, customers continue to seek advice and assistance from retail store associates. We believe that humans empowered by technology can exceed expectations at every point of the customer service model; both online and offline. Technology alone cannot consistently provide good customer service, but technology designed to enhance human experiences can exceed expectations consistently," says Neha Shah.

"Technology is used to upgrade the work flow and bring advancement, but the human touch is something that makes selling personal and believable, approachable and there is a trust factor," states Amit Jain.

"Technology has its role to play in retail. However, humans are social animals too and they look for emotional well-being more than momentary transactional happiness. So,



We can't deny the fact that technology has become a major necessity for retail operations at stores, but this doesn't mean that the human touch is losing its charm and importance. I personally believe that humans and technology are parallel for successful business operations," says **Ravi Prakash Singh, General Manager- Retail Operations, Citykart Private Limited.**

"Digital tools enable

### What Retailers Need to Do

There is no use of implementing technologies in retail stores just for the sake of it. Technology is a necessity, but it depends entirely on the business and the brand. Retailers must ask themselves some important questions before making the big move towards investing in tech support one of them being – Is the technology you want to work with embracing those

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values that your brand stands for or is it just overshadowing them?

The most important thing in building and preserving strong customer relationships is trust. If customers do not recognise your brand value anymore you will lose their trust and loyalty.

The overall reaction to technology in retail is positive from the customer's side with plenty of customers already familiar with technologies like AI or VR. Even though a huge part of customers still cannot call these technologies by name, the expectation of VR and AR assisting them when they enter the stores is growing continuously. Paradoxically, it seems like more the technology invades an industry, the higher the premium on maintaining a personal touch in dealing with customers and employees. It's wise to find a balance between technology and humans and let them work alongside each other.

The human touch can make a big difference in the current retail environment that has become too transactional, promotional, and robotic. Think of ways in which an inspired sales team can put a real smile on your customer's face. That is still the best indicator of a job well done.

### Building a Future Together

Technology and human touch have a future together – the word that fits here is Phygital. Phygital refers to a retail environment in which physical and digital experiences merge together seamlessly and complement each other in order to offer the consumer a single, positive, integrated experience. While modern consumers are actively looking for Omnichannel experiences, offline shopping remains important for a large number of them – especially families. Some like to hit stores out of habit, while others shop offline simply because they enjoy the activity.

“We strongly agree with this statement as one can make processes faster. Shingora has introduced technology like Zentrade, TAB Billing and Slack etc. to bring in that advancement. We have also introduced social media platforms, website maintenance, flex, banners and touchscreens to showcase the look of the product really give an edge to make brand language clear and easy to convey. Shingora focuses on hiring intelligent staff at all store locations with proper training sessions being provided on regular basis to

**Roberto Ramos, Senior Vice President, Strategy and Communications of The Doneger Group**, says there are five key ways in which retail can amplify its ability to connect emotionally with consumers and maintain a dynamic, friendly and productive relationship.

1. Put HR and talent management at the heart of brand planning. Advocacy begins from within, so think of your employees as your most important brand asset. Hire based on affinity with your brand values and the ability of the talent to bring those values to life.
2. Create lifestyle experts. Make sure you are training lifestyle experts that can get consumers excited about the industry, trends and products you're selling. Look at what brands like Best Buy have done to leverage their staff's friendly expertise into an engagement asset. Make the idea of a personal shopper the norm not an anomaly.
3. Rethink sales incentives. Most salesperson-to-consumer interactions seem rushed and forced. Put new key performance indicators in place that incentivise customer satisfaction, quality time spent with customers, insights gathered, solutions provided, and smiles triggered. Good results on those fronts will result in stronger sales.
4. Leverage technology to amplify the human factor. While it's challenging to deliver every consumer interaction in person, try to embed other forms of interaction with as much of the human touch as possible. Leverage consumer-centric platforms such as messaging services to communicate with consumers directly, in answering their needs and inspiring them to feel positively about your brand.
5. Turn the store into a social, human-centric environment. A way of making shopping less transactional, and therefore less prone to promotional/competitive pressures is by turning stores into destinations filled with familiar faces. An inspired sales staff should interact in an environment that is more inviting. Think less clutter, more welcome areas.

bring in the faith in the brand. It makes selling easy and spontaneous due to direct conversations that really help customers understand the brand language easily,” states Amit Jain.

“Technology today is helping retailers predict customer preferences, augmented reality enables customers to try on clothes, but even as technology has

enhanced the shopping experience, consumers often look forward to the human element in their shopping/ retail experience. As innovative tools start to gain significance in the in-store space, it is important to understand that employees will continue play the role of connecting the brand to the consumer. Technology will remain central to the retailers’

**PRICEWATERHOUSE COOPER'S CIS SURVEY SAYS, 56 PERCENT OF SHOPPERS WILL TURN AWAY FROM THEIR FAVORITE PRODUCTS OR BRANDS AFTER BAD EXPERIENCES, WHEREAS 32 PERCENT WILL WALK OUT FROM THE STORE WITH JUST ONE BAD EXPERIENCE.**

ability to understand and predict customer behavior. But none of these high-tech capabilities would be possible without people. Whether on the front lines or behind the scenes, it takes an army of specialised staff – floor associates, product designers, supply chain specialists, distribution center workers, and more, all operating with the help of technology – to delight customers with products and services,” adds Neha Shah.

“Technology has an impact on every business these days and the retail industry has also come a long way with the implementation of disruptive technology. We believe that great customer experience comes from blending technology with a personalised touch.

Creativity, personalisation, and emotional connection are unique human skills that ensure customer loyalty, a critical requirement for any business to succeed. While machines are making life simpler, there are many situations which are best handled manually. Having said that, it is inevitable for technology and human touch to reconcile and coexist in the fast-changing world,” says Sameer Singh.

“We leverage technology in our business to predict customer preferences through their purchase pattern, this helps our team serve them better. We use geo-tagging technology for customers to understand their requirements and buying patterns in a particular catchment area. The combination of both and evolution of technology can bring a revolution in the industry in near future,” he adds.

“Digital tools are not

the ultimate goal. They are the means to help achieve ultimate consumer satisfaction. Brands need to move from being super transactional and address these needs. Technology is the means and not the goal. Humans will continue to dream, and technology would help us achieve those dreams,” says Ashutosh Vaidya.

“The motto of Danube HOME is ‘Change is the Only Constant’ We need to be ready to adapt to any new change the industry undergoes. To remain a leading retailer, we need to continuously hone our internal skills and learn about newer technologies to stay ahead of the competition.

We believe in the need to change the working environment for the better through incorporating latest technological advancements. We are living in a fast-paced world where every second day a new technology is breaking the status quo. We cannot remain immune to what is happening outside. Therefore, we believe in creating a critical balance between technologies or automation of processes and personal human touch that ultimately helps us to achieve higher levels of customer satisfaction,” says Shubhojit Mahalanobis.

“We believe that technology should be looked at as an enabler that improves the efficiency and reachability

for an HR function. For a business like Easybuy, it isn't viable to have an HR representative at each store since stores are spread across the country. In such a scenario, technology bridges the gap and enables a healthy communication between stores and corporate offices. We believe that avenues should be available to employees to reach out to us, and at Easybuy through various channels such as the use of Facebook Workplace, we ensure that employees feel engaged and connected to the company, wherever they work from. Easybuy leverages on technology greatly in the learning and development function as training is an on-going process,” explains



Anand Aiyer.

“For us at Soch, technology is an enabler. We use it to aid our store teams to resolve customer issues, and also delight them. We have launched video catalogs which help our store teams showcase in-store merchandise better, aiding conversion. We have also launched Omnichannel retailing – with the capability to deliver sizes and styles not limited by the store's physical



inventory. This has helped ensure better consumer satisfaction and minimize sales loss. It is our store staff that brings in the human touch and ensures customer delight. The future store is a combination of technology with human touch. In fact, we are preparing to take this to the next level at our stores, by equipping all our staff with hand held devices which enable and help them to solve consumer issues in stores quicker and more efficiently,” says Manohar Chatlani.

“The Indian retail industry is still lagging behind in adapting to technological trends. To bring change, the store team will have to be receptive to transformation as their role will become very dynamic. With the technology changing at such a fast pace, there will always be a certain set of customers who would not be comfortable using it. It definitely takes human effort to explain the system or a new technology innovation to a first-time user,” says Sandeep Goenka.

### How to Prepare Your Staff

The expectation from front-end retail staff is huge, so it is necessary to keep them fully prepared and trained. A trained employee is as valuable as a digital and technical medium. To ensure that the employees are fully trained and ready, retailers must ensure:

- Retail associates have access to the same technologies as customers, such as tablets
- Retail staff has instant access to complete real-time inventory and product information
- They are allowed to access customer information that enables them to provide

personalised service

- Holding regular training sessions regarding new products, in-store technologies and services (including those that are only available online)
- Providing staff across board – front-end and back-end – with similar capabilities and training

**PEOPLE HAVE ALWAYS BEEN THE APPEAL OF THE RETAIL INDUSTRY. EVERY SHOPPER WANTS A SPECIAL TREATMENT IN A STORE. THEY WANT TO TALK TO RETAIL ASSOCIATES WHO ARE WELL-INFORMED ABOUT THE PRODUCT, WHILE HELPING THEM CHOOSE WHAT SUITS THEIR REQUIREMENTS.**

- Enabling retail staff to communicate with consumers digitally – for example, via live chat or text messages

“We hold a training session for our employees every quarter by a qualified trainer. The focus is on qualitative and quantitative aspects of retail such as how to increase footfall, customer enrollment, sales numbers, ASP, ABV and basket size. Also, we motivate staff with gifts and incentives so that they can achieve the company’s targets as well as their personal goals. In addition to this our retail teams and store managers are always available to help and guide them. As a result, after a few days of training, we see positive changes in operations,” says Ravi Prakash Singh.

“At Pepe Jeans, the philosophy has always been to keep the end customer at the forefront; it’s about giving

the consumer a complete shopping experience. These days, the model wherein store associates only serve as salespeople just won’t cut it anymore. As retailers we need to offer something more than just the ability to purchase merchandise. In an age of more and more connectivity through the use of the Internet, what the customer craves for is something real. When the customer has an amazing experience with the brand, it facilitates an emotional connection that in most cases leads to loyalty, high retention and high referral rates. Before the launch of a new collection every season, our store staff is thoroughly trained to identify key styles for different body types, and then deliver a unique and personal element to the customers’ shopping experience. They are also encouraged to exercise creativity with trends, accessories, and different fabrics to have fun with the customer and be flexible in their approach,” explains Neha Shah.

“Easybuy operates in a start-up culture and being a unique business format, it is imperative for new employees who come from varied organisational backgrounds to align to the brand’s vision, its key components of work culture thought processes and ways of working.

In-store training focuses on 5 core aspects that drive business:

- Product
- Process
- Development of Self
- Customer Service
- Sales

Class Room Training (CRT) and On-Job Training (OJT) are conducted, with an emphasis on a practical and holistic





approach to ensure that the training program provides clear expectations and is effective. It encompasses video-based training, presentations, team building activities, role plays, etc. A refresher training program is planned within three months to further reinforce the learnings of the core aspects. To add as aspiration value to the roles, the training also includes discussions with role models and an orientation on career progression in the organisation. Further objective assessments are done before and after the training program to measure the training effectiveness," says Anand Aiyer.

"At Kurl-on, we have a three-day induction program which is must for every employee at the time of joining. The employees are inducted on the job within 30 days of the training program and then spend some time shadowing our trained team," says Ashutosh Vaidya.

"We believe in in-depth and comprehensive training of our employees in order to provide the best customer experience at the store. The entire staff is trained on diverse topics for different segments. The hiring of the staff happens three months before opening a store. These three months are packed with rigorous cross functional trainings. In fact, to make the staff well versed in operations, managers and section managers are taken to Thailand for a fortnight

of training at our parent company, Siam Makro. Rest of the staff goes through a mandatory training of at least three weeks in India where they train cross functionally regarding compliances, standard operating procedures (SOPs), product knowledge, behaviour training etc., to provide a seamless and flawless experience to our customers. This training is done before opening of the store, as well as, as and when new changes are brought in, for instance, a new standard operating procedure, a new software or change of staff's duties," adds Sameer Singh.

