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HONORING THE BEST IN FOOD SERVICE

Images Food Service Awards 2019, presented by HUL's Knorr Seasonings and powered by Lulu Mall, were given away at the 12th edition of India Food Forum, held in Mumbai last month.

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THE RISE AND RISE OF FOOD DELIVERY APPS

How can F&B operators collaborate and partner with aggregators to expand the market

Featured inside: Chef Neelabh Sahay | Devesh Rawat | Vikram Rana | Rahul Gandhi | Chef Ravi Saxena



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What can you expect at a gathering that attracts the most eclectic bunch of cognoscenti from the Food Retail industry? As is customary at the annual India Food Forum (organised by IMAGES Group and publisher of FoodService India), the Conclave this year rippled with energy and its usual share of heat and light that the conferences, workshops, exhibitions, live shows and networking sessions radiated. Industry mavens who spoke on different themes and topics at the numerous panel discussions threw up interesting insights on the foodservice industry.

Discussions also led to information on trends, emerging concepts and categories, understanding consumer behaviour, and on marketing and F&B promotion strategies – all of which, as everyone agreed, require joint efforts of both suppliers and retailers. Pages 28 to 40 of this issue of the magazine offers a conspectus of the action at the India Food Forum. For those who were not there, we bring you interesting bytes and loads of information exchanged at the Forum.

Turn to pages 36 to 40 to find out about the winners of IMAGES Food Service Awards presented by HUL's Knorr Seasonings and powered by Lulu Mall. The winners were awarded glittering trophies and citations for demonstrating excellence in F&B operations across multiple formats. The selection process for the Awards involved inviting entries from the nation's leading food service operators across multiple categories. The Awards' Jury comprised eminent personalities from the fields of business, media, and research and consulting. The Jury analyzed key performance metrics such as growth in top line sales and retail presence, sales per square foot, same store sale growth. The Jury also studied the impact of IT application, innovation, marketing, supplier relations and employee practices.

My congratulations to the winners and my heartfelt thanks to all the participants at the Forum for making the show a great success.



Amitabh Taneja

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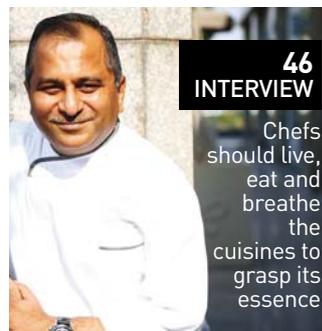
In an increasingly flourishing coffee-bar market, home-grown Eastern European coffee-shop brands are carving a niche for themselves. Two particularly successful examples are the Romanian fixed-price format 5 To Go and Serbian full-service specialty-coffee-shop chain Kafeterija.



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46 INTERVIEW

Chefs should live, eat and breathe the cuisines to grasp its essence

With over two decades of experience, nationally and internationally, and after honing his skills in multiple cuisines – from Italian to north Indian – he is an inspiration for several budding chefs in the business. Chef Ravi Saxena speaks to FoodService India about his culinary journey, about taking risks with a comfortable career at hotels and switching to restaurants, and sharing his professional wisdom for the benefit of aspiring chefs.

50 RESTAURATEUR

Focusing on the values of brand and breaking ground in niche markets

FoodService India speaks to Vikram Rana, MD, Vapour Bar Exchange, Gurgaon, about the challenges of opening a new restaurant in this competitive market and the marketing strategies necessary for the brand to stay relevant in this digital era.



52 F&B – MIDDLE EAST

Perfect Blend

Known for spectacular architecture and shopping malls, Dubai attracted more than 15 million tourists last year. Home to one of the world's highest number of restaurants per capita, the city is also considered a foodie paradise with almost endless dining out options. It comes as no surprise that the city of glitz and glamour attracts celebrity chefs from all segments, though mostly to be assigned to the fine dining scene. One of the latest additions to Dubai's hospitality landscape is Morimoto, one of 17 restaurants owned by Chef Masaharu Morimoto who is the face of contemporary Japanese cuisine.



50 GM SPEAK

Think global, act local, is the mantra at Marriott

Devesh Rawat, GM of Marriott Hotel, Indore, speaks to FoodService India about the role F&B plays in generating revenue at Marriott hotel in Indore.



Charcoal Concepts

Charcoal Concepts is a platform for specialized Indian food and beverage, founded by K Hospitality Corp, India's leading hospitality and food services corporation.



The company has a clear vision to conceptualize, incubate, develop and grow leading brands for Indian food and beverage, both in India and abroad.

Charcoal Concepts caters to global audiences and focuses on presenting the diversity of Indian fare, combined with progressive presentation, creative design and architecture and a captivating blend of flavours using classic culinary techniques. It aims to globalize Indian flavours, and lead the cuisine's evolution and growth in Indian and global markets.

