

# 360° Marketing - Home and Beyond

## Round Table Conference on Retail and e-Commerce



Seen on the dais (L to R): Mr. Vikram Chitnis, Business Head, Shoppers Stop; Mr. Karan Jethwani, member exporter from Mumbai region and Coordinator-Domestic Retail Promotions at EPCH; Mr. O P Prahladka, Vice Chairman, EPCH; Mr. Nitin Jain, MD, J.Nitin Merchandising & INV Home; and Mr. Kumar Rajagopalan, CEO, Retailers Association of India

EPCH organized a "Round Table Conference on Retail and e-Commerce" on 15th October, 2016, at the India Expo Centre. This brought together Mr. Kumar Rajagopalan, Chief Executive Officer, Retailers Association of India, as the moderator and Mr. Vikram Chitnis, Business Head, Shoppers Stop; Mr. Nitin Jain, Managing Director - J.Nitin Merchandising & INV Home; Mr. Vikas Dhingra - Partner, Speciality Merchandising Services Pvt Ltd.; Mr. Karan Jethwani, Proprietor, International Trade Linkers and Coordinator-Domestic Retail Promotions at EPCH; and Mr. O P Prahladka, Vice Chairman, EPCH, among speakers and participants. This aimed to provide an insight into the market size of online and retail sector in India and a wider perspective of India's retail stature as well as potential of handicraft exporters to escalate the Indian economy while helping the country earn forex.



*A flourishing country like India has all kind of potential to have a consumer based economy and things are changing day by day.*

**Mr. Kumar Rajagopalan**, CEO, Retailers Association of India

Mr. Kumar Rajagopalan, CEO, RAI initiated the discussion with promising features of the domestic market in the present scenario and why it should be preferred over exports. He believes that the handicrafts industry has a renowned market and therefore indigenous products should be sold in the domestic market in addition to exports. He further added, India provides the highest number of retailers to the world. "With a population of 125 crores, India has 3% among super rich and 18% as upper middle class. These 18% should be our target as retailers. Citing examples of upcoming local markets, he said, "people prefer exports because of a safety feeling but it's not like that. Export is way tough than selling in the local market. Now there is no issue of payment with the local vendors these days. Apart from these, we'll have to be trendy according to the market needs. If you care about your customers first, it's pretty sure that you will get back your market," he added.

Mr. Nitin Jain, MD, J.Nitin Merchandising & INV Home, said, India is going through a big phase of consumerism and we are not far behind the US market. It's all because young people are taking up the market. Infact, they as consumers want comfort first and are ready to pay the price. e-Commerce has helped the Indian market in an unexpected way, reaching out to every



*The reasons behind growth of consumerism in India is accessibility of products. This is complimented by*

*market and growing economy.*

**Mr. Nitin Jain**, MD, J.Nitin Merchandising & INV Home

single corner of the globe. Recollecting his first order from Nagaland, he said, e-Commerce indeed has wide ranging and well spread out customer base without any doubt. In

his opinion, presentation plays an important role in marketing. But nowadays there are many other platforms for market presence we are not completely utilizing, like social media, advertisement in TV channels, etc.

Vice Chairman, EPCH, Mr. OP Prahladka highlighted the importance of the local market. Talking about challenges, he categorically pointed out few problems like cash payment, no invoice and



*The local retail is the market for future. Exports are necessary indeed but we should not ignore our local market and it's potential.* **Mr. O P Prahladka**, Vice Chairman, EPCH

unauthorized export/import from some Asian nations, etc. He emphasized, that soon we will have one of the biggest tax reforms in this country. "There are few issues to be taken care of with regard to packaging, branding and product demonstration that may affect a market if ignored," he added and advised that instead of focusing on exports, we need to focus on a market of 125 crore population whose potential cannot be ignored. His opinion on the soon to be implemented GST is very clear and he supports it. Tax rate should be 16% he feels. "Because then only it will be easy to



*The home & housing sector is the where the future of retail lies. People spend 15% of their budget on home products.*

**Mr. Vikram Chitnis**, Business Head, Shoppers Stop

pay tax. As of now, it's easy to avoid tax than to pay," he concluded.

Mr. Vikram Chitnis, Business Head, Shoppers Stop, said that there are always issues regarding

payment v/s delivery from both the sides (retailers and sellers) and that has to be dealt according to the needs. Judging by product popularity and sales in the Indian retail segment, he



said that the present market can focus on metal, brass, handicrafts and lighting products. "20-25% of the retail business dwells here. We're expecting the retail market to be in trillions by 2020," he emphasized.

Mr. Vikas Dhingra Partner, Speciality Merchandising Services Pvt Ltd. said that GST will surely help us in many ways.



*A big proportion of our population resides in small cities where people are dependent on e-Commerce due to limited retail options.*

**Mr. Vikas Dhingra**, Partner, Speciality Merchandising Services Pvt. Ltd.

Maybe its implication will prepare us to brace up for tougher competition from China

as presently retailers avoid few products because of taxation problems. He emphasized on the importance of the local market and felt that ignoring it may cost one dearly. Looking at international chains like Walmart and IKEA that are set to



*Retail business in India is indeed growing and the Indian market has topped in various areas. But there are few areas that need to be worked upon.*

**Mr. Karan Jethwani**, Coordinator for Domestic Retail Promotions, EPCH

spread wings in India's cities, he assured the exporting community of domestic volume business.

Mr. Karan Jethwani, Proprietor, International Trade Linkers; and Co-coordinator for Domestic Retail Promotions, EPCH, said there has been 20-30% rise in the retail market for the last couple of years and it is an opportune time to build up a brand now, he said, adding the importance of social media and regional media for product promotion. ■