"We value our employees' professional and personal development. We believe in developing team bonding and increasing the positivity quotient in Individuals and teams. We conduct

**RETAIL STAFF- APART FROM PROVIDING CUSTOMERS WITH A POSITIVE EXPERIENCE - ALSO PLAYS A VITAL ROLE IN ADVISING ON DELIVERY OPTIONS OR EVEN IN HELPING THEM USE TABLETS IN-STORE TO ORDER OUT-OF-STOCK ITEMS. THEY ARE TRAINED TO OFFER THE HIGHEST LEVEL OF SUPPORT ALONG EVERY STEP.**



multiple levels of team bonding, product, process and motivational trainings at Danube Home. In order to motivate our employees to push themselves forward and strive to develop new skills, we use a perfect blend of internal and external training programs. At Danube Home, we invite external trainers and coaches to bring in a whole other perspective and provide new knowledge that would have otherwise gone amiss and share it all with our employees at different levels of management. From the higher management levels to the floor, we have designed and applied different training and coaching programs to ensure the growth of our employees," says Shubhojit Mahalanobis.


"And we do not just focus on our front-line employees; we also focus on the training and development needs of our backend support staff by chalking out a career plan for them while imparting successful and career changing programs like 'Knock, Power sellers and Smile,' he adds.

"We take training very seriously while making it a fun and interactive session for the employees at the store. The main features of the training

program are an educative session on how to read a customer, to understand their basic requirement. It is about already knowing what is on the customer's mind, his needs, his purpose of being at the store and gauging his behaviour, intent and affinity towards the brand," says Sandeep Goenka.

"Our staff is also trained on how to attend to the customer to increase the level of satisfaction and to deal with complaints. Another key aspect of training is teaching how to cross sell and up sell by throwing light on the products and its features. The product team explains the highlights and unique selling propositions to the store team. The frequency of training from regional heads is on monthly basis whereas training from visual merchandising and product team is received quarterly. Catalogues are provided to the store team for every season, category launch," he concludes.

### Conclusion

In an age, when prices can be compared, and orders can be placed via smartphones, there are almost an equal number of customers who still want human interactions in-store. And this cannot be ignored. 





### 3 CONCURRENT EXHIBITION ZONES



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India Food Retail Tech (IFRT) is a tailored platform for technology solution providers to showcase the latest products, innovations, services, tools.





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# Human Resource in Retail: Past, Present and Future

– By **Sanjay Bakshi**,  
Founder-JORSS

*With robotics transforming the working of the sector, 90 percent of the employers in the sector are focusing on reskilling their employees. The roles of the cashier, sales representative, inventory associate, and stock boy could also be threatened, whereas some new roles that will come up will be: retail data analyst, digital imaging leader, IT process modeler, digital marketing specialist and customer experience leader...*

**E**mployees are an integral part of retailing and emerge even more valuable in modern retail owing to the obligation of representing a retail brand. India has seen tremendous growth in modern retail over the years. Consequently, overall HR dynamics, employees' role, their skill set, and performance delivery have been subjected to a continuous change. Industry leaders and employers need to take stock of such HR developments to make informed business decisions.

## Future of HR in Retail

The report '**Future of Jobs in India: A 2022 perspective**' by **NASCOMM, FICCI and EY** reveals that the future jobs in the country will be determined by interplay of globalisation, demographic changes and adoption of exponential technologies by Indian industries. As a result, in 2022, 9 percent of the workforce will be deployed in new jobs that do not even exist today; 37 percent will be in roles that have radically changed skill sets and only 54 percent will have their jobs unchanged. By the same year, around 10 percent of the estimated 600 million workers in India will be in the organised sector and new-aged methods in the agriculture while a sustained growth of the manufacturing and service sectors are likely to add variety

of new and restructured jobs. The new forms of employment would include contract employees in the infrastructure sector; micro-entrepreneurs, employer-entrepreneurs in technology-enabled models (like freelancers, SME artisans, delivery workers, employees in start-ups); and, employer-enabled models in the agriculture sector.

## Impact on Retail

Among the new and changed jobs in retail would include working with big data and blockchain, and their importance would only increase with the adoption of technology. By the year 2022, of the 22 million employees working in the retail sector in India, 5-10 per cent will have a job that doesn't exist today, and 25-35 percent will require a new skill set. Nearly 15-20 percent of the current jobs in the sector are threatened, and the maximum impact of adoption of the technology of jobs will be felt in warehouse management. With robotics transforming the working of the sector, 90 percent of the employers in the sector are focusing on reskilling their employees. The roles of the cashier, sales representative, inventory associate, and stock boy could also be threatened, whereas some new roles that will come up will be: retail data analyst, digital imaging leader, IT process modeler, digital marketing specialist and customer experience leader.



## HR EXPENSE TRACKER

### Archies Ltd.

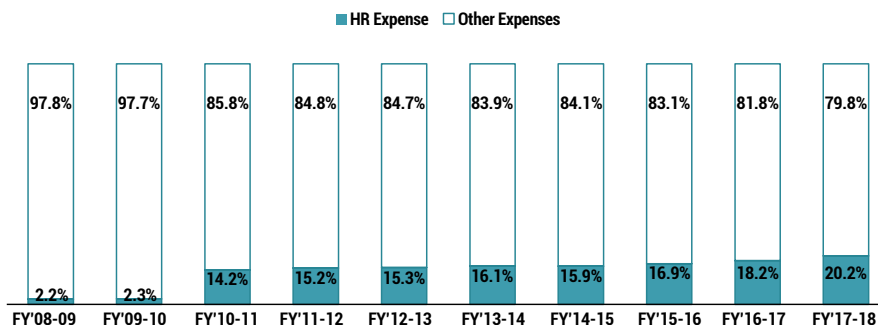
**Retail Brand:** Archies

**Format:** Speciality (Greeting cards, Gifts & Stationery)

**Segment:** Lifestyle

*HR expenses grew at a CAGR of 30.4% against Sale CAGR of 1.5% from FY09 to FY18*

*Average share of HR expense in total expenses is 13.6%*



### Future Retail Ltd.

**Retail Brands:** Big Bazaar, HyperCity\*, FBB, Foodhall, Easyday, Heritage Fresh, eZone

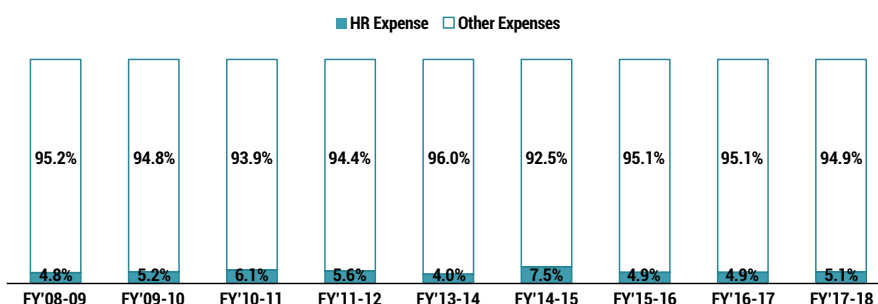
**Format:** Hypermarket, Supermarket & Speciality (Apparel & Accessories, Electronics)

**Segment:** Food, Fashion, Lifestyle

*HR expenses grew at a CAGR of 14.5% against Sale CAGR of 12.6% from FY09 to FY18*

*Average share of HR expense in total expenses is 5.3%*

(FRL - FY09, FY10 & FY11: CY Jul-Jun; FY12: Jul'11-Dec'12; FY14: Jan'13-Mar'14, \*November 2017 onwards)



### Jubilant Foodworks Ltd.

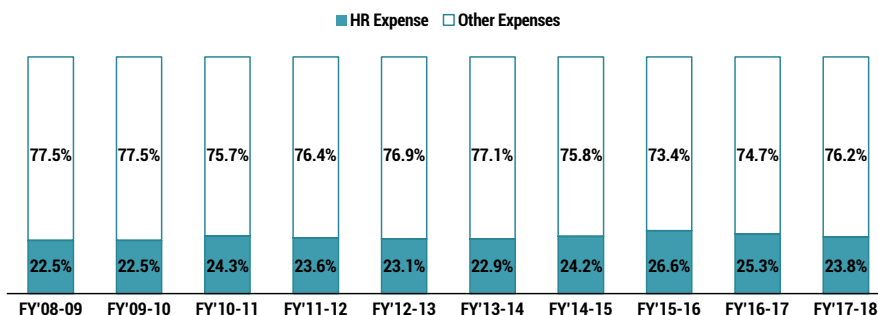
**Retail Brands:** Domino's Pizza, Dunkin' Donuts

**Format:** QSR

**Segment:** Food

*HR expenses grew at a CAGR of 30.4% against Sale CAGR of 30.1% from FY09 to FY18*

*Average share of HR expense in total expenses is 23.9%*



### Kewal Kiran Clothing Ltd.

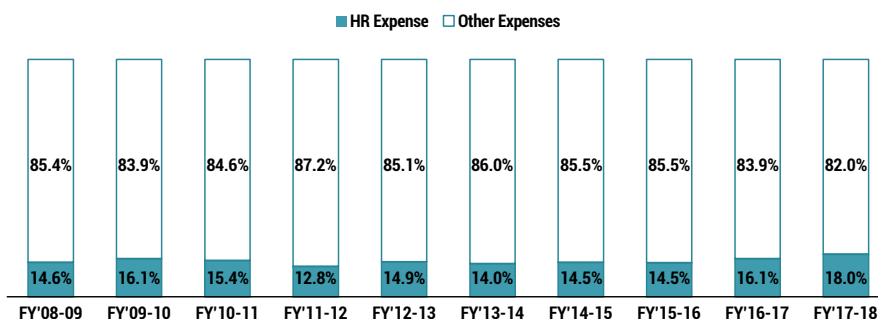
**Retail Bands:** K-Lounge, Killer, LawmanPg3, Integriti

**Format:** Speciality (Apparel & Accessories)

**Segment:** Fashion

*HR expenses grew at a CAGR of 15.3% against Sale CAGR of 13.6% from FY09 to FY18*

*Average share of HR expense in total expenses is 15.1%*





## EXPERT SPEAK

### Bata India Ltd.

**Retail Brand:** Bata, Power, Hush Puppies, Bubblegummers

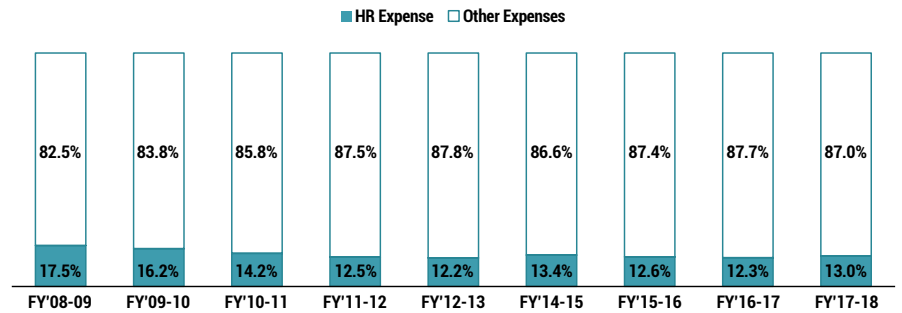
**Format:** Speciality (Footwear)

**Segment:** Fashion

*HR expenses grew at a CAGR of 6.4% against Sale CAGR of 10.4% from FY09 to FY18*

*Average share of HR expense in total expenses is 13.8%*

(\*Bata - FY09-FY13: CY Jan-Dec; FY15: Jan'14-Mar'15')



### Liberty Shoes Ltd.

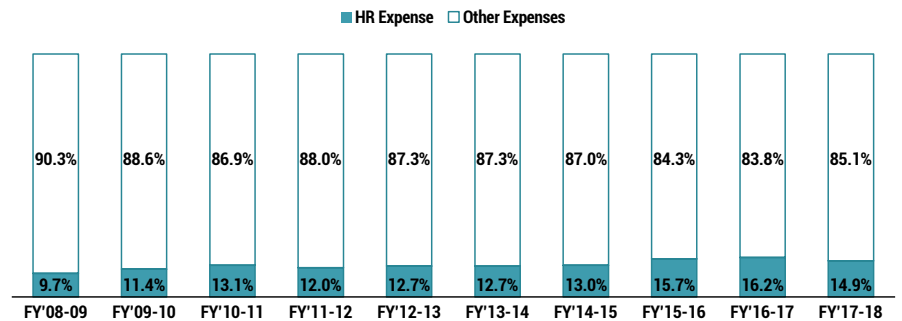
**Retail Brand:** Liberty

**Format:** Speciality (Footwear)

**Segment:** Fashion

*HR expenses grew at a CAGR of 15.3% against Sale CAGR of 9.4% from FY09 to FY18*

