



50

Fashion Brand Icons



PART 1

People
shaping
The *Fashion*
Landscape

Editor's Note



From ethnic wear to footwear, the growth of the Indian fashion industry is spectacular. It's believed that the industry will touch \$106 billion by 2026. When brands, from Uniqlo to Hidesign, keep adding more stores, manifesting the state of the industry, the number doesn't seem far-fetched.

Amidst these developments, often our usual fixation is on how businesses are performing and the attempts to gauge their cumulative growth. Seldom does it occur to us, let's say in an interview, that we should ask the main person or the mind behind the business questions ranging from personal aspiration to the journey accomplished so far interspersed with words of wisdom. It's crucial, given that the much-discussed positive growth numbers are possible only when the strategic plans are executed under strong and wise leadership. The combination of the right strategies and the leading will to execute them.

In this issue, **50 Fashion Brand Icons, People Shaping the Fashion Landscape**, we have attempted to present these minds and to bring out the strengths and insights that have helped them shape brands, sustain their values as well as growth. Like Steve Jobs' vision and skills helping build Apple and turning it into a trillion-dollar brand. The objective is to present to our readers these minds or leaders with insights and wise words, to mention some, which they have accumulated over the years.

Owing to the size of the industry, not all could be featured in this issue printed on recycled paper, a part of our commitment to a greener planet. This is a **green edition – using Favini Shiro Echo, an environmental paper with 100% recycled fibres** – from cover to cover. Shiro Echo paper is CO₂ emissions neutralised, and all raw materials are sourced from controlled and certified sources. Do take a look on the left side of this page to view the official certification.

We have broken up the list and featured the first fifty profiles arranged in alphabetical order. I am of the view that their aspirations, achievements, insights and wise words would throw light on what it takes to build a legacy.

Amitabh Taneja

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STORE LAUNCH

Indya goes global with first exclusive store in Malaysia

Delhi-based fashion house High Street Essentials Pvt. Ltd. (HSE), has announced the launch of the first store of its Indian wear brand, Indya, in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. The launch, it claims, strengthens the company's vision to make Indya a globally accessible Indian wear brand.

Born out of a thought to modernize ethnic fashion by considering the evolving lifestyle and needs of the new-age woman, Indya has since grown to become one of India's leading omnichannel fashion brands. Besides retailing in the country through its website, online marketplaces, 400+ shop-in-shops and 32 exclusive brand stores, the brand also serves a robust international market that currently contributes to 18% of its total revenue. Over the last two years, it has grown its global footprint by introducing shipping to over 35 countries and by partnering with marketplaces such as Amazon US, Walmart, Namshi, and Zalora.

In the next 18-24 months, the brand is looking at opening stores in regions with strong NRI communities such as the US, Canada, South Africa, and the Middle East. Located on Jalan Tun Sambanthan - a bustling street in Little India, Brickfields - and spread across 1200 sq.ft, the new store in Kuala Lumpur houses an exciting



assortment of Indian wear to fit well into the Malay woman's wardrobe- from chic daywear dresses and tunics elevated with traditional prints to modern festive wear that encapsulates the brand's signature pre-stitched sarees, shararas and kurtas with attached dupattas, and statement fusion jumpsuits. The store also features Indya's new collaborative festive collection with designer Ashish N Soni and its premium occasion wear line, Indya Luxe.

Speaking at the occasion, Shivani Poddar, Co-

Founder & CEO, HSE said, "From the time we started shipping internationally, we have got a very promising response from our customers in Malaysia. Our modern take on classic Indian wear makes our clothes relevant to their dynamic lifestyle and discerning sense of style. Opening a store here to make our designs more accessible to them made for a definitive next step. As a key strategic initiative, we aim to increase and strengthen our reach in international markets, bringing differentiated ethnic occasion wear at affordable price points to the Indian diaspora. The demand from these markets has been steadily growing and has been a driving factor in our efforts. We have aligned our plans to make international a key channel for business and aim to increase its contribution to revenue to 25% by next year."

Sathia Ramasamy, owner of the franchise store in Malaysia added, "It's been surreal bringing Indya to Malaysia. I've been a fan of the brand for years and have always wanted to share my experience with fellow Malaysians. The brand offers extremely current and functional designs at very affordable price points, which are otherwise not accessible to us here. The response has been overwhelming and we're extremely excited to get on board with Indya on their journey of growth."

