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The Rise of Multi-brand Outlets and the Change of Retail Landscape

Multi-brand outlets (MBOs) are becoming increasingly popular in India, and for good reason. Here are some observations and opinions on the growing trend of MBOs in India:

- 1) **Environment:** MBOs need to navigate these challenges to succeed in the Indian market. **Increased Choice:** MBOs offer a wide range of products from different brands, providing customers with more options to choose from. This is especially important in a diverse market like India, where customers have varying preferences and tastes.
- 2) **Better Bargains:** MBOs often offer better deals and discounts than single-brand stores, making them an attractive option for price-conscious customers. This is because MBOs can leverage their bulk buying power to negotiate better prices with suppliers.
- 3) **Improved Store Experience:** MBOs are investing in visual merchandising to create a unique store experience that sets them apart from single-brand stores. This includes creating a particular store image in consumers' minds, using perceptual maps to position themselves in the market, and leveraging technology to enhance the overall shopping experience.
- 4) **Foreign Investment:** The Indian government recently allowed 100% foreign direct investment (FDI) in single-brand retail and 51% FDI in multi-brand retail. This has led to the entry of international brands into the Indian market, which are partnering with local MBOs to expand their reach.
- 5) **Challenges Remain:** Despite the growth of MBOs, challenges remain in the Indian retail market. These include the dominance of unorganized retail, the need to adapt to local preferences, and the complexity of the regulatory

With the emergence of Multi-brand outlets like Zudio, Yousta, Azorte, etc. the Indian customer can be seen drawn to it compared to the traditional retail stores.

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The Rise of Multi-Brand Outlets in India: Zudio and Yousta

Once considered a luxury, fashion has now become a necessity for the youth. The emergence of multi-brand outlets like Zudio and Yousta has made fashion more accessible and affordable for the youth. These outlets cater to the needs of the youth by offering trendy and fashionable clothing at competitive prices.

Reliance Retail's Yousta is a youth-centric value fashion chain that offers high-fashion clothing at affordable prices. All products are priced below Rs 999, with a majority of them priced below Rs 499. The brand's commitment to sustainability and local communities is reflected in its stores featuring locally sourced and manufactured products. Yousta has a strong online presence, and its outlets boast several tech-touch points, including QR-enabled screens for information sharing, self-checkout counters, and charging stations.

Tata Trent's Zudio is a value fashion brand that aims to provide affordable and trendy clothing options for the masses, with a particular focus on the youth segment. The brand offers a wide range of products, including apparel, accessories, and footwear, all priced competitively. Zudio has a strong offline presence, with stores located in various cities across India. The brand emphasizes a seamless shopping experience and a diverse product range to cater to the needs and preferences of its target audience.

Both Zudio and Yousta are positioned as affordable fashion brands targeting the youth segment. They compete with each other, as well as other established players like Pantaloons and Max Fashion. The brands focus on offering trendy and fashionable clothing at competitive prices to attract their target audience.

Zudio has an advantage with its established presence and offline stores, while Yousta aims to leverage its online platform and plans for extensive store expansion. Multi-brand outlets and traditional retail stores have some similarities and differences. Here are some points to consider:

Similarities:

- Both multi-brand outlets and traditional retail stores offer a wide range of products, including apparel, accessories, and footwear.
- Both types of stores aim to provide a seamless shopping experience for customers.
- Both types of stores may offer discounts and promotions to attract customers.

Differences:

- Multi-brand outlets typically offer products from multiple brands, while traditional retail stores usually offer products from a single brand.
- Multi-brand outlets often offer products at lower prices compared to traditional retail stores.
- Multi-brand outlets may have a larger selection of products compared to traditional retail stores.
- Traditional retail stores may offer a more personalized shopping experience, with sales associates

providing assistance and recommendations to customers.

- Multi-brand outlets may have a more casual shopping atmosphere, with customers browsing and selecting products on their own.

Multi-brand outlets curate their selection of products through various strategies and considerations. Here are some ways they curate their product offerings:

- Partnerships and Deals: Multi-brand outlets often work out deals with multiple brands to sell their products. They may collaborate with brands to offer out-of-season or discounted products. This allows them to offer a diverse range of products from different brands at competitive prices.
- Target Audience: Multi-brand outlets curate their selection of products based on their target audience. They consider the preferences, needs, and demographics of their customers to ensure that the products they offer align with their customers' tastes and prefer

ences. This helps them create a curated collection that resonates with their target audience.

- Brand Diversification: Multi-brand outlets aim to offer a diverse range of brands to cater to different customer preferences. They carefully select brands that complement each other and offer a variety of styles, price ranges, and product categories. This helps them attract a wider customer base and cater to different fashion preferences.
- Trend Analysis: Multi-brand outlets keep a close eye on fashion trends and consumer demands. They analyze market trends, runway shows, and customer feedback to identify popular styles, colors, and designs. This helps them curate their product selection to include trendy and fashionable items that are in high demand.
- Brand Identity: Multi-brand outlets consider their own brand identity and positioning when curating their product selection. They choose brands and products that align with their brand image and values. This helps them create a cohesive and curated shopping experience for their customers.



77th National Garment Fair by CMAI Sparks Optimism for Upcoming Festive Season; Indian Domestic Garment Industry Anticipates 20% Surge in Festive Retail Sales

The 77th edition of the National Garment Fair (NGF 2023) in Mumbai, organized by the Clothing Manufacturers Association of India (CMAI), was a roaring success with more than 35,000 visitors comprising national and regional retailers, distributors, and wholesalers. Over the four days (July 18-21, 2023), the enthusiasm of the participants reflected the optimism from retail sales during the upcoming festive season.

Spread across 8,00,000 sq. ft., the National Garment Fair 2023 (NGF 2023) saw the participation of more than 1200 brands presenting a diverse range of Women's wear, Men's Wear, and Accessories at the Bombay Exhibition NESCO Complex in Goregaon East, and the Kids wear exhibition at the Jio World Convention Centre in BKC.

Speaking about the domestic garment industry, Mr. Rajesh Masand, President, of the Clothing Manufacturers Association of India (CMAI), said, "Since the start of the year, the garment industry has been grappling with a certain slowdown with moderate growth of 5-6% in garment retail sales on average.



Numerous brands and manufacturers have experienced a downturn of 10-15% compared to the previous year. Despite these challenges, there is optimism surrounding the forthcoming festive season, as the demand for apparel is anticipated to be robust."

Speaking about the NGF 2023, Mr. Rohit Munjal, Vice President and Chairman of the Fair Committee, Clothing Manufacturers Association of India (CMAI) said, "The success of the 77th National Garment Fair is a promising sign for the apparel trade, indicating a positive outlook for the upcoming festive season. Notably, prominent retailers and distributors from the country were observed attending the fair, showing interest in exploring regional brands with the potential for nationwide growth. The continuous growth and strength of NGF can be attributed to the unwavering support and active participation of both brands and retailers. Their consistent involvement has been instrumental in making the fair increasingly influential and successful."



The size of the Indian apparel market is estimated to be Rs. 7.80 lakh crores, and has grown by between 15-20% in FY2023. Speaking about the present outlook of the domestic garment industry, Mr. Rahul Mehta, Chief Mentor, Clothing Manufacturers Association of India (CMAI), said, "The organized segment of the market is projected to encompass approximately 25-30% of the total share. Prominent brands like Shoppers Stop, Reliance Trends, Lifestyle, V-Mart, and others are actively extending their presence and swiftly expanding their footprints into Tier-2 and Tier-3 markets."



Recognized as the largest and most highly anticipated Trade Fair in the Indian Apparel Industry, the National Garment Fair by CMAI serves as a vital platform for connecting National and Regional Brands, Manufacturers, Designers, and Fashion Accessories manufacturers with Retailers, Agents, Distributors, and E-commerce Companies. This biannual event holds significant prestige in the industry and is widely regarded as India's foremost trade fair, offering a comprehensive sourcing platform that maximizes both time and cost efficiency for all stakeholders involved.



CMAI Promotes Garment Manufacturing Entrepreneurship in Surat; Facilitates Knowledge Session with Siddharth Bindra of BIBA



Surat, July 28, 2023: Surat is recognized as a significant textile hub, having substantial potential to become a crucial center for garment manufacturing as well. In an endeavor to empower textile businesses in Surat with the nuances of garment manufacturing and brand building, the Clothing Manufacturers Association of India (CMAI) organized a 'Knowledge Session' featuring Mr. Siddharth Bindra, MD, BIBA Fashion Ltd.

More than 200 members of SAKET, an association that represents 160 Textile Markets in Surat, attended the session to benefit from the valuable insights shared by Mr. Bindra on how he built the BIBA brand. Under an MoU with SAKET, CMAI is committed to nurturing textile industry entrepreneurs in Surat to diversify their voperations into garment manufacturing as a natural progression that compliments their existing business.

During the session, Mr. Siddharth Bindra emphasized six crucial factors for building a successful brand: passion, commitment, and perseverance as driving forces, upholding the highest quality standards, understanding

and meeting evolving customer needs, establishing a unique brand identity, consistent and effective customer communication for lasting relationships, and aligning brand personality with pricing, packaging, and availability to create a strong and resonating brand for the target audience.

Speaking about the knowledge session, Mr. Ajoy Bhat-tacharya, Chairman, Gujarat Regional Committee, CMAI, said, "We are delighted that Mr. Bindra graciously spared his time to impart invaluable life lessons from his remarkable journey of establishing the BIBA brand to textile entrepreneurs in Surat. These sessions have a profound goal of inspiring and empowering textile businesses to join the thriving



Readymade Garment Industry in India. Looking ahead, we have exciting plans to organize a series of knowledge-sharing sessions with industry leaders, offering insights into the latest trends, developments, and innovations within the garments industry."

Along with the exceptionally insightful knowledge session by Mr. Siddharth Bindra of BIBA Fashion, CMAI launched the Surat Chapter of its 'ACHIEVERS CLUB' initiative to encourage and facilitate young entrepreneurs who have the passion to Achieve. These initiatives aim to foster growth and success within the industry, creating a vibrant and dynamic community of entrepreneurs.

Speaking about the CMAI MoU with SAKET, Naveen Sainani, Jt. Hon Secretary, CMAI, said, "Over the next three years, our goal is to promote garment manufacturing among entrepreneurs from the Surat textile industry, including SAKET members. We plan to achieve this by organizing programs, courses, and workshops dedicated to efficient garment production management. Additionally, we aim to enhance marketing skills and knowledge

for both export and domestic markets, along with implementing various other initiatives."

Speaking about the potential of the garment industry, Mr. Rahul Mehta, Chief Mentor, the Clothing Manufacturers Association of India (CMAI), commented, "Our partnership with SAKET also includes the establishment and management of a specialized training institute focused on equipping workers, operators, and staff for the garment industry. The tremendous potential of India's garment manufacturing sector offers abundant employment opportunities. The rising demand for Indian apparel brands, both locally and globally, further enhances the job prospects within the industry."

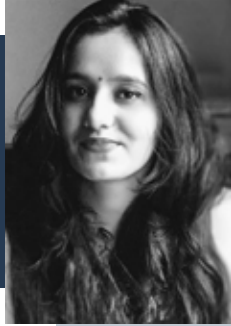
The Indian apparel market is valued at approximately Rs. 7.80 lakh crores, and in FY2023, it witnessed a growth rate of 15-20%. As the industry continues to evolve and expand, garment manufacturing remains pivotal in generating employment opportunities and contributing to India's economic growth. Recognizing the immense potential of the Surat textile market, CMAI (Clothing Manufacturers Association of India) strategically established its Gujarat Regional Office in Surat.



"Fashion is not something that exists in dresses only. Fashion is in the sky, in the street; fashion has to do with ideas, the way we live, what is happening."

Coco Chanel, 1883-1971

REVIEW PAPER



Miss Janvee Singh
Student
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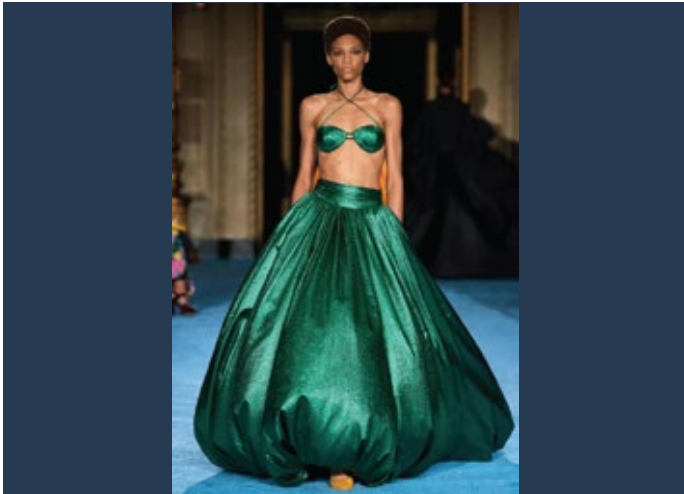
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Fashion Trends - Cause and Effects

The balance between Style and Function

What is a fashion trend?

Fashion trends are the driving force behind the fashion industry, as they influence the cycle of creation and consumption. Typically, when a new trend emerges, fashion designers produce their own adaptations, and consumers purchase these products. However, trends are not limited to clothing and footwear; they encompass a broad range of categories, such as accessories,



makeup, body art, and even home decor. For instance, trends may manifest in the form of body piercings, tattoos, plastic surgeries, or interior design and furniture.

Factors that Affect Fashion

The trends in fashion are constantly changing, and this

is a result of a multitude of factors. While fashion encompasses a wide range of areas, including clothing, accessories, and more, it is often associated with what people wear. Some of the key factors that influence fashion trends include social norms, fashion education, mass media, peer groups, social criticism, environment, customs, religion, work, leisure activities, wealth or changes in income, inspiration from friends, changing trends, and values, and influence from family members.

The Positive impact of fashion trend

Fashion and the apparel industry have a multitude of positive impacts. They give rise to new ideas, designs, and trendy looks, providing a chance for designers to showcase their talent. The apparel sector offers endless opportunities, making it an attractive industry for many. Fashion has the power to transform an ordinary look into a branded, modern style, helping people attract attention from those they admire. Additionally, fashion serves as a universal language that connects people from different cultures and regions of the world. It allows individuals to express themselves and make a lasting first impression. Moreover, fashion and apparel are among the most popular topics in various media outlets, enabling them to influence and inspire many people.

The Negative impact of fashion trend

The younger generation is increasingly gravitating towards Western culture, often disregarding Indian customs and traditions. Hollywood fashion and trends are now more appealing to them than anything that is native to their own country. Traditional attire is being replaced by Western outfits, which are considered more fashionable. Many individuals not only keep up with the latest styles and trends but also try to imitate the images of stick-thin models projected by the fashion industry. This has led to dangerous eating disorders, mental health issues, body mutilation, anorexia, and even suicides among young girls. Teens are constantly bombarded by ads promoting the latest trends, and the use of extremely thin and unhealthy models further adds to the problem. Moreover, today's teenagers and young adults are dressing in styles that are even more scandalous and revealing than those popular in the 1960s, which was their parents' decade. The global economic landscape has also had a significant impact on Indian fashion, further altering its character. This highlights the

importance of apparel and its demand in securing the future. Although designers are working hard to innovate traditional costumes, what today's society wants is a modern, Western look. To ensure a successful future, we must take significant and frequent steps to meet this demand.

Future scope

Despite the fact that Indian fashion has gained global recognition, the majority of Indians are unaware of the treasure they possess. Over the years, Indian fashion has evolved to incorporate both traditional and cosmopolitan looks. Western influence has been so strong that it has brought about a shift in style. However, the future of fashion is likely to be very different from the past due to globalization, the accessibility of different cultures, and the interconnectedness of people via the internet and mass media. These factors are likely to lead to a convergence of fashion trends in architecture, music, online presence, and clothing.

In India, fashion has become a serious business, but it is important to keep our Indian culture in mind while creating trends. Blindly following the trends that come from abroad is not the answer. Instead, we should focus on using "made in India" apparel and increasing employment opportunities by promoting Indian embroidery work, which has gained popularity worldwide. We can also bring beautiful and unique trends to our traditional clothing, which could be widely accepted by the younger generation. It is important to wear traditional costumes during festivals and rituals so that they can be preserved and passed down to future generations. By doing so, we can ensure that our traditions and culture remain alive and well.

What are Style and Function in Fashion?

In the realm of fashion, style denotes an individual's unique way of expressing themselves, whether it is through clothing, writing, or a particular architectural style. More specifically, personal style is the means by which an individual expresses themselves through their clothing, accessories, hairstyle, and the way they assemble an outfit. On the other hand, the functions of fashion encompass the ability to construct, predict, distribute, and implement certain values and patterns of behavior, which shape a person's tastes and enable them to be managed.

Conclusion

Fashion trends are constantly evolving, driven by a combination of factors such as changes in consumer preferences, technological advancements, and cultural influences. The fashion industry has a significant impact on the economy and society as a whole. As technology continues to advance, it has become a crucial element in the fashion industry, transforming the way we create, market, and consume fashion. The rise of social media platforms has also played a significant role in shaping fashion trends and influencing consumer behavior. With the ongoing changes and developments, the fashion industry will continue to be a dynamic and exciting sector, offering new opportunities and challenges for retailers, designers, and consumers alike.

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The Sustainable Way of Business: The Eastman Exports Story

Fashion Value Chain Talks with Mr. N. Chandran

- Chairman, Eastman Exports

Can you provide an overview of Eastman Exports and its mission in the garment and apparel industry?

We started our textile business with a small home-grown lab and later set up a larger processing unit. In the early 1980s, we seized the opportunity to enter the export industry. Today, we serve as a trusted supplier of garments to premium, luxury fashion brands across the globe. This has been possible because of our ability to constantly monitor market trends, innovate, and offer end-to-end service to clients. We continuously look to effectively drive our internal systems and business processes besides forging strategic external networks across the value chain.

As a company known for ethically sourced and sustainable garments, what measures have Eastman Exports taken to ensure ethical sourcing throughout its supply chain?

We are certified by the Better Cotton Initiative (BCI), Fairtrade and Global Organic Textile Standard (GOTS) cotton. These certifications require us to comply with specific standards and undergo rigorous audits to ensure compliance. For instance, BCI primarily focuses on sustainable cotton production, Fairtrade emphasizes fair trade practices and better livelihoods for farmers, and GOTS focuses on the certification of organic textiles. Certifications such as these encourage transparency throughout the supply chain

by tracing and verifying the origin and production methods of the materials used. They also give us access to sustainable and ethical materials and meet industry best practices. Further, Eastman Exports and its affiliates have built a robust infrastructure through forward and backward integration, providing capacity and capability across the entire value chain.

Could you explain the significance of being a member of the Sustainable Apparel Coalition and how it aligns with Eastman Exports' values and goals?

Sustainable Apparel Coalition (SAC), as you are aware, is a global multi-stakeholder non-profit alliance for the consumer goods industry. Being one of its first members from India represents our work in making tangible improvements in adoption, verification and transparency in our manufacturing processes. I am happy to share that SAC has recently conferred us with the Progressive Plus certification for the second consecutive year. This is another testimony to our commitment towards ethical business, the environment and the people that work with us.

The HIGG index tool is considered a universal tool for measuring the apparel industry's performance. How does Eastman Exports utilize this tool and what benefits does it provide for the company?