*Average share of HR expense in total expenses is 13.1%*



### Shoppers Stop Ltd.

**Retail Brands:** Shoppers Stop, Homestop, MAC, Estee Lauder, Bobbi Brown, Clinique, Mothercare, Smashbox, HyperCity\*

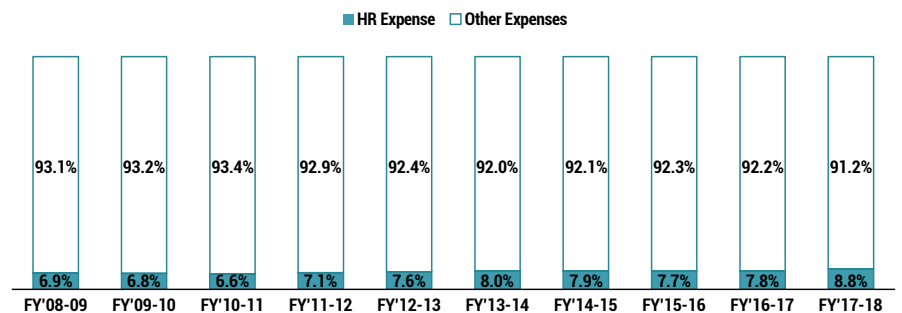
**Format:** Department store & Specialty (Home and Beauty)

**Segment:** Fashion, Lifestyle

*HR expenses grew at a CAGR of 15% against Sale CAGR of 12.3% from FY09 to FY18*

*Average share of HR expense in total expenses is 7.5%*

(\*Till November 2017)



### Sreeleathers Ltd.

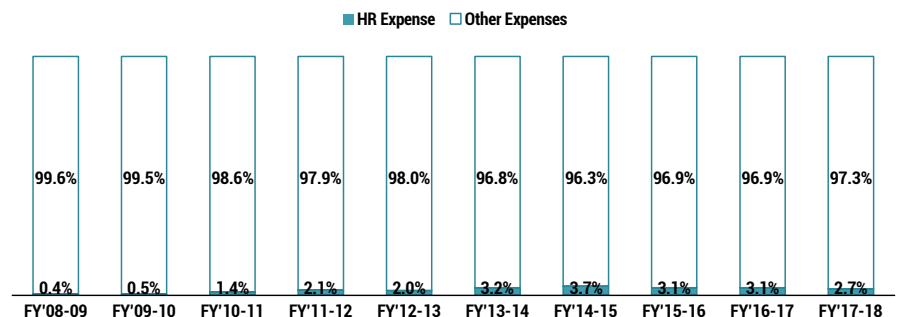
**Retail Brand:** Sreeleathers

**Format:** Speciality store (Footwear, Leather accessories)

**Segment:** Fashion

*HR expenses grew at a CAGR of 47% against Sale CAGR of 22.8% from FY09 to FY18*

*Average share of HR expense in total expenses is 2.2%*



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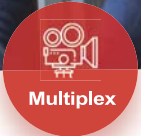
Receipt Printer

NFC Reader

MSR, Fingerprint Sensor

Custom Bracket for Card Payment Terminal

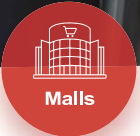
2D QR/Barcode Scanner



Multiplex



Commercial Complex



Malls



Food Court



QSR



Airports

### Display & Touch

LCD: 21.5" & 32" TFT,  
Touch- Projected Capacitive

### Other Features

WiFi, Bluetooth, Dual Camera, NFC, Card Payment, 2D QR/Barcode Scanner, Inbuilt Thermal 3" or 4" Receipt Printer

### System Configuration

Intel Processor range varies from Quad core to i3 or i5, RAM 4GB to 16GB expandable, Storage 64GB SSD to 1TB HDD

### Dimension

Pedestal: 400 (L) x 330 (D) x 1621 (H)  
With Stand: 495 x 258 x 1934





**Titan Co.Ltd.**

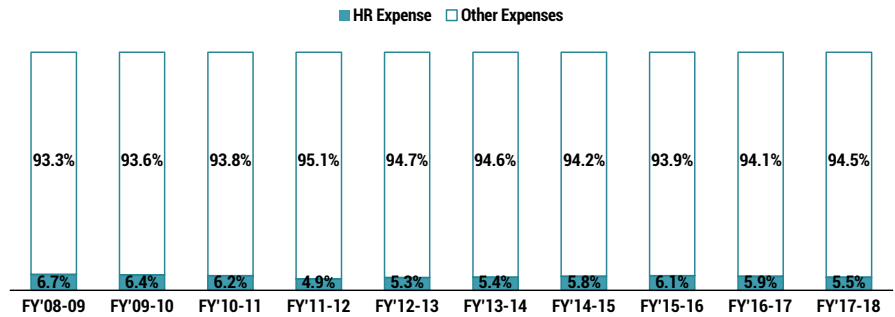
**Retail Brands:** Titan, Helios, Fastrack, Tanishq, Mia, Caratlane, Zoya, Titan Eyeplus, Mont Blanc

**Format:** Speciality store (Watches, Jewellery, Eyewear)

**Segment:** Fashion, Lifestyle

*HR expenses grew at a CAGR of 14.1% against Sale CAGR of 17.1% from FY09 to FY18*

*Average share of HR expense in total expenses is 5.8%*



**Trent Ltd.**

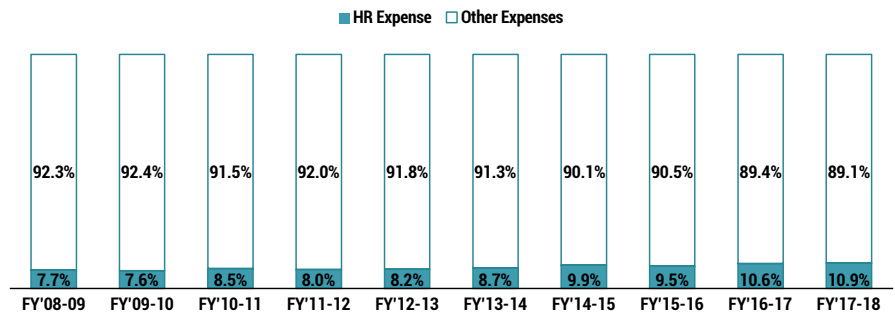
**Retail Brands:** Westside, Zudio, Star Bazaar, Landmark, Zara, Massimo Dutti

**Format:** Department store, Hypermarket, Supermarket & Speciality (Fashion, Books)

**Segment:** Food, Fashion, Lifestyle

*HR expenses grew at a CAGR of 20% against Sale CAGR of 16.2% from FY09 to FY18*

*Average share of HR expense in total expenses is 9%*



**V2 Retail Ltd.**

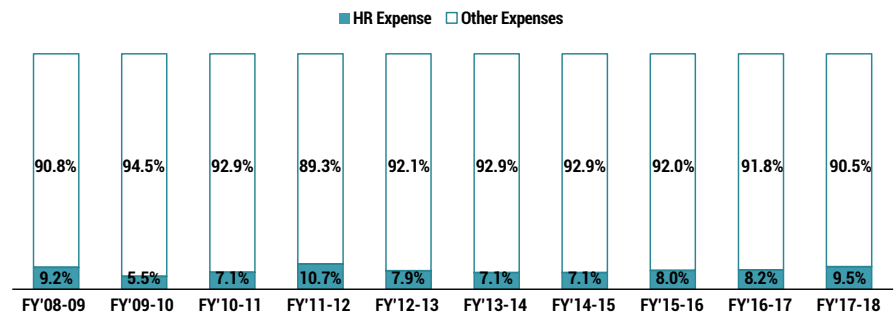
**Retail Brand:** V2

**Format:** Speciality (Apparel & Accessories)

**Segment:** Fashion

*HR expenses grew at a CAGR of (-)9.8% against Sale CAGR of (-)9.1% from FY09 to FY18*

*Average share of HR expense in total expenses is 8%*



Also NOTE: Post its split from Vishal Retail Ltd. in FY11, V2 Retail underwent restructuring during FY2012 resulting in negative CAGRs. Therefore, a revised analysis w.e.f. FY12 was also done to realise the followings:-

*HR expenses grew at a CAGR of 45.2 percent against Sale CAGR of 53 percent from FY 2012 to FY 2018*

*Average share of HR expense in total expenses stayed at 8.3 percent*

**Textiles & Apparel Retail**

Automation has already established its foothold in the areas of spinning and weaving in textile and apparel sector, it is set to intensify and take over

the job of helpers, fabric cutters, packers, pressers etc. The report cites industry experts that one robot can replace around 100 workers in a typical Indian textiles plant. The weaving and garmenting sub-

sector would continue to hire at a rate of 8-8.5 per cent year-on-year against a historical growth rate of 9-9.5 per cent to reach 40.7 million in 2022. 45-55 per cent of the jobs in 2022 would require new skill sets.

The roles that are at the risk of being obsolete are that of the packer, checker, folder, helper, and material handler. New jobs for environmental specialists, apparel data analyst, IT process engineer,

HR KPIs Annual Tracker FY18

Retail Company	No. of employees*	Share in HR Expenses				Average Annual Salary/employee (INR)   (USD)
		Salary & Wages	PF & Other funds	Staff Welfare	Other HR expenses	
Archies Ltd.	1,245	91.1%	7.3%	1.6%	-	229,719   (3,282)
Future Retail Ltd.	38,626 (20% females)	90.7%	5.8%	2.9%	0.6%	218,356   (3,119)
Jubilant Foodworks Ltd.	27,539 (17% females)	87.6%	6.1%	4%	2.2%	192,269   (2,747)
Kewal Kiran Clothing Ltd.	2,144 (9% females)	86.4%	6.6%	1.4%	5.6%	262,127   (3,745)
Bata India Ltd.	4,698 (3.7% females)	91.3%	4.5%	3.4%	0.9%	574,095   (8,201)
Liberty Shoes Ltd.	2,198	92.2%	6.5%	1.3%	-	315,560   (4,508)
Shoppers Stop Ltd.	7,480 (26% females)	90.5%	6.2%	3.2%	-	364,612   (5,209)
Sreeleathers	34	24.5%	2.2%	26.4%	46.9%	208,824   (2,983)
Titan Company Ltd.	6,856 (26% females)	85.4%	6.3%	8.3%	-	949,285   (13,561)
Trent Ltd.	5,853 (34% females)	88.7%	6.2%	5.1%	-	307,073   (4,387)
V2 Retail Ltd.	2,397	79.8%	5.9%	3.7%	10.6%	168,368   (2,305)
Aditya Birla Fashion & Retail Ltd.	20,508 (50% females)	85%	5.5%	6.3%	3.1%	320,231   (4,575)
Avenue Supermarts Ltd.	6,113 (22% females)	81%	5.2%	6.1%	7.7%	366,607   (5,237)
Cantabil Retail India Ltd.	1,216	94.3%	4.6%	1.1%	-	287,737   (4,111)
Future Lifestyle Fashions Ltd	10,915 (21% females)	87.6%	5.6%	2.4%	4.5%	194,998   (2,786)
Khadim India Ltd	830	88.1%	2.8%	8.4%	0.7%	691,843   (9,883)
The Mandhana Retail Ventures Ltd	653	90.9%	6.3%	1.4%	1.3%	346,675   (4,953)
Tribhovandas Bhimji Zaveri Ltd	1,253	90.8%	4.2%	3.1%	2%	528,852   (7,555)
V-mart Retail Ltd	5,868 (18% females)	83.2%	8.1%	7.5%	1.2%	139,424   (1,992)

Source: JORSS Research & Analysis | 1 USD = ₹70.00  
 All %age figures are based on Company's Standalone Sale; \*On Company roll



PLC maintenance specialist and e-textiles specialists will come to the fore. Simultaneously, the roles of merchandiser, fabric cutter, and pattern master will become increasingly digitized, and involve more machinery.

**HR Trackers: The India Story**

JORSS – a research-based Knowledge hub with expertise in data management, nurturing intelligent insights and building Knowledge Banks through research and training has developed two

HR trackers for consumption by industry professionals, consultants, researchers and students. These trackers have evolved as a result of intense study of around 200 company reports and return filing over the years. JORSS aims to share key findings of this study through these HR trackers:

**1. HR Expense Tracker:**

This is a decade (FY2009-FY2018) long tracker of trend in HR expenses in relation to total expenses by a retail company. 11 public listed companies have been covered in the first tracker and individual graphical snapshot has been prepared for each one of them.

**2. HR KPIs Annual Tracker:**

This tracker tabulates annual HR expense

performance of a retail company during a fiscal year. It shows HR spent under 3 key components of employee benefits viz. Salary, Funds and Welfare. It also notifies company wise the number of employees and average salary/per employee for the fiscal. In the first tracking 19 companies have been incorporated.

Going forward the list of companies will expand in both the trackers. All figures are in percentage for public consumption though JORSS is in possession of the primary figures and performance data. Industry query, feedback and suggestions on these trackers are welcome at info@jorss.in





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# Understanding the HR Policies of IKEA

– By Charu Lamba

*Through its expansion in India, it will create many more direct and indirect jobs. The number of co-workers is expected to grow from the current strength of 1,500 co-workers to over 15,000 co-workers in the future, out of which 50 percent will be women...*

**I**ngka Group (Ingka Holding B.V and its controlled entities) is accelerating its transformation, stepping up investments in new and existing IKEA stores and fulfilment centres, developing city centre formats and focusing on its e-commerce platform, to better meet the needs of its customers and be more convenient and affordable to many more people.