Through its food, hospitality and impeccable customer service, this organisation is purely focused on taking Indian cuisine global. With investments in its infrastructure, the company aims to introduce patrons to its award-winning range of distinctive recipes, flavours and concepts, in India and abroad.

Charcoal Concepts manages few of the leading, award-winning Indian cuisine brands, serving millions of customers each year.

Copper Chimney, Contemporary Indian:

Established in 1972, Copper Chimney is one of Charcoal Concept's flagship concepts in the country. The brand is an ode to the secret recipes and cooking techniques envisioned by its founder **J.K. Kapur**, using influences from slow-cooked dishes across undivided North India, from Peshawar to Delhi. Copper Chimney makes all its dishes fresh every day, using spices of the finest quality, sourced from select farms to create flavours that are truly unforgettable. Over the years, Copper Chimney has become the leading contemporary Indian restaurant brand, and has recently forayed into international markets with outlets in the Middle East (with recent launches

in the UAE and Kuwait) as well, with an upcoming large launch planned in London, UK this year.

Karan Kapur, Director, K Hospitality Corp, says, "The uniqueness of Copper Chimney and the strength of brand has grown from strength to strength over the past 45 years. Through our focus on fresh cooking, high quality produce, and our secret recipes and techniques that have been carried over generations, we always strive to we deliver our promise of 'Indian Food, Made Unforgettable.'" It is one of the oldest and strongest Indian restaurant brands in the country which has maintained its equity by fulfilling a high quality, value for money, memorable food and beverage experience for families and corporates across the country. "By integrating the brand and investing further into its development, we are readying it for the next phase of growth to lead the development of Indian cuisine, grills and overall great Indian flavours," says Karan.

Bombay Brasserie (India) & Bombay Borough (International) Experimental Indian:

Serving progressive Indian cuisines, Bombay Brasserie, and its international avatar, Bombay Borough, is an all-day modern Indian bar and eatery. Rediscovering India through an explosion of flavours, Bombay Brasserie's menu features



Breaking it down for the new-age generations

FoodService India speaks to Chef Neelabh Sahay, Executive Chef, Novotel Kolkata Hotel & Residences, about his proficiency and skills as chef and the new-age trends that are catching on in the foodservice industry.



Tell us about your professional career and the milestones that have shaped your career?

My culinary journey has been amazing, filled with challenges, success and learnings. I started my career with Oberoi Hotels & Resorts and worked with them for around 9 years. I worked at more than five hotels of the Oberoi group within the country, which helped me get exposure to the different cuisines, cultures and styles of cooking. I do not call myself as a specialist of any particular cuisine but at the same time I regard myself as a versatile cook at ease with different cuisines thanks to my varied exposure during the initial years of my career. One of my career milestones came in August 2013, when I was transferred to the largest property of the chain, Trident Nariman Point. If The Oberoi Grand taught me the softer aspects of being a chef, Trident Nariman Point taught me all that can go wrong in such large operations.

Later, I joined as Executive Sous Chef at the newly launched Novotel Kolkata Hotel & Residences. After working for almost a year, the turning point in my life came when I became the Executive Chef and was responsible for managing the culinary operations of the entire hotel. This has been an enriching experience as it gave me direct insight and taught me some valuable lessons.

What do you think are your strengths as a chef?

I keep myself grounded by keeping my basics strong. I feel everything is about how strong a chef is with his/her basics. If that is in order, then you can build on anything else. Hence, I believe

that being grounded and getting the basics right is my key strength as a chef.

How do you look at the role of a modern-day chef?

A modern-day chef has to perform nothing less than magic in his/her kitchen. With exposure to so many TV shows and the digital world, today's guest is someone who is demanding and relentless when it comes to what he or she wants. The hallmarks of a chef then comes down to his professionalism and his ability to delight the guest. The chef has to achieve a balance between the impossible and possible things.

What is the one thing that is going to change the way food will be promoted in future?

Digital media is and will keep on changing the way food is promoted all across the globe.

Does India have enough trained and qualified chefs to meet the new emerging demands?

Yes, of course. More and more hotel management colleges are opening in the country and that is giving a platform to the young and bright chefs to sharpen their skills.

Which particular cuisines do you focus on and how have you seen it evolve over the years?

We focus on global cuisines at Novotel Kolkata Hotel & Residences. It's always exhilarating when you mix ingredients of diametrically opposite cuisines. I think, most chefs these days are trying to combine flavour combinations in this way. However, I feel that it is our Indian cuisine that



Brewing Success

In an increasingly flourishing coffee-bar market, home-grown Eastern European coffee-shop brands are carving a niche for themselves. Two particularly successful examples are the Romanian fixed-price format 5 To Go and Serbian full-service specialty-coffee-shop chain Kafeterija.