UNIQLO opens first high street store in Delhi's Connaught Place

Global Japanese retailer UNIQLO has opened its first high street store in New Delhi. With a promise of making its LifeWear available to as many people as possible, the newest store is located at Connaught Place, New Delhi. The store introduces a brand new shopping experience for customers with its thoughtful designs, high-quality and functional products that are made for all.

After expanding its retail footprint in the North by successfully launching two stores in Lucknow and Chandigarh earlier this year, UNIQLO Connaught Place, New Delhi is the brand's 9th store in India. "We remain committed to being an integral part of India's retail growth and to make LifeWear accessible in many more cities. We started our journey in New Delhi and are excited to be launching our new store at the historical precinct of Connaught

Place. We believe that this iconic location serves as the best setting for our first high street store. We look forward to being a part of this retail district and community, said Tomohiko Sei, Chief Executive Officer, UNIQLO India.

The UNIQLO Connaught Place store, located in the inner circle of this landmark shopping destination of New Delhi, is set against a historic building and measures close to 8,000 sq. ft. of sales area across



three levels. The store features natural light on the first floor through the skylight. The store features UNIQLO LifeWear, apparel inspired by life's need for thoughtful and timeless clothing. Available in a variety of colours and styles for people of all ages, this apparel comes from the Japanese values of simplicity, quality and longevity.

STORE LAUNCH

Reliance Retail unveils fashion-lifestyle store Azorte in Bengaluru

Reliance Industries' retail unit Reliance Retail has launched its first premium fashion and lifestyle store chain Azorte in Bengaluru. The new store, in the line of billionaire Mukesh Ambani's plan to grab a bigger slice of India's luxury market, will house the best of global brands and contemporary Indian fashion.

Spread over around 18,000 square feet, the store will compete with global and Indian brands in the mid-premium fashion segment, and cater to millennials and Gen Z. The mid-premium fashion segment is one of fastest growing consumer segments as millennials and the Gen Z are increasingly demanding the latest of international and contemporary Indian fashion, explained Akhilesh Prasad, CEO of the fashion and lifestyle arm of Reliance Retail. "Designed with fashion-forward consumers in mind, the new store format includes several tech-enabled interventions such as smart trial rooms, fashion discovery stations, endless aisles and self-checkout kiosks that would make shopping more enjoyable."



Clovia opens store in Gurugram; eyes 150 Stores

Clovia, lingerie and personal care brand has recently opened its first exclusive brand outlet in Gurugram. The store is located at DT Mega Mall, MG Road and houses the complete range of Clovia's lingerie, sleepwear, activewear as well as the newly launched Skivia range of personal care products.

The brand currently has 40 exclusive brand outlets in the country and has been diversifying its product range along with aggressive offline expansion plans for H2 2022. The 757 sq ft Gurugram store is part of the company's nationwide expansion plans to open 150 EBOs by the end of this year.

Commenting on the launch, Pankaj Vermani, Founder and CEO, Clovia said, "Clovia has been at the forefront of offering an unparalleled D2C as well as offline retail experience to its patrons. We constantly engage and interact with our customers to seek feedback on the products and accordingly innovate our product offerings for them. With the opening of our first Exclusive Brand Outlet in Gurugram, we aim to reach out to more consumers by offering an omnichannel experience, who look for an enhanced shopping experience and not just make a purchase."



Levi's relaunches store at Chandigarh's Elante Mall

Denim brand Levi's has relaunched its store at Chandigarh's Elante Mall. The new store, spread across 4045 Sq Feet, in the brand's cutting edge NextGen store format that are designed to give consumers an authentic, compelling, and consistent expression of the Levi's brand, it claims. Digitally enhanced and with a lighter, modern and more open design elevating the in-store experience for consumers to explore the elevated store experience and collections.

"Levi's aims at elevating the brand experience for consumers and we are raising the bar with each new store opening. In key markets like Chandigarh, known for its strong sense of fashion, discerning consumers will be exposed to the best of the Levi's brand through the NextGen Indigo store format and

premium collections offered," said, Amisha Jain, Managing Director & SVP, South Asia, Middle East & Africa at Levi Strauss & Co. "We are raising the bar with each new store opening. In key markets like Chandigarh, known for its strong sense of fashion, discerning consumers will be exposed to the best of the Levi's brand through the NextGen Indigo store format and premium collections offered."

The store will feature the products the brand is loved for, from its iconic 501, Trucker jacket and logo tees to a range of jeans that promises a pair for everyone. Featuring the newest range of fits for women with looser, baggier and more relaxed trends and premium collections and collaborations, the store is set to be a new shopping landmark.