To support the biggest transformation in the history of the Ingka Group, IKEA India has already adopted its expansion approach. Through its expansion in India, it will create many more direct and indirect jobs. The number of co-workers is expected to grow from the current strength of 1,500 to over 15,000 in the future, out of which 50 percent will be women.

Besides jobs in the stores and new city centres, the company will also create a lot of new roles in areas such as digital, data analytics, diversified fulfilment networks and personalisation. Certain existing roles will change, and the company has confirmed that all its co-workers will get to explore new opportunities in the new organisation. 3,000 new jobs are expected to be created in the next two years in line with its growth plans and transformation.

**The Hiring Process**

IKEA has a unique hiring process as the brand believes in value base hiring and give priority to individual’s values more than their experience and degrees.

“At IKEA India, we recruit by values. It is more about understanding the person whom we are interviewing. We like to understand personal values of a candidate and how these come out in typical behaviour in everyday life. I like to listen to the ‘real stuff’, like stories about how they have created togetherness and made things simpler. We believe that it is only together that we can achieve what we are achieving. It also means it

**HR Policies**

IKEA has several employee friendly policies, such as day care facilities, parental leave policy, transport policy, competence development, mentoring, pension plan among others.

“At IKEA, we always go for the new and improved, so modern thinking, bringing in innovation, and thinking differently, is also at the core of our value. We believe equality works better and we are committed to hire 50 percent women co-workers at all levels,” she further states.

“We will empower and nurture women co-workers to grow with IKEA and create suitable work conditions to retain them,” she adds.



**“ WE LIKE TO UNDERSTAND PERSONAL VALUES OF A CANDIDATE AND HOW THESE COME OUT IN TYPICAL BEHAVIOUR IN EVERYDAY LIFE. I LIKE TO LISTEN TO THE ‘REAL STUFF’, LIKE STORIES ABOUT HOW THEY HAVE CREATED TOGETHERNESS AND MADE THINGS SIMPLER. ”**

– Anna Carin Månsson, Country HR Manager, IKEA India

balance is a better workplace, there are better discussions with more perspectives and better decisions taken.

“We believe the uniqueness of every individual makes IKEA better. Being ourselves and contributing with our uniqueness makes us all grow. Recognising our co-workers’ differences contributes to creativity and supports our growth,” says Månsson.

**Internal Training Programs**

IKEA invests in the development of co-workers by offering a variety of internal training programs – for those who want to learn something new and grow. IKEA also encourages co-workers to create a development plan and co-workers help to set their goals for the coming year and the future with their managers.

“We have co-workers from DISHA programme, and recently, we have in-house assemblers, forklift drivers and Urban Clap carpenters who have been given trainings in their respective functions. IKEA has contributed to the training of the carpenters on UrbanClap’s platform, thereby, skilling them to become professional IKEA assemblers,” says Månsson.

**Day Care Benefit**

Early this year, IKEA announced its day care benefit program for its coworkers at upcoming stores in India.

The centres are named as ‘DAGIS’ (Swedish for day care centers), will be located inside IKEA campuses across the country.

The first DAGIS came up inside the IKEA store in Hyderabad. DAGIS are made available for children of all



does not matter where you come from, whether you have a degree or not – we all believe in the same values,” says Anna Carin Månsson, Country HR Manager, IKEA India.

“The next core value we stress on is simplicity. We try to keep things simple. We have a simple and flat structure at IKEA, a simple way of talking to each other, a simple way of behaving. Simplicity allows us to focus on our tasks, on the right things,” she adds.

**Equal Opportunity for Women**

The ambition for IKEA in India is to develop a 50:50 gender diversity, encourage and create unique opportunities for women in society. Towards this, the brand has a non-negotiable commitment to hire 50 percent women co-workers at all levels in India including forklift drives and assembling co-workers.

IKEA aims to provide more opportunities to women in different life situations

through flexible work hours, possibilities to choose suitable jobs, child care facilities at the work place and by securing a healthy and safe environment.

“IKEA also wants to bring back women who have taken a sabbatical and dropped out of the workforce due to marriage, child birth etc. We want to be known as a workplace preferred by women who today hesitate to join back work due to many reasons such as lack of professional trainings, societal concerns and safety issues,” Månsson states.

IKEA believes that a workplace with gender





IKEA co-workers. In line with IKEA's commitment to diversity and inclusion and in its endeavor to redefine gender equality this program supports co-workers in their roles as parents and professionals.

“By this day care benefit program we enable co-workers to be more productive and be assured that their children are in safe hands while they are at work. This empowers women to return to work as well as help men to support their wives/ partners to resume work,” asserts Anna.

### Tack! Programme

IKEA Group is offering additional ₹150,120 each to its Indian co-workers' pension fundings as part of Tack! programme. Tack! is an IKEA Group Loyalty Programme to show appreciation for co-workers who continue working for the success of the business. This year the company will be rewarding a total of €96 million ( ₹700 crore) to the global co-workers pension fundings.

“Tack! is a way of thanking



the efforts and loyalty of our co-workers who are working for the success of IKEA. Our co-workers should know how much we value their experience and commitment, and I am proud that IKEA Group in India will give an additional ₹150,120 each to our co-workers' pensions this year,” says Anna.

Everyone who has worked for IKEA Group for at least five years is qualified for the loyalty programme Tack! – ‘thank you’ in Swedish – where IKEA Group co-workers can receive an extra annual pension payout, in addition to existing pensions.

Tack! was introduced in 2013 and since then the IKEA Group has paid out €509 million globally. This far a total of over ₹82 million has been allocated to the co-workers' pension funds within the programme in India.

Every co-worker gets the same amount regardless of position or salary, and part-time co-workers are rewarded in proportion to their hours worked. In total, 171 co-workers in India can celebrate the fact that IKEA Group gives them ₹150,120 each in appreciation for their loyalty.

“No matter where you work in our organisation you are

**TACK! IS AN IKEA GROUP LOYALTY PROGRAMME TO SHOW APPRECIATION FOR CO-WORKERS WHO CONTINUE WORKING FOR THE SUCCESS OF THE BUSINESS. THIS YEAR THE COMPANY WILL BE REWARDING A TOTAL OF €96 MILLION (₹700 CRORE) TO THE GLOBAL CO-WORKERS PENSION FUNDINGS.**

contributing to our success and continued growth. That is why it is so important for us to share this success equally,” says Anna.

The same amount is allocated to all co-workers who have worked at IKEA for at least one full fiscal year. Once they reach their five-year anniversary with the company, the accumulated money is paid out to their pension funds. After this, every annual pay-out goes directly into their pension funds.

The global funding is divided between all IKEA Group countries, based on each country's proportion of the total salary and wages. The payout is dependent on the total results of IKEA Group during the previous financial year.

To further emphasise the importance of co-worker contribution, all IKEA Group co-workers are part of the performance driven bonus programme, One IKEA Bonus. By reaching the financial goals in each market, co-workers can receive approximately one extra month's salary every year. [IR](#)



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# Retail Employees: Real Brand Ambassadors Making a Difference in Business Growth

– By **Sandeep Kumar**

*Retailers need to acknowledge that the demand for competitive differentiation, profitability and need to deliver faster and more flexibly to customers totally depends on the retail staff. To keep the motive of the business intact, retailers need to engage and build a great relationship with their employees...*

**S**ince its inception, the Retail Industry has been dedicated fully 'to and for' customers. The ultimate agenda of the industry revolves around its customers. The sole focus is to bring in more consumers and generate more profit. In its initial days, retail used to be a one-man-business. Slowly as the business grew, this one man – usually the owner – started looking for helpers and associates on temporary, and then permanent, basis. As the business became more organised, owners looked for managers and executives. The business grew in size and gradually took the form of a big chain. The concept of retail staff thus came into existence.

## **Valuing Employees**

Undoubtedly, the customer is king, but the retail staff is the army that keeps the king satisfied. If the army is not happy and working properly, the king cannot be happy. The retail business involves huge amounts of investment and it is very important to value

every pillar of the business. As retailers invest to inform and understand customers better, some tend to forget to inform and understand the employees.

Retailers need to realise that their workforce is as central to brand success as their customers. They must ensure that the staff plays an

active and positive role in building brand relationships with customers. They need to acknowledge that the demand for competitive differentiation, profitability and need to deliver faster and more flexibly to customers totally depends on the retail staff. To keep the motive of the business intact, retailers need to engage and build a great relationship with their employees.

## **Happy Employees = Profitable Brand**

**Reputation:** A happy employee contributes to the reputation of the brand. Whether a brand has hundreds/thousands of employees, each one is in

direct touch with the family and friends about their employment experience from time to time. A bad day at work or a cathartic sounding-off about a bad boss can quickly be shared with hundreds of social friends – with an ever-present risk of going viral. An unhappy employee is a brand ambassador that retailers neglect at their peril.

**ROI:** Retail staff is the first point of interaction with the customers. S/he is the one who creates the first impression and also is directly involved with the sales. He is the first person to read and judge the mind of the customer, therefore making



the customer convince to buy the product. So it is very important for the retailers that their employees work for the brand with full dedication and energy.

**Reactions:** The employment experience is transmitted to your customers by staff through the look on their face, their speed of response,

which gives them essence and respect, not just money. Engagement, relationship building, and trusted community are the key to happy retail associates. Employees also expect their employers' attention, timeliness, responsiveness and flexibility in the same manner as they do to the consumers.



the tone of their voice and the service they provide. It doesn't matter if they are customer-facing. Sluggish warehouse teams and slow, disinterested administrators directly affect your fulfillment speed and whether you keep brand promises.

### Employee Success Formula

In today's retail business, maintaining brilliant brand experience for customers depends on every interaction being easy and effortless. Again, a satisfied employee will help in forwarding the brand's reputation a lot.

#### Building/ Innovative Relationship:

No employees work for free and they all get paid their dues every month, but there are employees who also want better management/staff relationships apart from a salary. They want a job

#### Internal Communication in Retail is Hard but Important:

Communication in big chains typically travels top-down. Decisions are taken by the top officials but communicating them towards the lower end has to be done in a persuasive way. Bad internal communication has a butterfly effect in retail.

All it takes is for one detail to be mis-communicated and consequently, stores around the world lose employees resulting in clients and business. This effect is even more harmful in large companies with

**THE CUSTOMER IS KING, BUT THE RETAIL STAFF IS THE ARMY THAT KEEPS THE KING SATISFIED. IF THE ARMY IS NOT HAPPY AND WORKING PROPERLY, THE KING CANNOT BE HAPPY. THE RETAIL BUSINESS INVOLVES HUGE AMOUNTS OF INVESTMENT AND IT IS VERY IMPORTANT TO VALUE EVERY PILLAR OF THE BUSINESS.**

As per a survey by Deloitte and Facebook, 77 percent of companies believe that an email is no longer a viable tool for effective communication. With that in mind, retailers must be more conscious of the communications channels they are using to interact with shoppers, especially when it comes to manager-to-employee interactions or scheduling.

#### Empowering Employees through Knowledge:

Employees need to understand customers at a deep level: they need rich and up-to-date customer information at points of interaction such as in the call center or on the shop floor. They must be knowledgeable about their company too: a culture of greater transparency helps sustain a positive employee experience. It can range from ensuring regularity of management communications to making information more available on demand through apps that workers can access via mobile devices.

### Celebrating Retail Employees' Day

There are retailers and companies that treat their employees well. In a way to raise their brand value and profitability, they also make their customers know about it. Retailers provide timely benefits to their employees in form of higher salary, bonus and perks, planned tours and packages for the employees and their employees, by providing them insurance and solid cover in different areas, such health, education, house etc.

Retail Employees' Day (RED) is one such accomplishment as far as employees' contribution



great diversity and a global presence. Different languages, time-zones, and hierarchies make spreading information even more difficult and complicated. And with frontline employees spending most of their time on the sales floor, opportunities for training and briefings are rare, if not completely neglected.





**THE DAY AIMS AT CREATING AWARENESS AND EMPATHY FOR THEIR JOBS AND LIVES AND THE SIGNIFICANT ROLE THEY PLAY IN THE LIVES OF THE CUSTOMER. AROUND 500 RETAILERS AND 80 SHOPPING CENTRES ACROSS INDIA HAVE COME TOGETHER TO THANK THEIR EMPLOYEES ON THIS DAY.**

is concerned. An initiative conceptualized by TRRAIN (Trust for Retailers & Retail Associates of India) and supported by RAI (Retailers Association of India) in India, since 2011, every year December 12 is celebrated as Retail Employees' Day (RED), to bring the retail employees into focus and thank them for their untiring efforts. It is an attempt to encourage employers as well as customers to recognize the efforts of retail associates across the country.