The HIGG Index is a standardized framework developed by the Sustainable Apparel Coalition (SAC) that provides a comprehensive assessment of the environmental and social impacts of garment manufacturing processes. It offers a comprehensive set of tools to measure sustainability performance throughout the value chain, enabling us to assess and address potential risks while enhancing resilience. Additionally, it promotes industry-wide alignment on sustainability discussions, ensuring that all players are on the same page. Moreover, it helps us build our reputation and attract more business as sustainability becomes an increasingly important factor, especially in the West.

Eastman Exports has been praised for its water conservation efforts. Could you elaborate on the initiatives and technologies implemented by the company to minimize water usage and achieve a water-positive status by 2030?

Eastman Exports is one of India's first textile companies to introduce Zero Liquid Discharge (ZLD) methods for conserving and reusing wastewater. Currently, we recycle 3-4 million litres of wastewater every day and less than 10% of freshwater is withdrawn from natural resources. Further, the salt generated in the production process is reused using the most sophisticated technologies. This will certainly help us become a water-positive entity in the stipulated time.

In terms of water conservation, what specific actions does Eastman Exports take within its dyeing facility to achieve a Zero Liquid Discharge and recycle over 90% of the water used?

The government has prescribed Zero Liquid Discharge (ZLD) with stringent norms and conditions, and we adhere to all the stated norms. In fact, we achieve better results compared to stipulated norms on several fronts. By implementing a ZLD system, we have been able to significantly reduce the Chemical Oxygen Demand (COD) levels to approximately 50, well below the government's mandated limit. Furthermore, we prioritize water conservation by reusing nearly all of the water utilized during the initial phase of our operations.

In addition, we have strategically placed wet processing technologists throughout our production lines to optimise the effectiveness of our water conservation techniques. Through the implementation of advanced technologies such as spray dryers and multi-effect evaporators, we ensure that the effluents undergo combustion, resulting in the production of salt as a valuable end product. This salt is then reused in our dyeing process.

How does Eastman Exports ensure that its other facilities also contribute to the company's overall water conservation goals?

In regards to our other facilities, which primarily consist of cut and sew units, water usage is minimal or non-existent in their respective processes. However, to align with our overarching water conservation goals, each of these facilities is equipped with rainwater harvesting systems. By harnessing and utilising rainwater, these units make valuable contributions to our sustainability initiatives.

Could you discuss the importance of modern equipment in minimizing water usage and how Eastman Exports incorporates such equipment into its operations?

Fabric processing is a notably water-intensive operation, and at Eastman Exports, we place great emphasis on minimizing water usage within this segment. To illustrate this, traditionally, each fabric would undergo many baths or refills, consuming around 150 litres of water per kilogram of fabric. However, through our concerted efforts, we have managed to significantly reduce this figure to just about 50 litres. We have been working to further cut down water intake in this process. Furthermore, we proactively replace our machinery with more water-efficient alternatives on a regular basis. Additionally, we capitalize on the condensate water from the steam pipelines back into feed water of the boiler, resulting in lesser consumption of fuel.





What other sustainable practices and strategies have Eastman Exports implemented to reduce its environmental footprint beyond water conservation?

One of our key commitments is reducing emissions through science-based targets. For instance, we are actively working towards sourcing approximately 80% of our electrical energy needs from renewable sources. This transition will directly contribute to a significant 44% reduction in our greenhouse gas emissions. As part of our ongoing efforts, in 2022 alone, we replaced 41% of our coal requirements with biomass, further enhancing our sustainability initiatives.

At Eastman Exports, our guiding principle is Reduce, Reuse, and Recycle. Over the years, we have diligently worked towards reducing or replacing high-intensity chemicals with greener alternatives through the application of green chemistry. This not only helps minimise our ecological footprint but also provides us with an opportunity for continuous improvement by addressing any potential risks associated with chemicals.

Additionally, we prioritise the thorough testing of our raw materials to identify and eliminate impurities at the primary level itself. This proactive approach ensures that our manufacturing processes are more efficient and sustainable from the outset.

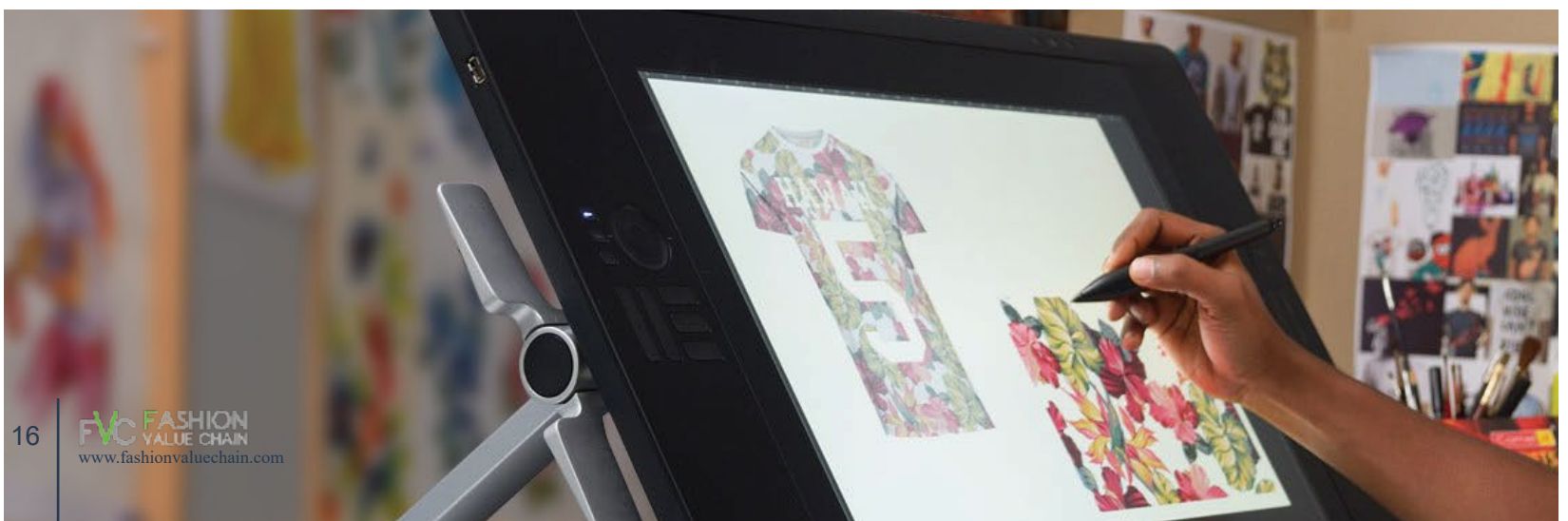
Can you provide some insights into Eastman Exports' future plans and goals for sustainability and social responsibility?

At Eastman Exports, sustainability forms the core of every process and we have been putting in massive efforts to embrace sustainable textile production and capacities. As already discussed, we want to become a water-positive entity by 2030.

We intend to further reduce the usage of coal-fired power plants and supplement it with biomass to reduce emission rates.

Social responsibility is a fundamental aspect of our corporate ethos. We strongly believe in fostering an inclusive and empowering work environment. To that end, we take pride in the fact that women constitute a substantial 70% of our total workforce, surpassing industry standards. We are committed to their continuous growth and development by providing access to various upskilling and financial courses.

Beyond our internal operations, we actively engage with the larger society through meaningful initiatives. We have established long-term partnerships with NGOs to undertake projects that enhance green cover in Tamil Nadu, positively impacting the local environment. Furthermore, we support a school in a remote village to ensure that children in that area receive quality education. Additionally, we extend scholarship programs for both our employees who aspire to pursue higher education and their children, further promoting access to educational opportunities.



collection story



SKECHERS
showcases unique prints
in its highly anticipated collaboration
with **Diane Von Furstenberg**

Skechers x DVF | Endless Kisses

Skechers reintroduces its highly anticipated collaboration with fashion icon Diane von Furstenberg (DVF) through the remarkable Endless Kisses collection. This vibrant collection merges everyday active wear and footwear with DVF's signature prints. From leggings to bra tops and tees, Skechers Apparel showcases colourful designs embodying the essence of the esteemed fashion house. Inspired by Diane's holistic lifestyle and love for hiking, these pieces effortlessly blend effortlessness and on-the-go style. With meticulous craftsmanship, the collection empowers fashion-conscious individuals to express their unique style while embracing an active lifestyle. Experience fashion-forward designs and functional activewear with **Skechers x DVF Apparel today!**

SKECHERS x DVF:

Midnight Kiss Reversible Bomber Jacket

Show yourself some love with the Skechers x Diane von Furstenberg: SKECHWEAVE Midnight Bomber. This fully reversible zip-up bomber jacket features the fashion house's iconic prints on Skecher's moisture-wicking SKECHWEAVE™ fabric, with a ribbed varsity collar, and front welt pockets.

INR **8,499/-**



SKECHERS x DVF:

SKECHERS APPAREL – GO SCULPT™

FULL LENGTH HIGH WAISTED LEGGING

High fashion meets everyday activewear with Skechers x DVF Go Sculpt™ Full Length High Waisted Legging. Elevate your basic black leggings with Skechers Go Sculpt™, an active 4-way stretch fabric that's moisture-wicking, quick dry, breathable, and has UPF 40+ properties. Complete with exterior side pockets, these pants also have a high-waisted double-layer compression waistband designed with the house of DVF's lipstick print, which can also be seen on the side panel down the leg.

INR **5,799/-**

SKECHERS x DVF:

SKECHERS APPAREL – GODRI TEE

Kiss plain activewear tees goodbye with Skechers x DVF Godri Tee. Made with Godri Serene™, a soft and lightweight peached jersey that's breathable with a comfort stretch, the oversize fit, short sleeve silhouette is printed with DVF's exclusive lipstick graphic on the center front.

INR **3,999/-**



SKECHERS x DVF: D'LITES

Introducing the delightful blending of the signature Lip print by DIANE VON FRUSTENBERG with unmatched comfort of Skechers. Stay active in this athletic style and comfort d'Lite style with lace-up and Air-Cooled MF

INR **8,499/-**



SKECHERS x DVF: MAX CUSHIONING ELITE

Enjoy cushioned comfort during your morning run with Skechers Max Cushioning Elite™. This athletic lace-up features a breathable lightweight Mesh upper with DVF print with Air-Cooled Goga Mat™ insole and an ULTRA GO cushioned midsole.

INR **10,999/-**

Skechers x DVF | Animal Instincts

Drawing upon the immense success of their previous partnership, Skechers reintroduces a captivating collaboration with the renowned fashion icon Diane von Furstenberg (DVF), this time with the beautiful **Animal Instincts collection**. This extraordinary collaboration seamlessly blends Skechers' expertise in exceptional footwear and apparel with DVF's distinctive prints and contemporary style. The meticulously curated animal-printed collection meets the needs of fashion-forward individuals who value both style and comfort, fusing fashion and functionality. From enchanting sneakers with floral motifs to high-performance leggings and versatile outerwear, a wide range of options awaits those seeking to express their unique style while embracing an active lifestyle.



SKECHERS x DVF: **MOVING ZEBRA REVERSIBLE BOMBER**

Whether you're cooling down after a run or running errands, throw on the Skechers x DVF: Moving Zebra Reversible Bomber. This reversible full-zip jacket displays the house of DVF "Moving Zebras" print on a lightweight, moisture-wicking SKECHWEAVE™ fabric. The bomber style also features a ribbed varsity collar, cuffs and hem, front welt pockets, and a zipped security pocket.

INR **8,499/-**

SKECHERS x DVF: **SKECHWEAVE RUN SHORT**

Get your move on however you please in the Skechers x DVF: SKECHWEAVE Run Short. Skechers SKECHWEAVE™ provides a 4-way stretch woven fabric that moves with you while keeping its shape – it's also moisture-wicking, wrinkle-resistant, and lightweight fabric with anti-static finishing for all-day comfort. These shorts also have a back-security zip pocket, elasticized comfort waist with an interior draw cord, and an interior knit brief.



INR **3,999/-**

SKECHERS x DVF: **D'LITES – FLORAL BREEZE**



Step right into seasonal floral prints in the Skechers x DVF: D'Lites – Floral Breeze lace-up fashion sneaker. The signature Skechers silhouette features a smooth leather upper, receiving the DVF touch with a fabric trim of the fashion house's archive floral print. The sneaker keeps things comfortable – thanks to its Skechers Air-Cooled Memory Foam® insole – and on-trend with an iconic DVF lips charm at the laces.

INR **10,999/-**

Barbiecore and the Resurgence of Pink:

POP-CULTURE

Unleashing New Narratives and Shifting Paradigms

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With larger portions of high-octane trends living an ephemeral life bound by the upper strata, encompassing the limited who's who of the fashion, the Barbiecore seems to have permeated a few layers, of the status hierarchy to end up in every street market, giving us a slice of the sharp savor of 'Pink' in the soggy monsoon streets of India.

Upending the saccharine-esque version of the colour, a mass concurrence has landed to accept the colour stripping down to unleash newer bouts, setting in motion several shifting narratives.

When the Dalgona coffee and Banana bread were high, was the only liberator for our brains lulling inside the sequestered households, into the mire and muck of the 'teams meeting'. Valentino's saturated, scintillating Pink adorning the FW 22 runway, acquired from the Picciolo x Patone collaboration shortly after the latter declared a fresh magenta, 'Orchid flower' as the colour of the year, breathed colour into the otherwise dreaded black and white of lives that were, like a slow-motion stock video showing a paint laden brush being dipped into a bowl of fresh water!

The way in which the Barbie duo, Margot Robbie and Ryan Gosling rollerbladed into the summer of 22, in latex suits blazing in the esprit neon and pink, a proliferation or a fresh inculcation of a hot-piquant pink, into the wardrobes, was a nno-brainer with the people picking up on the barbiecore in no time.

Nicki Minaj, the self-proclaimed 'Harajuku-barbie' rightfully gave herself the title, commemorating her age-old Barbiecore liaison, initiated much before the onset of the trend, while the rest of the fashion moguls took their time to chime into the tangy-high of the Pink. The ex-lovebirds Megan and MGK were seen dripping in Pink for the premiere of Kelly's documentary, 'Life in Pink', while Kim Kardashian got rid of her Black Balenciaga Lycra to be lying in a pink bed, draped in pink alls. The Barbie aesthetics, prosperously pinked red carpet after red carpets, with celebrities donning outfits from the Valentino PP collection to date. Of course, the other designers have also played their bit!

Summary:

The cultural phenomenon of Barbiecore has transcended fashion's upper echelons to become a ubiquitous presence in street markets across India. The colour pink, traditionally associated with saccharine sweetness, has shed its stereotypical image, inviting a mass acceptance of its vibrant variations. From Valentino's striking pink runway to the rollerblading adventures of Margot Robbie and Ryan Gosling, the Barbiecore aesthetic has captivated the fashion world. Celebrities like Nicki Minaj and Kim Kardashian have embraced this trend, while the colour itself carries deep historical and political connotations.

By Pratyasha Sarkar



However, being a colour crammed with denotations of gender identity, pink has always bore an array of changing values, eventually being shaped into a colour piled with political history.

And the influx of the brand-new iteration of the colour has somehow left us at a crossroads, with an anticipated evolution crashing in.

The neo-styled version of the colour reminisces of Schiaparelli's 'shocking pink' from the brand's dog days of the 1930s. It was inspired by the Cartier's neckpiece 'Tête de Bélier (Ram's Head), featuring a 17.47-carat diamond, owned by the notoriously reputed, transatlantic bad girl of the time, Daisy Fellowes. Referring to it as "Bright, impossible impudent, becoming, life-giving, like all the lightstand the birds and the fish in the world together, a colour of China and Peru but not of the West - a shocking colour, pure and diluted", the designer devised a packaging in the said shade of "shocking-pink" for the brand's first perfume, justifiably named 'Shocking'. And the colour kept tracing its way back to the brand's collections year after year.

The jagged details of the 'New pink' intervened the colour's growing identity towards a linear brand of femininity, gradually soaring during the 1950s, while peaking around three decades later during the 1980s, preceded by a period patronizing unisex colours influenced by the second wave feminists, while the 90s saw the parents idealising a constructed colour palette for their kids.

With the onset of the twentieth century, the colour was somewhat garnered as a knight in shining armour, emblematic to the amorphous strength presiding in the 'fairer sex'. The homespun knitted pink pussy hats worn in the Women's marches against Donald Trump's MAGA caps were made in the factories. The Year 2006, laid the foundation for Sampat Pal Devi's Gulabi Gang, who were thrashing injustice towards women, being clad in fiery pink sarees.

The same year, the word 'bimbo' meaning 'to appear as an eye candy, with no trace of intellect' flared up across

media, with American publishers lashing out at the then labelled 'bimbo summit' of Lindsay Lohan, Paris Hilton and Britney Spears. The following year was called the 'year of the bimbo', as according to the media the trio was hitting new lows in their lives.

The word, which originally described a baby boy in Italian, came to be used to refer to women in a song for a Broadway musical called My Little Bimbo Down on the Bamboo Isle in 1920. Needless to say, it's not fantastic to refer to an adult woman by a phrase that was formerly reserved for kids.

As an antithesis to Hollywood's femme fatale, the bimbo or the dumb-blonde bombshell archetype appeared innocent, childlike and less threatening. Sexualised and characterised by wholesomeness and beauty, dumb blondes' mental faculties never toppled their appearances - think Marilyn Monroe's Lorelei singing 'Diamonds are a Girl's best friends' wearing the iconic Hot pink gown in Gentleman Prefers Blonde. The archetype is almost idiosyncratic to a fashion aesthetic submerged in everything pink. The blazing hot pink, oozes the desirable amount of innocence with the ditzy, skittish stints in a whole of sexiness.

Subsequently, the archetype gave rise to the 'Girl boss' hustle culture in mid 2010s, carving a touchstone for 'Brains over Beauty'

Well, having a fair share in Barbiecore's opulence, #bimbotoks setting our FYPs flickering in the glare of the hot pink, the self-labelled Bimbos or the bombshells of the day are subverting values, by channelling power through the hyper-feminine and constricted aspects of the 'too feminine' coded linearity while talking about real problems.

All in all, while we are awaiting Greta Gerwig's feminist turnover of Barbie, or reaping the benefits of 'dopamine dressing' by wearing the hot pink every day with a pink graphic liner, this Pink Glam up is only giving a sweet time!

Home Textile : A Fashion Statement for Home Decor

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Abstract

Textiles used for interiors are called 'Home Textiles'. Home textile makes 'a house juvenile', a home to live in. It is used according to its desired properties in different parts, different rooms in the home VIZ living room, kitchen, bedroom, bathroom, study room, children's room, dining room, guest room, terrace, puja ghar, etc, and provides physical or psychological comfort. Various fabrics like Cotton, Acrylic, Modacrylic, Linen, Silk, Jute, Cotton/polyester blends, polyester/viscose blends, Cotton/viscose blends, and Polyester, etc are used as home textiles which have been discussed in the paper. The fabric used for interiors is subjected to various types of natural environments. Like Sunlight, dirt, dust, wind, spot & stain due to ink, fruit, coffee, tea, grease, etc has also been discussed in the paper.

