

CONVERGENCE OF PHYSICAL AND DIGITAL BUSINESS

# PHYGITAL

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| COVER STORY |

## BUILDING A BOND

How are brands redefining the concept of customer-centricity by using varied marketing stances to alter customer approaches!

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| FOCUS: MARTECH |

Getting insights from leading marketers to decode marketing trends, cutting edge strategies, and the pulse of the marketing universe

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## FROM THE CEO'S DESK

### Let's talk technology-disruption



According to latest reports 68% of marketing leaders still face challenges utilizing their stacks' full breadth of capabilities. However, COVID has accelerated the use of marketing technology stack and all across industries, businesses are introducing newer streams of technology to make their customer approaches tighter and seamless.

Marketing is also becoming a key aspect for businesses considering the movement of brands into the omnichannel territory. This further accelerates adoption of technology. In an effort to witness this trend more closely, we have dedicatedly spoken to 'marketers' and leaders walking the talk with marketing in their businesses. Some tips, few truths, and much more awaits you in this issue.

Apart from talking about the issue, I also want to mention that this year's Internet Commerce Summit was a truly star-studded event. We have just wrapped the 2-day gala with many new thought starters and we will be bringing to you an exclusive coverage of ICS 2021 in our next issue. The next issue will be a bumper, as we are also covering snippets of our on-ground big event of the year -PRC in the next issue.

Phygital Retail Convention, this year will be a physical event and take place at Renaissance, Mumbai. It will be a power-packed 2 days on 10th and 11th November, as we welcome 200+ speakers, 500+ delegates under one roof. Assuring you of intriguing insights, conversations, and much more, we invite you to be a part of PRC to witness it all in-person!

Like always, extend your unending support and make this event a grand success.

**Bhavesh Pitroda**

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## LAST WORD



### Making the most with marketing

Be it traditional marketing avenues or the new-age marketing channels & techniques, there is so much to grasp and understand when it comes to the changes happening within the 'marketing universe'. While traditional brands are routeing for influencer marketing, D2C brands are vouching for word of mouth, and then there is innovation too. It is all a new world and there is no 'one size fits all' theory.

In fact, marketing as a function is no more just a one-man show or just restricted to the marketing teams of individual companies. Marketing is a conversation open for discussion, all across board and CEOs, CFOs, and the top-management are gladly pouring in their insights to make marketing a big pivot for change for their companies.

With so much happening, we decided to shift attention to 'marketing' space and wanted to look closely to see how technology is helping accelerate the conversation with customers for businesses. With exclusive opinions, insights, trend stories, and interviews, this issue has a lot in store for you.

Leaf through the pages to check how you can make every bit of Martech work in your favour for your brand.

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**STRAIGHT TALK**

*In conversation with marketing leaders from across the industry to grasp newer concepts and brand-plans.*



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**TREND WATCH**

**76. Click, share, like: Rise of influencer marketing wave**  
Influencer marketing does not involve celebrities. Instead, it revolves around influencers, people who have become famous within the social media space owing to their content or the type of trends they follow. Through this feature we decode the trends and get brand insights on the subject of influencer marketing.



**DEEP DIVE**

**72. Marketing that packs a punch**  
With conversational marketing ruling the roost in e-commerce today, it is important for sellers to understand its rules and nuances so that opportunities can be tapped effectively and

excesses can be done away with. We get an opinion from owners of D2C businesses to understand a key segment of conversational marketing – WhatsApp and SMS marketing.

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Parinee, a reputed 50 plus years old real estate organization, founded by Mr. Dilip Shah headquartered in Mumbai, is a real estate group engaged in the flagship business of construction and provides housing with a vision – a vision to provide luxury, class, and lifestyle across the city. Today, Parinee Group is the first to introduce Phygital office spaces in the country through their projects 'Billions' in Worli.

## SNAPSHOTS



### LICIOUS TURNS INTO UNICORN AFTER FUNDING OF \$52 MILLION

Following a round of fresh fundraise, Licious, has shifted paradigm yet again by emerging as India's first D2C Unicorn. The tech powered, D2C fresh animal protein brand in the country, achieved a billion dollars valuation post receipt of funding worth \$52mn led by IIFL AMC's Late Stage Tech Fund. The D2C market in India is at an inflection point and is expected to attain a size of 100bn+ by 2025. The pandemic has played a major role in accelerating growth for the sector. Despite this, the sector failed to produce a Unicorn until Licious. D2C has the obvious advantage of direct consumer connect that helps them identify gaps and position their products accordingly. However, they also must go through the rigor of building a robust infrastructure that can sustain growth & enable quick scale-up. This needs a bottom-up approach & discipline from Day 0- a rare accomplishment that Licious was able to unlock. The achievement of Licious Unicorn status is expected to not only further the journey of the brand but unlock the next level of opportunities for the animal protein sector through an inflow of investment, talent & the emergence of more start-ups that will help raise the bar in all aspects.