The day aims at creating awareness and empathy for their jobs and lives and the significant role they play in the lives of the customer. Around 500 retailers and 80 shopping centres across India have come together to thank their employees on this day. With over two million people celebrating it, this initiative by TRRAIN has seen tremendous success.

The full day is dedicated to the employee's dedication and contribution towards

the brand and the industry. Few retailers celebrate it on a grand scale where as others keep it small but fully focused on the motive. RED has found widespread acceptance across retailers and brands of all sizes across geographies. Planning for the event starts over one month in advance leading to the buzz being created one week before the day. Most companies have a separate budget crafted to carry out activities on this day. It has become an occasion for employees from HQs and stores of different brands to celebrate together.

In 2013, Retail Employees' Day inspired Boyner Group in Turkey to celebrate the day with its 12000 employees leading the entire country to take up the celebrations in 2014. About 2 million people from the Turkey retail industry celebrated Retail Employees Day, making this simple idea a truly global phenomenon. The buzz around Retail



Employees' Day reached newer heights in 2015 with recognition received from the ministries of central and state governments of India. A letter from Narendra Modi, Prime Minister of India, congratulating TRRAIN & the Indian retail industry on this joyous occasion added tremendous momentum to the day. And the trend continues to grow popular. The event also received support from brand

ambassadors across multiple brands. Top celebrities from the Indian film Industry & the Indian cricket team took to social media to thank all the retail associates on RED.

Multiple employee engagement activities include red carpet musical welcome for the employees (inviting their families as well) along with games like musical chairs, talent hunt, fashion show and other activities are conducted. This is followed by cake cutting ceremony and lunch mostly. The big retailers/brand who has a national presence also conducts cricket and football tournaments for their employees in different city and zone.

### Conclusion

The retail industry in India has come forth as one of the most dynamic and fast paced industries with several players entering the market. Therefore it is very important for retailers to respect and treat their employee base well, valuing and acknowledging them as the face of their brand, their true brand ambassadors who make a powerful difference in business growth. **IR**

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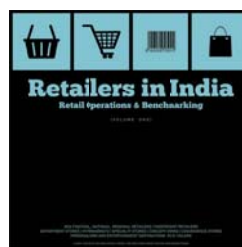
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**“I am Excited that RED is on its way to Becoming a Global Phenomenon”**

*In 2011 and 2012, the Retail Employees' Day (RED) celebration was just a round of 'Thank You's'. In subsequent years, the idea gathered momentum; it became widespread through social media, TV and print advertisements. The positive vibes spread, with more retailers- large and small jumping on the bandwagon...*

– By **IMAGES Retail Bureau**

**A** simple idea can sometimes become very powerful. If the idea connects with the people, then it can turn itself into a movement. This is what retail industry stalwart, **BS Nagesh, Founder, TRRAIN (Trust for Retailers & Retail Associates of India)**, said when he launched one modest idea – Retail Employees' Day (RED). The idea was conceptualised in 2011, when Nagesh met a few retailers and suggested they spend one day every year just saying a simple 'Thank You' to all those who worked for them, adding soul to their businesses. It started with just a few stores celebrating RED on December 12 every year. Today, hundreds of brands and malls are celebrating the day as RED in India, and Nagesh's idea has indeed become a movement.

In 2011 and 2012, the Retail Employees' Day (RED) celebration was just a round of 'Thank You's'. In subsequent years, the idea gathered momentum; it became widespread through social media, TV and print advertisements. The positive vibes spread, with more retailers- large and small jumping on the bandwagon.

In an exclusive interview, the initiator of this mega-retail program says that the success has only made him more determined to forward his efforts to make retail associates feel cared for.

***Retail Employee's Day is into its seventh year of success. How do you see this achievement?***

If I look back at the last six years and the journey that we have had of just a few stores celebrating in 2011 to now hundreds of brands and malls celebrating in India, I think we feel very happy. Last year, a few local associations joined in as well. The feather in the cap has been the Federation of Shopping Centers & Retailers (TAMPF) & UAE coming on board to celebrate the day with their retail partners. A simple idea is on its way to becoming a global phenomenon.

I am very happy with where we have reached but our dream is to witness the entire world celebrating Retail Employees' Day in the next 15-20 years. But yes, the needle has started moving and that is important for us.

**Is Retail Employee's Day meant for only front-end store personnel?**

The whole objective of this day was to create a day for retail employees. I believe, every employee who works for retail whether he is the Managing Director or an associate, is still a retail employee at the end of the day.

However, over the years, since the celebrations are planned by the management team to thank the retail front end associate, the message had got percolated that the event is only for them. Whether it is offline, delivery, warehouse, backend, managers, associate, supervisors & even the

malls celebrating the day in India. Over 4 million retail employees have been part of the celebrations in India, Turkey and UAE.

If we look at our mission that we have set at TRRAIN, we clearly believe we are a thought leader and a catalyst. Our job is to continuously encourage and motivate people to join hands such that the industry at the lowest level to the highest level, where human beings are present, can be very happy. So, we will continue to work on this.

On my visit to France last year, I met several retailers who were interested and are keen to celebrate RED and I am hoping that they will

has moved into execution.

For instance, how can we create pride for all those in retail. We created Retail Employees' Day.

**How do we create respect?**

That was done through the TRRAIN Retail Awards.

How do we get inclusion in retail- We launched Pankh-Wings of Destiny which we create livelihood for persons with disabilities?

How do we upskill the employees - Through the TRRAIN Aptech Retail Education Program.

Can we help them to save and earn more? This is happening through our latest project- TRRAIN Circle.

intelligence. However, the skills required to run a retail business will continue to remain the same. So, I foresee the future of retail as:

- Consumption driven growth in economy
- Wide spread use of technology, mostly through the mobile.
- Large number of Indians working for retail in different parts of the value chain.

**What kinds of association do you aim to build with retailers, corporate and the government?**

We have a simple theory. 'Whosoever is part of the value chain, and whoever has a heart that ticks, we would like them to be involved with TRRAIN so that they can excite & spread happiness for every associate he /she is involved with'

**What are the key elements that are necessary for creating a good retail service environment? Explain from both the customer and the retailer point of view.**

I think the most important element is that every employees' individual purpose & the organisation purpose have to get aligned. Secondly, the organisation must imbibe customer centricity as their core value. And lastly, the business as well as the processes must be simple so that everybody involved in the value chain is happy.

**Which sector has been more receptive to your initiatives?**

Till now, it has been fashion and food with electronics and jewellery playing a smaller role. For me, these four sectors along with automobiles, pharmacy and home improvement should be our target for the next 1-3 years. **IR**



Managing Director, I believe all of us should celebrate the day together.

My dream is to take the day global. Just as Turkey celebrates this as 'Shopkeepers Day', I want *Dukaandar Diwas* (Retail Employees' Day) to be celebrated all over India one day. It is not just about the brand but is about spreading happiness amongst retailers & retail employees.

**How many companies are associated with the RED celebration till now and how do you initiate to get more on board?**

As of last year, we have had over 400 brands and 80 +

celebrate the occasion and cherish the moment in 2018. We are eagerly waiting to pursue them as well. In my lifetime & in this journey, I will continue to talk about Retail Employees' Day to everyone, every individual, every organisation, every corporate, every country that I visit.

**TRRAIN has always been into empowering grassroots-level retail staff? Tell us how you do it?**

When we started TRRAIN, we identified 6 areas of work and each of these 6 areas are directly connected to the way the retail employee has felt. And each area is converted into a project that

And thus, our whole mission is to upgrade the lives of people in retail, both at work and at home.

**What does the future of retail hold in coming five-ten years?**

Even if GDP grows by 7-8 percent, retail will grow because eventually, the consumption is going to grow both online & offline. We will find a shift in the roles and the skills required for the role & therefore the overall requirement of numbers will increase. For instance, the role of a backend merchandiser which is currently a numerical skill will get into a skill that will use data analytics & artificial



# Retail As Service – The New Business Model

– By Prof. Piyush Kumar Sinha, Director, CRI Advisory and Research



*Dominance of unorganised market and growing consumer base projects high growth potential of Indian retail industry. The current USD 932.96 billion (2017) industry is estimated to grow by CAGR 14.3% to be USD 1.6 trillion market by 2021<sup>1</sup>. The contributing factors are increasing purchasing power, digitalisation of consumers demanding convenience and polarising industry. This demands a paradigm change in the way retailers function. The traditional and modern channels need to work together to provide seamless shopping experience across channels and shift the focus from product to service offerings to gain a sustainable competitive advantage.*

**I**ndian retail is characterised by fragmentation. A single retailer would never have a major share of the market as consumers have many options to choose from, with multiple retailers in each category and multiple channels to source from. (India rank highest in terms of per capita availability of stores.) This is attributed to the dominance of small format retail in India which is 93 percent of the total retail market. The rest 7 percent is divided between large format stores like departmental stores, supermarkets, specialty stores, malls, and online. The price-based competition has proved that retail to be not a simple and

sustainable business unless managed well. Deep pockets do not mean high market share and sustainability. The sector needs to find new business models and performance matrices different from GMV (Gross Merchandise Volume) and scale. The ever-changing customer expectations and reducing differentiation in terms of products and range would require retailers to compete on customer service, which is beyond just on-time delivery.

### Indian Retail Landscape

In 2017, the Indian retail industry was USD 932.96 billion and estimated to be USD 1.6 trillion by 2021, growing at CAGR 14.3 percent<sup>2</sup>. The projected growth of organised retail suggests the potential for modern retail in India. The factors that govern Indian retail market are changing consumer shopping trends with increasing purchasing power, time strapped consumers getting digital and polarization of the industry.

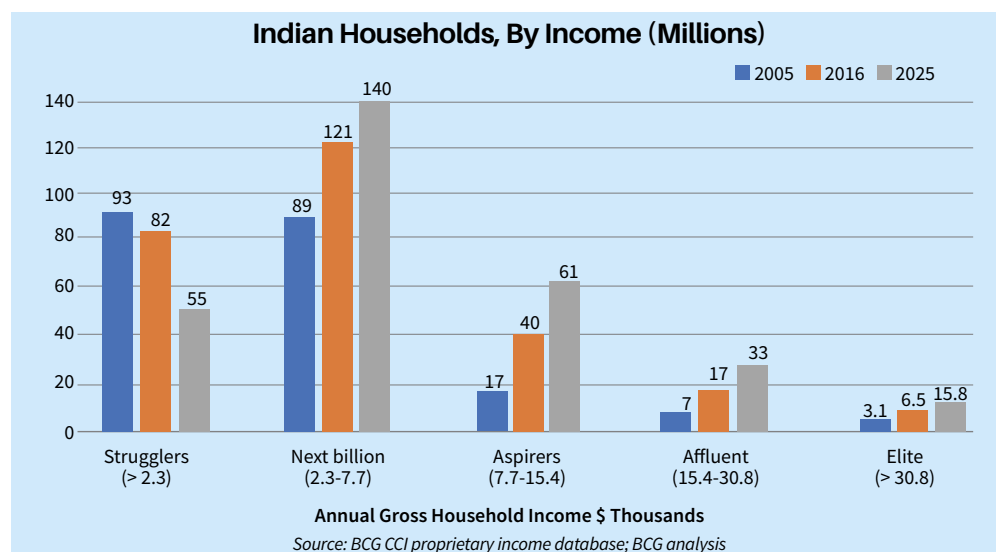
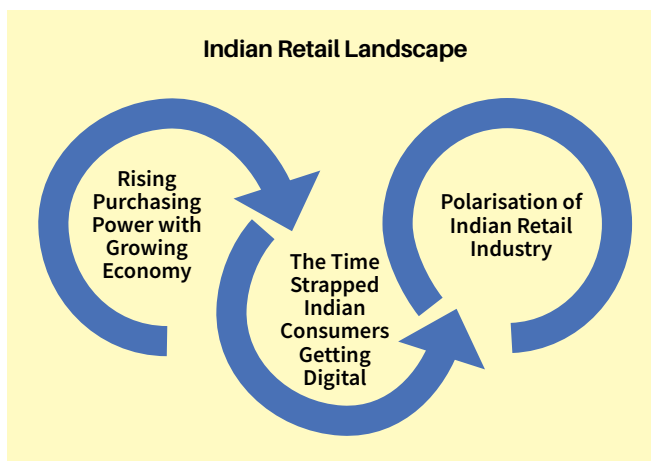
### Rising Purchasing Power with Growing Economy

The Indian consumer sector has grown at 5.7 percent annually between FY 2005 to FY 2015. It is estimated to be the third largest consumer market by 2025, growing at 12 percent annually. The rising GDP (6.7 percent in 2017 and forecasted growth of 7.5 percent in FY 2019-20)<sup>3</sup> has created the middle-class segment which is about 50 percent of the country's population. These

mid-income consumers have higher purchasing power and affluence (see the chart). About 75 percent of Indian youth (16 to 21 years old) spend more than INR 6,000 on cosmetics, apparels and mobiles (ASSOCHAM report). These are informed shoppers and investors with discerning and explorative shopping behavior. These consumers want it all. They are interested in quality and experience at affordable price with minimum hassle. Retailers would have to find new avenues to meet the expanding and changing demands of these consumers.