Alia Bhatt-owned Ed-a-Mamma launches new collection

Alia Bhatt-owned kids' clothing brand Ed-a-Mamma has introduced its range of clothing tailored for moms-to-be, Ed-a-Mamma Maternity Wear.

Focussed on the idea of 'Designed for comfort and designed for two', the launch campaign is led by mommy-to-be, Alia, who encourages fellow moms to be themselves and embrace their own personal style, throughout this journey.

On the launch, Alia Bhatt said, "I struggled to find quality maternity wear, and so I started devising my own solutions, making my personal style more bump-friendly and prioritising comfort. I realised a gap in my personal wardrobe represented a gap in the marketplace. And so, Ed-a-Mamma Maternity Wear was born! This capsule collection is designed to hold you, hug you, comfort you and do pretty much everything for you that you do for your baby. We've stayed true to the ethos of Ed-a-Mamma, with every garment being sustainable. And I can't wait to share it with others."

Ed-a-Mamma Maternity Wear, it claims, has been developed using natural, breathable fabrics such as cotton, linen, and viscose, which are gentle on the skin. The denims are designed to be soft and stretchy, to support growing bellies and beyond. Dresses with a flowy silhouette



and co-ord sets, which can be dressed up or down, are perfect for your everyday routine - whether it's working in or out, travelling or just lounging at home. The shirts and tees are lightweight, versatile and offer all day comfort. The dyes used are AZO free and the buttons are made from biodegradable materials like wood and coconut shells. Speaking on the introduction of the new Maternity line, Iffat Haider Jivan, Business Head, Ed-a-Mamma Maternity Wear, said, "With no

definitive brands in the national space, we saw a huge opportunity in this segment. Alia's clarity of thought in identifying the gap and her inputs in terms of style and comfort made the task simpler. The initial offering is a capsule collection that has captured current trends without compromising on comfort. We have introduced co-ord sets and dresses in vibrant colours and flowy silhouettes apart from casual wear, all designed especially for expecting moms."



Armani Exchange unveils A|X Fall/Holiday 2022 watch collection

Armani Exchange has unveiled its The A|X Fall/Holiday 2022 watch collection. The collection showcases sporty new elements, upgraded materials, sustainable details, and vibrant colors. Updates for the season include two-tone plating, lavender colors, and 7-link bracelets for her. The men's collection features new black stainless-steel plating, sporty silicone, and a variety of shades of blue.

Speaking on the launch, Kartik Aaryan said, "Armani Exchange watches bring out the best side of me - they're made to be bold, push the boundaries and set new benchmarks for style. I love experimenting with my own personal style, with these stellar timepieces in hand, it feels like the sky's the limit! For every kind of outfit, the Fall collection presents a festive watch to match the mood, it's delightful! I'm super excited to see people sporting this bold and vibrant collection, I hope these Armani Exchange timepieces make them feel as fearless and bold as I feel, every day!" Based on military-inspired details, these styles explore colors, materials, and finishes. The complex, sporty cases display exciting new design elements such as mirror finished dials, translucent and frosted straps, and color contrasts, which create this fully rounded and intriguing model.

GREENDIGO:

Thoughtfully designed for babies and parents

Co-founded by sisters Meghna Kishore and Barkha Bhatnagar Das, Greendigo is an internationally certified organic cotton brand that offers baby clothing and nursery essentials. It was born out of Meghna's personal need for non-toxic and safe clothing for her premature baby which also helped her recognise a white space that existed in the domestic market. Recently, actor Dia Mirza has invested an undisclosed amount in the brand. In an email interview with Images Business of Fashion, Meghna informs, "With children's skin being about 30% thinner than adults, it is more absorbent of substances present in their clothes." Excerpt of the interview.

Take us through the journey since 2019, and also tell us what influenced you to launch Greendigo.

Children are one of the largest consumers of apparel. They are also the most vulnerable customer segment to feel the ill-effects of synthetic clothing and toxic chemicals. With children's skin being about 30% thinner than adults, it is more absorbent of substances present in their clothes. With increasing exposure to pollutants and toxins in most clothes available today, there is a significant rise in the number of children prone to allergies, skin rashes, respiratory disorders amongst other threats to health. Synthetic garments take a long time to decompose, creating long-term pollution which in turn impacts the future generations who will inherit this planet in the days to come. Further, in India, availability of good quality, organic cotton clothing for children is low.