### LAKME JOINS PETA US TO PREVENT COSMETIC TESTING ON ANIMALS

Lakme has joined hands with PETA US 'Global Beauty Without Bunnies' programme. This programme certifies and encourages brands not to carry tests for cosmetic and personal care products on animals. PETA also mentioned that Lakme, which is owned by Hindustan Unilever, will now feature the programme's PETA-approved bunny logo on its packaging.

Sumati Matti, Head of Innovation LAKME mentioned, "Not testing any

of our products on animals is critical to our values at Lakme and is in line with Unilever's Positive Beauty



### FLIPKART PAY LATER AIMS TO PROVIDE CREDIT TO OVER 100 MILLION NEW CUSTOMERS

Ahead of the festive season, the e-commerce giant Flipkart has extended its services on 'Pay-Later' that will drive affordability and convenience to its customers. The 'Flipkart Pay Later'- EMI will facilitate an amount upto Rs 70,000 which can be paid over fixed tenures of 3, 6, 9 and 12 months for its eligible customers to enable them to make big purchases in this festive season.

Ranjith Boyanapalli, Head-Fintech and Payments Group at Flipkart, commented on this matter "Many high-value purchases are made during the festive season. He also added that "We have strengthened our EMI offerings to ensure that customers can manage finances and expenses judiciously during this period. In the times to come, we will continue to explore partnerships that can help customers upgrade their lifestyle affordably."



'Flipkart Pay Later' will become open to all products. Today over 100 million pre-approved consumers already have access to the product. With this expansion, online consumers beyond the 100 million who do not have direct access to credit to fulfil their shopping needs will also be able to apply for the product by providing the required information, an official statement highlighted.

With 'Flipkart Pay Later' becoming an open to all construct, Flipkart aims to bridge the gap between access to credit and consumers aspirations, making this festive season better than ever for consumers across the country.

vision." She further added that "PETA's 'Beauty Without Bunnies' programme is recognised worldwide for its high-quality standards and rigour, and we are proud to be a brand that is officially PETA-approved. With Lakme's range of high-performance and world-class cosmetics, skin-care products, and beauty salons, women can own their look while knowing that the beauty and safety from our products are from scientific alternatives to animal testing".

## | COVER STORY |

# Building a bond

In today's retail arena, the idea of 'customer-centricity' has changed way beyond anything we knew until a few years back. It is no longer an option, but a must to know your customers better because only they can help you get more leads and more business. Also because, the retail space is bursting with brands, so if you fail to know your TG, someone else will and that will adversely affect your brand's standing.

**Understanding** customers will also give you a chance to give them good service, which in turn results in strong customer relationships and new sales through positive word-of-mouth recommendation. However, understanding the customers' psyche is not easy and most often requires a thoughtful analysis to identify their preferences or purchase patterns so that you can anticipate their needs and exceed their expectations. Here is what the CEO & Founders of some top D2C brands have to say about their customer-centric approaches.

## Creating a digital pathway

"Digital innovations have made customer acquisition more democratic. Earlier there was a high entry barrier because acquiring customers from

offline channels needed more investment. With digital innovations, it is in reach of more brands and people. Now every customer feels connected to the brand directly, because they can directly talk to the brand through various digital channels. This brings the retail companies to talk to the customers directly. According to me, retail is tilting towards service also. Content is part of servicing, more than retailing. Every retail company will have to opt for content strategy so that they can build a communication channel with the customer. The most exciting advancements in ad tech and martech is that non-technical marketers can also use them. Few years back we used to set up a tech team to build an ecommerce platform, but not anymore. Shopify has made it very easy for non-tech people to start ecommerce businesses. Social media

platforms are also enabling commerce, which will make the social commerce to grow and more and more companies and individuals will be using ad tech and martech platforms via these new age ecommerce platforms," **Rana Atheya, CEO and founder of DogSpot.** in mentions. DogSpot.in is India's most visited dog portal and e-store. A product and customer management professional, Rana founded DogSpot.in with an aim to ease pet parenting woes and bring knowledge and insight to the larger community.

Today, DogSpot.in is the largest pet community site in the Asia-Pacific region and has registered organic growth year on year. In 2016, the company received funding from Ratan Tata amongst others and has since then grown stronger adding new products to their line up and furthering their goal of helping people be better



## | OPINION |

# Automation: Some truths & thoughts

Automation today is many things, but what it actually is and how it can help retail is a big question. Let me try and answer a few things, to the best of my abilities.