### The Time Strapped Indian Consumers Getting Digital

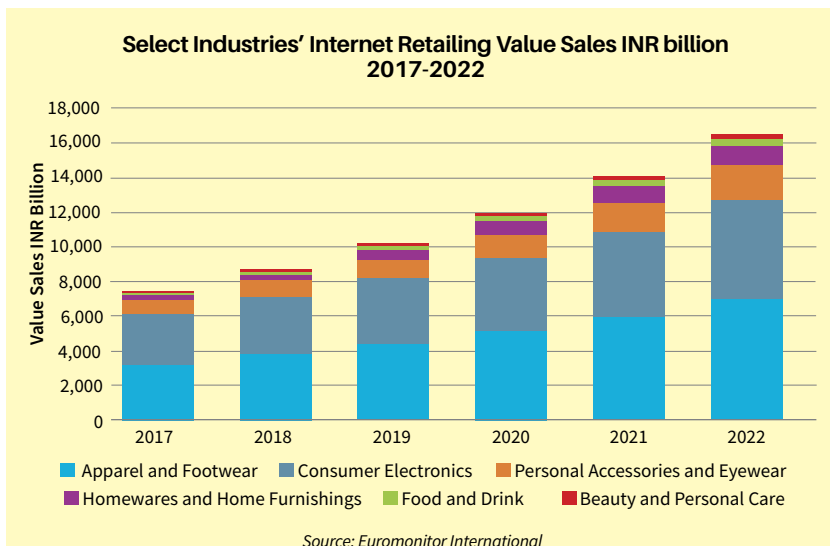
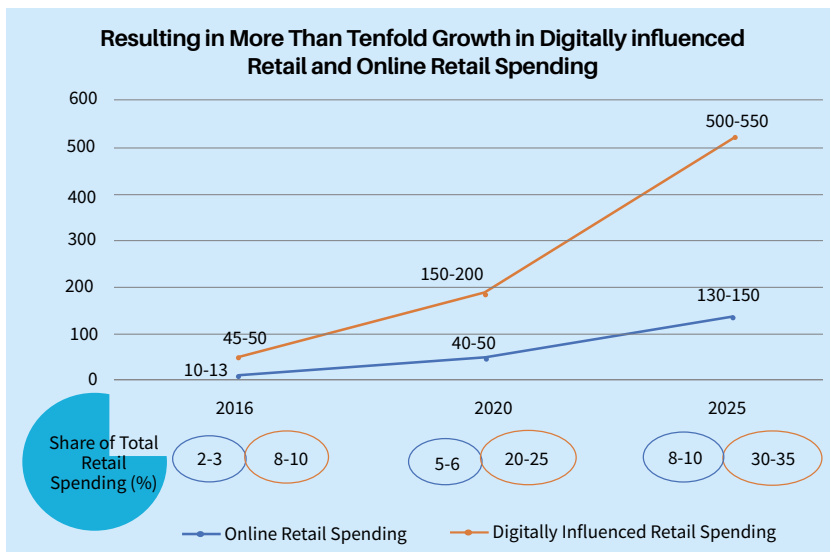
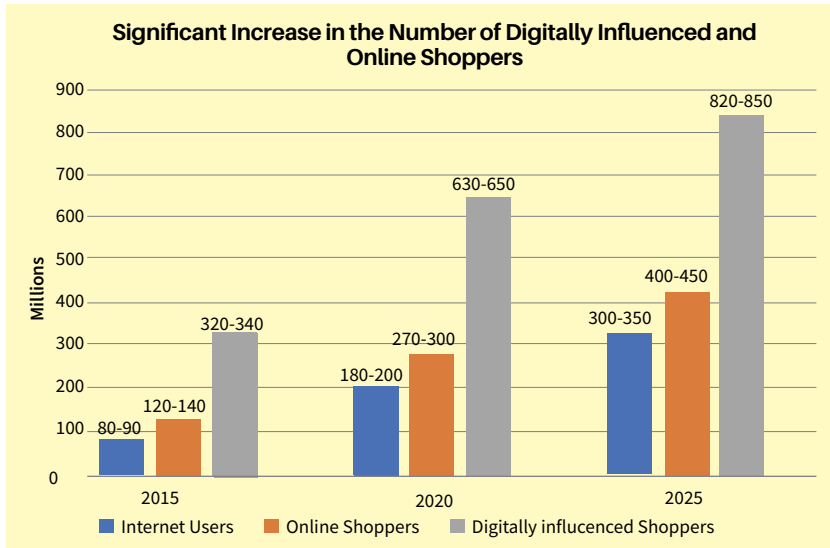
Increasing number of working women, growing single households (9.04 million constituting 11.6 percent of the total households as per 2011 census report) coupled with hectic work culture (Indians work for around 2,195 hours a year on average as per the Arcadis report)



<sup>1</sup>India Retail report 2018-19 by IMAGES Research    <sup>2</sup>India Retail report 2018-19 by IMAGES Research

<sup>3</sup><https://tradingeconomics.com/india/gdp-growth-annual>; <https://www.livemint.com/Politics/TQmmRQnpW1ZcB1qQsi3h6H/World-Bank-sees-India-as-fastest-growing-economy-for-next-th.html>, as accessed on 12<sup>th</sup> July, 2018





result in consumers opting for convenience over lower price. More than 65 per cent of consumers say convenience is the driving factor of their shopping behavior as per a PwC study.

Online retailing provides consumers convenience with accessibility and affordability. E-commerce in India has grown at an annual rate of 51 percent, the highest in the world, and is expected to be \$120 billion in 2020 from \$30 billion in 2016 (ASSOCHAM-Forrester study). The increasing internet users (second largest, 445.96 million in 2017 and expected to be 829 million by 2021) and increasing smartphone penetration (telecom and broadband services is USD 38.95 billion in 2017<sup>4</sup> with second largest smartphone market) indicates growing number of consumers on various digital platform. According to Euromonitor's Global Consumer Trends 2016 survey, more than 65 percent of online consumers visited or updated their social networking sites daily. The online medium is expected to influence 30 percent of the entire retail sales which would amount to \$70 Bn of retail sales in 2019<sup>5</sup>. The demonetisation in November 2016, further created opportunities for digital transitions and growth in India. According to government sources, between November 8 and December 7, 2016, e-wallets providers such as Oxigen, Paytm and MobiKwik observed a spring of 271 percent in number of daily transactions and 503 percent in terms of value of transactions. Most of the leading categories are growing online.

These shifts are indicative of growth potential of Indian retail, making all product types accessible and affordable at various digital platforms. However, online format with heavy discounts and only 1 per cent conversion rate may find it difficult to remain viable. About 8 percent of initiated online transactions are abandoned during the process due to poor customer service (Datamonitor report, 2011)<sup>6</sup>. Hence, to reach these consumers, retailers would need to think beyond accessibility and affordability of product and to cater to the rising expectations of the consumers need to harvest on services quality or introduce innovative services.

<sup>4</sup>India Retail report 2018-19 by IMAGES Research

<sup>5</sup><http://capillarytech.com/the-state-of-omni-channel-retail-in-india-is-it-time-yet-part-1/>, as accessed on 12<sup>th</sup> July, 2018

<sup>6</sup>Yin, E. C. H., & Fyfe, V. B. C. (2011). *Intelligent Data Engineering and Automated Learning-IDEAL 2006*.

## Polarisation of Indian Retail Industry

The increasing consumption and high competition pushes the industry towards consolidation. The consumers buy mostly from two or three stores/sites in a category. Big retailers acquire the mid-size retailers to scale their business and smaller ones find their niche to sustain. Among the top retail houses, Future Group and Bharti Retail have combined their retail in 2016 to become India's biggest retail conglomerate with 7 key retail brands, 738 stores in 221 cities across India<sup>7</sup>. Even the online e-commerce is consolidating through mergers and acquisitions. Hence, few big retail houses concentrate in each category. The online consumer base is also skewed

towards both in terms of demographic and geographic. Organised retail in India is 7-10 percent and online is 1.2 percent. About 52 percent of regular shoppers are in 26-35 age groups and almost 65 percent of online shoppers are male<sup>8</sup>. Only 24 percent of the online consumers use the medium for buying<sup>9</sup>. In terms of geography large part of the consumers come from top metro cities. Mumbai leads in online shopping followed by Delhi and Kolkata.

Fewer large retail houses and skewed consumer base trends push towards polarization of the industry, creating two types of retail formats. One acts as "one stop shop for all", where consumers can get everything under one roof like Bigbazar and Amazon. Other format is

specialised service providers concentrating on focused offerings like Pharmeasy.in and thesouledstore.com or Polyvore, which was a designing website centered on providing a platform for creative minds to design, create and communicate. Eataly, which is an Italian food mall where everything related to food is provided, from food stalls, beverage counters, restaurants, bakery, grocery items, to a cooking school, giving consumers a complete food experience. Croma, Vijay Sales and Foodhall are other such examples. Both the

**THE INCREASING CONSUMPTION AND HIGH COMPETITION PUSHES THE INDUSTRY TOWARDS CONSOLIDATION. THE CONSUMERS BUY MOSTLY FROM TWO OR THREE STORES/SITES IN A CATEGORY. BIG RETAILERS ACQUIRE THE MID-SIZE RETAILERS TO SCALE THEIR BUSINESS AND SMALLER ONES FIND THEIR NICHE TO SUSTAIN.**



formats provide a complete experience with certain added services to cater to the changing expectations of the consumers like premium membership facilities by Amazon and personalised styling assistance by thesouledstore.com.

### Transforming Retailing

Growing purchasing power, increasing digitalized consumers and polarization of the industry require a paradigm change in the way Indian retail marketplace

functions. Delivering best product on-time is the necessity but is not sufficient to gain consumer satisfaction. Online and large format price stores are just a dispenser system where consumers can pick and move. Its fast and convenient but not enough to reach the consumers' love bracket. The consumer preferences are changing towards having an experience over owning a product, instant gratification over long-term benefit and variety than loyalty. Hence, retailers

<sup>7</sup><https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/services/retail/kishore-byanis-future-group-in-talks-with-aditya-birla-retail-to-buy-or-merge-business/articleshow/53817795.cms>, as accessed on 12th July, 2018

<sup>8</sup><http://www.assochem.org/newsdetail.php?id=5427>, as accessed on 12th July, 2018

<sup>9</sup>Nie, N., and Erbring, L. *Internet use*. Stanford Institute for the Quantitative Study of Society, California (2000).



that are transforming from just a product delivery system to customer service provider, helping consumers make better choice, are here to sustain.

### Omnichannel Presence

The concept of maximizing the Basket size and value has changed with new formats. Price discounts, reduced or no shipping cost, low or no switching cost makes it highly price competitive. Consumers have access to range of products through various platforms heightens the consumers' expectations from retailers. More than 73 percent customers, within the age group of 25-34, use more than one channel for making purchases.<sup>10</sup> Against the predictions, not all the online businesses proved profitable stating that brick-n-mortar formats will stay relevant. Consumers no longer think of offline and online as separate medium. They are looking for a seamless experience across

### CONSUMERS NO LONGER THINK OF OFFLINE AND ONLINE AS SEPARATE MEDIUM. THEY ARE LOOKING FOR A SEAMLESS EXPERIENCE ACROSS ALL CHANNELS AND RETAILERS NEED TO BUILD SYSTEMS TO SERVE THEIR CUSTOMERS ANYTIME, ANYWHERE.

all channels and retailers need to build systems to serve their customers anytime, anywhere.

Omnichannel presence by a retailer is the key to consistent and unparalleled service across all touch points. However, the challenges are reverse logistics management and third-party logistics interactions. Integration of online search with in-store buying can work only if the

inventory is in correlation on both the platforms. In case customers do not find a product of their choice at the outlet they can order it online through the tablet at the outlet and have it delivered to their home. Nordstrom stores are 3,000-square-foot store opened with only service model. They display merchandise only to try on, but not for sale. Shoppers are provided services like stylist and onsite tailoring. However, the shoppers can only order merchandise online which then can be delivered to the store on the same day. Consumers look for not just shopping but a personalized shopping experience. The retailers to reach these consumers need focused and customized strategy. Digitalization through internet and technology can be used as an aid to the specialization. For example, Bloomingdale's Manhattan flagship store uses interactive windows as their showcase

to display their apparel to the passersby. The consumers can select the different clothing and colors through the display. They can even order by texting "POLO" for a link to a checkout page. This makes the passerby convert to consumers without them even entering the store. Virtual dressing rooms are another example where retailers are trying to create customized shopping experience.<sup>11</sup>

The definition of success has changed. Businesses have moved from creating value to creating valuation. Businesses both online and offline that shift from pricing model to non-price model would sustain. The retailers would have to create non-price propositions by delivering unique product or experience to the consumers through a focused strategy and best in class services.