INTRODUCTION

Home textiles are nothing but an interior environment, which deals with interior spaces and their furnishings. More important than the function or comfort of furnishing or their maintenance is their total effect on our psyche in various areas of home viz bedroom, kitchen, bathroom, study room, children's room, dining room, guest room, terrace, puja ghar, etc.

THE PURPOSE OF HOME TEXTILES

The intention being both physical & psychological, the home textile exhibits various properties such as absorbency, heat insulation, softness, comfort, breathability, air & water vapor permeability, protection against glare making room cooler in summer, increase livability & workability of small space, lends privacy, reduces air conditioning load in summer, reduce noise.

THE FORMS IN WHICH HOME TEXTILES ARE USED

Curtains, valances, pillows, pillowcases, bolsters, cushions for seating, footstool, bed sheet, bed dressing, blankets, carpets, tablecloths, table mats, napkins, door

mats, rugs, wall hangings, letter holders, lamp shades, slipcovers, sofa covers, kitchen aprons, terry towels, upholstery, pot holder, tea cozy covers.

ROLES OF FABRICS:

- Fabric protects interior color from fading and furnishing from deterioration to sunlight.
- It protects you from sun glare, and it lends protection from night blackness in the evening and from too early sun in the morning.
- Fabrics lend privacy to any degree that is needed.
- It shields people from draughts or heat and reduces heat loss in winter.
- It can make the summer room cooler and reduce an air conditioning load in the summer.
- Fabric increases the liveability and workability of a small place, reduces noise, makes music and even speech richer and more resonant of all acoustic materials, and sound engineers find no material that is equal.

Uses of Textiles in various Sections of House

1. Living room



Textile scope: Curtains, valances, pillows, pillowcases, bolsters cushion for seating, footstool, carpets, door mats, rugs wall hangings, letter holders, lamp shades, slipcovers, sofa covers, upholstery, fabric paintings.

The fabric used: Cotton, linen, flax, synthetic polyester, muslin, jute, silk, cotton/viscose blend, p/c blend, texture chenille, woven voiles, knitted acrylic, polyester fabrics with aluminum film inside applied under vacuum, plush wool, handloom product sand nonwoven products.

Requirement for textiles

Physical

- Comfort, drape, durability
- Strength, quick & easy washability, dryable
- Luster, elasticity, bending, crease resistance, abrasion resistance, resilience
- Antistatic, antipilling
- Good fastness properties

Psychological

- Attractive colors
- Wonderful texture
- Prints & embroidery
- Feel, luster
- Shape & decorative designs

2. Kitchen & Dining room



Textile scope: table cloths, table mats, napkins, door mats, rugs, kitchen aprons, terry towels, upholstery, pot holder, tea cozy covers, curtains.

The fabric used: cotton, linen, modacrylic, and nonwoven.

Requirement for textiles

Physical

- Flame retardant
- Flame resistance
- Absorbent, durable, quick & easily washable
- Dryable,
- Colour fastness

Psychological

- Natural colors
- Natural motifs, prints, etc

3. Bedroom



Textile scope: Curtains, valances, pillows, pillowcases, bed sheets, bedspreads, quilts, cushions for seating, carpets, rugs, lamp shades, upholstery, fabric paintings.

The fabric used: Cotton, linen, cotton/polyester blend, and wool.

Requirement for textiles

Physical

- Quick & easy washability
- Durability, dryable
- Bending, crease resistance, resilience
- Anti-static, antipilling, drape, handle
- Bulkiness, texture

Psychological

- Peaceful colors
- Wonderful texture
- Prints & embroidery
- Feel, luster
- Shape & decorative designs

4. Bathroom



Textile scope: Terry towels, curtains, bath rugs, door mats napkins, bathrobe, scrub brush

The fabric used: Cotton, jute, linen, acrylics, nylon, synthetic blends, nonwoven products, etc.

Requirement for textiles

Physical

- Absorbency
- Softness, handle, drape
- Colour fastness
- Bacterial resistance
- Quick & easy washability, durability, dryable
- Anti-static, antipilling, drape, handle, bulkiness, texture

Psychological

- light colors
- wonderful texture
- Prints
- Feel
- shape & decorative designs

5. Study room



Textile scope: Curtains, Valances, rugs, lamp shades, upholstery, napkins, nonwoven fabrics, for electronics devices, dusting cloth

The fabric used: Cotton, jute, linen, silk, acrylic, etc.

Requirement for textiles

Physical

- Comfort, smoothness softness
- Bending, crease resistance, abrasion resistance
- Antistatic, antipilling
- Durability

Psychological

- Peaceful colors
- Wonderful texture
- Prints
- Feel

6. Puja ghar



Textile scope: Curtains, valances, rugs, napkins, dusting cloth, sacred cloth door mats, bed sheet, dusting cloth

The fabric used: cotton, linen, silk, modacrylic

Requirement for textiles

Physical

- Absorbency, flame retardants & resistance
- Comfort, durability, smoothness softness, anti-soiling

Psychological

- Peaceful sacred colors, prints, embroidery
- Wonderful texture
- Prints
- Feel
- Shape & decorative designs

7. Children room



Textile scope: Curtains, valances, rugs, napkins, dusting cloth, sacred cloth, door mats, bed sheet, dusting cloth, bed covers, quilts, soft toys, fabric paintings, bed padding

The fabric used: cotton, linen, silk

Requirement for textiles

Physical

- Absorbency, flame retardants & resistance
- Comfort, durable, smoothness, softness.
- Anti soiling, quick&easily washable, color fastness color fastness.

Psychological

- Bright colors, floral & cartoon prints,
- Embroidery wonderful texture
- Prints
- Feel
- Shape & decorative designs

8. Guest room



Textile scope: Curtains, valances, pillows, pillowcases, bolsters, cushions for seating, footstool, carpets, door mats, rugs, wall hanging, letter holders, lamp shades, slipcovers, sofa covers, upholstery, fabric paintings

The fabric used: cotton, linen, flax, polyester, muslin, jute, silk, cotton/viscose blend, cotton/polyester blend, texture chenille, plush wool, handloom product, nonwoven products, etc.

Requirement for textiles

Physical

- Comfort, drape, durability, strength
- Quick&easy washability, dryable, luster, elasticity, bending, crease resistance
- Abrasion resistance, resilience, anti-static, antipilling

Psychological

- Attractive colors
- Wonderful texture
- Prints & embroidery

9. Terrace & Garden

Textile scope: Cushion seating for swing, bolster, pillow, pillow covers, napkins, rugs, table, mats, table cloths, tea cozy covers

The fabric used: cotton, cotton/viscose blends

The fabrics used for interiors are subjected to various undesirable influences of the natural environment for example sunlight, dirt, dust, mud & working environment, for example, spot & stains.

Requirement for textiles

Physical

- Color fastness, wash fastness, resistance to sunlight
- Quickly & easily washable, durable

Psychological

- Seasonal colors
- Textures, prints
- Embroidery, shapes & decorative designs

CONCLUSION :

As the home textile is one of the special branches of textile, needs special consideration. Hence it deals with interior spaces and their furnishes & also deals with it should be comfortable, and clean and the psychological effect in various areas of the home should be better.

Apart from the wide use of textiles for clothing, home textiles are rapidly capturing the market. Indian home textiles find a rating amongst the top 5 in the world according to a study conducted by the US Department of Commerce. The day is not far away when Indian home textiles will reach the zenith.

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Psychology of T-Shirts and the Development of Reusable Stickers

-An Experimental Study

By



Ragini Gupta, M.Sc.



Dr. Sabita Baruah

T-shirts and the psychology of mainstream consumers have a strong connection. This connection often works in supernatural ways. Bold messages printed on T-Shirts help express one's unusual outlook on everyday living. The graphics on T-shirts help draw attention one's personal quirks and idiosyncrasies within an informal communication space. Sometimes, messages displayed on a T-shirt might bring psychological comfort to a person struggling to stand out from the crowd and establish a unique self identity. It is therefore, a very effective way of providing a temporary boost to one's self esteem in a world where conformism stifles everyday life. Today, Graphic and Art T-shirts are in demand in many youth rebellion circles. They are readily available to social protestors in every part of the world. The study concluded that there is a potential market in the future for these reusable stickers. These Graphic and art T-shirts are sometimes customized to specific youth consumers and special occasions. Furthermore, it is possible to make different customized reusable stickers for T-shirt based on consumer's choice or the intensity of their expression. Therefore, an experimental study was carried out to design and develop reusable stickers that can be used multiple times with "Stick & Peel" method. Also, these stickers can be placed on any part of the T-shirt such as front, back, sleeve and sides etc. For general market acceptance therefore, a survey was conducted. Further, it is environment friendly to make a reusable sticker than purchasing a new T-shirts every time you feel like buying.

Keywords: T-shirt, Psychology, Social expression, Graphic, and Art T-shirt.

INTRODUCTION

The T-shirts are an iconic staple in American youth rebellion movements, fashion, and popular culture. Originally designed as an undergarment, the T-shirt has transformed itself into the most universal item in youth apparel. T-shirts are simple garments that have transformed the fashion world, created their own industry in garment decorating, and changed the way cultural messages are shared forever. The T-shirt, as we know it today, is an apparel staple. In fact, as the T-shirt is the basic attire in the wardrobe, it can be found in multiple colors, shapes and designs. It is a universal garment which can be worn in summers, winters, and the rainy season. T-shirts have transformed from a means of simple clothing to articles of complex political self-expression. It is for this reason that T-shirts have become very important cultural assets. Apart from being the most comfortable of clothing forms, messages on T-shirt often help serve as a safety valve. They can help the youth communicate their pent up feelings through cleverly crafted messages..

The influence of T-shirt graphics on human psychology

Reflection of your individuality

T-shirts provide a personal canvas for individuals to announce their inner feelings to the world at large. They can also carry forward messages for making known publicly one's hobbies, passions, interests, and social maladjustments. Sometimes, these messages can help reveal one's inner self. Such identifications help T-shirt wearers bond with like-minded folks. Some messages can also help enlighten mainstream society. The artwork and messages on a T-shirt is often the best way to convey to the world what the wearer socially stands for.

Encouragement and support for social changes

Owing to some recent events, there is a surge in people wearing tees with slogans like, 'Black Lives Matter.' Such messages tell the world that the wearer supports a cause. A silent support strengthens the number of people who might also desire social change. By now, the world knows that it was an ingenious strategy of non-violent protests that brought about India's independence. It is this type of silent support that often brings about social changes that

human civilizations might desire. It was also reported that the behavioral intentions and perceptions of individuals can instantly change, based on the graphic featured on a T-shirt.

Most comfortable form of clothing

Wearing and carrying a T-shirt is as simple as throwing it on. A T-shirt is the second best thing that consumers would prefer to get cozy and cuddle with, if not the first. It is the comfort, warmth, and soft hug of a T-shirt that can help wearers sleep better. Comfort sometimes varies with T-shirt sizes and occasions. If it is comfort that wearers are looking for, a loosely fitting T-shirt may be the answer. Along with other fashion wears, T-shirts have been revolutionized over a period of time in the fashion and apparel industry. The consumers are also constantly looking for something new and innovative. Therefore, an experimental study was carried out to design and develop reusable stickers that can be used for multiple times with "Stick & Peel" method. Also these stickers can be placed any part of the T-shirt such as front, back, sleeve and sides etc. Also customized design can be created.

MATERIALS & METHODS

Development of reusable stickers

The experiment was carried out in collaboration with Pidilite Industries Limited, Mumbai. Digital designs were developed while taking inspiration from the Hollywood and Bollywood. A pilot study was carried out to examine the feasibility of the idea. It was found that transparent plastic sheets of ultra clear 100 Micron were suitable for making the stickers. It was also found that the developed stickers could be used multiple times on different parts of the T-shirt such as front, back, sleeve, neckline, shoulder line and sides [Fig.1&2].



Fig:1. Sticker in the front of T-Shirt

Sticker in Front

On the Sleeve



Fig:2. Same sticker on the sleeve

Furthermore, the adhesiveness property of the sticker remained intact while peeled off-on for multiple of times from the T-shirt. However, after repeated affixes, the stickers were reused by applying a fresh coat of adhesive. In case, T-shirt wearers are tired of using the same sticker repeatedly, they can re-print a new design on a fresh plastic substrate. They can then apply the first coat of adhesive, allow sufficient time for curing, and use it as fresh sticker for a new occasion.



Fig: 3.Process of developing reusable stickers

The adhesive for the stickers was made using Teknotex k337 and Pidicryl 4260. Viscosity was maintained at 400-500 Poise using Brookfield viscometer. The Teknotex k337 is an Acrylic polymer which is also a pressure sensitive adhesive. It is a water-based adhesive with a ready-to-use aqueous laminating binder. After evaporation of its water content, Teknotex K337 forms a soft tacky film with superior laminating properties. Therefore, it is suitable for a broad range of applications even at low temperatures. The Pidicryl 4260 is a synthetic thickener used for to increase the viscosity of the adhesive. It is a cross-linked acrylic copolymer emulsion with very high thickening efficiency. The process of developing reusable sticker shown above (Fig: 3)

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Graphic T-shirts primarily serve as visual communication tools. They are available in a variety of visually attractive colours. However, this study intended to reduce repeated buying number of Graphic T-shirts through use of custom designed reusable stickers. The experimentation of this idea was to check the feasibility of the concept of reusable stickers. However, after multiple uses, noticeable cotton linters were found on reverse side of the sticker. These linters can be easily removed by water. Therefore, it was concluded that the stickers can be used on woven shirt, dress, or on denim. The sticker can also be used for multiple times on different parts of T-shirts. The adherences property of the stickers remained reasonably intact even while being peeled off multiple times from the T-shirt. Moreover, the sticker can be reused by applying a fresh coat of glue. The study also confirms that these stickers can be used for 7 to 8 times at various parts of the T-shirt and on different garments.

A survey was conducted to evaluate the response of the consumer to this new idea. For this evaluation, 100 respondents were selected with ages ranging from 20-60 years. This includes 50% male and 50% female with various occupations. A sticker and a T-shirt are both gender neutral. It is as casual as a jeans and can be worn anywhere by anybody.

Fig.4.How often T-shirts is worn

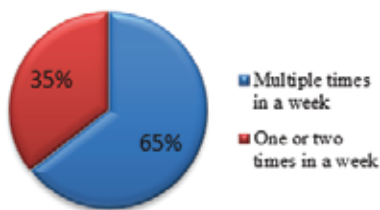
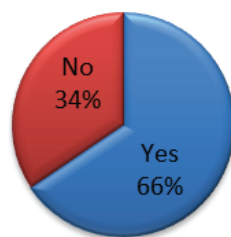


Fig. 5. Posses personal favorite T- Shirts

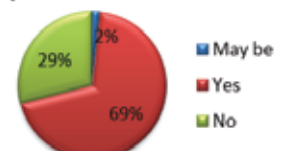


After survey, it was apparent that most of the respondents possessed graphic T-shirts that they wore multiple times in a week .The respondents had their favorite graphic T-shirts tucked away in their wardrobes (Fig.4 & 5)

Fig.6. Your graphic Tees still in good quality or not ?



Fig 7. Would you like a reusable graphic T shirt sticker which can be used on another T shirt on your own convenience ?



Moreover, they also acknowledged that their graphic T-shirts were in good physical condition. However, the respondents seemed tired of repeatedly communicating the same messages over and over again (Fig.6). In this context, the survey confirms that a significant percentage of respondents welcomed the idea of reusable graphic stickers (Fig.7). Therefore, reusable stickers may become trendy for wearers who prefer customized graphic T-shirts.

CONCLUSION

The present study has revealed that T-shirts have a strong psychological connect. In fact, Graphic T-shirts allow expression of an ideology without uttering words. This communication channel available for broadcasting one's social outlook or pent up emotions can bring psychological comfort to young consumers. It was found that Graphic T-shirts were not only popular as general sportswear, but also enjoyed a strong connect with social occasions, business events, religious functions, and spiritual activities. Meanwhile, the present research on reusable designer stickers might bring about a significant change in consumer behavior and purchasing habits. The study concluded that it was possible to make available a collection of highly customized stickers for Graphic T-shirt enthusiasts. These stickers can be custom designed to reflect individual choices. Consumers can now express their ideas through just one T-shirt while using replaceable stickers. These reusable customized stickers can also be used for dresses, shirts, skirts or pants etc. It is also environment friendly to make new stickers than purchasing new T-shirts.

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Retail Trends to Look Out For

By Pratyasha Sarkar

Retail Trends

Required assistance in predicting consumer demands, identifying consumer possibilities, or guided strategic planning molded according to the ongoing mega trends, has become the only residence for fashion retailers to carve out a place for themselves in the field accustomed to the cutthroat competition of the fashion world. With the constant altering of perspectives in the contemporary, trend forecasting has enabled industries to stand out from the competition, reduce risks, and spur innovation, by giving them an edge in the marketplace. Additionally, it equips businesses with the knowledge and tools they need to make wise choices, explore fresh avenues, and respond to changing consumer demands.

Fashion has long placed a high priority on sustainability and adaptability. Customers, however, don't merely want firms to wait and observe what fashion trends are before acting. Brand differentiation is a reflection of businesses' rising ambition to go above and beyond what is generally expected of them and come up with innovative, creative, and digital ways to stand out.