Flavia Fresia reports

The Eastern European branded coffee shop market looks buoyant. Romania, in particular, posted double-digit unit growth in 2018: + 25%, according to the latest Project Café Europe 2019 annual study published by the Allegra Group.

And while big international brands like Starbucks are entering new markets and driving their growth in others, local brands are also emerging and gaining strength.

The 100-unit-strong coffee shop chain 5 To Go was launched as a fixed-price concept in Romania's capital, Bucharest, in 2015 by Radu Savopol, a designer and restaurateur, and Lucian Bădilă, a 25-year-old barista and entrepreneur.

All hot coffee beverages (espresso, cappuccino, latte etc.) as well as other beverages (chocolate, tea, soft drinks) and snacks are priced at RON 5, little more than one Euro (approx. €1.05), and served in well-designed stores with an appealing and contemporary feel. "I wanted to come up with something new and fresh for the Romanian market," says Savopol. "Fixed pricing is not really an innovative concept for Europe or America, but in Romania it was not really developed. Research showed us that a good and well-prepared coffee could be sold at a fair price in good looking stores. We have gained the trust of our clients because we are offering them medium-premium products at a low price."





Local ice cream will continue to be patronized

Rahil Gandhi, Director, Vadital Dairy International Limited, speaks of his companies new marketing campaigns, withstanding the foreign competition and the growth of ice cream industry in India.



Rahil Gandhi

The ice cream industry in India appears to be going through a phase of churn with foreign brands giving a serious look-in to home-grown brands. What explains this sudden foreign interest in the Indian Ice cream industry and why are local brands looking to exit a business they have been associated with so long?

I don't think there is any sudden interest of foreign brands in India. As you may be aware, Hindustan Unilever Limited (HUL) had acquired the Kwality brand ice cream way back in 1995. Also, Cadbury had brought the Dollop ice cream brand in 1990. There has always been an interest in ice cream or the dairy sector by foreign brands. Ice cream, overall, is always in demand and liked by many and there has never been a sudden foreign interest in the industry. Of course, there are always some local brands that are on the lookout for interesting buyout opportunities to come their way. By and large, local ice cream still continues to be patronized and liked by many people.

Why is it that many of the regional players, despite their years in the business, have not really been able to scale up as desired? Why is it that regional players have not been able to become national brands?

Regional players, despite being in the field for long, have not been able to scale up at the desired size because ice cream is a very tough business to be in. We need to have effective distribution, high-end logistic support and be able to match the taste and preferences of consumers. But regional players have been able to scale up in their own territories. They could not grow further in other territories due to the higher transportation and infrastructure costs. Setting up depots is very expensive and not very profitable if they are farther away from your production base. Selling ice cream products in other far way territories poses formidable logistics challenges.

Do you think foreign players will be able to scale the business heights that Indian players have failed to achieve?

As I said, most home-grown regional players have done well and have amazing success stories in their own respective regions though that success has not been replicated at the national level. I don't believe it is that easy for foreign players to scale business beyond a point as the market is extremely competitive. Already, there are many big brands, multinationals, and major co-operatives in the market. They too have a tough time in catering to the territories where they are regionally weak. And good local players will always offer strong competition. Also, Indians are normally patriotic by nature and are loyal and patronizing of home-grown brands.

Is brand building a tough nut to crack in India's ice cream market, which is massively fragmented, unorganized and crowded with small players?

Definitely, brand building in ice cream is a tough nut to crack. You only need to look, for instance, at a State like Maharashtra where there are one or two local players in every district. But they find it hard to scale up beyond a point individually. In some pockets of the State, it is very difficult to cut across the locally preferred and accepted brands. If you look at Aurangabad district alone, there are about 10 local brands in the region. Add to the fact that there are other brands available as well, which makes the existing cold chain market very competitive regionally.





India Food Forum 2019 concludes on a thumping note

As the 12th edition of India Food Forum got up and running from 5th-6th Feb. at the Renaissance Hotel Mumbai, it once again shone the spotlight on a ground breaking agenda geared to reframe our understanding of the trends shaking up modern food retailing. Through an innovative format of Conferences, Exhibition and Awards, India Food Forum 2019 brought into play a powerful and cutting edge agenda that set an exciting tenor for two days of knowledge sharing and exchange of ideas among industry stalwarts.

The theme of the Forum this year – Charting the growth map for food grocery, food service and food startup in this fast, tech-savvy, digitally connected, demanding consumer-driven era – was aimed at building the roadmap for food retail business to accurately read the underlying opportunities and predict future consumption paths that the

Indian consumer will tread. Offering unique opportunities for networking and business ideas, and for exploring growth opportunities in the dynamic world of food retail, the Forum gathered with the mission to “accelerate food retailing excellence by generating ideas, insights, innovation and opportunities for profitable growth.”

