

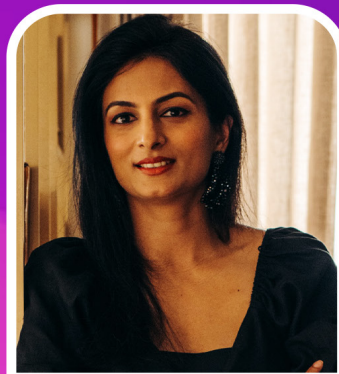
MALL TALK



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MS. PUSHPA BECTOR,
Senior Executive Director and
Business Head at DLF Retail



NIRUPA SHANKAR
Joint Managing Director
Brigade Group



SHOPPING CENTRES
ASSOCIATION OF INDIA

COO's DESK



Anjeev Kumar Srivastava
COO, SCAI

As we step into a new month, the retail landscape continues to evolve at an unprecedented pace. Shopping centres are no longer just commercial spaces; they are dynamic ecosystems where experience, technology, and community engagement converge to redefine the shopping journey.

Consumer expectations are shifting towards immersive, tech-enabled, and sustainable retail environments. The rise of AI-driven personalization, phygital integrations, and data-backed decision-making is enhancing tenant engagement and operational efficiencies. At the same time, sustainability remains a key priority, with shopping centres embracing green building practices, energy-efficient operations, and circular economy initiatives. Another crucial aspect of retail success today is the role of placemaking. Shopping destinations that integrate leisure, entertainment, and cultural experiences are thriving, creating a seamless blend of commerce and community. The emphasis on curated tenant mixes, experiential zones, and digital innovation is ensuring that malls remain relevant and resilient.

This month, we bring you insights from industry leaders who are pioneering new models of engagement. From innovative leasing strategies to adaptive reuse projects and emerging retail formats, we explore how shopping centres are staying ahead of the curve. We also spotlight key developments in the region, highlighting trends that will define the next phase of retail evolution.

As always, we remain committed to providing you with thought-provoking analysis and expert perspectives. We look forward to continuing this journey with you, shaping the future of retail destinations together.

Anjeev Kumar

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DEEP DIVE

THE BIG TRANSFORMATION

In recent years, shopping malls have evolved from retail hubs into vibrant tourist destinations. No longer limited to shopping, today's malls offer immersive experiences that combine retail, entertainment, dining, and cultural attractions. This transformation aligns with the changing preferences of consumers especially millennials and Gen Z—who prioritize memorable experiences over material possessions.

The Evolution of Malls in the Tourism Landscape

Traditionally, malls were destinations for purchasing goods and services. However, the rise of e-commerce has compelled them to redefine their purpose. To stay relevant, malls have transitioned into lifestyle hubs, curating attractions that appeal to tourists and locals alike.

From architectural masterpieces to cultural exhibitions, modern malls are new-age tourist hotspots, delivering experiences that go beyond shopping.

Key Features of Modern Malls as Tourist Attractions

Architectural Innovation

Iconic architecture plays a critical role in drawing tourists. Many malls are designed as architectural landmarks, blending contemporary aesthetics with local cultural elements.



Key Features of Modern Malls as Tourist Attractions

For example, the Dubai Mall in the UAE stands as a marvel, featuring attractions like the Dubai Aquarium and Underwater Zoo alongside its striking design.



Entertainment Complexes

Entertainment facilities such as theme parks, cinemas, and gaming zones enhance the appeal of malls. The Mall of America in the United States, for instance, houses Nickelodeon Universe, an indoor amusement park that attracts families worldwide.

Cultural and Artistic Exhibitions

Many malls feature art installations, museums, and live cultural performances. Singapore's Ion Orchard Mall merges high-end retail with an art gallery, creating a unique space for shoppers and art enthusiasts alike.

Diverse Culinary Offerings

Modern malls curate diverse dining experiences, ranging from global cuisines to local delicacies. The Time Out Market in Lisbon, for instance, combines shopping with a culinary experience showcasing Portugal's gastronomic heritage.

Sustainability and Green Spaces

Eco-conscious design is becoming a hallmark of contemporary malls. IconSiam Mall in Bangkok incorporates green spaces, water features, and an indoor floating market, celebrating Thailand's cultural and ecological heritage.