### Digitalisation of Distribution

Every category has its own primary format: kirana stores dominates grocery sector, online is the preferred platform for electronics and mobile. Further the heterogeneity of the Indian consumer makes it difficult to follow same strategy across the nation. Retailer would need to understand the strengths and weaknesses of a format with respect to the different target market before penetrating.

Retailers need to shift focus to localised service or consumer segment. Thinking local through local business partners could be an approach to sustain and



<sup>10</sup><http://www.happiestminds.com/whitepapers/omni-channel-retail.pdf>, as accessed on 12th July, 2018

<sup>11</sup><https://econsultancy.com/blog/64408-12-more-examples-of-digital-technology-in-retail-stores>, as accessed on 12th July, 2018

<sup>12</sup>Sinha, P. K., Gokhale, S., & Rawal, S. (2015). Online retailing paired with Kirana—A formidable combination for emerging markets. *Customer Needs and Solutions*, 2(4), 317-324.



succeed in the polarised market. The big retailers would have to work hand in hand with the traditional retailers. There are six million traditional stores constituting of 42 percent of the physical stores<sup>12</sup> providing a mix of merchandise, credit, home delivery and personalised services but has limited reach. On the other hand, online stores provide access, variety, price and convenience but they have high operating cost and acquisition costs with 1.2 average basket size. It is proposed that e-commerce companies to scale up their business can capitalise on the situation by partnering

with traditional local stores to provide common values like localization, personalisation and convenience<sup>13</sup>. The reach of a combined traditional-online model could also be extended to rural geographies to serve the 850 million consumers, about 70 percent of Indian population and contributing around half of the country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP)<sup>14</sup>.

This would enhance the role of the wholesalers. They would need to become more value added service providers, ensuring that retailers focus on understanding and customised services and products for their set of

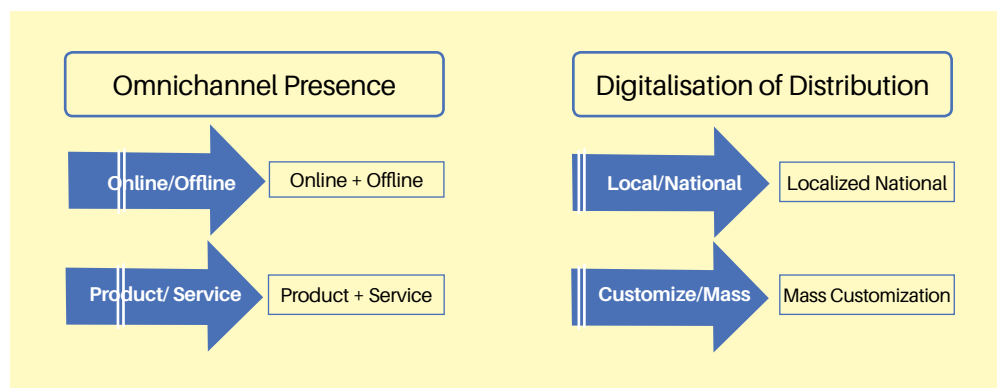
customer. A free exchange of data from retailers to wholesalers and vice versa would be key. Instead of just being a bulk breaking agency, they would have to become agglomerates as well as distributors of demand to smaller stores. Digitalizing the distribution channel through small retailers and modernizing the retail formats make the system more competitive and efficient.

### Way Ahead

The road ahead is transforming "Retail as a service", focusing on market of "one". Each customer would need to be serviced differently. The performance matrix would move from channel/format profitability to customer profitability. Similarly, instead of store profitability, the chain would have to measure profitability of the trading areas as the same retailer would use multiple formats to service the same customer leading to the reduction of the share of each format. This would require a different set of skills even for brands that participate on these platforms. Shopper marketing

strategies would come to forefront than hardcore consumer marketing. Flipkart partnered with Microsoft Azure as its exclusive public cloud computing platform to help its customers in shopping online. Amazon is the biggest example, accounting for 26 percent of all online retail sales, with the help of its huge data bank is now converting itself into a personalised services provider.

Retailers would need to change the game from product centric to a service centric approach. Products are no more the differentiators. Consumers can locate products from anywhere and at varied price points with similar quality. Retailers need to adopt Omni-presence not only in the form of retailing but servicing as well, providing the customers a complete shopping experience. With the help of data integration and technological support consumers can be served across channels, where each consumer can have a personalised shopping experience. For eg. - a customer sees a sale at the store, sees few items they like on the e-commerce page, and receives a coupon from the store via email. When they go to the store, they can use the coupon, and know exactly what item they're getting. That's the kind of shopping experience consumers are looking for<sup>15</sup>. Retail as a service is not easy to play as it provides sustainable competitive advantage to retailers irrespective of the size of the company. 



<sup>13</sup>Sinha, P. K., Gokhale, S., & Rawal, S. (2015). Online retailing paired with Kirana—A formidable combination for emerging markets. *Customer Needs and Solutions*, 2(4), 317-324.

<sup>14</sup><https://www.ibef.org/industry/indian-rural-market.aspx>, as accessed on 12th July, 2018

<sup>15</sup><https://cybra.com/10-omnichannel-retail-statistics-you-cant-avoid/>, as accessed on 12th July, 2018



# Kompanero Eyes 100 EBOs by 2025

– By Charu Lamba

*Tier I and metro cities are the major markets for Kompanero since the customer profile of the brand comprises of middle-aged, travelling professionals with the sensibility of vintage yet contemporary fashion and appreciate artisanship...*

**O**ver the last decade, the accessory market in India has grown considerably, given that fashion accessories are no longer just extra buys in comparison to apparel. A wide range of products like bags, wallets, belts, jewellery, watches etc have transformed from need-based products to a want-based products, leading accessories to become a significant part of the retail fashion segment.

Betting big on this ever-growing demand for accessories, Kompanero started its journey from Bengaluru in 2014 and since then there has been no looking back for the brand.

According to **Indranath Sengupta, Director, Kompanero**, the brand has come a long way in just a few years' time.

"We have spread our wings and flown far west to Australia where Kompanero has achieved quite a cult following. We are proud to say we are available in more than 250 stores in Australia, and the brand is flying off the shelves faster than we can make accessories. We have also been building up a steady presence across the high streets of UK."

Internationally, the brand is available in Korea, Japan and Canada and has recently also entered into the US market.

"Closer home we have a network of 25 stores across the length and breadth of India," he states.

Nationally, the brand has stores in Tier I cities like Mumbai, Delhi, Kolkata, Bengaluru and Chennai in Tier II cities such as Coimbatore and Indore.



## Target Audience

Tier I and metro cities are the major markets for Kompanero since the customer profile of the brand comprises of middle-aged, travelling professionals with the sensibility of vintage yet contemporary fashion and appreciate artisanship.

“Generally, our customers are 27 years upwards. They are doctors, corporate directors, creative artists, designers and other accomplished professionals with a taste for vintage,” says Sengupta.

Apart from this, the brand is also focusing on tapping Millennials. It is planning to introduce products like slim wallets to cater to the younger

customers who are going minimalistic.

“We have more such innovative small leather goods lined up for 2019. These are easy on the pocket too for Millennials who are studying or in early stages of their career,” he says.

Sengupta says the brand prefers a combination of high streets and malls as that’s where its customer segment is. “Malls give us the advantage of footfalls whereas high-streets give us the ability to create that in-store experience we aspire to reach. We also love airports since our customers are folks who travel a lot and so we consciously focus on airport stores,” Sengupta adds.



**“ WE HAVE SPREAD OUR WINGS AND FLOWN FAR WEST TO AUSTRALIA WHERE KOMPANERO HAS ACHIEVED QUITE A CULT FOLLOWING. WE ARE PROUD TO SAY WE ARE AVAILABLE IN MORE THAN 250 STORES IN AUSTRALIA, AND THE BRAND IS FLYING OFF THE SHELVES FASTER THAN WE CAN MAKE ACCESSORIES. ”**

– *Indranath Sengupta,*  
*Director, Kompanero*

Apart from physical presence, the brand is also available on own e-commerce website, Amazon, Myntra and Jabong.

“Online business is the fastest growing area at the moment and we are quite focused on different digital marketing strategies to create brand awareness and increase overall sales,” says Sengupta.

## Product Range

Kompanero as a brand brings real vintage appeal, craftsmanship and sustainability for the customers. The product portfolio of the brand comprises of leather goods like sling bags, backpacks,

portfolio bags, messenger bags, travel bags and wallets.

“We are a complete leather vintage lifestyle brand.

This year we have also diversified into footwear and jackets. Soon we are going to introduce a range of full leather trolleys, some of which will be imported from Italy,” reveals Sengupta.


“As we focus a lot on handcrafting and artisanship, the labour costs are really high. However, we want to remain competitive in the leather accessories market hence the products are modestly priced to our competitors in this category. Average selling price of our brand is ₹6,000-7,000,” he adds.

Kompanero is also branching out to offer customers products that are sustainable, vegan, made from natural/ organic products, which are environment friendly. Their bags are made from naturally tanned leather, which is all the rage these days. The brand believes that customers have now become more conscious about the products they are investing in and hence there has been an increase in demand for eco-friendly products.

## Future Plans

The leather products brand is looking to take the total store count to 100 by 2025.

“In December 2018, we are scheduled to launch EBOs at Guwahati airport, Chandigarh airport, Chennai Express Avenue, R City Mumbai and 2 more stores,” says Sengupta.

“The average size of our stores is 500 sq. ft. with the largest store being over 1,000 sq. ft. In India, all our stores are company-owned, whereas outside India, we sell via multi-brand outlets and boutiques,” he concludes. 







# Homegrown Perfume Brands Bottle Scent of India, Give it a Global Attitude

– By Adesh Kumar Gupta, CEO, Liberty Lifestyle

*According to a study titled Perfume Market: Global Industry Trends, Share, Size, Growth, Opportunity and Forecast 2018-2023, the global market of perfumes is currently estimated at ₹2,000 crore and is projected to grow by 50 percent to ₹3,000 crore in the next five years...*

**F**ragrances signify who you are, they can influence human thoughts, emotions, moods, behavior and more than 80 percent of the human race can relate them directly to memory. Perfumes, a fragrant liquid, can indicate one's personality, style and individuality.

According to a study titled Perfume Market: Global Industry Trends, Share, Size, Growth, Opportunity and Forecast 2018-2023, the global market of perfumes is currently estimated at ₹2,000 crore and is projected to grow by 50 percent to ₹3,000 crore in the next five years.

According to another report called Global Cosmetics and Perfumery Glass Bottles Market, the sale of perfumes through e-commerce is further anticipated to witness significant growth during the forecast period, owing to the higher adoption rate of smartphones, as they offer convenience, in terms of comparing the availability of a wide range of products and prices.

## The Indian & Global Perfume Market

- The fragrance sector currently occupies 5 percent share of the total lifestyle market in India but is set to grow considerably.
- Gujarat contributes to approximately 6 percent of the total perfume market in India.
- The rising population, growing urbanisation, higher spending capacity and product diversification by manufacturers are major factors leading to increasing demand for perfumes.

The ever-growing industry of perfumes has today evolved into a mainstream business in the overall Cosmetics & Personal Care Retail Industry, and with the increasing emphasis on looking good and smelling good, has inched its way into becoming more than just a personal care accessory over the past few decades.

### Case Study: Liberty Lifestyle

Taking impetus from the growing needs of personal grooming, and the demand for youth oriented and exotic fragrances is on the rise, Liberty Group – a brand with a history of over 60 years in footwear retail – announced its foray into the world of luxury lifestyle retail with its new business vertical Liberty Lifestyle, in October 2018. Inspired by an unconventional spirit to live free, the new line encapsulates the idea of breaking free from the shackles of the stereotypical thought process and inspiring people to adopt the ‘Scent of Freedom’.

The target consumer for the group’s perfume brand is well-travelled, experienced,

yet rooted to Indian values. He is self-made and someone who wants to lead a comfortable life, a Millennial who leads life on his own terms yet appreciates the mix of old and new world. Keeping the key audience in mind, the brand gave a lot of thought to the pricing and design of perfumes, both of which play a crucial role in ensuring retail sales, luring consumers and turning them into buying, loyal customers.

