





IMAGES RETAIL

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Leaders of Digital Transformation

The rise of digital retail has significantly transformed the Indian retail landscape, ushering in a new era of convenience, efficiency, and customer-centricity. With increasing internet penetration, smartphone adoption, and digital literacy, Indian consumers are more connected than ever, driving a shift from traditional retail to omnichannel experiences. Digital retail allows businesses to reach customers across geographies, personalise offerings, and streamline operations through real-time data and analytics.

For Indian retailers, digital transformation is no longer optional—it is a necessity. The pandemic accelerated this shift, highlighting the need for robust e-commerce platforms, contactless payments, digital supply chains, and virtual customer engagement tools. Technologies such as AI, machine learning, cloud computing, and automation have become integral to improving decision-making, enhancing inventory management, and delivering personalised customer experiences.

As India moves toward a digitally inclusive economy, embracing digital retail is critical for long-term sustainability, growth, and competitiveness. Retailers that invest in digital capabilities today will be best positioned to meet the evolving expectations of tomorrow's consumer.

While technology drives transformation, it is people who power it—visionary individuals who harness digital innovation to make their businesses sharper, stronger, and more customer-focused. This edition is a tribute to those leaders who are championing digital change within their organisations and redefining the future of retail.

Unveiled at the prestigious Phygital Retail Convention (May 7–8) at the Jio World Convention Centre, this issue highlights the contributions of Chief Information Officers, Chief Marketing Officers, and E-Commerce Heads—the key pillars propelling this dynamic industry forward. Happy Reading.



Amitabh Taneja

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71% of Shoppers Prefer Retail Experiences Enhanced by Generative AI: CRI

The report, ‘What Matters to Today’s Consumer’, highlights how evolving technology, changing financial priorities, and a rising focus on sustainability are shaping modern consumer behavior.

By IMAGES Retail Bureau



Generative AI (Gen AI) is reshaping the retail experience, with 71 % of consumers expressing interest in its integration

into their shopping journeys. This growing demand is largely driven by Gen Z and Millennials, who prioritise hyper-personalisation and frictionless digital interactions. These insights come from the fourth edition of Capgemini Research Institute's annual consumer trends report, **'What Matters to Today's Consumer'**, which highlights how evolving technology, changing financial priorities, and a rising focus on sustainability are shaping modern consumer behavior.

Nearly half (46%) of consumers are enthusiastic about the impact of Gen AI on their online shopping and three quarters are open to Gen AI recommendations, up from 63% in 2023. More than half (58%) have replaced traditional search engines with Gen AI tools as their go-to for product/service recommendations. 68% of consumers want Gen AI tools to aggregate search results from online search engines, social media platforms, and retailers' websites to provide a one-stop shop for highlighted purchase options.

7 in 10 consumer products and retail companies view Gen AI as a transformative technology, a significant shift from last year. However, the study finds that while investment in the technology is on the rise, Gen AI usage is not meeting expectations. Consumer satisfaction with the technology is down from last year (at 37% in 2024 compared to 41%

ETP: Powering the Next Wave of Unified Commerce

ETP leads the charge into the future with its AI-powered, cloud-native platforms—Ordazzle and ETP Unify—designed to deliver truly unified commerce experiences at scale.

By Sandeep Kumar



Founded in 1988, ETP began with a passion for creating purpose-built software for retailers. By 1994, the brand had partnered with IBM to scale the solutions on enterprise-grade platforms. In 1997, it expanded globally with Intentia, establishing operations in London, New York, and Singapore. By the early 2000s, ETP VX became a go-to retail solution in India and the Middle East. In 2007, ETP entered Indonesia and has since grown to serve 500+ brands across 24 countries. More recently, it has launched Ordazzle and ETP Unify—AI-powered, cloud-native platforms that embody our future-forward approach to unified commerce. Over 37 years, ETP has been empowering some of India's largest retail brands to deliver consistent, connected customer experiences across offline and online channels in real time.

In an exclusive conversation, Naresh Ahuja, Chairman & CEO of ETP Group, discusses how brands are leveraging ETP's solutions, and its future expansion strategies.

Which major brands are using ETP's solutions today?

