

Shopping Centre News

DEVELOPING RETAIL SPACES IN INDIA

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Malls Should Use Omnichannel Solutions To Improve Their Customer Experience

The COVID-19 crisis and its aftermath have led to dramatic shifts in consumer behaviour. A few years back, a customer's journey used to be a single trip to the store, but things have changed now. The future of shopping is here. Customers expect malls to cover their needs, irrespective of the channel that they use.

For shopping centers, this results in a specific need for action through the expansion of their offerings to online channels and via the combination of all brick-and-mortar and digital channels to provide an omnichanneling experience. All the progressive malls have already adapted to the increasing changes in customer preferences and are now recording sales that equal almost their pre-COVID numbers. The malls have started putting more money into their digital presence. Curbside pickups are also beneficial for malls, retailers and customers. Even malls are putting a lot of money into social media marketing and influencer marketing to increase their reach, especially amongst the tech-savvy Millennials.

Being always ahead of the curve, we had predicted in 2017 that Omnichannel was going to rule the roost in coming times. Now it is more pertinent than ever to finally move the mall businesses toward an omnichannel route to increase the profitability for all the stakeholders involved. Services such as Click & Collect or Click & Reserve can be converted into brick-and-mortar purchases and, thus, into additional turnover.

One crucial factor is that today's shopping centres already meet the requirements for transformation into omnichannel platforms: a broad range of products and assortments, an established partnership with brick-and-mortar retailers, the physical vicinity to customers, a good connection to city transport networks, and existing logistical infrastructure. For shopping centers, this results in a specific need for action through the expansion of their offerings to online channels and via the combination of all brick-and-mortar and digital channels to provide an Omnichanneling experience.

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



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Retail Real Estate Reaching Pre-COVID Levels; Festival Provides Boost

Mall sales are resuming in a big way ahead of the festive season. As a result of pent-up demand and positive consumer sentiment. This positive change has resulted from a managed COVID scenario and an increase in vaccination drive. Things are looking up for retail real estate, and there are plenty of positive indicators.

By Shopping Centre News Bureau



Online Deliveries help Nexus Malls to recover 90% of its business

Nexus Malls has achieved a 90% business recovery because to a variety of technological and operational solutions, including a cooperation with retailers to enable online deliveries from mall locations. Online orders from mall shops also provided a strong source of money for the mall, as the bulk of their brand collaborations have a revenue-sharing component, meaning that the more transactions completed at these stores, the more revenue the mall receives.

F&B, as well as beauty shops like Nykaa and Sephora, toy stores like Hamley's, and several fashion labels, handled the majority of these online orders. Furthermore,

Nexus Malls engaged in retailer marketing programmes and created concepts such as 'shop and win,' which encouraged customers

to spend more, ensuring that even if mall attendance was lower than usual, customers spent more than the average.

In addition, the group has focused on enabling contactless ordering at food and beverage establishments. Nexus Malls will introduce FastTag parking at its Bengaluru malls, which would scan the tag at the mall's entrance and deduct parking costs money automatically at the exit. This is expected to significantly minimise the time spent waiting at automobile parking exit locations. The brand claims to have maintained a 95% occupancy rate and now seeks to regain 100% of 2019 business by the end of December.



DLF planning to build malls on lease model

DLF is considering to develop two large malls as well as small shopping centres on a lease model. DLF will launch a new range of localised malls in residential localities and add two large malls in city centres in the coming months to expand its retail portfolio. DLF had on Thursday reported net profit of ₹378.12 crore for the quarter ended September, a two-thirds jump from ₹227.75 crore a year earlier, buoyed by improved demand in the residential business.

According to sources, while the localised malls will come up in Gurgaon, the big malls could be in Goa and Chennai. DLF operates close to 4 million sq ft of retail area, most of which is in Delhi-NCR.



INFLUENCING CHOICES

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 and set themselves as well. In fact, the relation between influencers and businesses are highly beneficial wherein businesses are making an ROI of \$5.78 for every \$1 spent on influencer marketing.

By Anurima Das

Influencer marketing is one of the most popular marketing trends and is expected to grow to be worth \$13.8 billion by the end of 2021. This marketing trend is a hybrid of old and new marketing tools and it takes the idea of celebrity endorsement and places it into a modern-day content-driven marketing campaign. The main differentiator in the case of influencer marketing is that the results of the campaign are collaborations between brands and influencers.

However, 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 and set themselves as well. In fact, the relation between influencers and businesses are highly beneficial wherein businesses are making an ROI of \$5.78 for every \$1 spent on influencer marketing.