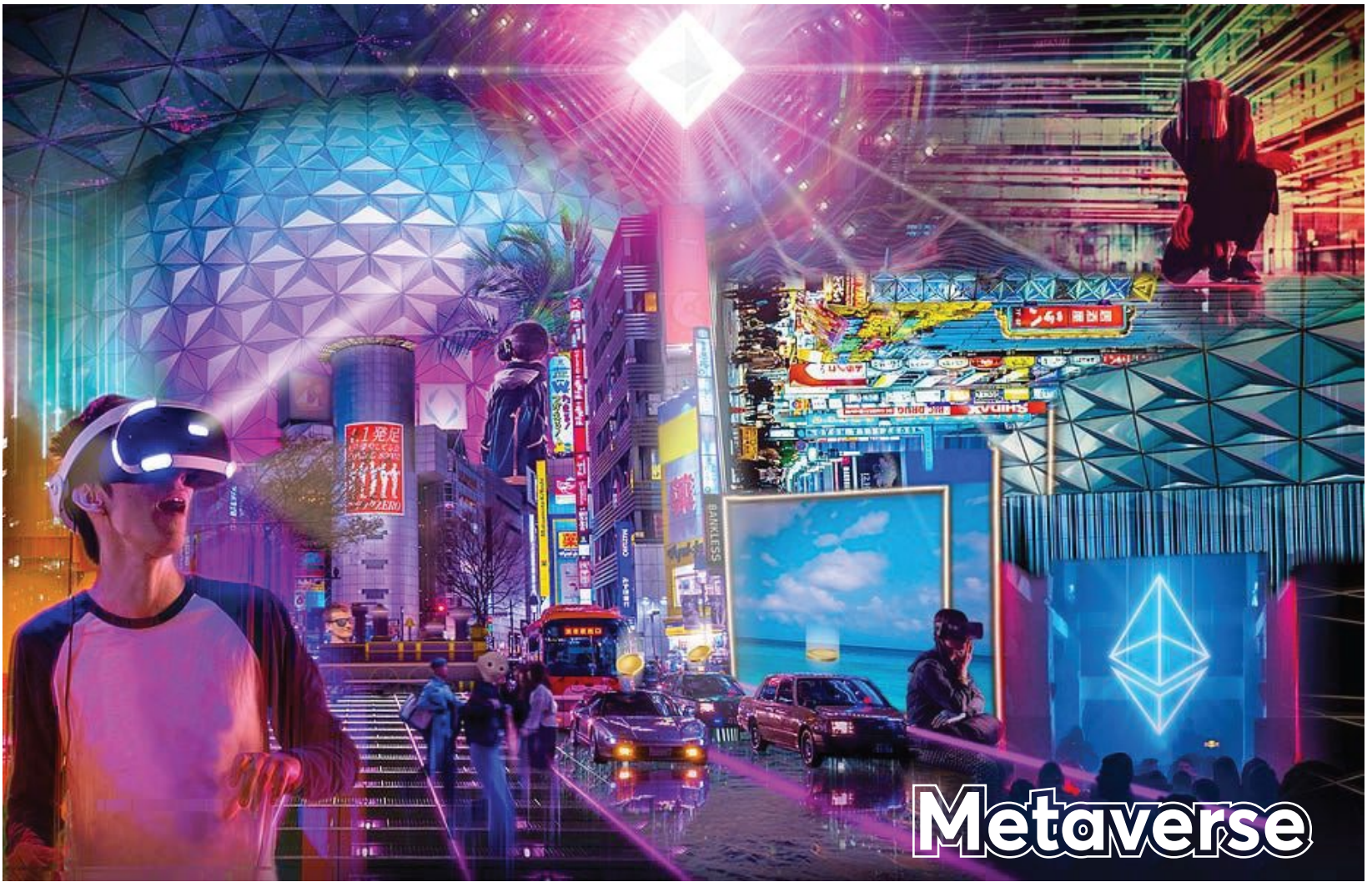
The trends are shaping **the fashion retail industry at present and in the near future.**



Circular Textiles

Circular textiles, also known as circular fashion, is a sustainable approach that aims to minimize waste and maximize the lifespan of textiles. It involves creating a closed-loop system where materials are recycled, reused, or repurposed instead of being discarded. By embracing practices such as recycling, upcycling, and designing for disassembly, circular textiles promote resource efficiency and reduce the environmental impact of the fashion industry. This approach not only addresses the issue of textile waste but also encourages durability, extends product lifespan, and fosters innovative business models such as rental and sharing platforms. By adopting circular textiles, the industry can move towards a more sustainable and responsible future, contributing to a circular economy and minimizing its ecological footprint.

The concept of the metaverse, a virtual shared space where users can interact with a computer-generated environment and other users, is increasingly shaping various industries, including fashion. The metaverse has the potential to significantly impact the fashion industry in several ways. In the metaverse, users can create and customize their digital avatars, which opens up opportunities for virtual fashion. Virtual clothing, accessories, and other fashion items can be designed and worn by these avatars, allowing users to express their personal style and experiment with different looks without physical limitations. Virtual fashion also offers sustainability benefits as it reduces the need for physical production and material consumption.



With the metaverse, digital fashion marketplaces can emerge where users can buy, sell, and trade virtual clothing and accessories. These marketplaces can be platforms for fashion designers and creators to showcase and monetize their digital creations, fostering a new economy centered around virtual fashion.

The metaverse enables personalized fashion experiences, including virtual try-on. Users can virtually try on clothing and accessories, experiment with different styles, and make informed purchasing decisions. This virtual try-on technology can enhance the online shopping experience and bridge the gap between physical and digital retail.

In the metaverse, influencers, and content creators can play a significant role in shaping fashion trends and driving consumer behaviour. They can collaborate with brands, curate virtual fashion collections, and inspire their followers with their virtual style. The metaverse blurs the line between real-life influencers and virtual personas, creating new opportunities for brand partnerships and marketing campaigns.

As the metaverse expands, there is potential for integration between virtual and physical fashion. This could involve incorporating elements of virtual fashion into physical garments or creating hybrid fashion experiences that combine physical and virtual elements.

The metaverse can also serve as a testing ground for fashion concepts and designs before bringing them into the physical world.

Overall, the metaverse is likely to revolutionize the fashion industry by offering new avenues for creativity, self-expression, commerce, and brand engagement. It has the potential to redefine the way we experience, consume, and interact with fashion, blurring the boundaries between the physical and digital realms.

Social media Intervention

Many consumers now look to social media platforms for support and assistance, examining influencers' clothes on Instagram and TikTok, browsing user-curated boards on Pinterest, and sending snaps on Snapchat to seek counsel. According to several studies, the pandemic has increased dependency on social media, with 74% more people being encouraged to purchase through these platforms than they were before the pandemic, and 70% mentioning apparel as the product they shop for most. Over the next two years, social commerce sales in the US are anticipated to increase by 51% to reach \$56 billion as customers experiment with new social buying channels. Global social commerce sales are predicted to reach \$600 billion by 2027.



Experiential retail

Experiential retail refers to a retail strategy that goes beyond traditional brick-and-mortar shopping by creating immersive and engaging experiences for customers. It aims to provide memorable and interactive moments that enhance the overall shopping journey, strengthen brand connections, and differentiate the retail experience from online shopping. Here are some key aspects and benefits of experiential retail:

Product passports

Product passports are a concept gaining traction in sustainability and consumer awareness initiatives. They are digital or physical documents that contain detailed information about a product's lifecycle, including its materials, manufacturing processes, environmental impact, and social responsibility aspects. The aim of product passports is to provide transparency and enable informed decision-making by consumers and other stakeholders.

Promoting transparency by providing comprehensive information about a product's origins, materials, and production processes, product passports enable consumers to make informed choices based on their values and preferences. It also encourages companies to disclose their supply chain practices and demonstrate accountability.

It facilitates a better understanding of a product's environmental impact throughout its lifecycle. They may include details such as carbon footprint, water usage, energy consumption, and waste generation. By providing this information, product passports empower consumers to choose products with lower environmental impacts and encourage companies to improve their sustainability practices.

In addition to environmental aspects, product passports can include information about social responsibility and ethical considerations. This may involve details about fair labor practices, human rights, supply chain transparency, and certifications related to social and ethical standards. By highlighting these aspects, product passports enable consumers to support companies that align with their values and promote ethical practices.



Thrift or Pre-owned clothing

Second-hand fashion, also referred to as thrift or pre-owned fashion, is the term for apparel and accessories that have been owned in the past and are being sold or given away for reuse. Due to its advantages in terms of sustainability and the rising interest in conscious consumption, secondhand clothing has become more and more popular in recent years.

By extending the life of garments, it lessens the fashion industry's impact on the environment by cutting down on carbon emissions, water use, and trash production. The circular economy's guiding principles are in line with used clothing's promotion of reuse and recycling. It provides accessible and inexpensive solutions, enabling anyone to buy designer goods in a variety of styles, brands, and price ranges. Due to the wide variety of clothing available for many ages, styles, and cultures, secondhand fashion also allows for individual self-expression. People can support ethical concerns by avoiding fast fashion and the attendant exploitative labour practices by making second-hand purchases. By assisting small companies and neighborhood thrift shops, it promotes community and boosts the local economy.



The Local Nation: Stories to Market

Brand story



Have you seen the pop-ups at the local events or in the flea markets, or on social media? Did you ever think that in this segregated market of small businesses, handmade products can be brought under one roof?

Well, The Local Nation has done just that, started around three years ago in October 2020, The Local Nation which started as a Social Media community has grown into an organized market of small business owners and their handmade products. And mind you, these not only include some trendy and eye-catching apparel and sarees but handbags, jewelry, Home decor, kitchenware, stationary essentials, lights and lamps, and many more.

Saying that, The Local Nation isn't just an online marketplace, whether it's their marketing strategy or the way of telling the story behind the products, The Local Nation communicates very well with its target audience. They post short stories of how common people just like you and me went ahead in following their dream and started successful small businesses, like the story of Vidushi, an ex-Lawyer from Delhi who went back to her home in Assam, and begin her journey of making cane bags, currently she employees over 40 women in the process.

Another story is of Usha Ji, who with her two daughters, Ishita & Bansari empowered 45 women to make designer tote bags. And the story of Anmol, who with the help of Artisans of Rajasthan and Gujrat begins her journey of making traditional Indian embroidery more accessible by incorporating it with denim.

Talking about the local brands of the local nation, Punah.co is such a brand that upcycles old clothes which had gotten into land-fills into trendy boho ethnic jackets, denim jackets, and army patch-work jackets.

Talking about the story of The Local Nation, it is now a community of more than 4 lakh followers on Instagram with daily active users on their website also. The community of local artisans, local homegrown brands, and the local people of India like you and me are what makes The Local Nation a successful market that knows that stories sell!

With its Modern Polyresin Artefacts, Ashnam Retail is Rewriting Décor Rules in India.

As a part of its product portfolio, Ashnam Retail features a wide gamut of home décor products like different kinds of figurines and gold & silver-plated home décor items!



Manojkumar Sharma
Founder Director - Ashnam



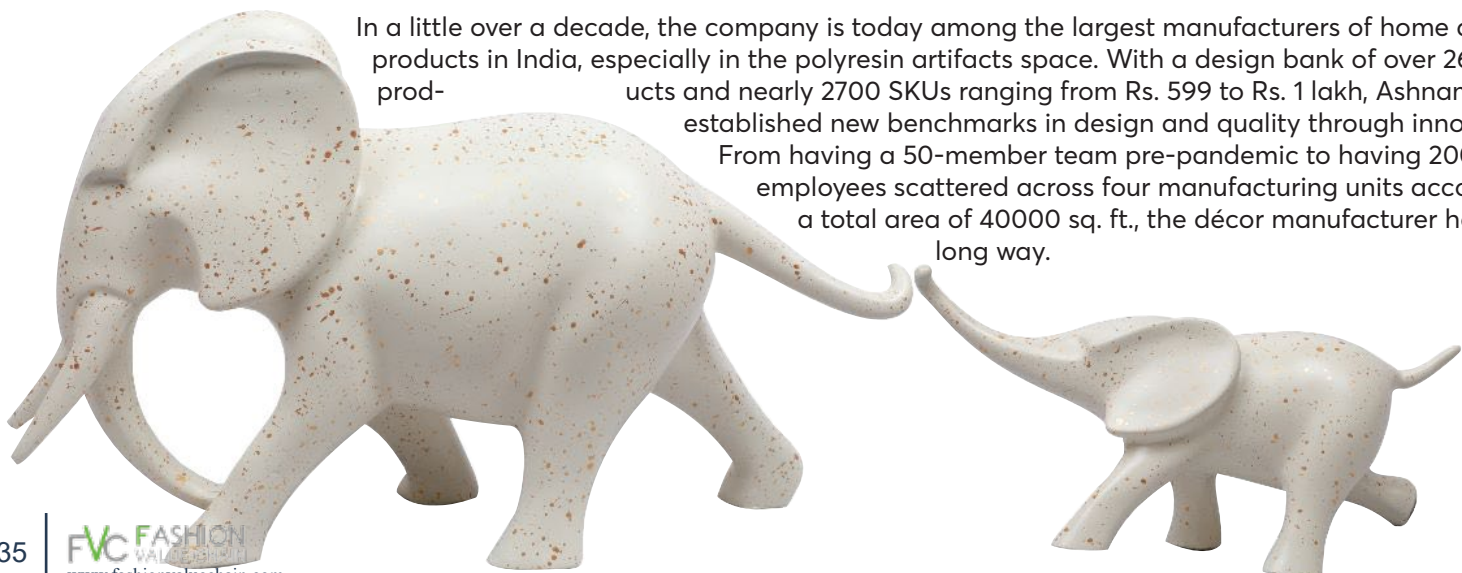
It was in 2012 when Manoj Kumar Sharma, the brain behind the Vasai-based décor manufacturing company – Ashnam Retail, identified growth opportunities in the industry and started as a trading company dealing in gift articles and figurines. By building and leveraging the Founder's diverse network in the market, Ashnam became a supplier of these products for globally renowned gifting stores and jewellery outlets like:

Waman Hari Pethe Sons | Archies | Dagdusheth Halwai Trust PNG Jewellers, as well as for high-profile industrialists like **Vijaypat Singhania**.

But as luck would have, the décor manufacturer faced grave challenges after witnessing a few initial years of significant growth. Yet, with unwavering courage and a strong resolve to bounce back from setbacks, Ashnam was revived in 2016. Along with a professional team of 50+ members, the Founder aggressively worked on expanding its manufacturing capacity and acquired a 7000 sq. ft. space in Vasai, entering new growth markets and reinforcing processes, which served as catalysts for the next phase of growth.

In a little over a decade, the company is today among the largest manufacturers of home décor products in India, especially in the polyresin artifacts space. With a design bank of over 260 unique products and nearly 2700 SKUs ranging from Rs. 599 to Rs. 1 lakh, Ashnam has established new benchmarks in design and quality through innovation.

From having a 50-member team pre-pandemic to having 200+ employees scattered across four manufacturing units accounting for a total area of 40000 sq. ft., the décor manufacturer has come a long way.



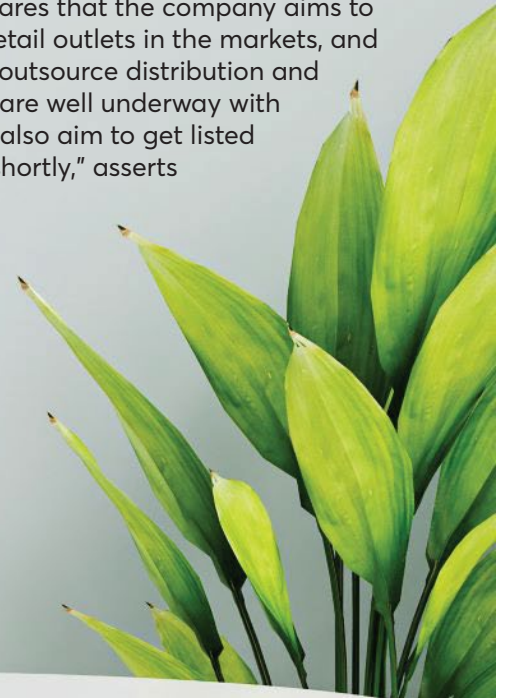
"This industry has been very unorganized, so we primarily focused on innovation. From commencement till now, we have prioritized design excellence, human resources, and fair wages; this approach has helped us differentiate ourselves from others. The opportunities will continue to exist in this sector, and we are optimistic that our main USP, polyresin products, will capture a dominant share in the market," shares Manoj Kumar Sharma, Founder of Ashnam Retail.

Given the potential that the industry holds and, in a bid to improvise and expand further, the décor manufacturer has adopted the white-label business model in recent years. This has enabled them to compete with Chinese manufacturers and collaborate with large-scale retailers from India. Currently, Ashnam Retail its white-label solutions for popular brands like Metro Cash and Carry, Hometown, At Home, Shoppers Stop, Home Centre, Archies, and Royal Oak, among many others. In addition to this, the company is taking great strides towards the D2C business model, with a singular intent to become the go-to brand for all things décor, both offline and online, through retail outlets and marketplaces like Myntra, Amazon, Nykaa, Flipkart, and PepperFry.



"The younger generation likes more contemporary designs while the older generation prefers a religious touch to their décor products; our talented team of product designers makes it possible for us to cater to both these types of audiences. One of the things that help us introduce trendsetting and visually compelling products is our deep understanding of the finer nuances of home décor. With quality, functionality, and value at the forefront of our product development, we strive to transform every interior space with our products," adds Sharma.

Talking about the future of Ashnam Retail, the Founder shares that the company aims to launch its retail outlets in the markets, and the talks to outsource distribution and dispatching are well underway with players. "We also aim to get listed on BSE SME shortly," asserts Sharma.



Experiential Retail and Technology Features at Reliance Azorte Store



Experiential retail is a marketing strategy that aims to provide customers with a unique and memorable experience beyond browsing or buying products. It is all about creating immersive and personalized experiences, prioritizing customer engagement, and striving for memorable, multi-sensory interactions that are captivating. Retailers use amenities such as advanced technology, exclusive in-store services or events, and knowledgeable staff to create memorable in-store experiences that foster brand loyalty.

Reliance Azorte store is an excellent example of experiential retail. The store offers a seamless shopping experience that's made even more convenient with tech-assisted features like smart trial rooms, mobile scan-and-go, fashion discovery stations, and self-checkout kiosks.

The store has a network of distinct zones for both Western and ethnic clothing, and gender, as well as a multitude of Azorte's departments that range all the way from footwear to home. The store has a complex brand hierarchy of in-house and third-party brands, all to fall under the dominant brand identity of Azorte.

Reliance Azorte store has several industry-first tech-enabled interventions, including mobile checkout, smart trial rooms, fashion discovery stations, and self-checkout kiosks. Smart trial rooms capture valuable data on what was tried and rejected, which can be used for designing the next collections. The store also has RFID screens all across the 22,000 square feet retail shop that act as virtual styling assistants that can suggest clothes for customers. The fashion discovery station is powered by AI to help customers find clothes according to their body type. The store also has endless aisles, which enable customers to browse through a wide range of products that are not physically present in the store.



Reliance Azorte store's tech-assisted features provide customers with a seamless and convenient shopping experience. The store's smart trial rooms enable customers to try on clothes without the hassle of changing rooms, while the fashion discovery station and RFID screens help customers find clothes that suit their body type and style preferences. The mobile scan-and-go feature allows customers to scan items with their mobile phones and pay for them without having to wait in line, while the self-checkout kiosks make the checkout process faster and more efficient.

Experiential retail offers several benefits for both customers and retailers. For customers, experiential retail creates immersive and personalized experiences that prioritize customer engagement and stimulate their senses. It also helps to nurture communities and inspires new approaches. Experiential retail can also help customers to get to know brands well, leading to increased brand loyalty and repeat purchases. For retailers, experiential retail can generate buzz and publicity for a brand, create a sense of community, and provide an opportunity for retailers to collect valuable data on their customers. Experiential retail can also help to increase foot traffic and sales, as well as differentiate from competitors

Reliance Azorte store exemplifies the benefits of experiential retail through its use of advanced technology to provide customers with a seamless and convenient shopping experience. The store's tech-assisted features, such as smart trial rooms, fashion discovery stations, and self-checkout kiosks, enable customers to browse and



purchase products with ease. The store's smart trial rooms capture valuable data on what was tried and rejected, which can be used for design-



ing the next collections. The store also has RFID screens all across the 22,000 square feet retail shop that act as virtual styling assistants that can suggest clothes for customers. The fashion discovery station is powered by AI to help customers find clothes according to their body type. The store also has endless aisles, which enable customers to browse through a wide range of products that are not physically present in the store. These features provide customers with a seamless and convenient shopping experience, leading to increased customer engagement and brand loyalty.

Charisma by Anu Mehra:

a go-to label for everyday women



CHARISMA
anu mehra

Fashion Value Chain

indulged in an extensive conversation with **Anu Mehra**

Fashion Designer / Founder, Charisma by Anu Mehra.

Can you tell us about your journey as a fashion designer and how it led to the founding of Charisma?