ETP is the trusted technology partner for over 500 brands across 24 countries. In India, we work with category leaders from various retail verticals such as apparel, footwear, groceries, sports goods, timepieces, and many more. Globally, our solutions power retail operations for brands across the Middle East, Southeast Asia, and Australia, with successful deployments across lifestyle, fashion, electronics, and department store formats. Our ability to deliver at enterprise scale while localising to market nuances is a key reason why leading retailers choose ETP.

What are ETP's expansion plans over the next few years?

We are actively expanding our presence across Asia Pacific, the Middle East, and Australia, with a specific focus on rapidly growing digital economies like Indonesia, Vietnam, Thailand and the Philippines. Our latest AI-powered, cloud-native platforms—ETP Unify and Ordazzle—are not only enterprise-grade but also



Catalysing Retail Revolution

The first edition of IMAGES Retail's special coverage, Digital Transformers: Catalysing Retail Revolution, honoured visionary leaders who are redefining the retail landscape through digital innovation. These leaders—comprising CIOs, technology heads, marketing heads, and e-commerce leaders—have been instrumental in integrating cutting-edge technologies, enhancing consumer experiences, and driving business transformation into a rapidly evolving retail ecosystem. As retail continues to undergo a seismic shift driven by digital innovation, these industry titans are instrumental in steering innovation towards growth. These digital transformers are at the helm of guiding brands through the complexities of modern retail, from e-commerce and omnichannel strategies to leveraging data for personalised experiences. Their ability to integrate emerging technologies and adapt to the fast-paced digital landscape will determine the future of retail.

As we move into the second edition, these digital icons will take on a pivotal role as the jury, bringing their expertise to identify and celebrate the next wave of digital leaders. Their insights and strategic foresight continue to shape the future of retail, ensuring the industry stays ahead in an increasingly digital-first world.



Catalysing Retail Revolution

By IMAGES Retail Bureau

Building on the success of its inaugural edition, IMAGES Retail is proud to present the second edition of Digital Transformers: Catalysing Retail Revolution. As retail continues its rapid evolution, driven by digital advancements, data strategies, and omnichannel integration, this edition will recognise the leaders who are spearheading these changes. Through their innovative approaches, CIOs, CMOs, Heads of E-Commerce, CDOs, COO-Technology, CPTOs, and CDIOs have been instrumental in reshaping the retail landscape. Their efforts have not only transformed the industry but have also created new avenues for growth and customer engagement in an increasingly competitive market.

The Role of Technology in the Retail Industry

Technology has had a profound impact on the retail sector in recent years. From enhancing operational efficiencies to offering seamless shopping experiences, its integration has become essential for success. Retailers who embrace new technologies can better meet consumer expectations, optimise their business models, and foster deeper connections with their customers. In particular, advancements in Artificial Intelligence (AI), Machine Learning, big data analytics, Augmented Reality (AR), and cloud computing are revolutionising the way retailers interact with consumers, manage inventory, and personalise shopping experiences.

The retail industry has witnessed a surge in omnichannel

strategies, where physical stores, e-commerce platforms, and mobile apps are integrated to offer customers a seamless experience, whether they are shopping in-store or online. Through advanced data analytics, retailers can track consumer behavior and preferences, enabling them to deliver personalised recommendations, targeted offers, and tailored marketing messages. Additionally, AI-powered tools are optimising everything from supply chain management to inventory forecasting, providing retailers with the ability to run their operations more efficiently and respond to market demands in real-time.

Leaders Driving Digital Transformation in Retail

In this digital era, the responsibility of leading and driving these transformative changes falls to key executives such as CIOs, CMOs, Heads of E-commerce, CDOs, COO-Technology, CPTOs, and CDIOs. These individuals play distinct but complementary roles in shaping the future of the retail industry.

Chief Information Officers (CIOs) are at the forefront of managing the technological infrastructure of retail organisations. They oversee the integration of new technologies into business processes and ensure the smooth functioning of IT systems. By leveraging advanced technologies like cloud computing and AI, CIOs are enabling retailers to enhance customer experiences, optimise operations, and stay ahead of the competition.