Shopping malls have slowly begun to embrace this trend and are successfully bringing in influencers to market their businesses. "For Artisanal Markets, we tied up with well-known lifestyle macro-influencers who showcased the market with an interesting perspective through their creative content, on Instagram. At DLF Promenade, we on-boarded a well-known stylist as our Style Director to not only amplify the campaigns on social media, but also create buzz on-ground, wherein she acted as a fashion advisor on behalf of the mall. These influencers were brought on board for key campaigns as their own persona and vibe was in sync with the various buyer personas across our malls. At DLF Malls, it is our endeavor to create unique experiences for our patrons. We strive to strengthen and reach the right audience as an essential part of our marketing strategy. Today, social media plays an important

role in shaping customer's behaviors and while we have our own strong presence across various channels, amplifying the content through influencer





MALLS MATTER

This festive season people thronged to malls but sales are yet to fully recover. For malls and retailers to clock in revenue as before, it is important that they work on ways to build a personal rapport with their patrons. A shoppers visit to the mall has to be justified with a refreshing retreat through visual treats

By Zainab S Kazi

If one thing, the pandemic has made retailers realise the importance of having a strong online presence but having said that their physical presence in form of stores at malls and high streets too stands important though now for perhaps a different reason altogether – that to build brand equity and build a personal rapport with the consumer, more

than generating sales. As we get accustomed to the #NewNormal, malls and shopping centres along with their retail tenants have a lot to turn around.

And the Task just got Bigger

The green signal has now been given to malls to reopen for business but that comes with

'conditions apply'. Malls have the responsibility of letting in vaccinated shoppers which implies an added responsibility on the security staff to check on the certification of each shopper before he enters. Of course, the wearing of mask when within the mall is another precondition along with ensuring sanitizers are accessible to the shoppers as they move around the huge space.

If we take a look at malls around

the country, a lot many are seen following the norms with utmost sincerity wherein the security staff is seen painstakingly checking on the certification but then the onus also remains with the shoppers to be honest about the vaccination and not being offended when asked to return only post being vaccinated. Another put off for the shoppers is that of waiting in queues as the staff checks on their vaccination status. To ensure that shoppers do not turn



NEW MALL SUPPLY TO COME UP IN 2021 ACROSS INDIAN CITIES

The supply of new retail malls in India is expected to more than double by 2020. (approx. 2.1 mn sq. ft.) At least 1.22 million square feet of new mall supply is expected in Bengaluru, with an additional 1.1 million square feet expected in Mumbai and Noida. The organised Indian retail market is growing at a CAGR of 20-25 percent per year. The RBI's Aug 2021 consumer confidence survey's future expectations index (FEI) becomes more optimistic.



To say that COVID-19 cast a shadow on the Indian retail sector is an understatement, and any hopes for a swift comeback in 2020 fell flat. New mall completions – a lead indicator of the sector's prospects – were phenomenal in 2019, with around 8.5 Mn sq. ft. added across the top 7 cities. This was a staggering 73% growth over the previous year.

However, with complete and then intermittent lockdowns laying a serious jinx on the sector from

March 2020, consumers were under house arrest and buying only essentials via ecommerce portals. Also, construction took a major hit during the lockdowns. There were severe supply constraints as well as a shortage of semi-skilled and unskilled construction workers.

As a result, new mall completions in 2020 dropped by 75% over the previous year, clocking in at approx. 2.1 Mn sq. ft.

With the second COVID-19 wave receding gradually and the

vaccination drive picking up pace, consumer confidence is once again heading northwards. Due to a substantial improvement in the general economic situation and employment scenario outlook, the future expectations index (FEI) of RBI's latest Consumer Confidence Survey returned into the optimistic territory.

After a severely rough patch in 2020 due to the unprecedented lockdowns, the overall growth prospects for shopping malls

remain intact:

- Organized retail penetration in India is less than 10% compared to the developed nations such as the US and UK at 85% and 80%, respectively.
- Per capita organized retail space in India is approx. 2 sq. ft per person compared to the US at 23 sq. ft. per person and Dubai at 16 sq. ft. per person.
- India's per capita income is USD 1,961 and has grown 12% in the past 5 years.



SCAI EMPHASISES THE NEED TO IMPLEMENT A NATIONAL RETAIL POLICY

The formation of uniform laws will help in bridging all the infrastructure gaps, streamlining regulatory compliances and technology enhancements, which will result in encouraging the opportunity of employment in different sectors and also give way to a business model that is consumer-friendly in nature.

By Shopping Centre News Bureau

A roundtable held at the recently concluded **IMAGES Shopping Centre Next 2021** event, discussed about the importance of forming a National Retail Policy. It is thought that this policy will ease the way business is conducted and it will also provide a seamless experience for the patrons of the shopping centres. The need to see retail in a different eye is an important aspect of the business right now as there are so many constraints in doing business with copious numbers of clearing of licenses, which eventually results in creating a strenuous business model. The formation of uniform laws will help in bridging all the infrastructure gaps, streamlining regulatory compliances and technology enhancements, which will result in encouraging the opportunity of employment in different sectors and also give way to a business model that is consumer-friendly in nature.