Armed with a fashion degree, my journey commenced during my early days as a young mother. Frequently, I grappled with the challenge of managing a limited budget for my clothing needs. This often led me to a crossroads where premium dresses appeared overly extravagant while budget-friendly options compromised on quality. At this juncture, I resolved to craft high-quality and stylish Indian attire tailored for the everyday woman. This endeavour was directed towards women who, like me, adeptly balance the demands of family, work, and the myriad responsibilities of modern life.

My conviction firmly rests in the notion that achieving a million-dollar look shouldn't demand a million-dollar expenditure. Guided by this principle and fuelled by a vision to revolutionize the fashion panorama, Charisma's evolution has been remarkable. While our offerings have expanded beyond Indian wear to encompass Western attire, our core specialization is Indian bridal ensembles. Throughout the years, we have guided numerous remarkable women in harmonizing fashion, tradition, and their distinctive personas through accessible outfits. This aspect stands as the most gratifying part of my journey.

What inspired you to start your own label, and what were your goals when you began Charisma?

My motivation came from the unaddressed requirement for affordable yet top-notch clothing, particularly stylish everyday wear and bridal attire. The existing array of designer brands either came with exorbitant price tags that did not align with the financial constraints of budget-conscious women or fell short in terms of the desired quality standards. This realization prompted me to embark on a journey to revolutionize this sector. My goal was clear: to bring about a transformation by introducing personalized, high-quality, and appropriately priced fashion options tailored specifically for women.

How would you describe the philosophy and vision behind Charisma by Anu Mehra?

The vision behind Charisma was to transform the Indian bridal wear and female fashion landscape. We aim to bring about high-quality and fashionable Indian and Western wear for everyday women and high-quality Indian bridal wear that comes without budget constraints.

Charisma by Anu Mehra is known for its bespoke bridal wear and contemporary couture. Could you elaborate on the design aesthetics and unique selling points of your brand?

Our status as a fashion brand with comprehensive in-house design and manufacturing capabilities is a significant aspect that sets us apart. This differentiates us from labels

that depend on external sourcing for multiple stages of production. My direct engagement at every juncture of the journey further distinguishes us. I involve myself with every process, from the initial conceptual sketch to the final product preparation and delivery stages. This level of unparalleled involvement guarantees our customers personalized excellence and attention to detail that they genuinely appreciate.

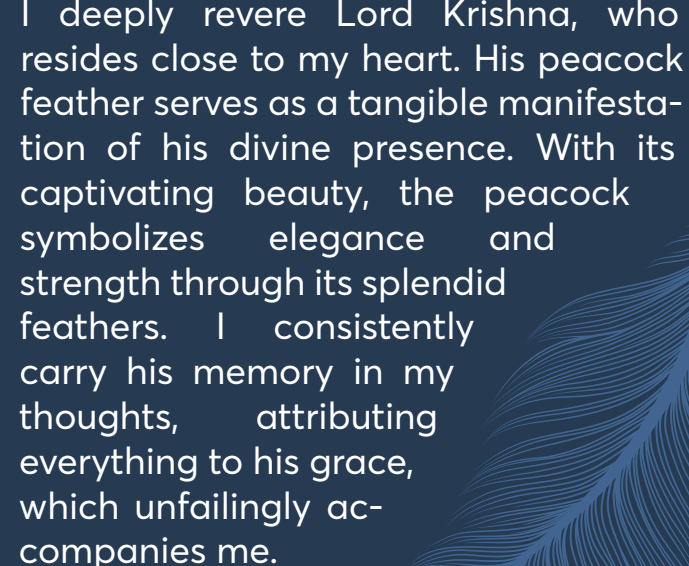
You mentioned that the brand offers ready-to-stitch artisanal materials and accessories. How do these features contribute to the bespoke experience for your customers?

There are numerous fabric arts across India, such as Ikat from Orissa, Pochampally from Andhra Pradesh. A multitude of skilled artisans are rooted in their localities. We endeavor to unite these artisans, who are geographically confined, under a single platform. We collaborate with these artisans to infuse our designs with their expertise. These designs are then carefully curated using a variety of renowned fabrics. Our clients can observe and envision these creations, allowing us to tailor their preferences to perfection.

The logo of Charisma features a golden feather inspired by Lord Krishna.

Could you explain the significance of this imagery and its connection to your brand?

I deeply revere Lord Krishna, who resides close to my heart. His peacock feather serves as a tangible manifestation of his divine presence. With its captivating beauty, the peacock symbolizes elegance and strength through its splendid feathers. I consistently carry his memory in my thoughts, attributing everything to his grace, which unfailingly accompanies me.



As an ethical and sustainable brand, what steps does Charisma by Anu Mehra take to ensure responsible and environmentally friendly practices?

Charisma is a brand firmly established upon the three fundamental pillars of sustainability, ethics, and quality. These guiding principles have been the driving forces shaping our trajectory since the brand's inception. Our primary focus revolves around making a positive impact on the environment and the skilled artisans who breathe life into our creations.

We have taken a proactive approach to material sourcing in pursuing these goals. By cultivating robust partnerships with local vendors and Indian manufacturers, we exclusively collaborate with them. This deliberate choice grants us complete transparency and control over our supply chains, ensuring our ethical standards remain unwavering.

Our

commitment extends to the welfare of these artisans and craftsmen. We actively seek out talented individuals and engage in direct collaborations, guaranteeing them fair compensation, safe working conditions, and the appreciation they deserve for their traditional mastery. Our overarching ambition is to empower them towards enhanced livelihoods while safeguarding India's rich heritage of crafts.

Our approach to sustainability is distinctive in nature. We channel our energies into unveiling limited-edition collections, each piece meticulously crafted with precision and care. This methodology averts over-production and excess inventory, thereby reducing the likelihood of unsold items ending up in landfills. Moreover, the exclusivity inherent in our limited editions resonates with our customers, who acknowledge that their purchases not only embrace style but also reflect conscientious choices. Embracing the art of

upcycling, we further minimize waste by creatively repurposing surplus fabrics and materials into smaller accessories, ensuring no resources go to waste. This approach significantly lessens our ecological footprint and fosters a sustainable, circular economy.

At Charisma, we extend beyond mere clothing; we offer narratives. With each acquisition, our customers become part of a broader story that celebrates local artisans' artistic brilliance, champions environmental protection, and advocates for responsible fashion. We remain constantly evolving, adapting to industry shifts, customer inclinations, and ecological awareness. At the core of it is our steadfast belief that fashion can be a catalyst for positive change, and we are resolutely committed to setting an example that others can follow.

In the highly competitive fashion industry, how does Charisma by Anu Mehra differentiate itself from other brands, particularly in the bespoke fashion segment?

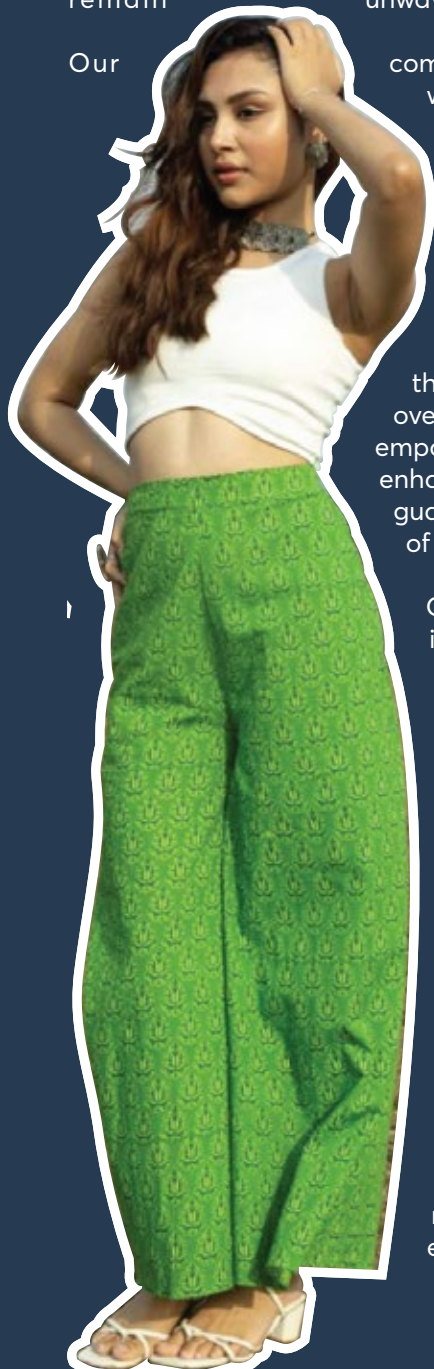
We are different from the other brands in the vertical due to our end-to-end in-house design and manufacturing capabilities. From sourcing the materials, and creating the first sketches to manufacturing the product, none of the processes is outsourced. As the founder, I am personally involved with each stage of the process. This is unlike what other labels in the market do. Our customers get the guarantee of unparalleled personalization and meticulous attention to detail, which they highly value and appreciate.

How do you maintain accessibility and affordability while providing high-quality bespoke fashion?

We have made a deliberate effort to exclusively source all our materials from local vendors and manufacturers within India. Additionally, we possess a comprehensive in-house capacity to handle every facet of the design and manufacturing procedures. These capabilities and our streamlined manufacturing processes that minimize wastage and prevent losses from excessive unsold inventory empower us to provide exceptional quality while maintaining the right prices.

The brand has gained popularity among celebrities and TV stars. How has this recognition helped Charisma's growth and reputation?

We have many celebrities and social media influencers as our clientele, and we also collaborate with other influencers to wear our designs and leverage the visibility of such collaborations on social media platforms. Further, we actively engage with fashion influencers and bloggers aligned with our brand values. They have a significant following among people who prefer ethical and sustainable fashion, and through these celebrities and influencers, we can showcase our products to such audiences.





Starting from a small shop, Charisma has grown into a go-to label. What were some of the key strategies or challenges you faced in this journey?

The most significant challenge brands face is the surge of fast fashion. Social media has propelled large, international, and budget-friendly brands to the forefront, making it challenging for smaller brands like ours to compete in pricing and design diversity. Striking a balance between keeping pace with rapidly shifting seasonal trends, accelerated by the entry of these fast fashion giants, is crucial. We navigate these demands while upholding quality standards and avoiding unnecessary waste. This journey represents a learning curve inherent to all fashion labels, and we surmounted these hurdles by remaining steadfast in our commitment and resisting the allure of low-cost, fast fashion. We proudly value our craft's craftsmanship, sustainability, and timeless appeal. A growing awareness of the environmental repercussions of fashion choices prompts consumers to be more conscious. Our dedication to cultivating a sustainable brand identity has proven economical, prudent and ethically rewarding.

You mentioned plans to grow spectacularly. Could you share some insights into the future expansion and growth plans for Charisma by Anu Mehra?

We aim to expand Charisma's coverage worldwide through strategic partnerships with retail chains and are also exploring our presence in e-commerce platforms. We will also launch new collections every month, whether in sarees, Indian wear, western wear, or bridal collection. This month we launched our new collection, Tarang, a sustainable collection of casual Indian wear inspired by the sea. You can explore it on our social media pages or website!

How do you plan to leverage digital platforms, multi-designer retail stores, and social media to reach a nationwide audience?

We have plans to mark our presence on more fashion websites and marketplaces and even do offline product placement across Mumbai or other parts of the country. We already have clientele in international markets such as MENA, USA, UK, Australia, and other major countries where a sizeable Indian diaspora resides.

Word-of-mouth seems to play a significant role in customer acquisition for Charisma. How do you ensure strong customer retention and satisfaction?

Our unwavering focus has always been on providing our clients with high-quality, sustainable, and affordable experiences. This commitment has led our clients to genuinely value and hold dear the products they acquire from us, prompting them to endorse Charisma to their acquaintances. Additionally, our clientele encompasses numerous celebrities, social media influencers, and fashion trendsetters, and we capitalize on our partnerships with them across various social media platforms. These endeavours have played a pivotal role in establishing Charisma's robust organic presence, solidifying our reputation as a continually expanding fashion label that embodies sustainability, style, quality, and accessibility. a sizeable Indian diaspora resides.

What are some of the memorable experiences or feedback from your customers that have helped shape the brand's identity?

Since the beginning, I have been directly crafting all the designs for clients. Each client has a unique persona, and we tailor our designs to match their individuality and preferences. Every client is treated with utmost significance, and we prioritize their needs personally. The positive feedback we receive is a testament to our efforts, as clients often return with anecdotes of receiving compliments on their attire. Remarkably, my first client continues to entrust me with their clothing choices. It is encouraging when they express that our creations possess a timeless quality while staying abreast of current trends, positioning us at the forefront of fashion. These consistently uplifting comments serve as a driving force. Ultimately, our clients find their distinctive identity through our work.

As the brand's first client, how did you maintain your connection with customers as the label grew?

Our policy centres around punctual delivery aligned with client preferences, quality, and budget considerations. We give them a comprehensive offering that caters to all their needs. Each client is important as they often bring in new referrals. Taking my first client as an example, their entire family has become loyal clients. I have had the privilege of coordinating attire for four generations of weddings within the same family. My team knows these principles must be adhered to with every client interaction. express that our creations possess a timeless quality while staying abreast of current trends, positioning us at the forefront of fashion. These consistently uplifting comments serve as a driving force. Ultimately, our clients find their distinctive identity through our work.

Personal and Inspirational:

- **You have been a part of the fashion world for over two decades. What are some of the most valuable lessons you have learned during your journey as a designer and entrepreneur?**
-

Beyond mere financial gain, work ethics and a fervent dedication to your craft are very important. Establishing a solid foundation and maintaining unwavering principles are essential. Furthermore, customers are primary. While financial resources are necessary for expansion, the role of clients cannot be undermined. Additionally, it is imperative to ensure the well-being of your staff and uphold a commitment to deadlines and core values. Lastly, embracing the notion that growth stems from learning through mistakes is of utmost importance.

- **Who are your design inspirations or role models in the fashion industry, and how have they influenced your work?**
-

Ritu Kumar's profound connection with Indian heritage inspires me, and I admire her journey. I am very inspired by Sabyasachi Mukherjee, and you can see much of his influence in my work.

- **What advice would you give to aspiring fashion designers and entrepreneurs who want to make their mark in the industry?**
-

For any young entrepreneur aiming to build a fashion or lifestyle brand, embracing one's unique vision and passion is key. Our vision is often shaped by our personal experiences, needs, and values, but how it caters to a specific audience or addresses a unique need can set a venture apart. I would advise budding fashion entrepreneurs to remain authentic and let their genuineness reflect in their creations. Secondly, passion fuels creativity and determination. You must find a purpose that you resonate with strongly. It could be empowering women, cherishing the cultural heritage, promoting sustainability, and even combining all these values that can drive you forward. It is this passion that can be a game-changer during challenging times.

I would also advise people not to get discouraged by the limitations of resources. It can be daunting, but it would also push you toward becoming more resourceful, innovative and make you a problem solver. The core things to focus on are your products' uniqueness and value addition. Stand firmly behind your value proposition and let it guide your brand identity. Last but not least, I advise you to celebrate your positive impact on your customers' lives. Every time you add joy to someone's life, you would realize how it adds to your confidence and joy as an entrepreneur.

Fashion Value Chain talked with
Mr. Francesco Magri, Regional Manager –
Europe, Woolmark at Milano Unica



interview

Wool Innovation and Sustainability: Conversation with Woolmark

Could you please tell us about Woolmark and its mission in the textile industry?

Certainly. Woolmark is a non-profit organization that is owned by woolgrowers in Australia. Our primary mission is to promote wool and foster innovation in textiles and yarns. This is why we are here at Milano Unica, to showcase the remarkable qualities of wool and its applications in the fashion industry.

Woolmark's presence extends far beyond Australia. Can you elaborate on your global reach and the regions you operate in?

Absolutely. While Woolmark is rooted in Australia, we have a global presence. We operate hub offices in various regions, including Italy, France, the UK, the U.S., China, India, Korea, and many more. In these regions, we work closely with brands and consultants to promote the use of wool and innovation in the textile industry.

Milano Unica offers a unique platform to engage with different sectors of the fashion industry. Could you share your experience at this event and how Woolmark collaborates with various brands?

Milano Unica is indeed an exceptional event that allows us to connect with a wide range of brands, from fashion to sports and lifestyle. At Woolmark, our focus is on promoting innovation in fabrics. Our primary tool for achieving this is the Wool Lab, a sourcing guide where we showcase the best selection of yarns and textiles made from Merino Wool.

Sustainability is a major concern in the textile industry today. How does Woolmark address sustainability, especially in the context of wool production?

Sustainability is a core value for woolgrowers in Australia. They are deeply committed to environmental preservation. Woolgrowers have taken significant steps to address carbon emissions and reduce their carbon footprint. Additionally, they are actively involved in regenerative agriculture practices, which are vital for the environment.

How has the response been in terms of adopting wool and sustainable practices within the textile industry?

The response has been overwhelmingly positive. There is a growing demand for innovative fabrics, and wool is making a strong comeback in the fashion industry. As we look ahead to the next winter season, Merino wool is expected to be one of the primary fibers for textiles. Its exceptional performance and natural sustainability align perfectly with what brands are seeking.





interview

Birla Cellulose's Sustainable Approach: From Fiber to Fashion

Fashion Value Chain Talks with Mr. Murgan Thenkondar
President Marketing and Global Head, Birla Cellulose.

Can you tell us about Birla Cellulose's products, factories, and marketing offices?

Birla Cellulose is a part of Grasim Industries and is a leading producer of viscose staple fiber. The company has factories located in India, Thailand, Indonesia, and China. Birla Cellulose's products include viscose staple fiber, filament yarn, and specialty fiber. The company has marketing offices in India, China, Indonesia, Thailand, Turkey, and Europe.

How does Birla Cellulose ensure sustainable sourcing of wood pulp for its fibers?

Birla Cellulose is committed to sustainable sourcing of wood pulp for its fibers. The company sources wood pulp from sustainably managed forests and has implemented a traceability system to ensure that the wood pulp used in its fibers is responsibly sourced. Birla Cellulose also works with suppliers to promote responsible forestry practices and has implemented a supplier code of conduct that includes environmental and social standards.

Can you tell us about Liva's brand campaigns?

Liva is a brand of Birla Cellulose that offers a range of fabrics made from viscose staple fiber. Liva has launched several brand campaigns to promote its products, including "Liva Fluid Fashion"

and "Liva Accredited Partner Forum". The "Liva Fluid Fashion" campaign showcases the fluidity and drape of Liva fabrics, while the "Liva Accredited Partner Forum" is a platform for Liva's partners to showcase their products and designs.

How does Liva collaborate with fashion designers?

Liva collaborates with fashion designers to showcase the versatility and quality of its fabrics. The company has partnered with several designers to create collections using Liva fabrics, including Anita Dongre, Sabyasachi Mukherjee, and Manish Malhotra. Liva also sponsors fashion events and shows to promote its products and collaborations.

Can you tell us about Birla Cellulose's collaboration with clusters?