Chief Marketing Officers (CMOs), in the digital age, must balance traditional marketing strategies with cutting-edge digital campaigns. They use customer data insights to craft personalised experiences that resonate with consumers. By harnessing tools like data analytics, CRM platforms, and social media, CMOs are transforming how brands engage with their audiences, making marketing campaigns more targeted, impactful, and results-driven.

Heads of E-Commerce are responsible for overseeing online retail operations, ensuring a seamless and user-friendly digital shopping experience. Their role is crucial in ensuring that e-commerce platforms are integrated with other sales channels and provide a consistent experience across touchpoints. E-commerce leaders are also key in utilising customer data to enhance product offerings and optimise the online sales funnel.

Chief Digital Officers (CDOs) play a pivotal role in driving digital strategies within an organisation. CDOs ensure that a retailer's digital transformation aligns with its overall business goals. They work to integrate digital tools, technologies, and customer-focused strategies to foster growth, streamline processes, and innovate in ways that meet the demands of today's digital-savvy consumers.

Chief Operating Officers (COOs) of Technology have become increasingly essential in the tech-driven retail space. These professionals bridge the gap between operations and technology, ensuring that technological innovations are effectively integrated into retail processes. COOs of technology oversee areas such as automation, robotics, and digital logistics.

Amit Dhanjani is a seasoned marketing leader with deep expertise in retail and luxury automotive sectors, known for crafting compelling brand narratives and driving impactful marketing strategies. As Head of Marketing Communication at Apparel Group India Pvt. Ltd., Amit leads the marketing efforts for a diverse portfolio of global fashion brands, combining creativity with strategic precision to fuel brand growth and consumer engagement. His career includes key marketing roles at French Connection and GAS Jeans, where he played a pivotal role in elevating brand presence in the Indian market. Amit also brings valuable experience from the luxury automotive world, having worked with Mercedes-Benz, and began his career in the dynamic world of event marketing with Hungama Events. Armed with a master's degree in marketing, Amit specialises in brand strategy, digital and social media marketing, CRM, media planning, event execution, and ROI-driven campaign management, consistently delivering results across diverse market segments.

KEY CAMPAIGNS IN THE LAST 2 YEARS

- › Aldo x Janhvi Kapoor Association for ALDO Festive'24 Collection.
- › R&B- Womens Day Campaign, where R&B hosted a Women's Day celebration at its store in Ahmedabad, welcoming over 1,000 women for a shopping experience.
- › Victoria's Secret- Very Sexy Collection Launch in April'25.
- › Victoria's Secret store launches at Hyderabad and Bangalore in January'25.
- › Charles & Keith, Launch of Spring Summer'25 Collection, Spring to Space.

IMPACT OF THE CAMPAIGNS

- › The Aldo x Janhvi association was designed to elevate brand visibility and recognition within the target market. By partnering with a celebrity like Janhvi, Aldo aimed to attract new customers and strengthen its position in the fashion industry.
- › The Festive Collection Launch was a strategic initiative to broaden the brand's reach and engage a wider audience. Through a multi-channel marketing campaign and exclusive promotions, the brand sought to capture the festive spirit and drive sales during this key shopping period.
- › The Victoria's Secret Store launches were a crucial component for retail expansion strategy in India. By opening new stores in key locations, Victoria's Secret aimed to increase its market share and provide greater access to its products for Indian consumers.
- › The R&B Women's Day Campaign was a regional initiative focused on building and promoting the R&B category. Through targeted marketing efforts and exclusive offers, the campaign aimed to raise awareness of R&B products and drive sales within the region.

3 KEY CAREER LEARNINGS

- › Customer-centric approach.
- › Clear key performance indicators for every campaign to track progress and measure success.
- › Embrace digital transformation, focusing on cost-effectiveness and return on investment.
- › Ensure every marketing investment delivers measurable returns.

TOP MARKETING STRATEGIES AIDED BY TECHNOLOGY

Today everything on creatives is mostly driven by AI. Entire campaigns, including all creative assets, can now be generated by AI without the need for traditional photoshoots, as long as you have the product. By leveraging AI strategically, one can maximise its potential and gain a significant advantage.

BUSINESS MANTRA

Keep customers as the key focus, and build everything around them. Don't lose your eye on the consumers, always look at problems from their point of view.

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