With twelve years of stellar track record as India’s pre-eminent knowledge and business networking platform for food retail, India Food Forum 2019 once again brought together key decision makers from every part of the food retail ecosystem. Chaired by Krish Iyer, President & CEO, Walmart India, India Food Forum 2019 was power-packed with interactive and focused panel discussions, workshops, exhibition, Master-classes, product launch pads, awards and an array of other highlights.

The activities at the Forum this year had a thoughtfully curated and designed five structured zones – Food & Grocery



KRISH IYER
*Chairman, India Food Forum 2019
President & CEO, Walmart India*

Forum India, India Food Service Forum, India Food Retail Tech, Food Start-ups Innovation Convention, and the Golden Spoon Awards for excellence in Food and Grocery, Foodservice and for demonstrating innovation in the Food Start-up category. To keep the delegates connected with the next big innovations in food retailing, HoReCa and food technology, the Forum featured a





HONORING THE BEST IN FOOD SERVICE

Images Food Service Awards, presented by HUL's Knorr Seasonings and powered by Lulu Mall, were given away at the 12th edition of India Food Forum, held in Mumbai last month. The awards are given for excellence in different categories of Food Service, and recognised as India's most prestigious honour for F&B operators. India's most innovative, successful and revered brands and professionals across the food service sector were presented with the awards this year. Trophies were presented to brands, personalities and concepts for exceptional initiative, outstanding/focussed performance, setting efficiency benchmarks, innovation, and broader impact to India's foodservice industry.



The coming Home Delivery Boom

Food delivery apps are enabling demand through their swift expansion and this is further facilitated by the multitude of restaurants already dotting the landscape that are eager to cater to the supply side. The key question to keep in mind is how this market will pan out over the next few years, and what is in it for Foodservice operators and Foodservice companies to partner in this growth and drive it.

by K.S. Narayanan



Since time immemorial, India has been a nation of traders with millions of mom & pop stores and independent restaurants dotting the entire length and breadth of the country. These millions of establishments were able to address the needs of the billion-plus population and get goods & services delivered to the doorstep in their own limited manner. In recent years, there has been a tremendous transformation in this area with the advent of the 'on-demand service economy' in the food service industry space pioneered by the food delivery apps, including the likes of Swiggy, Zomato, UBER Eats, Food Panda and other players.

The traditional classification of the food industry was segregated in a rather simplistic manner between 'in-home eating' which includes staple grocery items, fruits & vegetables cooked at home, and 'out-of-home eating', which referred to hotels, restaurants and catering. The on-demand service economy has now introduced a third dimension in significant measure, i.e. out of home cooked food, but delivered and experienced at home.

The popularity of food delivery apps has surged exponentially within the past 3-4 years in India. Within the past year alone, one of the key delivery apps has expanded its presence from 15 to 45 cities, the number of orders per day has grown seven fold and their number of riders has multiplied 25 times. This merely reflects the tip of the iceberg, with this space currently seeing stupendous growth.

These food delivery apps are enabling demand through their swift expansion and this is further facilitated by the multitude of restaurants already dotting the landscape that are eager to cater to the supply side. The key question to keep in mind

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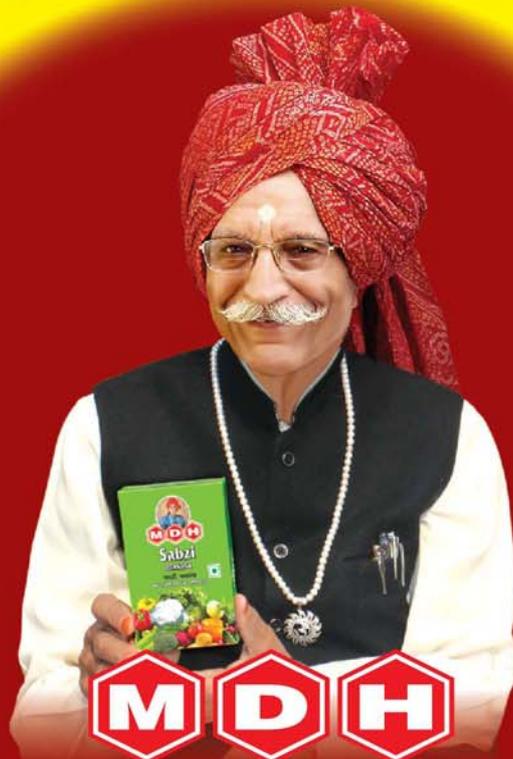
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