Birla Cellulose collaborates with textile clusters to promote sustainable and responsible practices in the textile industry. The company has partnered with several textile clusters in India, including the Tirupur Exporters Association and the South India Textile Research Association, to promote sustainable textile production and responsible sourcing of raw materials. Birla Cellulose also works with textile clusters to develop new products and technologies that promote sustainability and reduce the environmental impact of textile production.

interview



**CMAI's Remarkable Impact
on India's Garment Industry**

Fashion Value Chain Talks with **Mr. Rahul Mehta**

- Chief Mentor, CMAI

- **We're here at the 77th Edition of the National Garment Fair, and it seems like you've had an incredible response this year. Can you tell us more about it?**

This year's National Garment Fair has been phenomenal. We've witnessed participation from over 1300 brands, making it the largest-ever exhibition in India's garment industry. Initially, we expected around 30-35 thousand retailers, but the response has been so overwhelming that we anticipate this number will be exceeded.

- **Could you shed some light on what sets CMAI apart from other associations in the industry?**

There are several factors that make CMAI stand out. First and foremost, we continually evolve our formats and strategies to adapt to the changing business environment. Secondly, our dedicated team members personally commit to the fair's success, actively working on it for three months leading up to the event. Many organizations outsource these tasks, but we believe in hands-on involvement. Lastly, our rates for exhibition spaces at NESCO and Jio Convention center are extremely reasonable, making it accessible to a wide range of participants. This year, we've even taken the entire NESCO facility and space in Jio World Center, a first in the history of the garment industry.

- **How does CMAI support garment exporters, both domestically and internationally?**

While our primary focus is on domestic markets, we also have members who engage in exports. In fact, we're venturing into international promotion with the "Brands of India" trade show in Dubai this November. This marks the first time any association has taken the initiative to promote Indian brands globally. It's not a one-time effort; we've been in discussions with the Dubai World Trade Center for three years, and if successful, we plan to expand this endeavor further.

- **Can you tell us about CMAI's involvement with luxury brands and Indian manufacturers?**

We've created forums where manufacturers showcase their production capacities rather than just promoting brands. This approach benefits major corporates like Aditya Birla Retail and Fashion Ltd., as well as international and domestic brands, as they can source their production requirements from these manufacturers. It's a unique platform we've developed.

- **How does CMAI contribute to branding by garment manufacturers?**

Many of the major brands in India began their journey by participating in CMAI's exhibitions. We also collaborate closely with international brands. We have two specific activities for brands - the Captain's Forum, which brings together top brands and retailers for idea exchange and problem-solving, and the Shore Initiative, where we work with brands to introduce sustainable practices in the Indian industry.

- **Could you tell us about CMAI's stance on the Direct-to-Consumer (D2C) trend?**

We don't have a specific forum for D2C, but we are actively considering how to engage with this growing business model. It's a trend that's catching on, and we want to ensure we can connect with D2C businesses effectively.

- **Before we conclude, can you tell us about any business training programs CMAI offers for manufacturers?**

We frequently host knowledge-sharing workshops where we invite experts and industry leaders to speak on various topics, providing valuable training and insights for manufacturers in the garment industry.



Anita Dongre: Queen of Prêt

Anita Dongre is a renowned Indian fashion designer and entrepreneur who is the founder of the House of Anita Dongre, an Indian fashion house. She was born on October 3, 1963, in Mumbai, Maharashtra, India. Dongre's mother, Pushpa Sawlani, used to stitch clothes for Anita and her five siblings when they were kids. Later in life, Anita studied fashion design at SNTD college located in Mumbai, where she pursued a Degree course in Fashion designing. After completing her degree, Dongre designed and supplied designs for many of the country's leading boutiques for 12 years, before launching her label. Dongre launched her jewelry brand Anita Dongre Pink City, which also features under House of Anita Dongre.

She later launched her clothing brands, which include AND, a western wear brand; Global Desi, a contemporary line; Grassroot, a sustainable luxury brand; and Anita Dongre, a bridal couture and prêt line, including menswear. Dongre's brother and sister handle the operations of the business, while she focuses on the design front. She features as the Chief Creative Officer of the company. The House of Anita Dongre offers a range of clothing brands, including AND, Global Desi, Anita Dongre, and Grassroot. AND is a western wear brand, Global Desi is a contemporary line, Anita Dongre is a bridal couture and prêt line, including menswear, and Grassroot is a sustainable luxury brand. Dongre is committed to sustainability and eco-consciousness.

She works with artisans and has set forth several initiatives that benefit rural women and local artisans while reviving and sustaining Indian handcrafted traditions. Dongre's foundation is committed to helping provide sustained employment to women through collaborations with organizations like Goonj and NEPRA, and with their local tailoring unit in Modgaon in Plaghar district. These women help upcycle the fabric waste generated in the clothing manufacturing process into godharis, carry bags, and reusable masks, which later go towards the aid of people and animals in need and as items to be sold in local markets.

Anita Dongre's fascination with fashion started when she saw her mother, Pushpa Sawlani, creating beautiful garments with fabrics for her and her siblings when they were kids. Her mother was the first designer she was

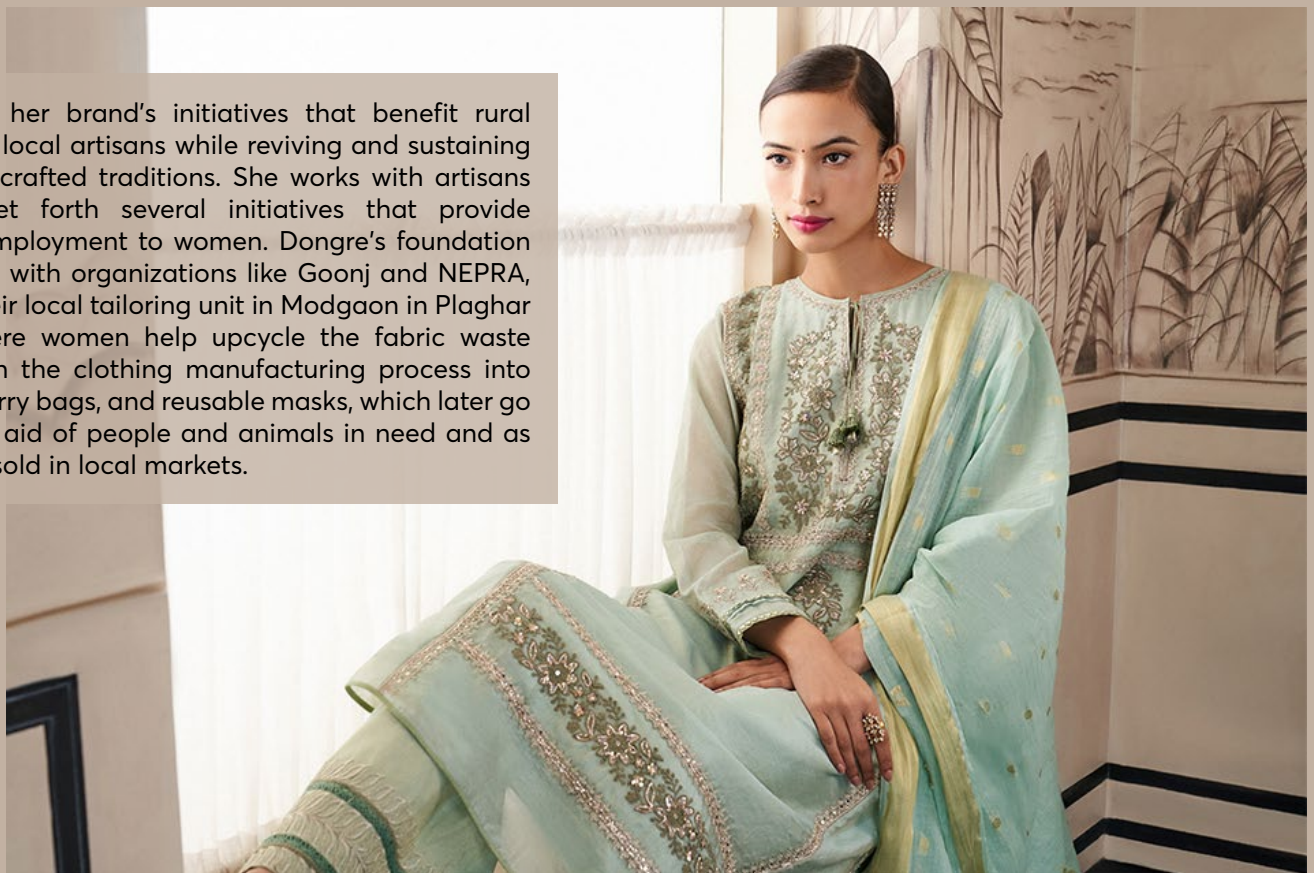


exposed to, and she was inspired by her creativity. Later in life, she studied fashion design at SNTD college located in Mumbai, where she pursued a Degree course in Fashion designing. After completing her degree, Dongre designed and supplied designs for many of the country's leading boutiques for 12 years, before launching her label. She launched her jewelry brand Anita Dongre Pink City, which also features under House of Anita Dongre. She later launched her clothing brands, which include AND, a western wear brand; Global Desi, a contemporary line; Grassroot, a sustainable luxury brand; and Anita Dongre, a bridal couture and prêt line, including menswear. Dongre's journey into fashion was inspired by her mother's creativity and her passion for designing beautiful garments.



Anita Dongre's design philosophy is centered around creating luxurious designs that enhance a person's confidence and sense of self. She believes that fashion plays a defining role in this aspect. Her designs showcase Indian aesthetics in a contemporary language, and she is inspired by Rajasthan's splendor and India's rich craft tradition, which she aims to revive and sustain while empowering craftspeople. Dongre's design philosophy is based on "Wear ability, comfort, and inclusiveness." She was the first Indian designer to introduce standard sizing in the country for Indian women. Her commitment to sustainability and eco-consciousness is

reflected in her brand's initiatives that benefit rural women and local artisans while reviving and sustaining Indian handcrafted traditions. She works with artisans and has set forth several initiatives that provide sustained employment to women. Dongre's foundation collaborates with organizations like Goonj and NEPRA, and with their local tailoring unit in Modgaon in Plaghar district, where women help upcycle the fabric waste generated in the clothing manufacturing process into godharis, carry bags, and reusable masks, which later go towards the aid of people and animals in need and as items to be sold in local markets.





Handlooms of India

Paithani's painstaking art is much beyond popular parrots

Paithani is not just about peacocks and parrots, its history is as interesting as its tapestry weave

By Ranjani Govind

In our quest to bring you the minutiae of Indian weaving culture - in this new series on a handloom - we bring you closer to a handloom silk craft tradition, Paithani, dating back to 200 BC. Paithani, worn still in Maharashtrian social and religious functions with local pride, remains an heirloom. Being a must-include in every girl's wedding trousseau, saris are known to last generations as they are made rich and strong.

With its origins in antiquity, the Paithani sari is said to have hailed from the royal dynasties of the medieval town of Paithan near Aurangabad. Named after the town, the sari is believed to have been originally made with the finest silk threads from China and pure zari that was spun locally.

Historically Paithan has always been centred around the weaving industry. Every household in Paithan was linked with weaving and ancillary activities such as dyeing the silk, winding the zari or even selling silks.

Signifying a history with the craft of Indian handloom, every piece typifies a luxurious spread of motifs with liberal use of gold, as well as floral and bird-inspired motifs. "It's an interesting history. Our 2nd Century BC trade exchange show records of Paithani silk being bartered for Roman wine and olive oil! Artisans of ancient Supratishthapuram city (presently known as Paithan) were gifted with this skill. Historians have noted that fine Paithani saris with delicate gold and silver thread-work were sold in Greece in exchange for gold too between 200 and 400 BC," says weaver Ram Manohar who lives at Aurangabad in Maharashtra.

Ram Manohar hails from a family of silk weavers who preserve old records of 'weaved Paithani material albums' that serve as models for weavers and handloom aficionados. "These can serve as a reference for anyone taking up research work on handloom," says Manohar. "My great-grandfather chose this city as it has always been a major production centre of cotton and artistic silk fabrics."

The elaborate flowery designs and the ornate bird-inspired treatments are signature to any Paithani designery. They are part of the Paithani family of weaving that are now crafted from home-grown silk threads and zari. "To create an accurate Paithani it takes 500 grams of silk threads and 250 gms of zari," says Manohar, as the fourth-generation weaver has brought in creative touches with a modern twist to the classic Bangadi-Mor (bangle-peacock) motif of Paithani. "The painstaking process has taken three years for a single sari. It brings about bangle patterns running all over," he says. The contemporary varieties of the sari from Paithan and Yeol in Maharashtra are fashioned from homegrown silk threads from Bangalore, while the zari is sourced from Surat, according to 47-year-old Aseefa Khan from Yeol, who has been perfecting her Paithani skills on the loom for the last 30 years.

Gorgeous motifs in three types of weaving

The saris are named after the gorgeous motifs on them – tota-maina (parrot and maina); asawalli (flower and vine); narli (coconut); pejli (leaf) panja (flying peacock) zardari and Muniya (parrot in zari) on pure silk cloth base. Weaving a Paithani sari can take anything between six months to two years,

depending on the intricacy of the motif and design with three major types of weaving - the split tapestry weave, interlocking method, and dove-tailing method. adding that even an ordinary Paithani silk with minimum work in six yards costing Rs.25,000 will weigh 750 grams. "You can imagine the kind of gold work that goes into it! The nine-yard versions use more raw material and can weigh up to a kilogram," adds Aseefa.

Yeola, hardly known to people with regard to its near-3000 Paithani weaver looms, is a quiet township in the Nashik District of Maharashtra.

According to weaver Shirish Patil, the town was founded in the late 17th century by Raghujibaba Patil who moved here with families of master weavers.

Amongst the generous spread of Havelis there, Shrinivas Soni, a 6th generation weaver with ancestral roots in Rajasthan from the shop Soni Paithani says his Haveli-shop is one of the oldest and well-known. "We have supplied Paithani saris to many film and television heroines. But with the film 'Devdas' we became more well-known as we supplied Paithani saris to Madhuri Dixit and Aishwarya Rai," says Soni, his shop being amongst the near-100 Paithani dealers with weavers in Yeola.

Soni's forefathers who settled in Yeola, "as they observed the demand for Paithani saris in 1857" wanted to take forward their ancestral legacy. Nearly 25,000 weavers live in Yeola and its neighbouring town Nagde now. Everyone works on traditional pit-loom or the newly introduced frame loom. "Richly besieged with motifs, the silk-and-gold Paithani saris were patronized by the Peshwas, and today Yeola has more number of looms than in Paithan village!" adds Soni.



MADHURYA



Strong influences and re-creations

Today it's common to see zari replaced with gold-like threads too in Paithani work. Says Bharathy Harish of the revival boutique Madhurya Creations, who customizes Paithani from Maharashtra, "The history of Paithani talks of a strong influence from both the Peshwa and the Moghul traditions. A Paithani is known for its trademark borders that classify them into its type - the Morbangadi (mor-peacock and bangdi – bangle); Munia – the parrot; and Brocade with florals and birds. The artistry is so accurate that one feels the flowers can be plucked from their branches in this weaving!"

Bharathy has had customers asking for different versions in a Paithani too. "We have got Manasarovar, mountains and lakes done and this kind of tapestry weave allows you to weave like a painting!" she says.

Although popular beliefs say Paithani was always made from pure silk, it dates back to a time when saris were available in pure cotton as well. Textile records in various museums speak of Paithani dating back to 200 BC used a fine cotton weave. "When the royals yearned for a dash of rich profusion in its weave, the weavers came up with introducing kora or shahtoot silks in its weave, and thus began its journey of being one of the icons in silks," explains P. Saraf of Vyusti Saris.

The 2,000-year-old weave is done with the same technique as the Persian rug, says Arati Baandal of OnlyPaithani, a designer label that works to promote Paithani. Arati who had an exhibition held at Rain Tree in 2018 said she was also experimenting with colours. "Traditionally, a Paithani is done in purple, yellow, red, pink and bottle green. We are doing it in blue, mauve, grey and pastels. We are also creating them in checks and fusion borders."

Distinguishing features

A Paithani weave is like gara embroidery with no threads hanging and doesn't get entangled with accessories. With both sides of a Paithani looking exactly the same, a true Paithani is thus distinguished from the plethora of Paithani saris made on a power loom and other fakes in the market. Designers say one has to look for popular colours as reds, yellows, sky blues, magentas, greens, peach-pinks and purples with traditional motifs as parrots, peacocks, lotus, Ashraffi or the Asawalli and the pankha (fan) or muniya (parrot with red beak) borders.

The price of a Paithani sari varies from Rs. 6000 to Rs. 7 lakhs, depending on the artistry and the quantity of gold, zari and silver threads used in it.

Tanboocel Bamboo Fiber: A Sustainable and Eco-Friendly Fabric

Bamboo fibre is a regenerated cellulose fibre made from naturally organic bamboo through a high-tech process. Tanboocel bamboo fibre is a brand of bamboo fibre that is known for its softness, durability, and eco-friendliness. Here are some key features of Tanboocel bamboo fibre



Eco-Friendly

Tamboocel bamboo fibre is known for its softness and comfort. It is a breathable fabric that wicks away moisture, making it ideal for hot and humid climates. It is also hypo-allergenic and gentle on the skin, making it suitable for people with sensitive skin.

Soft and Comfortable

Tamboocel bamboo fibre is known for its softness and comfort. It is a breathable fabric that wicks away moisture, making it ideal for hot and humid climates. It is also hypo-allergenic and gentle on the skin, making it suitable for people with sensitive skin.

Eco-Friendly

Bamboo is a fast-growing plant that requires less water and pesticides than cotton. It is also a renewable resource that can be harvested without damaging the environment. Tanboocel bamboo fibre is made from 100% bamboo, which makes it a sustainable and eco-friendly fabric.

Durable

Tamboocel bamboo fibre is a strong and durable fabric that can withstand wear and tear. It is also resistant to shrinkage and pilling, which makes it a long-lasting fabric.



Versatile

Tanboocel bamboo fibre can be used to make a variety of clothing items, including t-shirts, dresses, and underwear. It can also be blended with other fabrics, such as cotton and spandex, to create a more versatile fabric.

Sustainable Production

The production of Tanboocel bamboo fibre is a sustainable process that uses less water and energy than traditional textile production methods. The process also produces less waste and pollution, making it a more environmentally friendly option.

The production process of Tanboocel bamboo fibre is a high-tech process that is environmentally friendly and sustainable. Here is how it compares to other regenerated cellulose fibres

Tanboocel Bamboo Fibre

Tanboocel bamboo fibre is made from natural organic bamboo through a high-tech process.

The process is a closed-loop system that uses conventional chemicals (NaOH and CS₂) for producing rayon. The production process is sustainable and produces less waste and pollution than traditional textile production methods.

Tanboocel bamboo fiber is a sustainable and eco-friendly fabric that is known for its softness, durability, and versatility.

Lyocell Bamboo Fibre

Lyocell bamboo fibre is a kind of regenerated bamboo fibre that is made by spinning bamboo cellulose pulp using Lyocell technique.

The process is a closed-loop system that uses a solvent to dissolve the bamboo cellulose pulp.

The production process is sustainable and produces less waste and pollution than traditional textile production methods.

Lyocell bamboo fibre is a sustainable and eco-friendly fabric that is known for its softness, durability, and versatility.

Viscose Rayon Bamboo Fibre

Viscose rayon bamboo fibre is a kind of regenerated bamboo fibre that is made by spinning bamboo cellulose pulp using the viscose rayon processing method.

