**Market Watch** 

How Retail Can Accelerate Vaccinations and Return to Normalcy? Events
Intelligent Process Automation
for the Retail Industry

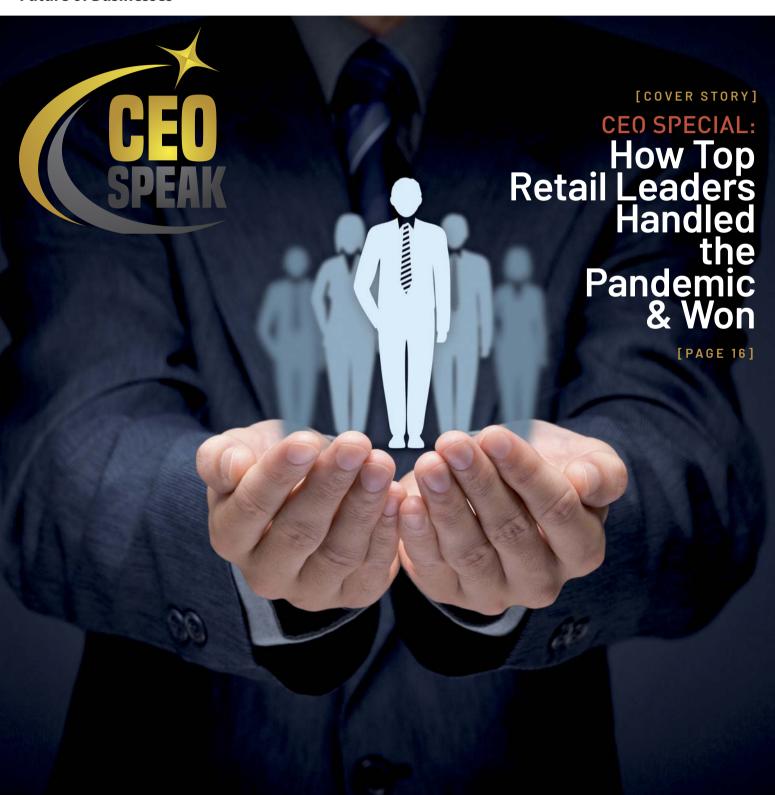
Customer Centric Transformation Technology & Data Help Retail Formulate the CX Journey pg 40

Research
Conversational Commerce
Helping Retail Get Back on Track

# I MAGES - I MAGE

**Future of Businesses** 

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It has been a tough one year for the Retail Sector. The onset of COVID-19 and the shutting down of stores and malls indefinitely was a challenge no one had predicted. The pandemic has been a oncein-a-lifetime test of business continuity planning for retail businesses across the globe. Even when things have stabilized to an extent and economies are gradually opening up, the industry is being confronted by a hard question - what's next? With little to no revenue in sight for months, brands and retailers turned to those who they have always looked upon to lead them when the going gets tough - their CEOs/ MDs/ Business Heads.

The January 2021 edition of IMAGES Retail brings to its readers, a curated list of decision makers, their strategies in countering the pandemic on grounds of planning, decision making, investing in new areas, resuming business, implementing digitization, technology, innovations and also ensuring safety to the employees and consumers.

The CEO Special will walk readers through the steps taken by them to bring the brand firmly on the road to recovery, innovative consumer experience, new technologies introduced, future plans and also highlight their leadership skills during this adverse situation.

A sound digital transformation strategy has become indispensable to retail today. While there have been numerous discussions and debates on the meaning and benefits of digital transformation, there are few real-life references of successful digital-led 360-degree retail evolution. The edition also features a session from 'PHYGITS LIVE' which was conducted on January 12, 2021. The session will walk our readers through a first-of-its-kind case study presentation showcasing retailers and technology partners jointly presenting a crisp PoC narration from challenges to solutions.

We also hope that the New Year brings a new hope - aside from new concepts, technologies and innovations for the retail industry, globally and in India.

As always, we hope you find the issue informative and useful. Log on to our website <a href="https://www.indiaretailing.com/">https://www.indiaretailing.com/</a> for more features, analysis and expert opinions.