It is important that the bottle speaks of the scent contained inside it and that is why a lot of care needs to be put into creating the bottles to the perfume. Liberty Lifestyle’s perfume bottles are

**FRANCE HOLDS A VERY DOMINANT PLACE REGARDING INTERNATIONAL PERFUME SALES, WITH DOMESTIC COSMETICS AND PERFUMES BRANDS BEING RECOGNIZED AMONG THE MOST INFLUENTIAL BRANDS ACROSS THE GLOBE.**

created with an aim to appeal to the young Millennial as well as Gen Z.

### Partnering the French

It is a known fact that French perfumes are considered the finest in the world. France is one of the largest markets for perfumery and cosmetic products in Europe and is hailed as the fashion capital of the world, with established perfume manufacturers based out of here.

France holds a very dominant place regarding international perfume sales, with domestic cosmetics and perfumes brands being recognized among the most influential brands across the globe.

The French fragrance market has been ranked second highest in the health and beauty industry in 2016, and it continues to thrive against the backdrop of a highly competitive environment, with Chanel, Dior, and Guerlain occupying the major share. Besides these top three players, more than 40 other different players also operate in the French perfumes market.

This is the main reason that Liberty Lifestyle chose only the best French perfumers to help marry their product’s notes perfectly.

### The India Factor

Packaging plays an important part of the aesthetics and functionality of cosmetic and perfumery products and can affect the consumers purchase decision about a particular product. Liberty chose a global look and feel for its bottles, while keeping India’s weather conditions as well as consumer budgets in mind.

Liberty Lifestyle has created unique scents which are crafted especially for

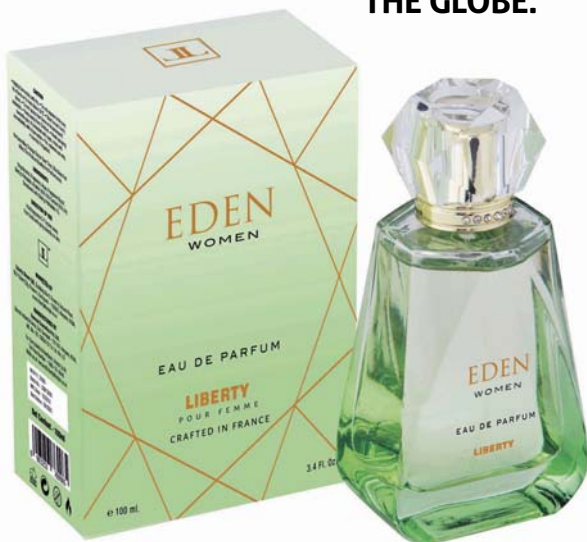
Indians – from opulent florals to off-beat ouds, the brand has created a collection that is sure to get noticed. The new Eau de Parfum range consists of twelve fragrances, with names like Flirt, Eden, Bloom, Bliss, Dream, Dusk for women and OUDGold, Legend, Passion, Marine, Rebel, Impulse for men along with an aftershave named Marine we hope to appeal to its customer base, including Millennial and Gen Z.

Liberty Lifestyle perfumes are already available at select Liberty stores. The online market is an equally important channel of sales and currently contributes ₹148 crore which is projected to grow by approximately 120 percent to ₹345 crore. Online market share of this category is currently 7 percent of the total perfume market and expected to increase to approximately 11 percent in the next five years.

Liberty fragrances are being sold on reputed e-commerce websites including Nykaa, Purple, Amazon, Myntra etc. Apart from this, perfumes are also available at exclusive Liberty Lifestyle kiosks in DLF Promenade Mall, Vasant Kunj, Delhi and Logix Mall, Noida.

The brand is looking at building an ecosystem for long term sustenance and is on the lookout for the right technology partners. It has big plans to market the product sufficiently to ensure it reaches the right consumer base and is gearing up to use its R&D capabilities to ensure quality products are being delivered.

Liberty Lifestyle aims to be present at various e-commerce platforms which are relevant to its portfolio and to cover the top 50 cities and 100 large format lifestyle stores and SIS partners by 2019. **IR**





**S**ince its launch in August 2016, Lodha Xperia Mall at Palava has become the new destination for shopaholics in and around Thane and Mumbai. With a plethora of options in premium and international brands across a bouquet of more than 135 stores and 8 large sized anchors spread across 4 floors along with a 6 screen-PVR cinema, Timezone and a foodcourt in the FEC rank, Lodha Xperia has everything for shoppers of all age groups.



In an exclusive interaction with IMAGES Retail, **Brijesh Pandey, Associate Vice President - Retail, Lodha Xperia Mall**, explains what makes Lodha popular among the Millennials. He also talks about the mall's growth, its successful journey so far and future plans.

### ***Tell us about Lodha Xperia, the largest destination mall in Thane.***

Lodha Xperia has created a shopping and lifestyle destination like none other in and around Thane. The mall which has been built by the Lodha Group has the perfect mix of anchor and vanilla stores across all categories, making it the one-stop destination for everyone to shop, eat and enjoy.



# Lodha Xperia: Thane's Largest One-Stop-Destination Mall for Shoppers of All Ages

– By IMAGES Retail Bureau

*Xperia, as a mall, has been successful in creating a brilliant equilibrium between International and homegrown brands, entertainment as well as F&B, making them hugely popular among the GenZ population in and around Mumbai...*

### ***Why did you choose Thane to build your mall?***

The mall is planned as part of a township project by name of 'Palava', spread over an area of more than 350 acres and occupied by approximately 27,000 residents of ours in Dombivali. Palava is growing city and we are sure that the mall will self-sustained in couple of years. The intent was to offer a world class experience in shopping with standard national and international labels and take the aspiration of residents a level up.

### ***International brands monopolise major limelight in malls. Do you think homegrown brands should be also given more space and value?***

Xperia as a mall has been successful in creating a

brilliant equilibrium between international and homegrown brands by offering each of the mammoth opportunities to showcase their offerings through the multiple communication mediums of the mall.

### ***Tell us about innovation in customer engagements.***

We have been incredibly successful in engaging our target audience, be it through our traditional mediums of Print & OOH or digital mediums such as Facebook, Instagram, websites, alliances, etc. Our events such as Xperia Fashion Week, Xperia Star, Indian Food Festival, etc. have been huge crowd-pullers. Overall, our holistic approach of engagement has enabled us reach massive landmarks in the industry.

### ***What has been your marketing and promotion strategy this year?***

We have managed to paint the town orange and blue, amplifying the popularity of Xperia Mall, by meticulously planning our campaigns and coinciding them with important dates of the yearly calendar. We have experimented with different mediums and have been successful in broadcasting the required communication.

### ***Is Lodha Xperia an Omnichannel mall? What are the tech innovations implemented in the mall?***

We believe that technology is the way forward for the global shopping centre industry. Personal consumer experience or the delight factor for an individual are things that need to be worked on. Once

we are able to replicate the same with the help of new-age technology that is when Omnichannelisation would make sense for us.

**Tell us about the design of the mall? What is your USP?**

The mall is developed with best in class finishes on store front, common area finishes which is mix of stone and

Then there is the coffee shop experience of Starbucks as well as Café Coffee Day.

The first floor has women's ethnic wear with the likes of Sabhyata, Cotton Culture, Suti, Biba and Mahuva. Footwear brands from Bata to Puma, activewear offerings from D:FY, Speedo, eyewear &optics from Hollywood Optics, Lenskart.com and men's casual wear from Mufti

our efforts to provide them the luxury they deserve. A thorough research and analysis while planning Xperia Mall, helped us gauge that consumers were keen to rate food offerings as a major factor in their experience of a mall. We simply decided to give our consumers the best.

Luxury Food courts are becoming a favourite among mall operators and real estate

**Tell us about your entertainment partners – Why did you choose them?**

PVR Cinemas are market leaders in their field. At Xperia, there is a 6-screen cinema to cater to the movies and entertainment needs.

Timezone in the FEZ category caters to the gaming needs of consumers in Xperia. They are one of the best in the



glass, the experience of utility and services from washroom to baby change units and a world class food court.

**Tell us about the zoning in your mall?**

The centre is balanced in zoning, which is well executed by the lease and design team. On either ends we have departmental stores which pull and distribute footfalls equally. Vanilla stores are in the centre of the mall. The ground floor has H&M, Forever 21, accessories from Aldo, western fashion from AND and Latin Quarters and an ethnic taste in the form of Global Desi, W. There are also unisex offerings from retailers like Being Human as well as footwear and men's formal and semi-formal wear offered by retailers like Zodiac, Oxemberg, Blackberry's.

to Spykar also on this floor.

The second floor has options on CDM&T, electronics, home improvement, furniture, gifting and toys, while the third level is dedicated towards food, with more than 20 outlets in QSR formats, entertainment provided with industry bests including Timezone & PVR, topped with casual and fine dining experience from British Brewing Company, PopTates, 29 States, KFC, Pizza Hut and East Asian Spic Co.

**Tell us about your food court? How different it is going to be from the rest?**

We, as a brand, believe in providing comfort to our consumers in all aspects, during their visit at our mall. The lounge-type seating in our food court translates

developers who see them as a part of an experiential retail strategy, and among consumers who are eating out more than ever and want authentic dishes to satisfy increasingly sophisticated palette. The concept is slightly different, where the food court acts as a stable anchor unit itself and increases the customers dwell time thereby increasing the customer spends too. The unique up-segment design has evolved the food court to transform in a food destination than the typical food court, helps drive more consumer traffic. This also gives us opportunity to induct and offer products made by local artisans, food-oriented boutiques, flea shops and other interactive elements such as entertainment, screening of sports and other media.

industry and are keen to take the gaming and FEZ to higher levels using their expertise to innovate by matching the advancement in technology and ability to churn games in the category.

Our research findings suggested that the combination of PVR Cinemas and Timezone in one location was the need of the region, hence, we partnered with best of the industry.

**What can we look forward to from Lodha Xperia in 2019?**

We are keen on sustaining the momentum that has been garnered over the past 2 years. Additionally, we are keen to explore different mediums that help us reach the maximum target audience. **LR**



In the 80s, pearl was a relatively unexplored market. The pearl sector mainly constituted of shops in the unorganised sector with designs that were wholly unexciting with quality control and fixed prices were unheard of. In a market dominated by the glitter of gold and diamonds, the subtle glow of pearls was not accorded much importance, until the opening of Chandrani Pearls in 1985.



By innovative marketing, honest prices, purity, integrity and exotic designs, Chandrani Pearls soon became a household name, not just in Kolkata but also pan India, with 58 showrooms. **Nisheeth Nayar, Director, Chandrani Pearls** talks about the successful franchising journey of his brand.

### ***Tell us about your franchising journey.***

We work on a FOFO model with nearly 80 percent of our outlets being run by franchisees. Our store formats and franchisee model is such that it is easy to operate and create profitability. In 2018, we have added new franchises in high potential Sec A & B towns, and also completely renovated our flagship store to give it a new and fresh look. We have also started expansion in the north with a showroom in Gurugram.



# Chandrani Pearls: Taking the Franchise Route to Expansion in India

– By IMAGES Retail Bureau

*By innovative marketing, honest prices, purity, integrity and exotic designs, Chandrani Pearls has become a household name, not just in Kolkata but also pan India, with 58 showrooms...*

***Based on your experience and expertise, what do you have to say about the understanding of franchising in India, especially if you have to compare it with the system seen in European or Western countries.***

Franchising in India is still in its growing phase. With the huge demand in all sectors, it is the fastest way for a company to penetrate the market and grow its operations. One of the biggest differences between India and western countries is that here franchise businesses are primarily family-owned, where the individual wants to take control of their finances. This is a huge opportunity in India, as young entrepreneurs in India are a growing number.

***Tell us about the nuances that are typical to franchising operations in India.***

Franchising in India is a very interesting concept. While it helps a franchisor expand its operations in an asset light format, finding a suitable franchise partner who shares the same vision as the franchisor can be a challenge. It is also a reason why franchisors appoint multiple franchisees instead of a master franchisee. The other thing that makes franchising interesting in India is that every area and city has different characteristics, which requires a very micro focus when selecting franchisees.

***What makes your brand a favorite with franchisors - things that you do for relationship and business building for them.***

We believe in creating lasting partnerships, and when we appoint a franchisee, they become part of our company family. We help them grow with us, and always

motivate them to be involved in the various aspects of running the business. Our reputation and integrity also help in establishing a confidence needed to take on a franchisee. We have developed systems to help the franchisee understand the nuances of the business and track and control the operations.

***As a franchisor, what do you expect from the franchisors?***

As mentioned earlier, we treat all franchisees as part of our family, therefore we ensure that any potential franchisee is a good fit with the company culture and vision. They need to be enterprising, aspirational, with a go getter attitude. They must be willing to take on challenges, and willing to invest in stocks, and good manpower, which really are the cornerstones of any successful business. ■



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