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# PHYGITAL

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| COVER STORY |

## DIGITAL DEMOCRACY

Building the futuristic & connected world of e-commerce

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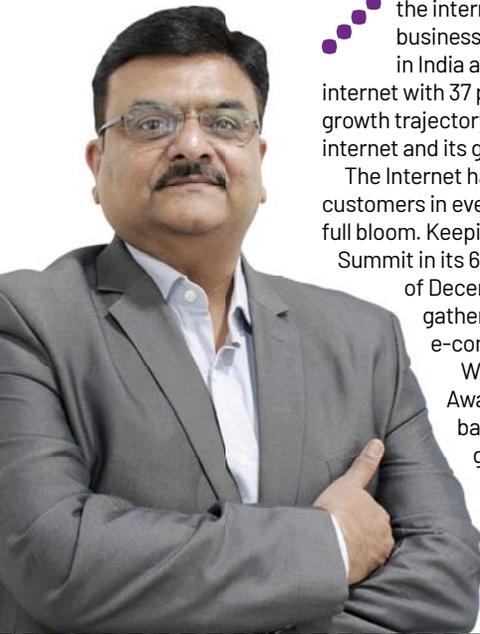
| TECH TALK |

Keeping the extravagance of the Phygital Retail Convention alive, we look at some of the most powerful technology-led business conversations that happened over the 2-days of the event.

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## | FROM THE CEO'S DESK |

### Quick, ready, & on the go: Digital nodes accelerating business growth



Research shows that e-commerce will make up 22% of global retail sales by 2023. The growth of e-commerce for retail is just one aspect to celebrate and rather we should be celebrating the rise of the internet and how it is accelerating growth and almost a revolution in every industry and across businesses. A recent report by Kantar revealed that at present there are 692 million active internet users in India and much of the growth continues to be driven by rural India where 351 million users are using the internet with 37 percent penetration. Such promising numbers and a perfect growth story hint at the excellent growth trajectory India is portraying to build its 'commerce' backbone all across industries, piggybacking on the internet and its glorious connectivity.

The Internet has made the prospect of doing business more democratic, rather open, and transparent for customers in every way. Which is likely to usher into a new era of convenience courtesy of ONDC coming into full bloom. Keeping in mind the internet growth story in India we are gearing up to pivot the Internet Commerce Summit in its 6th edition, this December. We are excited to meet you all at ICS scheduled for the 13th and 14th of December at Hotel Sheraton Grand, Whitefield, Bengaluru to witness the most prestigious industry gathering celebrating the varied facets of the internet and how it is accelerating the growth of the e-commerce across industries and categories.

We look forward to having an extensive 2-day meet followed by the prestigious e-commerce Awards to comprehend and share knowledge regarding the internet and its powerful, actionable backbone. The economy is no more divided, rather it is connected thanks to the internet. The great consumer and industry or service divide are no more existent. So, it's time to buckle up and shoulder the growth of this undivided democratic world.

We are ready to have you with us to begin the new phase of digital transformation at ICS 2022. Come, be a part!

**Bhavesh Pitroda**

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## LAST WORD



### Digital democracy is bringing the world closer with every click

According to reports the recent rise in digital literacy has led to an influx of investment in e-commerce firms, levelling the market for new players to set up their base, while churning out innovative patterns to disrupt old functioning. This is a very meaningful development hinting at the growth of the economy piggybacking on the strengths of the internet. Honouring its power we bring to you the current issue of Phygital.

In this issue, we have talked extensively about the idea of digital democracy and what it means to leaders across industries. Eminent CX personalities have expressed their thoughts regarding this and mentioned what they are seeing as trends for this broader subject. Apart from this, we have tried to capture the e-commerce growth story of several brands and have put retail leaders like Duroflex and Chennai Silk under the spotlight to understand how technology deployment is helping these brands grow and discover a new horizon of customers.

While the tech implementation becomes an example for the industry to follow, we have also brought in a plethora of case studies showcasing how retailers have partnered with the right enabler to derive growth. Liberty saw phenomenal online growth by partnering with GreenHonchos, Being Human marked the start of its phygital journey with them, and Style Union made processes simpler & connected with Centric Software. This is not all, this issue also brings to you a host of exciting trendsetting features and some key industry insights.

Let's keep the internet growth narrative going with power!

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### COVER STORY

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The e-commerce ecosystem is witnessing unprecedented growth over the last few years piggybacking on technology. All across the globe, across industries and segments, the growth registered by e-commerce businesses is phenomenal and it is giving an impetus for the growth of traditional businesses too. But how is digital democracy getting shaped all across the globe, especially in India?



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A first-of-its-kind retail intelligence event, Tech.NXT uncovering the facets of Retail Digital Transformation was conceptualized as part of the recently concluded Phygital Retail Convention. Here's looking at GreenHonchos and its stellar presentation made as part of Tech.NXT.