Amitabh Taneja

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JANUARY 2021 | VOL. 20 NO. 1



## 8. National Newsmakers

### Indian Retail Sector Records Significant FDI Inflows Post Lockdown

Foreign Direct Investment equity inflows into India crossed the US \$500 billion milestone between April 2020 to September 2020, strengthening the country's credentials as an investment destination

# 10. International Newsmakers Brands & Retailers Report Upward Trend During Christmas-New Year Sales

Across the globe, the expanded 75-day holiday shopping season sales reported an upward trend in all retail categories. As a result, retailers entered 2021 with renewed prospects, hopes and norms, all the while waging a daily war on COVID



### 12. Market Watch

# How Retail Can Accelerate Vaccinations And Return To Normalcy?

The introduction of the COVID-19 vaccines in India will be the biggest launch of any product in one of the largest countries globally

### **36**.

### Events PHYGITS LIVE

### Intelligent Process Automation for the Retail Industry - Human and Digital Workforce

Reinventing the CFO toolkit: enabling process automation to be future ready



### 40.

### Customer Centric Transformation

### Technology & Data Help Retail Industry Formulate the Next Step in the CX Journey

Industry veterans share key insights on leveraging data, and emerging technologies like Al, AR, VR, etc., to attract, inspire and retain customers in the age of the 'New Normal'

### 44.

### Research

### Conversational Commerce Helping Retail Stores Get Back on Track in the 'New Normal'

Research by Feedback Advisory indicates that 'Conversational Commerce' is fast becoming the 'Go to Market' aide to get customers back to stores and offer phygital, contactless shopping experiences

### **COVER STORY (PAGE 16)**

# CEO SPECIAL: HOW TOP RETAIL LEADERS HANDLED THE PANDEMIC & WON

The pandemic has been a once-in-a-lifetime test of business continuity planning for retail businesses across the globe. Even when things have stabilized to an extent and economies are gradually opening up, the industry is being confronted by a hard question - what's next? With little to no revenue in sight for months, brands and retailers turned to those who they have always looked upon to lead them when the going gets tough - their CEOs

- » Enrich Focused on Consumer Experience & Innovative Initiatives to Recover Lost Ground During the Pandemic
- » Hidesign to Focus More On High Street Presence and Larger Experiential Stores
- » Burger Singh Expanded Presence from 8 to 13 Cities During Lockdown, With Stores in Gujarat & Punjab
- Soch to Add Newer Categories, Tweak Merchandise Mix & Innovate, While Keeping a Close Eye on Consumer Demands in 2021
- Senco Gold & Diamonds Look Forward to Seamless, Digital Led, Customer Centric Planning Strategies in 2021
- » Forming, Norming & Staging: 3 Strategic Stages Defined Metro Brand's Revival to Normalcy
- >> V-Bazaar to Open 7 More New Stores in This Financial Year
- "Live Chat & Video Assist Services' Helped Home Town To Record 3X Increase in Different Categories
- » Bikano Sales Volume Shot Up Remarkably During Lockdown & Have Been Consistent in The Unlock Phase
- "The Belgian Waffle Co. Opened 18 New Outlets (COCO and FOFO) from June to October"
- Easybuy To Strengthen Digital Presence, Omni-Journey And Will Reach 100 Stores In FY21
- » Lovely Bake Studio Tied Up With E-Commerce Platforms, Delivery Services To Reach Consumers Across India During Lockdown
- Firm Planning and 360 Degree Marketing Helped Tvisha Jewlz to Recover Lockdown Impede
- » Being Omnipresent Across All Channels Helped Build A Greater Brand Value for ORCO During Lockdown
- >> Ratnadeep Retail Eyes ₹800 Crore Y-o-Y Turnover by FY2020
- » Lacoste Saw a Quick Recovery Period, 40 Percent Sales from Online Platform
- » Better Conversion Rate, Revenue Increase of 20-30 Percent for Gempundit in 2020

National Newsmakers IMAGES RETAIL JANUARY 2021

### DESPITE GLOBAL SLOWDOWN, FDI GROWTH STORY IN INDIA TO CONTINUE INTO 2021



The high growth story of foreign direct investments into India will "go well" in the new year too as there

is a growing interest among overseas investors about the country amid the government's continuing reform measures to further improve the business climate. With relaxed FDI norms, defence production will be among the areas that will be looked at for fresh overseas investments in the months ahead while easing compliance burden of businesses will be a priority area, as per a report by news agency PTI.

Irrespective of the global slowdown and the COVID-19 pandemic, FDI into India recorded a significant jump, according to Secretary in the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) Guruprasad Mohapatra. Facebook's huge investment in Mukesh Ambani's Jio Platform helped India receive around USD 43.5 billion FDI during the January-September 2020 period and going ahead, the bullish trend is expected to continue.

"There was a global slowdown. We also thought that the growth patterns of FDI in India, which was very very encouraging, might decline post-COVID. But the decline has not happened and the FDI continues to grow well and now the general revival is there in the economy. I do not have any anxieties now, it (FDI growth) should go well in 2021," Mohapatra told PTI.