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Meghna Kishore
Co-Founder, Greendigo



(L to R) Meghna, Dia Mirza and Barkha

ED-A-MAMMA: A conscious clothing brand



Launched by Bollywood actor Alia Bhatt in 2020, Ed-a-Mamma is a sustainable kids wear brand. The brand offers a series of products—all designed to help put the planet first and build a conscious generation. In an email interview with Images Business of Fashion's N Bobo Meitei, Iffat Haider Jivan, the brand's Business Head, discusses sustainable clothing for kids in India, growth and expansion of the brand.

Share with us how the idea of Ed-a-Mamma was born.

Alia has always been extremely conscious of the environment and has been promoting conservation through her NGO Co-Exist for a while now. Alia wanted to take this idea forward by inculcating in children, a love for the planet. We identified a gap in the kids wear segment and Ed-a-Mamma was launched as a sustainable kids wear brand. Ed-a-Mamma is strongly content driven and pegged on story telling. Our aim is to constantly talk to kids and their parents about an alternate lifestyle that is sustainable. Kids are the flag bearers of the future and through our clothing line we aim to raise a new generation of mini planeteeers.

What elements make it different from its competition?

Ed-a-Mamma is a conscious clothing brand. Our entire range of apparel is made of natural fibres and responsibly sourced. When we think of sustainable clothing, the first thing that comes to mind is expensive clothing in subtle hues. We have broken this stereotype by making Ed-a-Mamma accessible to a wider consumer base. Our range of apparel is vibrant and fun for kids with our signature prints. We work on a larger scale and are able to pass the benefits of the same to our consumers.

What is the brand's approach towards sustainable fashion? How seriously do you take it?

All our garments are made from natural fibres, our buttons are made of wood, coconut shells and are plastic free, dyes used are AZO free and completely safe for children. We do not use plastic in

Omniverse

Exploring metaverse and its implications

Italian fashion and design school, Istituto Marangoni Mumbai, hosted 2022 fashion presentation by second year students in a physical setting.

IBoF Bureau

After a break of 2 years, Italian fashion and design school, Istituto Marangoni Mumbai, hosted 2022 fashion presentation by second year students in a physical setting. Aptly named, the show, Omniverse, explores the metaverse and its implications for humanity.

Focusing on the theme of omnipresence, pushing boundaries and norms, embracing technological research, Omniverse explores other avenues of survival as a race. A metaverse with digital twins. The show also aims to link the recently launched Istituto Marangoni Metaverse page to the physical show and integrate digital aspects of the design process of students into an immersive experience.

Speaking about the virtual showcase, Tarun Pandey, COO – Istituto Marangoni, Mumbai said, “Istituto Marangoni Mumbai’s 2022 student fashion showcase – Omniverse – spotlights the creativity of our 2nd-year students through their 18 collections. These

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Istituto Marangoni Mumbai’s 2022 student fashion showcase – Omniverse – spotlights the creativity of our 2nd-year students through their 18 collections. These are the result of a reflection by each designer on the unprecedented couple of years that the fashion industry.
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are the result of a reflection by each designer on the unprecedented couple of years that the fashion industry has gone through due to the drastic effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. The collections by these talented students are filtered through and influenced by the unique point of view and brand-new expressive language of Gen-Z, to which our students belong.”

The collections not only celebrated their personal and professional growth at the institute, but also the concept of the ‘Omniverse’. A total of 18 students showcased their collections. Among them, Abha Pandit was awarded as the ‘Fashion Design student of the Year’ for her collection.



Talking about the show and the level of fresh talent, Mevin Murden, Director of Education – Istituto Marangoni, Mumbai said, “The Mumbai school collections are stronger and stronger each year, moulding into a distinct identity celebrating India’s fine heritage of textile and craft. The Italian approach helps students design for a global market innovating and re-contextualising crafts. The aim is to educate students in responsible design whether it is in terms of environmental or social responsibility. The show was designed to give a contemporary luxury look and feel to the experience reflecting the new aesthetics of luxury fashion for the new generation of consumers.” **BoF**

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Fashion
Brand IconsPeople shaping The *Fashion* Landscape

Over the last decade, India has emerged as one of the fastest growing fashion markets. Owing to factors such as increasing per capita income, deeper internet penetration and a large young population, it is expected that the market will touch \$106 billion by 2026. These factors combined with the fact that a large chunk of the market is still untapped give strong reasons to be optimistic about the market.