In the roundtable discussion, the experts from the business gave us insights about the problems in hand. They gave an in-depth view and mentioned ways to find a proper solution for the problems. As currently, the world is moving towards the Omnichannel approach due to the lockdown, and proper policies are required from the government to address the problems at one go.

Brief overview of the panel:

The session was moderated and anchored by **Rachit Mathur**, **Managing Director & Partner, BCG**, Leader India Consumer & Retail Practice.

DIWALI DHOOM AT MALLS IN FULL SWING

Diwali – The festival of light never disappoints and this is well accentuated by retailers who are presently busy attending to the increase in demand by consumers for their pre-Diwali shopping. From local markets to malls, the sentiments are positive and going by the trend, malls have left no stone unturned to add in special offers for their shoppers along with going all out with eye-catching Diwali décor.

By Zainab S Kazi



From retailers and malls alike alluring their shoppers with irresistible offers and giveaways to Parking Full signages across major malls in metros and Tier-II cities, the indicators that consumers are back to being at malls is loud and clear. Governments across various states have gone ahead to eventually lift restrictions on mall operation timings. With vaccinations being carried out full-swing, people are no longer shying away from visiting shopping centres which rightfully can be now termed as a respite for the common man who was deprived of social outings for months together. According to various news media reports, majority of the malls in Bengaluru had Parking Full signs put up and this was also the case in places like Vastrapur. There were shoppers who Tweeted their disappointment at not being able to enter the malls due to long queues for parking. Similarly, people shared their ordeal of having to wait for almost an hour to get into trial rooms, but then the ordeal was well-masked by the happiness around of seeing festive spirits at an all-time high, thus indicating that things were getting back to normal for malls and shopping centres – an industry that suffered the most during this pandemic period.

Happy indicators

According to Retailers Association of India (RAI) and Litmus World's annual festive shopping index, 94% consumers are excited about festive shopping, 73% consumers express intent to shop online, while 66% and 46% plan to shop at malls and at stand-alone shops. Topping the festive shopping list this year are apparels at 63% followed by home appliances and electronics at 50% and a surprise dip is seen in mobile phone shopping that stands at 36%.

Festive Fervor at Malls

The malls all geared up to leverage on the positive customer sentiment, which is much better and full of vigour this year due to the gap of two years from the pandemic. The malls have taken this celebratory season in their stride and are luring in more footfall with attractive décor, offers and giveaways...



R CITY MALL OPENS ITS GATES TO THE CITY IN A BRAND NEW AVATAR

One of the Mumbai's largest shopping destination, R CITY Mall, has undergone a 360-degree makeover with completely revamped plush new interiors, ensemble of Iconic International brands, a widespread global F&B palate with 250+ cuisines

accompanied by a brand new elegantly designed logo and tagline. With a sprawling courtyard spread across 24,000 sq.ft. that makes for a perfect venue for stand up performances, musical gigs, food fests and much more, the mall is also the largest leisure

and recreation hub of the city that houses 12+ leading entertainment centres.

The newly revamped mall is all geared up for the festive season with its mega event - 'R CITY Fiesta' which is an 80-day long extravaganza comprising an awe-inspiring and majestic festive décor - The Fountains of Light, an ornate structure, inspired by the royal light water fountains from around the world. It's an elaborate design of 5 majestic horses that appear to be galloping out of the Light fountain with crystal detailing. The display is 34ft tall surrounded with over 2 lakh glass crystals and creates a gleaming ambience to mirror the forthcoming gaieties.

This imperial decor is perfectly complemented with high value gratification worth ₹2 crore that include the limited edition all-new Jeep Compass 4 x 4, an iPhone every week and Gold coins every

day via lucky draws. Additionally, assured prizes up to ₹5000 to be given via a Spin the Wheel activity.

Pancham Lillaney, CMO, R Retail Ventures Private Ltd. said, "We are extremely delighted to unveil the new avatar of R CITY which is not only a transformation in its look and feel but an extraordinary experience in the truest sense. Our mega R CITY Fiesta is poised to be a testimony of this with an extravagant breath-taking décor and high value prizes worth ₹2 crores. Not only that, but we also have an exciting line-up of events and activities which includes Wedding Fest, Jewellery Fest, Christmas activations, Stand-up comedy shows by well-known comic personalities, a city level food fest, and much more. Through these, R CITY is committed to delivering on its promise of an extraordinary and memorable experience to its customers."



MALLS ARE WINNING OVER WITH CURBSIDE PICKUP

Customers will now be able to scoop up online orders from multiple stores within the same mall for curbside pickup. Curbside pickup became a hugely important and popular fulfilment offering during the pandemic lockdowns, and its popularity appears to be sticking.