The process is a semi-synthetic fibre processing method that uses a lot of water and chemicals, which can be harmful to the environment.

The production process is not sustainable and produces a lot of waste and pollution.

Viscose rayon bamboo fibre is a sustainable and eco-friendly fabric that is known for its softness, durability, and versatility.

Using Tech to drive Retail Success: Interaction with Mr. Nitin Chhabra

Congratulations on the recent Series B funding round! Could you share with us how ace turtle plans to leverage this investment to further expand and strengthen its operations?

Thank you. We aim to capitalise on the legacy of Lee and Wrangler and sustain rapid growth of over 100% in the current fiscal year as well. We will also be expanding Toys"R"Us, Babies"R"Us and launch Dockers this fiscal. The funding will be deployed to acquire more brand licenses, revamp the data platform, expand the team and to develop new technology products that will focus on streamlining the supply chain processes and improving brick-and-mortar store operations. This would help us to drive business growth and customer satisfaction. Over the next 3 years, we are looking to build a highly scalable and profitable business with significant penetration across India for our portfolio of brands. We will also be adding more global brands to our portfolio.

ace turtle has achieved impressive revenue milestones within a short span. What key factors do you attribute to this success, and how does the company plan to sustain its growth trajectory?

We attribute this growth to our unique and heavily tech-

driven operating model. Our proprietary omnichannel technology platform, Rubicon 3.0, powered by machine learning, plays a key role in enabling seamless inventory management and fulfilment across channels. The web-stores of Lee and Wrangler have seen sales grow rapidly in the last year. Customers pan India love to shop for latest merchandise sold on the webstores. By selling our products (Lee, Wrangler and Toys"R"Us as of now) on major online marketplaces such as Flipkart, Myntra, Amazon, Ajo, TataCliq and Nykaa, we have expanded our reach pan India. Our commitment to innovation and customer-centric solutions drives our growth, as we continue to build more robust proprietary technology platforms.

As a technology-driven provider of retail solutions, how has ace turtle utilized advanced technology, including the Rubicon platform, to remove obstacles for brands and enhance customer experiences?

I would like to clarify that we don't provide retail solutions to brands anymore. We have sunset the SaaS business where we were providing our technology platforms to global brands and retailers. We use our tech platforms for

our own portfolio of licensed brands – Lee, Wrangler, Toys”R”Us, Babies”R”Us and Dockers.

Our tech platforms, Rubicon and the Connect app, have played a crucial role in eliminating obstacles for both brands and customers. Rubicon connects all online and offline sales channels, delivery to customers, inventory, and discovery, presenting them as a single unified view. Additionally, it functions as a robust mechanism that empowers us to achieve high levels of consumer satisfaction. Whether in the allocation of last-mile delivery partners or in notifying customers about the presence of specific products in nearby stores, Rubicon has ingrained that flexibility is built into our operational framework.

Since ace turtle’s association with Lee and Wrangler, there has been a substantial business transformation, exemplified by a 5x increase in online revenue share in just 12 months. Rubicon offers the convenience of ordering from anywhere, enabling customers to place orders through various avenues, including the brand’s webshops (www.lee.in and www.wrangler.in), marketplaces (Amazon.in, Flipkart, Ajo, TataCliq, Myntra), conversational and social commerce, endless aisle, and the physical retail stores. Consumers benefit from having access to the entire product range across stores and online. Integration with ESL, electronic shelf labels at the retail stores always provides accurate pricing; increases access to real-time promotion and product information and cohesive omnichannel experience. Brands also get access to end consumer data in real-time. This helps to boost sales and improve customer experience significantly.

The recently launched Connect App 2.0 is now operational in over 80+ Lee and Wrangler retail stores. This upgraded version of the app enhances operational efficiency and productivity, ultimately leading to an improved customer service experience. Additionally, our various tech interventions like electronic shelf labels, smart mirrors in our Lee flagship store have all been developed keeping in mind the customer experience.

The offline retail presence of ace turtle has grown significantly, with 80+ stores for Lee and Wrangler. How do you strike a balance between online and offline channels, and what role does data intelligence play in this omnichannel approach?

Rubicon has played a crucial role in making our products accessible through prominent online marketplaces and department store chains, including Pantaloons, Shoppers Stop, and Lifestyle. The essence of our strategy lies in data intelligence. RFID tags within stores assist in inventory management and analyse footfalls, refining store operations to align with customer demands. Connect 2.0 helps us find out store footfalls, attendance of store staff, sales target vs achieved among other key metrics. We’ve installed Smart Mirrors in our stores. The Smart Mirrors provide innovative

experiences to shoppers by engaging and delighting with personalized recommendations and effortless product discovery.

These data-driven interventions ensure that our product line reflects evolving fashion trends, specifically among young Indian consumers. Our closed-loop ecosystem employs consumer data for supply chain and design decisions. Online purchase patterns guide product manufacturing, distribution, offline store placements, and marketing strategies. This synergy boosts efficiency, providing an integrated shopping experience.

With a complete vertical offering from design and local sourcing to D2C, what are some of the challenges ace turtle faced in the Indian market, and how did you overcome them?

The primary objective was to drive technology adoption across our businesses and retain valuable consumer data to facilitate business scaling. Rubicon played a crucial role in enabling our brands to achieve this by offering a unified view and seamless management of their commerce operations across various channels.

Starting from a single view of catalogue, inventory, and pricing across platforms like marketplaces, websites, social commerce, conversational commerce, and more, Rubicon facilitated customer order management, optimised fulfilment, deliveries, returns, and customer support. As a result of these technology interventions and vertical commerce business model of ace turtle, Lee and Wrangler saw their highest annual sales since entering the Indian market more than 25 years ago.

There were two main challenges when it came to implementation. One was changing the legacy mindset among franchise owners and brands regarding the importance of a technology-driven model. The second was making the entire business data driven.

One of the significant obstacles we encountered while implementing ace turtle’s data-driven approach was obtaining customer data. As this data was essential for the success of our business model, we had to take some difficult decisions. One such decision was to discontinue the wholesale business of Lee and Wrangler, which had been a significant source of revenue, when we took over the business from Kontoor Brands in 2021. Additionally, we had to shut down several offline retail stores of Lee and Wrangler, and our distribution partnerships with department stores came to an end. This was due to their reluctance to share customer data with us. A crucial aspect for us was the willingness to adopt technology. We looked for partners who demonstrated flexibility in trying out new technologies and quickly scaling up upon achieving positive results. Our practice of introducing new initiatives every quarter required store operators to be aligned with our business model.

ace turtle's distribution network covers a vast area, delivering over 20,000 pin codes. What strategies and logistics do you employ to ensure seamless and efficient product delivery to customers?

At the core of our strategy, we have our Rubicon, our omnichannel commerce platform that integrates online and offline sales channels. It enables us to have real-time visibility of inventory, employ intelligent order routing, optimise last-mile delivery, and even fulfil orders from the nearest physical store. This not only enhances the speed of deliveries but also reduces operational expenses. Through collaborations with reliable third-party logistics players and warehouses, we further extend our reach. Based on the past data on Rubicon, across all the transactions, the algorithm automatically allocates the order to the last-mile delivery partner. Not all last mile partners are efficient in every pin code. This tech-enabled and data-driven approach ensures the dependable and prompt delivery of products including returns.

The retail industry has seen significant shifts in consumer behaviour and market dynamics. How does ace turtle stay ahead of these changes, and what role does data analytics play in understanding customer preferences?

Our whole model is data-driven. It makes us a lot more agile and nimble with a leaner team.

The retail stores of Lee, Wrangler and ToysRUs are connected to us through Connect 2.0 app. Earlier retail store operations data was not available seamlessly. There was a manual intervention needed. The app empowers retail store teams to succeed by making them more efficient and engaged through communications, training, helpdesk and workflows. It enables the store teams to perform key store activities such as omnichannel order fulfilment and visual merchandising using their smartphones. Apart from this, the Connect 2.0 app also has new modules such as Settlement Reports, Retail Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), Leaderboard, Store Weekly Performance, Training and Attendance.

We leverage data analytics both at platform level – Rubicon and Connect and feed the data back into the design and supply chain to meet the ever-evolving consumer preferences. The consumer data on what is selling, the frequency of footfalls and purchases, the price sensitivity, average selling price and consumer preferences are captured for us across offline and online channels by Rubicon and Connect. We feed this data back into our supply chain, and then that's how the new products are designed and manufactured as well. So that's like a full loop.

As ace turtle continues to scale global brands in India, what are your long-term goals for the

company, and how do you envision its impact on the retail landscape?

We are working to expand our licensed brands portfolio, revamping the data platform, expand the team and to develop new technology products that will focus on streamlining the supply chain processes and improving brick-and-mortar store operations. This would help us to drive business growth and customer satisfaction. Over the next 3 years, we are looking to build a highly scalable and profitable business with significant penetration across India for our portfolio of brands. We will also be adding more global brands to our portfolio.

We believe we are at the forefront of leading retail industry's next phase of evolution with our **Retail Nxt** approach. We will continue to innovate and make our business more technology-driven going forward.

The investors backing ace turtle, such as Vertex Ventures and Rianta Capital, have played a crucial role in the company's growth. How has their support contributed to ace turtle's success, and what value do these strategic partnerships bring?

We are fortunate to have had investors who have believed in us from the beginning. Vertex Southeast Asia and India have been one of our earliest investors. They have been true partners in every sense of the word and have stood by us during tough times. During our business pivot from SaaS to Licensed Brands in 2021, they showed full trust in us and supported us throughout the process. Their capital and guidance on strategic issues have really helped us navigate challenging times over the past decade and emerge stronger.

With ace turtle's remarkable journey from 2014 to the present, what advice would you give to other entrepreneurs looking to establish and scale their businesses in the highly competitive Indian market?

I think it's important to have open discussions and connections with other entrepreneurs from the larger ecosystem. This network provides emotional support, learnings, and support on both the business and personal side. It is crucial to go deeper into problems and not fall in love with the idea, as markets and consumers evolve rapidly. I would say that there is no better time in India than now to be an entrepreneur.

Muga Silk: *The Golden Silk of Assam*



Muga silk is a rare variety of wild silk that is geographically tagged to the state of Assam in India. The silk is known for its extreme durability and has a natural yellowish-golden tint with a shimmering, glossy texture. Muga silk was recognized as a protected geographical indication (GI) in 2007, and was granted a GI logo for trademark purposes in 2014. The silk is made from semi-cultivated silkworms named *Antheraea assamensis*, which are the strongest natural fibres. Muga silk is produced only in Assam and nowhere else. The silk is used in making hats, caps, scarves, wraps, stoles, quilts, bridal wear, upholstery, sarees, and kurtas.



The production of Muga silk is still an important industry in Assam, providing employment to thousands of people and generating significant revenue for the state's economy. However, the production of Muga silk is facing several challenges, including competition from synthetic fabrics and a decline in the availability of Som trees. Climate change and pollution are also affecting the production of Muga silk. Muga cocoons are formed with continuous filaments of 350-550m. For the production of 1kg of muga raw silk, 4500-5500 cocoons are required. The existing traditional methods of production are labour-intensive and require skilled workers.

Muga silk is one of the most expensive varieties of silk in the world. From silkworm rearing to the selection of cocoons and then to de-flossing, reeling, and weaving, the entire process adds to the uniqueness of the fabric-making *Antheraea Assama*, the scientific name of the Muga Silk, itself points to the place of origin of this exotic silk. Muga silk cloth is largely used by Assamese women as mekhela, riha-sador sarees. Eri spun silk is used for dress materials and the coarse variety for making scarves, chaddar, and shawls.

Muga silk is an important part of the cultural heritage of Assam and is used in making a variety of products, including sarees, mekhelas, chadors, and shawls. Muga silk is considered a symbol of Assamese heritage and tradition, making it a source of immense pride for the people of Assam. Muga silk is widely popular for its unique yellowish colour, which is a significant feature of traditional Assamese attire. These sarees are highly sought after for their natural sheen and exquisite beauty. Muga silk is used to create garments for special occasions such as weddings and religious ceremonies. The adoration of the muga silk

garments with motifs and designs is the most crucial part of the Assamese culture and tradition. Muga silk is also used in making hats, caps, scarves, wraps, stoles, quilts, bridal wear, upholstery, and kurtas. Muga silk is one of the rarest silks in the world and is known for its extreme durability. It is the highest-priced among all other silk fibres.

Muga silk is different from other types of silk in several ways. Firstly, it has a natural yellowish-golden tint with a shimmering, glossy texture, which is a significant feature of traditional Assamese attire. Muga silk is also known for its extreme durability, making it one of the strongest natural fibres. It is the most expensive among all other silk fibres due to its exclusivity and rarity. Muga silk is produced only in Assam and nowhere else, and it is one of the rarest silks in the world. Muga silk is also allergen-free and repels dust mites, making it a hypoallergenic fabric. The production of Muga silk is considered eco-friendly as the silkworm does not require delicate care, making it an affordable silk type. The traditional designs and patterns used in Muga silk textiles are intricate and showcase the rich cultural heritage of Assam. The texture of Muga silk is slightly thicker and coarser compared to mulberry silk, and the silk fibres in Muga silk have a sturdy and robust nature, contributing to its strength and durability.



vicuña wool: Fibre of God



Vicuña wool is considered the rarest and most expensive legal wool in the world. It is obtained from the South American vicuña, an animal of the family of Camelidae, which lives in the Andes at altitudes of 3,200 meters and above between Peru and northern Chile.

Here are some characteristics of vicuña wool:

- ◆ **Cost:** Vicuña wool is the most expensive legal wool in the world, with a raw kilo reaching \$300 to \$500 depending on the quality. Today, vicuña wool can cost between \$399 and \$600 per kilo, compared to cashmere which is around \$80 per kilo.
 - ◆ **Fibre diameter:** Vicuña wool has the second smallest fibre diameter of all animal hair, after shahtoosh.
 - ◆ **Quality:** The highest quality vicuña wool has a thickness of 12-14 microns and the highest comfort factor of all naturally obtained fibres.
 - ◆ **Colour:** The vicuna is characterized by its brown cinnamon colour in the back and side of the body, along the neck and in the back portion of the head.
- Vicuña wool is strong and resilient, but it is highly sensitive to chemicals and is generally used in its natural color. The hair of the vicuña is used to make a variety of products, including sweaters, scarves, and shawls. Despite its high cost, many people consider vicuña wool to be worth the investment due to its softness and rarity.
- Harvesting and processing vicuña wool involves several steps, which are regulated to ensure the sustainability and conservation of the vicuña population.
- ◆ **Harvesting:** Vicuña wool is traditionally harvested through a process known as shearing. This involves gently clipping the wool from the animal's underbelly and chest.

Indigenous communities, who have a deep understanding of the unique properties of vicuña wool, often rely on the vicuña for their livelihoods and have developed traditional techniques for harvesting.

- ◆ **Sorting:** Before processing, the down hair is separated from the guard hair by sorting. This ensures that only the finest and softest fibres are used.
- ◆ **Spinning:** After sorting, the down hairs are spun into yarn. This process involves twisting the fibres together to create a continuous thread.
- ◆ **Weaving or knitting:** The spun yarn is then used to create various products, such as socks, sweaters, scarves, and shawls. These products can be woven or knitted, depending on the desired outcome.

It's important to note that the harvesting and processing of vicuña wool is heavily regulated by international conventions. Only a small quantity of vicuña fibre is harvested annually to ensure the conservation of the vicuña population.

The traditional techniques and cultural significance of vicuña wool are being preserved, even as the industry becomes more industrialized and commercialized. Efforts are being made to ensure the sustainable management and conservation of the vicuña population.

Vicuña wool is known for its unique and luxurious characteristics. Here are some of the key features of vicuña wool:

fibres diameter: Vicuña wool has the second smallest fibre diameter of all animal hair, after shahtoosh. The down hair of the vicuña used for the production of vicuña wool is, with an average hair diameter of 11–13.5 microns, one of the finest animal hairs.

- ◆ **Quality:** The highest quality vicuña wool has a thickness of 12–14 microns and the highest comfort factor of all naturally obtained fibres. The surface structure of the fibre has scales as in sheep wool, and the scale spacing is between 7 and 14 scale rings per 100 microns.
- ◆ **Colour:** The vicuña is characterized by its brown cinnamon colour in the back and side of the body, along the neck and in the back portion of the head.
- ◆ **Cost:** Vicuña wool is the most expensive legal wool in the world, with a raw kilo reaching \$300 to \$500 depending on the quality. Today, vicuña wool can cost between \$399 and \$600 per kilo, compared to cashmere which is around \$80 per kilo.
- ◆ **Harvesting:** Vicuña wool is traditionally harvested through a process known as shearing. This involves gently clipping the wool from the animal's underbelly and chest. The harvesting process is heavily regulated by international convention, and only a small quantity of vicuña fibre is harvested annually to ensure the conservation of the vicuña population.



Apparel Trade Report – Key Global Markets and India

Report by Wazir Advisors

Summary:

Apparel Imports Update in Key Markets

USA:

- In Jun 2023, US apparel imports were US\$ 6.6 Bn. which is 23% lower than in Jun 2022. On YTD basis, the imports are 22% lower than in 2022.
- China's share in the US' apparel import has reduced by 5% since 2021

EU:

- EU apparel imports in Jun 2023 has decreased by 10% compared to Jun 2022 and were US\$ 7.0 Bn in value. On YTD basis, the imports are 4% lower than in 2022.
- In the EU apparel market, Bangladesh's share witnessed an increase of 2% from 2021 while China's share decreased by 3% in the same period.

UK:

- UK apparel imports in Jun 2023 were US\$ 1.9 Bn. which is 5% higher than in Jun 2022. On YTD basis, the imports in 2023 are 14% lower than in 2022.
- In the UK apparel market, share of China have decreased by 6%, since 2021.

Japan:

- In Jun 2023, Japan's apparel imports were US\$ 1.6 Bn. which is similar to that in June 2022. On YTD basis also, the imports have not changed.
- In the Japan's apparel market, China's share was 51% while Vietnam's share stood at 16% in 2023.

MONTHLY APPAREL IMPORTS OF KEY MARKETS

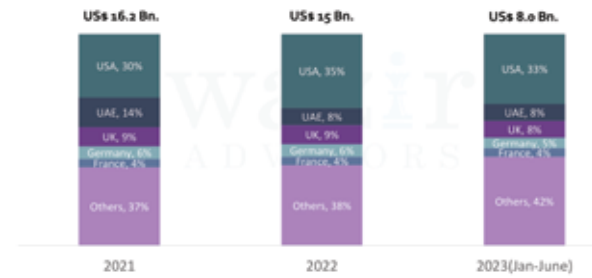
Region	Year	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	YTD	CY Total
USA	2022	7.5	7.5	9.3	8.1	8.5	8.6	9.3	10.4	9.6	8.2	6.3	6.5	49.5	99.8
	2023	7.3	6.2	6.3	5.8	6.5	6.6							38.7	
	Change	-3%	-17%	-32%	-28%	-24%	-23%								-22%
EU	2022	6.9	7.5	8.5	7.5	7.6	7.8	8.2	10.7	10.6	9	7.2	7.6	45.8	99.1
	2023	8.2	7.2	7.7	6.3	5.9	7.0							42.3	
	Change	19%	-4%	-9%	-16%	-22%	-10%								-4%
UK	2022	1.9	1.8	2.2	1.8	2.1	1.8	1.9	2	2.2	2.5	2.2	1.8	11.6	24.2
	2023	1.7	1.6	1.8	1.4	1.6	1.9							10.0	
	Change	-11%	-11%	-18%	-22%	-24%	5%								-14%
Japan	2022	2.1	1.7	2.1	1.7	1.8	1.6	1.9	2.8	2.7	2.5	2.1	1.8	11.0	24.8
	2023	2.2	1.6	2.3	1.8	1.5	1.6							11.0	
	Change	5%	-6%	10%	6%	-16%	0%								0%
Total (Key Markets)	2022	18.4	18.5	22.1	19.1	20.0	19.8	21.3	25.9	25.1	22.2	17.8	17.7	117.9	247.9
	2023	19.4	16.6	18.1	15.3	15.5	17.1							102.0	
	Change	5%	-10%	-18%	-20%	-22%	-14%								-13%

SHARE OF MAJOR SUPPLIERS IN KEY MARKETS



SHARE CHANGE OF MAJOR APPAREL MARKETS

In India's apparel export basket, UAE's share has decreased by 6% since 2021 and that of USA has increased by 3%.