"In the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, the government imposed a nationwide lockdown in late March





to curb spreading of infections and the move had also severely impacted economic activities. The government has relaxed FDI norms in sectors such as defence production and that is also one of the areas "which one will look forward to", Mohapatra was quoted by PTI as saying.

According to him, some big ticket investments will keep happening as "overall there is an interest in India's growth story" particularly now because the worst part of the pandemic is over. After taking a lot of steps to significantly improve the ease of doing business, Mohapatra said, now the government is working to reduce compliance burden of businesses. Foreign direct investment equity inflows into India crossed the USD 500 billion milestone between April 2000 to September 2020, strengthening the country's credentials as an investment destination.

# INDIA TO BENEFIT FROM SHIFTING OF GLOBAL SUPPLY CHAINS FROM CHINA: FICCI



India could benefit from the likely shift in global supply chains from China to other economies in the aftermath

of the COVID-19 pandemic, according to a survey. The Ficci-Dhruva Advisors Survey conducted this month covered more than 150 companies in India.

"Another major outcome of COVID-19 is the likely shift in global supply chains away from China to other economies. Nearly 70 per cent of the survey participants have said India could benefit from this move and they expect a fair share of manufacturing to shift from China to India in the near future," said Ficci on the findings of the survey. Moreover, the prospect of introduction of a vaccine against COVID-19 early next



# **Brands & Retailers Report Upward Trend During Christmas-New Year Sales**

Across the globe, the expanded 75-day holiday shopping season sales reported an upward trend in all retail categories. As a result, retailers entered 2021 with renewed prospects, hopes and norms, all the while waging a daily war on COVID

By IMAGES Retail Bureau

# **US HOLIDAY RETAIL** SALES GROW 3 PERCENT, ONLINE SALES JUMP 49 PERCENT: REPORT



Retail sales in the US rose three percent during this year's expanded holiday season, running from October

11 through December 24, while online sales in the country grew 49 percent as compared to 2019, said a report by Mastercard. The findings underscore the shift to online spending, with e-commerce accounting for 19.7 percent of overall retail sales — up from approximately 13.4 percent in 2019, said the Mastercard Spending Pulse report.

"American consumers turned the holiday season on its head, redefining 'Home For The Holidays' in a uniquely 2020 way. They shopped from home for

the home, leading to record e-commerce growth. And consumers shopped earlier than ever before. Across our expanded 75-day holiday shopping season, sales were up three per cent, a testament to the holiday season and strength of retailers and consumers alike," Steve Sadove, senior advisor for Mastercard and former CEO and Chairman of Saks Inc, said in a statement. Home



furniture and furnishings experienced the strongest growth of any sector as compared to 2019, up 16.2 percent, and it grew 31 per cent online specifically, the results showed. In addition, home improvement rose 14.1 percent, with e-commerce sales grew 79.7 percent. Meanwhile, the apparel sector experienced a decline of 19.1 percent year over year, while electronics and appliances were up six per cent overall, said the report. Department stores saw overall sales decline of 10.2 percent and online sales growth of 3.3 percent, reinforcing the importance of Omnichannel offerings, it added.

### WALMART TO BEGIN **DELIVERIES WITH** DRIVERLESS TRUCKS IN



Taking its autonomous vehicle pilot with a startup called Gatik to the next level, retail giant Walmart

is now planning to start deliveries with driverless truck in the US state Arkansas starting next year.

"This achievement marks a new milestone that signifies the first ever driverless operation carried out on the supply chain middle mile for both Gatik and Walmart," Tom Ward, Senior Vice President of Customer Product, Walmart US, said in a statement.

The move comes after Walmart last year began an autonomous vehicle pilot with Gatik to move customer orders on a two-mile route between a dark store — a store that stocks items for fulfillment but isn't open to the public — and a neighborhood market in Bentonville, Arkansas. The pilot has since then registered over 70,000 operational miles in autonomous mode with a safety driver.



# How Retail Can Accelerate Vaccinations And Return To Normalcy?

The introduction of the COVID-19 vaccines in India will be the biggest launch of any product in one of the largest countries globally

By Rajendra Aneja

o, launching Wheel powder, is really sweating blood," opined Dr. Ashok Ganguly, the chairman of Hindustan Lever in 1989, as we worked through the tiny lanes of Dharavi. We had spent the entire day, working 35 shops in this crowded slum of Mumbai, to study how a new low-cost powder was faring. He had reviewed how the sales team was selling the powder. Our field force merchandised the powderpacks on the grocery shelves. Then, they ensured painting the walls with the green brand colours. Finally, they affixed posters on the doors of the shops. It was back-breaking labour, shop by shop.