How does Consolidation work for Curbside Pickups?

The real value proposition is bringing stores together in a one-stop shop, eliminating the need to go store to store, checking out and then figuring out how pickup will work. During the holiday season especially, consumer demand is there.

Whether a shopper purchases from one store or multiple stores, the customer experience is seamless, convenient and personalized. On arrival, the purchases are ready the moment the shopper pulls up and they're greeted by name.

Adoption will be partly driven by how successful mall operators market this new approach and convenience. Customers will be receptive once they experience how valuable it is, whether saving time, delivering on convenience or reducing stress.

Malls can't survive on foot traffic alone. They're using technology to help them innovate and look at different touchpoints before shoppers are on site. There has to be an omnichannel solution to reach them digitally throughout the customer journey to compete with online giants, retain foot traffic and grow store sales. They are using their physical footprint to their advantage because consumers "want it now."

Why curbside pickup will redefine mall success:

Stores become hubs of online order fulfilment and safety is the price of entry for the foreseeable future.

Shoppers view and value stores very differently today than they did pre-COVID-19.

More than ever before, it is all about safety, speed, and convenience. Shopper demand for an optimised purchase journey has only increased with the pandemic. Retailers who have applied learning from the past several months and made the right technology adjustments will be better positioned to manage the expected demand for customer fulfilment.

Once customers feel safe, converting those 'returns' into sale-exchanges in a frictionless way will be critical for maintaining revenue in stores that are open for socially-distanced selling. ●



Curbside is also a supply chain win for retailers who save on last-mile delivery and can benefit from incremental foot-traffic sales, although balancing store and hub inventory levels can prove tricky without an up-to-date OMS. The integrated solution essentially allows consumers to shop the mall from the comfort of their own homes using a single app.

Important elements for curbside pickup at malls

To compete with ecommerce-only sales, the customer experience

at malls must be redefined, and of course operators know this. Curbside pickup has improved speed and convenience, but there's still an incredible amount of friction when shoppers have to pull into a designated curbside space for each store, flag down the staff and wait for their purchases with limited, if any personalised service.

It's a completely new level of service that will help operators and retailers compete with online giants during the upcoming holiday season. Mobile technology, including location and AI, is the critical component.

Omnipresent feature in consumer's life

518 million Indians were present on social media in 2020 and this number will go up to at least one social media account, a five percent growth from the previous year. With reach like that, it's no secret that social media is a powerful marketing tool for malls and retailers and it's important that the brand's consumers engage with have a strong social media presence.

All progressive thinking malls have gone digital first and have dedicated a bigger chunk of their marketing budget to social media outreach. Shopping malls and brick-and-mortar stores, can leverage on social media to enhance the shopping mall experience. Yet, with so many social media platforms available for use, which ones are giving malls the biggest bang for their buck?

Facebook:

Facebook provides physical store locations the opportunity to market to multiple demographics using a variety of tactics. It allows shopping centers to invest their marketing budgets into increasing the reach and penetration of different event announcements, promotions, and guest engagements in an effort to increase foot traffic. Ultimately, the platform gives the ability to target key shopping groups, delivering the right message, to the right audience, at the right time.

FOR MALL MARKETING THE FUTURE IS SOCIAL MEDIA

When malls were inceptioned, consumers used to be driven to malls out of necessity. It was a one-stop shop for goods and services. In the early 2000s malls morphed into a social gathering spot for communities to meet. Then with the e-commerce boom that came around 2008 consumers started shopping online rather than hitting the malls. They quickly realized that the internet offered a larger selection than malls' restricted space shelf allowed. And recently malls were hit by the aftermath of lockdowns, now shopping malls have realized that they must find a way to stay relevant, and what's more relevant in today's culture than social media?

Instagram:

Unlike Facebook, Instagram is less about the promotion of a particular sale or brand, and more about promoting the experience. It's about capturing the drip of

missing out). Instagram helps malls paint the picture of a can't-miss experience that's unattainable from the comfort of your couch.

Twitter:

Unlike Facebook's function to promote sales, and Instagram's ability to highlight experiences, Twitter allows shopping malls to engage with the community. It's being used as a tool to talk about local events and trends in an effort to ultimately get customers into physical store locations.

Twitter is also evolving into a care and guest experience channel. It is being used for official announcements and personal communication with guests. Through the platform, shopping malls are able to gain valuable, first-hand information on how to improve the customer experience, and keep shoppers coming back for more.

Social Media for future of mall success:

Mall marketing professionals have been investing more time and money into online social platforms with the main goal of driving foot traffic and ultimately increasing sales. Going forward, social media will also be used to increase malls' overall brand perception, curating content to signify that they're places where people want to experience brands not just shop. ●



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