Today, it's a vibrant market where global brands find themselves next to well-positioned Indian brands or competing with other global peers. In this landscape, we often hear about these brands' stories, and little about the people behind them. But like a ship, journeying towards its destination, a brand needs a captain who can lead or guide, come what may. Someone who understands the canon that, before becoming a leader, success is all about growing yourself and others. A leader is, as Napoleon Bonaparte put it, a dealer in hope, or someone with the capacity to translate vision into reality.

So who are these individuals at the helm? How did they start their journeys? How did they succeed? What learning and technologies have they introduced to scale up their business or to add more value? What insightful understanding can they share with us? These are some of the compelling questions we have asked them. They are the leaders working with the clear objective of redefining the fashion industry while ensuring scalability as well as the success of their brands, big or small, and therefore contributing to the collective growth of the industry. We are also curious to find out what they aspire to achieve and what innovative ideas they have adopted, and thus have set them apart from the competition.

Our aim is to offer our readers a picture that encompasses all the great minds irrespective of the size of the business they are leading, for each achievement is unique. The size of the business is a matter of choice or a matter of time; some prefer to run a compact operation, targeting a niche market, and some are only waiting to become big soon.

To present this to you, we have reached out to almost everyone in the industry. Despite their busy schedules, most of them were generous enough to reply on time. But as the industry is vast, all the profiles couldn't be featured in a single issue. So we have decided to break up the coverage into parts. Here is the list of the first fifty of the fashion brand icons presented in alphabetical order.

“EMBRACE
UNCERTAINTY
AND THE
CHALLENGES
WHICH COME
ALONG WITH”

- AASHEESH MEDIRATTA



AASHEESH MEDIRATTA

CEO, **SSIPL Group** | 45

Education

1999-2001
Master of Fashion Management (PGDAMMM) from
NIFT, New Delhi
1995-1998
BCom (Hons) from Shri Ram College of Commerce,
New Delhi

Career history

In the retail and ecommerce industry for more than 20 years. Before joining SSIPL Group, Aasheesh was CEO at FashionAndYou.com. He joined FashionAndYou in 2010 as head of Sales, before taking over the role of CEO in 2012. Aasheesh also co-founded BehindTheRamp - India's first inclusive business network for new-age designers, brand entrepreneurs, and fashion professionals. Earlier in his career, Aasheesh headed businesses for international luxury brands Rosenthal and Villeroy & Boch, was Brand Manager of Guess Jeans in India. His prior experience includes working with Debenhams, Marks & Spencer, ITC Ltd, and Pantaloons.

Role & responsibilities

Heading the retail and distribution divisions at SSIPL Group.

Strengths & weaknesses

Strengths:

- Decision making
- Detail-oriented
- People management

Weaknesses:

- Being blunt
- Being perfectionist can be a pain sometimes
- Fussy over punctuality

Aspiration

At large, aspiration remains to create and drive long-term value for all stake holders; at the same time make organization adapt to new technologies and work on distributed leadership by onboarding and nurturing the new talent around me.

Game changing retail technologies

- Contact less stores - Grab and go technologies and its adaptations.
- AI-led Retail Video Analytics to help understand in-store customer behavior better.
- Metaverse (Still trying to understand as it unfolds)
- Any technology which can enhance in-store customer engagement and experience.

Skills that helped you succeed

- Good Communication with all stakeholders
- Strong work ethics
- Analytical skills

Lessons learned

Learnings over last 2 decades:

- One's personal growth comes from uncomfortable environments he/she has worked in.
- There must be a fine balance between controlling and delegating; not every person is transparent and self-driven.
- Most of challenging situations can be managed diplomatically.

On the future of industry

India retail industry will continue to be driven by two key parameters - value and convenience. 'Value' is embedded deep in the mind of Indian customer mind and shall continue to be one of the key parameters and second important factor which will continue to be in play is 'convenience' backed by adoption and optimum usage of new digital technologies. While consumption shall continue to be dynamic and unpredictable; customers shall keep experimenting with new products and categories.

Learning from your career

- Embrace uncertainty and the challenges which come along with.
- Sometimes getting the work is more important than doing it perfectly.

Life mantra

Stay hungry, stay foolish.



Look dapper with the ethnic swag

Ramraj's innovative blend of heritage and elegance of our tradition is a style statement across the country. Transform your personality with an exquisite blend of heritage and elegance. Look dapper in the ethnic swag with Ramraj Dhotis & Shirts, a versatile choice for men from all walks of life.



COTTON - LINEN
CULTURE OF INDIA



SCAN QR CODE FOR STORE LOCATION