BY SANDEEP PARIKH

**Evolution** brings about change. There is no denying that. In terms of work, each revolution brought about change and with it a lot of anxiety and job loss theories. However, history is witness to the fact that at each step the nature of work has changed so did the locations in a few instances e.g. automotive manufacturing moved out of Detroit however people are still in jobs.

So the short answer is yes, automation will have an impact on people at the bottom of the pyramid, people who do non intelligent, error prone, manual work will get automated. But they will quickly re skill and do more intelligent and interesting work. So in the end, they will benefit.

Important to note here is that the world in general (barring countries like India, to some extent China, some in Africa and parts of Asia) has a greying population. In about 10 years time there will not be enough people to do the work at hand so there is not going to be any dearth of work.



#### About the Author:

*Sandeep Parikh is the Author of Automation Conundrum and has over 25 years of experience across organisations such as EY, Unilever, ICI, Microsoft, Genpact. He is an innovative, hands-on executive, who has a record of leveraging technologies to help create economic value for organizations and stakeholders across industry sectors. Sandeep is an Electronics Engineer and a postgraduate in Sales and Marketing Management.*

#### Looking closely

Retailers and consumer organisations are looking at revamping their approach towards consumers. In the past their pitch was mainly pivoted around their respective product or service however now it is about personalization and end user experience.

*Let me give you some examples.*

1. Consumer product companies in partnership with large format retailers are using automation and associated technologies to ensure their shelves are stocked with the right quantity of products at all time
2. Computer vision helps ensure promotions are being run effectively and yielding results
3. Top luxury brands offer you the ability to create 3D avatars of yourselves and try out different looks...you can then order clothes accordingly

| FOCUS |



(L to R) Luke Coutinho & Narendra Firodia, Co-Founders, YouCare Lifestyle

## Right lifestyle choices in just a click!

YouCare Lifestyle, is a unique online retail marketplace that brings together products and services under one roof that can add value to our health and lifestyle. With a clear focus on supplying quality to the buyer as its prime offering, the online marketplace retails a product line made up of established holistic and wellness products. The marketplace brings to life the vision of preventive healthcare seen by its Founders.

**This** is an online marketplace that not just connects farmers and vendors across the country, but also caters to a growing community who follow holistic living. As an online retail store that is a free-trade platform, every rupee on YouCare Lifestyle goes back to the farmers directly, eliminating middlemen and other costs. The platform has an extensive chemical free and natural products catalogue covering various lifestyle categories like food, nutrition, skincare, cosmetics and books

to clothing, fitness and accessories. YouCare Lifestyle as a platform makes available products created not just for the right food chain but built for a community that supports holistic lifestyle and living. YouCare Lifestyle is a story of a small brand coming out and making a difference to everyone's life and health. A story that stands out by its offering of continued value addition to the market and putting together an e-commerce platform that caters to all those looking for healthier lifestyle alternatives.

## | E COMMERCE |

# Business Talk

Amazon Business turns 4! In conversation with Suchit Subhas, Director, Amazon Business to decode the journey.

BY YASH BHATIA



**Online** wholesale marketplace Amazon Business has completed four years of being a platform of trade for MSMEs. Through this tenor, it has seen an increase of 39% in monthly users and also catered to Tier-II and III markets with a 30% and 25% customer base, respectively. During the pandemic, the company also kept its employees safe by creating a dedicated COVID supply.

According to a report by IBEF, MSMEs sector in India increased by a CAGR of 18.5% from 2019 to 2020. In the Union Budget 2021, the Government also announced funds of Rs.10,000 crore for 'Guarantee Emergency Credit Line', which act as a major boost to the sector.

On this occasion we talked to **Suchit Subhas, Director, Amazon Business**, to gain an insight on new partnerships, business enhancement and innovation.

**How is Amazon Business helping MSMEs for all their business procurement needs?**

Since its launch in 2017, Amazon Business has always aimed to empower MSMEs as a one-stop destination with over 15 Cr GST enabled products across top categories to cater to their distinct business needs. Coupled with a strong delivery network that has a presence in 99.6% pincodes in India, our focus has been to simplify purchasing for businesses and help them reduce cost to improve profitability.

There are over 4 lakh sellers selling to business customers on Amazon Business. By partnering with our sellers, Amazon Business has also launched stores relevant to the different needs of businesses such

## | STRAIGHT TALK |

# The right approach

One of the country's top digital marketers, Sameer Jain, presently working as VP - Digital Marketing & Sales with Max Life Insurance Company Limited, is responsible for building the brand through digital marketing and creating awareness about the company with the consumers via new-age marketing avenues.