Retail Sales Update in Key Markets

- In July 2023, US monthly apparel store sales are estimated to be US\$ 18.2 Bn. which is 5% more than in July 2022. On YTD basis also, the sales in 2023 are 5% higher than in 2022.
- In July 2023, US monthly home furnishing store sales are estimated to be US\$ 4.7 Bn. which is 10% lower than in July 2022. On YTD basis, the sales were 1% lower than in 2022.
- In Q2 2023, online sales of clothing and accessories registered a nominal growth of 1% over Q2 2022.
- In July 2023, UK's monthly apparel store sales were £ 3.7 Bn. which is 3% higher than in July 2022. On YTD basis, the sales were 9% higher than in 2022.
- In Q2 2023, online sales of clothing registered a growth of 10% over Q2 2022.

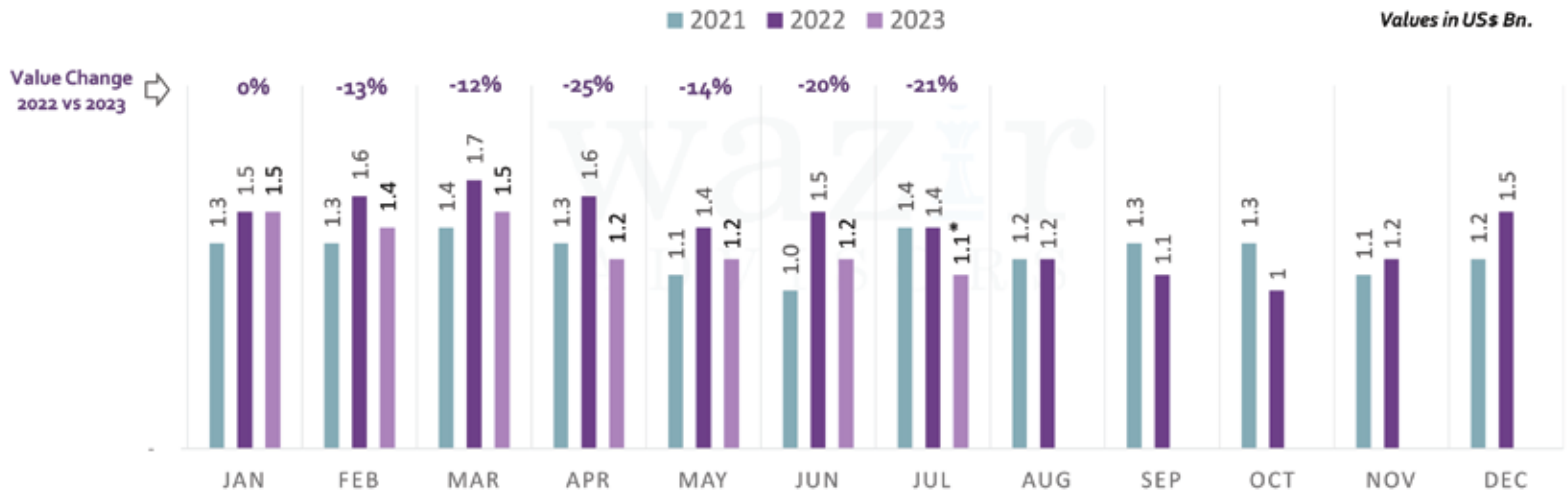
Indian Apparel Exports Update

- In July 2023, India's apparel exports are estimated to be US\$ 1.1 Bn., which is 21% lower than in July 2022 exports. On YTD basis, the exports were 15% lower than in 2022.
- In India's apparel export basket, UAE's share has decreased by 6% since 2021 and that of USA has increased by 3%.

MONTHLY APPAREL EXPORTS TREND

In July 2023, India's apparel exports are estimated to be US\$ 1.1 Bn., which is 21% lower than in July 2022 exports. On YTD basis, the exports were 15% lower than in 2022.

Year	Jan-July	Jan - Dec
2021	8.8	15.0
2022	10.7 (+21%)	16.7 (+12%)
2023	9.1 (-15%)	



Data Source: DGCI&S; *Quick Estimates

Milano Unica: Pioneering Sustainability and Innovation in the Fashion Value Chain

Fashion Value Chain Talks with Mr. Alessandro Barberis Canonico

-President : Milano Unica

Milano Unica has a rich history of over 30 years. Could you tell us more about how it has evolved and its role in the fashion industry today?

Certainly. Milano Unica started as a textile fair over three decades ago. Initially, it was a platform for Italian producers to showcase their fabrics, buttons, and accessories. However, over the years, it has grown into an international event that attracts buyers from all corners of the world. We even expanded to include Milano Unica China to cater to the growing Chinese market. In the last decade, we have focused on curating a select group of high-quality exhibitors and maintaining the exclusivity of the fair.

Could you explain the criteria for selecting exhibitors and buyers for Milano Unica? How do you ensure the quality of the participants?

Selecting exhibitors is a meticulous process. We have a selection committee that reviews each exhibitor's qualifications and products. Additionally, exhibitors can also invite others, but we rigorously assess their eligibility to maintain the high standards of the fair. Quality is paramount when it comes to exhibitors, as they represent the best of the best in the industry. For buyers, while we do our best to attract high-quality ones, it's sometimes challenging to set stringent criteria, but we strive to maintain a certain level of excellence.

Milano Unica has ventured into special areas like sustainability, metaverse concepts, and showcasing innovative technologies. Could you elaborate on these initiatives and their importance in the fashion industry?

Milano Unica is committed to staying at the forefront of industry trends. We believe in looking ahead, which is why we're exploring concepts like the metaverse, where we envision the future of fashion, textiles, and consumer engagement. Sustainability is a key focus. We have areas dedicated to showcasing sustainable products and innovations. This aligns with the growing global trend towards eco-friendly practices and materials. Additionally, we're also spotlighting cutting-edge technologies, innovative production methods, and materials to drive positive change in the industry.

The COVID-19 pandemic disrupted many industries, including fashion. How did Milano Unica adapt during this challenging time?

The pandemic posed significant challenges for us. We organized an online fair where companies could showcase their collections on our website. However, the online format had limitations, such as the reduced quality of viewing compared to the physical event. Unfortunately, only a small percentage of exhibitors managed to sell their collections online. In response, we had to send most collections directly to the market through agents. It was a difficult period for everyone involved.

Can you tell us more about E-Milano Unica and its role in disseminating information and insights within the fashion industry?

E-Milano Unica is another initiative to provide information and insights. We host events at the venue, including presentations on market trends, studies by U.S. firms, and technical information about the collections presented at the fair. It's a platform for knowledge-sharing and staying informed about the ever-evolving fashion landscape.

Sustainability is a prominent theme in the fashion industry. How does Milano Unica contribute to promoting sustainability in luxury fashion?

Sustainability is a top priority for us. We believe in leaving a better world for future generations. Sustainability encompasses social, environmental, and material aspects, from cotton to wool to silk. We encourage exhibitors to obtain internationally recognized certifications at every stage of the value chain, ensuring transparency and eco-friendly practices. Luxury fashion, in particular, benefits from sustainability as it leads to longer-lasting products, reducing waste.

Recycling is a critical aspect of sustainability. What are the challenges and opportunities in recycling fashion products, especially in the luxury market?

Recycling in the luxury market presents unique challenges due to the complex composition of high-end garments. Separating different fibers is difficult, especially when you have mixed materials like cashmere, polyester, and nylon. While recycling is a promising avenue, it's currently challenging to maintain the same quality as the original product. We believe in producing long-lasting, reusable products to reduce the need for recycling. Recycling can be done chemically or mechanically, but it's still an evolving field.

Lastly, what is Milano Unica's message to consumers, especially in the luxury market, when it comes to sustainability?

Our message is simple: "Buy better, buy less." Luxury products are designed to last, and by investing in quality, consumers can reduce their environmental impact. Sustainability should not be a trend but a way of life. We encourage consumers to choose products with sustainable certifications and consider the longevity of their purchases.





The Tell of Zari Artisan: an FVC exclusive

Fashion Value Chain talked with **Mr. Kheemraj Nandlal Rathi,**

- Zari artisan.

- **Can you tell us what inspired your deep connection to native crafts and textiles?**

My journey into native crafts and textiles began in my early years. I was born in Sindh, Pakistan, and grew up amidst rich cultural diversity. In 1971, during the Indo-Pak war, my entire family relocated to the South West of Rajasthan. This move exposed me to a whole new world of textiles, particularly zari work.

- **Could you share more about how you became involved in zari textile work and your family's role in it?**

Zari textile work became a significant part of my life. While my mother was deeply involved in designing zari patterns, my father was responsible for selling our creations in domestic markets. As I grew older, I became increasingly

drawn to this craft and began learning the art of zari work myself. My desire was to preserve the traditional local art and support unknown artists, all while engaging with both local communities and the wider world.

- **Can you tell us more about your journey in promoting and keeping the native craft alive through your business?**

I embarked on extensive travels across India, where I encountered various textile traditions in different regions. Sadly, many of these traditions were fading away as people no longer wanted to work in the old ways. This compelled me to act. I wanted to ensure that these traditions and native crafts thrived, and this became a central part of my business. Today, I design, and my co-workers bring these designs to life. Most notably, I collaborate with local women artisans from many villages in the Barmer region of Rajasthan.

- **Zari work is deeply rooted in Rajasthan's culture. Could you provide more insight into the different styles of zari work and their significance?**

Zari work holds a significant place in the cultural fabric of Rajasthan. There are several distinct styles, including Mukka work, Golden Zari, Silver Zari, and Black Zari. Mukka work, in particular, is often referred to as the "Ornaments of Rajasthan Textiles." It involves the use of golden metallic thread, silver polish metallic thread, and black metallic thread on thicker fabrics.

- **Could you delve into the intricate details of Mukka work, explaining how it's executed and its significance in the Thar Belt of Rajasthan?**

Mukka work, also known as Mukke-ka-kam, is a stunning embroidery technique characterized by the couching of gold and silver metallic threads. Mukka, which is the local name for metallic thread, is wound around a cotton fabric core. Both golden and silver mukka threads are employed in this embroidery. This work is primarily done in the Thar Belt of Rajasthan, particularly among the Sindhi Muslim and Meghwal communities.

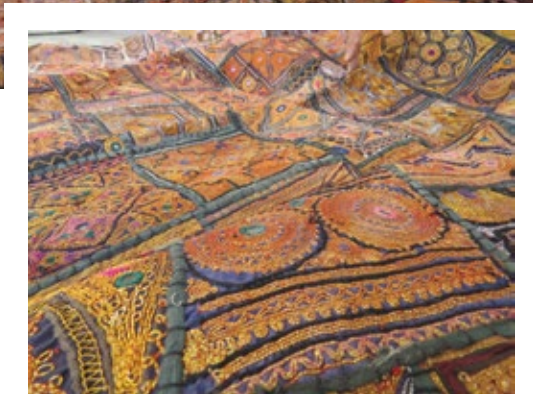
The technique involves doubling the metal thread, placing it on the fabric, and then securing it with stitches using another thread. The couching is executed with precision to maximize the surface area of the metallic yarn. Other stitches like buttonhole and outline stitches are also used to fill in the design. The artisan sketches the design on the cloth, employs a black thread for the outline, and attaches a mirror in the center, surrounded by mukka work.

The final result is a vibrant and rich piece of embroidery, often featuring geometric designs, zigzag patterns, and stars. The motifs and designs draw inspiration from everyday objects and are named accordingly, such as "FUNI" (a sweet), "PATASHA" (a white sugar disc), "CHAUKRI" (courtyard), and "DABBO" (a box). This beautiful work is commonly found on ladies' tops, wall hangings, and hand purses.

- **Given the current preference for fast and cheap products, how do you work to create new, unique designs while preserving traditional techniques?**

In a world that demands speed and affordability, I strive to stay true to traditional techniques. Collaborating with fellow artists, I work on creating fresh and distinctive designs. It's vital to keep local crafts alive by using age-old methods and ensuring that our creations are not mass-produced replicas. Our goal is to provide unique, handcrafted pieces that celebrate our native craft.

- **What do you believe the future holds for zari markets, and how can the next generation contribute to its preservation?**



The future of zari markets is heavily reliant on the next generation. It's crucial to teach, guide, and expose them to our

native art forms. We need to instill an appreciation for traditional crafts in younger minds. This can be achieved through better and more artistic education across various fields.

- **What kind of support and initiatives from the government or society would help further encourage artists and the art of zari work?**

Personal efforts can only go so far. We need more support from the government and society at large. Initiatives that promote and protect traditional art forms, along with financial support for artisans, can make a significant difference. By recognizing the value of these crafts, we can ensure their continuity.

- **Finally, how do you envision the broader application of zari art, possibly in unisex clothing or home furnishing products?**

Zari art holds immense potential for expansion. While it has traditionally been associated with women's clothing and accessories, there's an opportunity to explore its use in unisex clothing and home furnishing products. With creativity and innovation, zari can find its place in diverse areas of design and fashion.

Gateway to Fashion Success: Trend Forecasting in the Indian Apparel Industry

By Susmita Ghosh

India is a land of diverse cultures and a burgeoning fashion-conscious population. Apart from the Indian apparel industry being dynamic, the sector is ever-evolving. Its role in our economy is impactful. With India being a treasure trove of opportunities for both domestic and international fashion-wear brands, trend forecasting is an element of great importance. Making a mark in the competitive market calls for more than just a keen eye for product design. Understanding customer preferences and the ability to predict and adapt the ongoing as well as upcoming fashion trends is the main crust of the fashion cake. Trend forecasting serves as the compass that shows business houses the right path through the intricate maze of India's apparel industry.

Indian Apparel Industry: A Statistical Overview

In the Asia-Pacific region, India and China are the top players in the apparel industry. India is the fifth-largest exporter of apparel and the second-largest producer of garments and textiles. India's apparel and textile industry contributes 2.3% to the country's GDP. Moreover, it contributes up to 12% in exports and 13% in industrial production.

In 2023, the global apparel market size stands close to USD 1.33 trillion. It is expected to reach USD 1.67 trillion by 2028 at 4.63% CAGR. In the financial year 2023 in India, the readymade garments export stood at USD 16.2 billion whereas it was USD 6.19 billion in FY22. It is projected that India's apparel exports will grow at a CAGR of 12-13% and cross over USD 30 billion by 2027. On the other hand, by 2025, India's apparel market is expected to touch USD 135 billion.

If we analyze the above figures, the demand for Indian apparel is inclining. One of the reasons that has made it possible is the correct predictability and adaptability of trend forecasts. However, India's competitive advantage in terms of cost of production and skilled manpower cannot go unnoticed.

Importance of Trend Forecasting in India

In the context of the Indian apparel industry, trend forecasting is an indispensable tool. The numbers that are released every year by the top statistical agencies on the Indian apparel market are proof of the same. Aditya Birla Group has now become one of the top global market players in the fashion industry along with Inditex, Kering, PVH Corp. and LVMH. Above all, trend forecasting allows fashion businesses to align their products with the ever-changing tastes and preferences of consumers.

India is a kaleidoscope of fashion inspiration. Trend forecasting helps fashion brands to collaborate with regional and cultural trends. It enables them to create trendy collections that resonate with the diverse segments of the population. In October 2022, Nykaa, an Indian cosmetics and fashion retailer brand, partnered with Apparel Group, a Dubai-based lifestyle and fashion conglomerate to expand in Middle Eastern countries like UAE, Saudi Arabia, and Kuwait by using its retail infrastructure.

With greater exposure to global trends through social media and international travel, consumers now demand a wider variety of styles, fabrics, and designs. In simple terms, Indian consumers are slowly becoming fashion-conscious. Therefore, trend forecasting helps brands keep pace with these evolving preferences. It ensures that their offerings remain desirable and relevant to consumer demands.

The Process of Trend Forecasting

Trend forecasting is a multifaceted process. It starts by conducting extensive research through fashion shows, street fashion, trade exhibitions, social media, or consumer behaviour. The next step is identifying common themes, styles, fabrics and colours that are likely to gain popularity in the near future. Trend forecasters study consumer demographics and psychographics to understand what drives consumers' fashion choices. Further, the trend forecasters collaborate with designers, stylists, and marketers and use their creativity and intuition to interpret the data and translate it into actionable insights.

Trend forecasts are typically presented in the form of trend reports, mood boards, and fashion presentations to help fashion brands understand the predicted trends. They incorporate them into their product development and marketing strategies. There is no end to trend forecasting, it is an ongoing process. Once the product is launched, fashion houses constantly monitor consumer feedback and align them with the ongoing market trends. It helps them make necessary adjustments to stay ahead of the curve.

Challenges in Trend Forecasting for the Indian Apparel Industry

The common challenges faced by fashion businesses when trying to implement trend forecasts in their product development and marketing strategies are as follows:

Cultural Sensitivity: Even though Indian consumers are fashion-conscious, the fact cannot be denied that they are culturally sensitive and aware as India is known for its diverse cultural landscape. Hence, misinterpretations or insensitivity in design can lead to backlash and harm a brand's reputation.

Sustainable Fashion vs. Fast Fashion: The demand for sustainable fashion is also on the rise. Balancing the demand for fast fashion with sustainability is a delicate task. Therefore, trend forecasters need to consider eco-friendly materials and production methods while predicting trends.

Copycats and Counterfeits: The Indian market is plagued by counterfeits and copycat products. It is evident over all social media platforms. Trend forecasting can inadvertently contribute to this issue if not used responsibly.

As the Indian apparel industry continues to grow and evolve, the role of trend forecasting will become even more critical. The use of big data analytics and artificial intelligence are gradually contributing to enhancing the accuracy of trend forecasting. Machine learning algorithms can analyze vast amounts of data to identify patterns and predict trends with greater precision. As a takeaway, the Indian apparel industry can continue to thrive and innovate by understanding the nuances of trend forecasting and navigating its challenges. It will help them deliver fashion that resonates with its diverse audience. As technology and sustainability become integral to the fashion landscape, trend forecasting will evolve to meet these demands. It will ensure that the industry remains vibrant and responsive to the needs of the modern Indian consumer.



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