The Distribution Challenge

As India begins launching the Covid-19

Dr. Ganguly's words, 31 years ago. Before a product, like a soup or a cooking oil, is launched in the market, it takes 12 to 30 months to conceive, plan and produce it. However, after the product is ready, it takes consumer goods companies just four to six weeks, to place it in about six to eight million supermarkets, wholesalers and small groceries (kirana shops), in India. The introduction of the COVID-19 vaccines in India, will be the biggest launch of any product, in one of the largest countries globally. Around one billion people across India have to be inoculated. So, the vaccines have to be packed appropriately, transported, delivered and stored in the towns and villages.

### **Government & Private Partnerships**

Countries like Russia, UK, USA and Brazil

are struggling to get the vaccines to their people expeditiously. The distribution of vaccines cannot be undertaken in a bureaucratic manner. We need some original, out-of-the box solutions. The rollout of the vaccines in various towns, presents an excellent opportunity to the retail trade, to contribute to the marathon task of vaccinating millions of citizens. The entire supply chain in retail, comprising of shopping malls, wholesalers, retailers and the corporations manufacturing dailyuse groceries can contribute to this endeavour. Governments should work closely with the private sector.

### **Shopping Malls**

Organised retailers like shopping malls and centres, have ample spaces in the restaurant and play areas. There areas



16 Cover Story IMAGES RETAIL JANUARY 2021



The pandemic has been a once-in-a-lifetime test of business continuity planning for retail businesses across the globe. Even when things have stabilised to an extent and economies are gradually opening up, the industry is being confronted by a hard question - what's next? With little to no revenue in sight for months, brands and retailers turned to those who they have always looked upon to lead them when the going gets tough - their CEOs...

### By IMAGES Retail Bureau



# CEO SPECIAL: HOW TOP RETAIL LEADERS HANDLED THE PANDEMIC & WON

t has been a tough one year for the retail sector. The onset of COVID-19 and the shutting down of stores and malls indefinitely was a challenge no one had predicted. Millions of retail employees lost their jobs. Retailers were left with little manpower as workers migrated to their native places, and with each day turning up huge financial losses, the situation has been chaotic and worrisome to say the least.

The pandemic has been a once-in-a-lifetime test of business continuity planning for retail businesses across the globe. Even when things have stabilised to an extent and economies are gradually opening up, the industry is being confronted by a hard question - what's next? With little to no revenue in sight for months, brands and retailers turned to those who they have always looked upon to lead them when the going gets tough - their CEOs/ MDs/ Business Heads.

In this crisis situation, every employee, be it a different business/company/store, looked up to its management for a solution and a time frame assuring their future prospective. The CEOs/ MDs/ Business Heads and other top honchos who had

authority to make decisions were in the line of line to take their brands out of the crisis and direct them on to a path to normalcy.

It is said that leadership is an influence. One doesn't lead by pointing at a place and asking people to go there. One leads by going to that place and making a case. Similarly, leaders from different brands had to lead from the front in this fight for survival. The last one year was time for some serious strategic planning, decision making, investing in new areas, resuming business, implementing digitization, technology, innovations and also ensuring safety to the employees and consumers.

The task for the leaders in the management was to offer perspective on major concerns, find measures that proved most successful in mitigating the human and business impacts of the virus, and to lift the operational emphasis shifted through the pandemic.



# Intelligent **Process Automation** for the Retail Industry - Humań and Digital Workforce

powered by



### Reinventing the CFO toolkit: enabling process automation to be future ready...

By IMAGES Retail Bureau

he last few months have imposed a steep learning curve for businesses across the globe. Organizations of all scale and sizes were compelled to re-think and reinvent operations, processes as well as roles, to sustain the catastrophic affects of the pandemic. Especially, CFOs were at the heart of this evolution and were forced to assume greater roles in wake of the pandemic.

In an attempt to re-invent the CFO toolkit enabling process automation to be future ready, PHYGITS LIVE (India's first Digital Transformation Strategy Summit) conducted a session titled, 'Intelligent Process Automation for the Retail Industry - Human and Digital Workforce', on January 12, 2021. The session was powered by Automation Anywhere.