**Context** holds a lot of importance for Sameer, and he says that understanding consumer intent and thereby delivering as per the context through the right marketing techniques is key to gaining maximum customer hook. "Consumer behaviour is ever changing and the change has further got amplified since covid. Digital innovations for customer acquisition aim to tap into consumer mindshare and catch them at the right moment on the right platform. For instance, creating customer engagement is now a proven formula for life time value as well as new user acquisition. Instagram stories, WhatsApp BOT, OTT content integrations help brands connect with their target audience and eventually drive engagement and business," Sameer highlights when setting the pedestal for customer acquisition.

## Content over commercials

"Advertising is getting more and more crowded with multiple brand and industries eyeing for consumer attention and click through. Similarly, users have evolved to a stage where they have become successful at avoiding advertisement commercials sub consciously. Content on the other hand is more pull than push. With the relevant content you are trying to answer some of the queries that

users have and eventually initiate a conversation," Sameer mentions when talking about content and how and what is driving the space at present.

## Customer retention

Sameer adds, "Retention for me is directly proportional to engagement. If you are able to engage your customers with intuitive conversations and tools that impact their day to day life, then retention is an invariable outcome. For ecommerce it could mean frequency of visits per user on the platform, for travel number of blogs read, for insurance life event based meaningful financial planning conversations and so on".

## Closer to customer in Pandemic

"Making our communication contextual to what the customers were going through in the pandemic versus proposition/event based communication earlier helped us connect better. Making all touchpoints and processes digital also helped us transform a physical business into a phygital one. Lastly, customer experience plays a very big role for any organisation. Having constant listening posts is key to improving customer experience. One of the biggest mistakes we make as marketers is when we try to retro fit what he consumer wants into what we would



## | BRAND VIEW |



# On Track

India's e-commerce industry has witnessed a huge surge during the pandemic. Pickrr, understanding the trends streamlined the logistics solutions for e-commerce & D2C brands with data intelligence. The brand's recommendation engine selects the best courier platforms across the country and provides the customers with the best options available. Along with that, the sellers get access to the best delivery SLA.

**Pickrr** is India's No.1 exponentially growing End-to-End Logistics and Technology startup founded in 2015 by IIT and ISB Alumni with strong entrepreneurial backgrounds and deep domain expertise. Pickrr, has introduced Artificial Intelligence to simplify users journeys. Using AI, the brand wishes to keep a track of the warehousing needs of their sellers. They integrate the data from all the warehouses and match it with the demand patterns to identify the demand centres. "So, we are in a better position to put the inventory close to their demand centres. Better warehouse management leads to quick delivery. As the transit time is reduced, so do the costs. This, in turn, leads to lesser returns. We have also made sure that we collaborate with the best players in the market. We already have FedEx, BlueDart, Delhivery, DTDC, Ecom Express, EKART and XpressBees on board. All of these players have an excellent track record of handling millions of monthly orders professionally. This too helps us in fulfilling our orders quickly. We aim to provide 1-2 days delivery to our customers. But in the coming months, with our hyperlocal delivery partners, we will be able to offer 4-5 hours delivery too. This will be limited to selected cities, as of now, but we wish to expand it further once the machinery starts to function like a well-oiled one," Rhitiman Majumder, Co-Founder & CEO at Pickrr mentions.

In conversation with **Rhitiman Majumder** we try to understand the brand's growth journey and how it is disrupting the logistics space in India.

**What strategy have you been following in order to make your presence in terms of first to last mile fulfillment stronger in the Indian market?**

We follow a multi-faceted strategy to make our first to last-mile fulfillment stronger in the Indian market. We have talent across all spheres and levels. While the tech team has been our key focus, we also focus on field-level professionals to facilitate seamless

services at the bottom line.

Secondly, we update our tech stack to ensure sellers get a smooth experience while executing their bulk orders. With Pickrr's integrated dashboard, sellers can manage thousands of orders with a single click. We have also launched a mobile application to help e-commerce companies and D2C brands further streamline their operations, gain direct access to customer data, and analyze

orders.

Finally, through Pickrr's intelligent e-commerce fulfillment/warehousing solution, Pickrr Plus, sellers can deliver their customers' orders within 1-2 days. We have set up four warehouses across India to give the sellers direct access to our storage solutions without making any upfront investment.

Meanwhile, to keep track of the last-mile deliveries, our tech platform

# 87%

## of D2C businesses struggle to become profitable.

As a leading full-stack D2C enabler, we help brands exponentially grow their exclusive online channel with a Technology driven and Performance oriented approach towards operational ease & enhanced conversions.

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