**CASE STUDY**

**46. Centric PLM™ accelerated production time to market for Style Union**

Keeping the idea of business survival and innovation in mind, PLM plays a critical role in helping brands and manufacturers develop the next generation of products, at a lower cost, and with a faster time to market. Holding this as its strength, Centric is redefining retail practices with PLM innovations.

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Tech implementations and deployments have become the call of the day for retail all across categories. We speak to Vipin Rustagi, Group Chief Information Officer, Duroflex to understand how is tech driving growth for the brand.

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FroGo is India's first e-commerce store that exclusively delivers frozen foods. The brainchild of serial entrepreneur, Mira Jhala FroGo is set to take the country by storm with its freshness of perspective and the freshness of frozen food.



**BRAND FOCUS**

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John Jacobs has evolved since its inception from being a challenger brand to a major global player in the eyewear industry. Despite multiple lockdowns and the consequent limitations, John Jacobs has grown by 50% as compared to FY 2021. In conversation with Apeksha Gupta, CEO, John Jacobs to understand how the brand is future gazing and what it means to step into the phygital landscape.

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The commerce ministry in India considered logistics to be the lifeline of the economy. Considering the importance of a strong logistics backbone for the country, the ministry has announced its plans to develop a dashboard for the industries to report & flag off issues related to logistics for faster resolution.

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Delivering on time is a thing of the past now. Delivering on time and quicker than 10 minutes is more the trend to watch. Does this help a brand win its much-needed customer base?



## | COVER STORY |



## AMIT KUMAR SINGH

Chief Operating Officer (COO), ARTH - Powering Micro Businesses

The companies have undergone a major paradigm shift to align with changes in the new normal. There have been changes with respect to the business processes such as digital adoption, dispersed workforce, communication solutions, and automation workflows. There is increased agile adoption, and more and more processes are being automated to improve efficiency. The automation workflows are applicable to most business processes and they reduce dependency as well as manual intervention.

### Technology preparedness

The organizations in the financial services segment have been efficient in terms of technology preparedness. There has been constant innovation to provide services on different platforms, establishing an omnichannel presence. Also, there has been increased automation of processes at every level in order to deliver value and improve efficiency.

### Going Democratic

The digital democracy concept is even more relevant now. The same can be observed in the case of digital documents, identity proofs, certificates, and digital verification of the same. In order to sync with the post-pandemic business processes, digital adoption has become necessary. Also, most documents are now stored digitally. With the advent of the new normal, most organizations had to undergo a

technological transformation in order to keep pace with the changes. With the dispersed workforce, there has been an increase in technology adoption to improve availability, service reliability, and overall customer experience. The business ecosystem will progress in the coming year with the increased digital, and technology adoption, and improved omnichannel presence with the focus on providing the best experience and services to the customers.

### Omnichannel for digital acceleration

Customers today are omnichannel and it is essential for all sectors to be present on multiple channels. Now especially after the pandemic, it has become even more important to have an effective omnichannel presence. There has been a transformation and the financial services industry has adopted multiple strategies such as online integration, promoting interaction, infrastructure upgrades, cloud adoption, etc. Also, efforts have been made to promote interaction among companies, customers, partners, and employees so that the services can be adapted to individual demands. The new-customers post-pandemic have an increased online presence. Organizations accordingly have to adopt technologies in order to provide value and the best experience to the customers. In addition to that, customers have a wider range of options available to choose from hence making the business landscape more competitive.

| STRAIGHT TALK |

# Going the subscription route

The 'subscription-basis' purchase within the retail ecosystem is a growing trend. E-commerce brands are offering this 'on-trial' way to customers in order to help them save money and in turn, they can try, get satisfied, and think about a bigger investment.

**Subscription** is becoming the new norm in India and many brands have started to realize the potential of the subscription business model and have started to adapt it to their benefit in order to create a niche. DrinkPrime for instance has experienced 500% growth in 2019-2020 and 330% growth in the first six months of 2022 piggybacking on their subscription model.



## | RETAIL FOCUS |



# The Strong Brew

The concept of alcoholic beverage retail in India is still very nascent and innovation in this segment is mostly restricted to the product as compared to the process. However, **Teja Chekuri, Managing Partner, Ironhill India** is now focusing on India to create a fabulous concept where you can enjoy authentic varieties of craft beer served with good food in a great ambiance.

**Ironhill India** was started in 2017 by **Teja Chekuri**, as the first microbrewery in Andhra Pradesh. After the successful launch in Visakhapatnam, Vijayawada, and Hyderabad, the team opened its 4th outlet in Bengaluru on 26 March 2021. Ironhill India in Bengaluru is located in the IT hub near Marathahalli and is spread across a lavish 1.3 lac sq ft making it the largest microbrewery in the world. Since the Bengaluru launch, the brand has established footprints with a swanky new outlet in Nellore and Rajahmundry as well. The Ironhill India team plans to expand its footprint across 10 more locations in 2022 across Maharashtra, Goa, Haryana, and Chandigarh. Plans are afoot to open 3 more outlets in Mysore, Mangalore, and Pune by the end of the year via a franchisee model. Operating through this offline expansion model, Chekuri wants to innovate the processes of retail with technology support in order to bring about a change in this rather traditional industry. Here's a short conversation with him about the industry and how he looks at its growth in the coming days.