The session was moderated by **Sumeet Pathak**, Digital Workforce Evangelist - IMEA, Automation Anywhere. The other panelists were:

- >> Tanmay Kumar, CFO, Spencer's Retail & Natures Basket
- >> Pratap Swarup, CFO, Bestseller India (Jack & Jones, Only, Vero Moda, Selected Homme and Junarose)
- » Arun Ganapathy, CFO, House of Anita Dongre (AND, Global Desi, Grassroot, Pinkcity)
- >> Pramod Dangaich, CFO, Infniti Retail (Croma)
- >> Harshal Ambani, Executive Director, Intelligent Automation, Digital, KPMG India

Sumeet Pathak kickstarted the session by welcoming the panelists and also introduced the topic of discussion to the panel.

"It's no longer enough for CFOs to simply oversee the finances at the

# **Technology & Data**

Help Retail Industry Formulate the Next Step in the CX Journey

Industry veterans share key insights on leveraging data, and emerging technologies like AI, AR, VR, etc., to attract, inspire and retain customers in the age of the 'New Normal' . . .

By IMAGES Retail Bureau

ver the last few months. the Coronavirus pandemic has led to an unparalleled shift in the way both retailers and consumers view and utilise technology. Over the last few months, we have seen how digital technology has firmly established itself as one the most important factors driving innovation and consequent business success for enterprises. As we accustom ourselves to the 'New Normal', the traditional template of retail has been completely overhauled - brands and retailers are now compelled to step up their reliance on the power of modern technology to create new values and richer experiences for consumers.

In order to comprehend the new ways of consumer engagement and the ways by which retail businesses can leverage data, and emerging technologies like AI, AR, VR, etc., to attract, inspire and retain customers in the age of the 'New Normal', Phygital Retail Convention (PRC) hosted a session titled, Customer **Centric Transformation: Formulating** The Next Step In CX Journey.



The session was moderated by Piyush Chowhan, Group CIO, LuLu Group International, UAE and featured a handful of the most eminent names from the Indian retail industry as panelists, including:

- >> Sandeep Jabbal, VP- IT, Jubilant **FoodWorks**
- >> Krishnan Venkateswaran, Chief Digital & Information Officer, Titan Company
- >> Pankaj Singh, Director National Chain Stores & E- Commerce, Levi Strauss & Co
- >> Thomas Reju, Country Digital Manager, IKEA India

TIMELY RESPONSE



**SERVICE** 









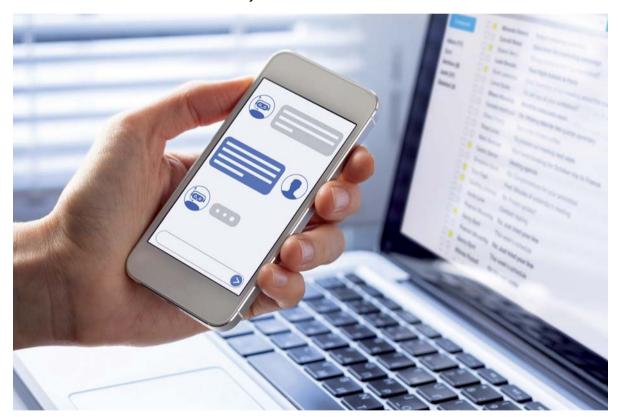


**CUSTOMER** SATISFACTION 44 Research

# **Conversational Commerce Helping** Retail Stores Get Back on Track in the 'New Normal'

Research by Feedback Advisory indicates that 'Conversational Commerce' is fast becoming the 'Go to Market' aide to get customers back to stores and offer phygital, contactless shopping experiences. Brands are now adapting 'Back to Store' practices as well as are trying to meet their customers where they are...





eedback Advisory, an endto-end Market Research and Advisory firm, has recently conducted a survey on the impact of COVID on the Indian Retail industry, with a focus on practices that retailers are adapting to accelerate their path to recovery post lockdown.

40 + leading retail brands were interviewed for the survey and different solutions probed, including Easyrewardz Shopster, Capillary Store2Door, Yellow Messenger, and others. The key findings have shed light on 'Conversational Commerce' being the 'Go to Market' aide to get customers back to stores and offer phygital, contactless shopping experiences. Brands are now adapting 'Back to Store' practices as well as are trying to meet their customers where they are.

The retail industry has traditionally depended on 'Walk-in' Customers,

however, the current COVID crisis has created a complete breakdown of its sales cycle.

The industry, which is one of the key pillars of the Indian economy and contributes 10 percent to the GDP, is estimated to be around US\$ 600 billion. India is considered to be one of the top 5 retail markets in the world powered by its 1.3 billion population.

The pandemic impacted Indian retailers in an unprecedented manner,



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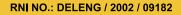
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