**Tell us a little about your brand's retail journey in India.**

Ironhill began its journey with the launch of its first outlet in 2016, in Vizag. Thereafter, we expanded to Vijayawada, Rajahmundry, Hyderabad, Bengaluru, and Nellore, with our Bengaluru microbrewery being the largest microbrewery in the world currently.

**Tell us a little about the brand story and how did you plan on the range based on Indian customer needs.**

So Ironhill was born out of the need to bring world-class craft beers paired with great grub to the Indian brewing scene. The idea was to provide unique as well as classic styles of craft beers to our customers in an ambiance that really bolsters the craft experience.

Ironhill, is not a one-trick pony, in the sense that, our focus is on being a holistic dine-out space with a great craft beer experience, which means we are equally geared towards providing great food, cocktails, and entertainment through events in a majestic ambiance.

We plan our range based on current events, seasons, and the Indian taste palate - Indians generally prefer low hop beers, and a variety of other factors with a healthy dose of innovation thrown in.

**Operating within a niche, what has been your strategy for growth?**

We believe in providing quality offerings at a great price point. We have focused on growing in a balanced way; hence we have a first mover advantage in Tier 2 cities which we then used to propel our growth in Tier 1 cities. We believe growth

## | EVENT |

# Tech Talk:

## Conversations on Business Led by Technology

Keeping the extravagance of PRC alive, let's take a close look at some of the most powerful technology sessions spanning over the two days.



The third edition of Phygital Retail Convention (PRC) 2022, conducted on August 24-25 at The Westin, Powai Lake, Mumbai focused on the dramatic transformations occurring in the Indian consumer landscape and consequently, retail models. The theme – India/Bharat: The World's Biggest Consumer Story reflected the promise and opportunity of the ongoing transformation.

Once again, PRC 2022, India's largest retail intelligence event, aimed to unveil and decode the mega retail opportunities across India + Bharat – a

mega, but dual and complex sets of consumption landscapes. **Shailesh Chaturvedi** (MD & CEO, Arvind Fashions Ltd) and **Damodar Mall** (CEO -Grocery, Reliance Retail) were honoured and designated as 'PRC 2022 Patrons'.

"Despite the remarkable volume and pace of retail evolution over the past two decades, India remains a largely underserved market vis-a-vis growth in consumption. The opportunities are far larger than what modern retailers have achieved so far," said **Bhavesh Pitroda**, Director and CEO, IMAGES Group. "The scope of taking the experience and pluses of modern retail to the country's

heartlands – Bharat – is immense, and PRC 2022 will be dedicated to optimising this."

"Retail real estate is the essential infrastructure that will facilitate the spread of modern retail across small-town India. With consumer aspirations and expenditure fast expanding in these locations, real estate majors are also investing heavily in the promise of 'Bharat'. With PRC 2022 hosting all of India's real estate majors, the event will highlight the plans of these organisations in taking Bharat's retail revolution forward," adds **Vineet Chadha**, COO – Retail, IMAGES Group.

| TECH.NXT |

# GreenHonchos: Enabling personalisation & omnichannel enablement for India's leading brands

A first-of-its-kind retail intelligence event, Tech.NXT uncovering the facets of Retail Digital Transformation was conceptualized as part of the recently concluded Phygital Retail Convention. Here's looking at GreenHonchos and its stellar presentation made as part of Tech.NXT.



## | EXPERT SPEAK |



# Platform for growth

The startup economy in India is booming and counting a lot of growth owing to the changing customer behaviour and technology boon. What's working in favour of the industry?

By Suraj Juneja

**There's** a reason why I chose to be a part of the start-up ecosystem and why I am so enthralled by it.

It's India's most exciting space and phase and perhaps the backbone of the country's growth story. In terms of startups, we're the third largest ecosystem in the world and one of the fastest growing. It's

not just the business acumen and entrepreneurial mindset in Indians but with the last few years giving us so many success stories in terms of unicorns and IPOs from the start-up world, suddenly the perception of an entrepreneur has changed. It's an acceptable career decision among families from all strata of society now. It's aspirational to almost all pass-

outs from major colleges whether it's technology or business-based education. Recent shows like Shark tank have only raised the awareness of how funds can be raised, how age is not a criterion anymore and neither is formal education in terms of achieving success of a business. It sure has become a household topic – and this is not even the beginning!

# Delivering an unfair digital advantage for eRetail Brands.

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