Case Studies

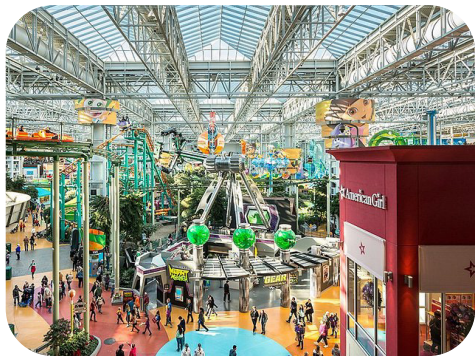
Dubai Mall, UAE

Adjacent to the Burj Khalifa, the Dubai Mall attracts millions annually with its 1,200 retail outlets, Dubai Fountain, ice-skating rink, and Dubai Aquarium, creating a multi-faceted experience for all ages.



Mall of America, USA

Located in Bloomington, Minnesota, this mall combines extensive retail offerings with an indoor theme park, aquarium, and live events, positioning itself as a premier entertainment complex.



LuLu Mall, Kochi, India

LuLu Mall redefines shopping in India by integrating retail with entertainment, including a multiplex cinema, bowling alley, and ice-skating rink, while promoting local culture through its food court.



West Edmonton Mall, Canada

As North America's largest mall, it features an indoor water park, theme park, miniature golf course, and ice palace, making it a year-round tourist destination.



Economic Impact

The transformation of malls into tourist destinations has significant economic implications. These malls boost local and international tourism, create jobs, and drive revenue for the hospitality and retail sectors. For instance, the Mall of Asia in the Philippines attracts millions annually, positively impacting the local economy through tourism, transportation, and hospitality.

Challenges and Opportunities

While promising, the concept of malls as tourist destinations presents challenges, such as high operational costs, competition, and the need for continuous innovation.

However, the opportunities outweigh these hurdles. By leveraging technology, embracing sustainability, and prioritizing customer-centric experiences, malls can thrive as tourist attractions.

The transformation of shopping malls into immersive tourist destinations enhances the shopping experience while contributing to tourism and economic growth. With continued innovation, sustainability, and adaptation, malls are poised to remain integral to the tourism ecosystem in the years ahead.





INSIGHT

UNDERSTANDING THE DYNAMIC LANDSCAPE



Ms. Pushpa Bector,
Senior Executive Director and
Business Head at DLF Retail

Over the past decade, the retail industry in India has undergone massive transformation. What was once a simple and transactional model has evolved into a dynamic ecosystem of experiences, personalization, and meaningful connections. This shift has not only redefined how consumers interact with brands but has also shaped my journey in this ever-evolving industry. When I first stepped into the retail space, shopping was straightforward where customers visited stores, browsed products, and made their purchases. Retailers operated on broad assumptions about what customers needed, with little scope for individualization. Today, the landscape is unrecognizable. Shopping is no longer about transactions; it's about offering

immersive experiences that align with a consumer's values and aspirations.

At DLF, we recognized this shift early and embarked on a mission to redefine our malls as destinations not just for shopping but as hubs of curated experiences. We wanted our properties to be spaces where people come not just to purchase products but to engage, connect, and explore. Over time, our malls have evolved into vibrant destinations offering live performances, wellness events and thoughtfully curated activities. These initiatives have become reflections of the changing aspirations of Indian consumers who increasingly seek inspiration and engagement in their shopping journeys.

The buzz around India's retail landscape is now louder than ever. Over the past decade, the number of brands in the country has grown exponentially, soaring from just 400 around 15 years ago to over 2,000 today. This remarkable growth has been fuelled by the entry of numerous global names and a vibrant start-up ecosystem. In 2025 alone, several iconic international brands have entered the Indian market, adding to the dynamic retail scene. Notable entrants include British online fashion giant ASOS, French luxury department store Galeries Lafayette, and the US-based footwear and sportswear retailer Foot Locker. These additions, alongside the

thriving ecosystem of over 600 D2C brands across categories like F&B, fashion, and beauty, reflect the immense energy and innovation in India's retail space. At DLF, we've had the privilege of being the port of first call for many iconic brands entering India, providing them with a perfect launchpad and enabling them to seamlessly connect with India's evolving consumer base. Our malls have become vibrant ecosystems where legacy brands, start-ups, and emerging D2C players coexist, creating unparalleled shopping and lifestyle experiences.

India's retail sector has grown exponentially alongside these shifting consumer expectations. It is now the fourth largest retail market in the world, with the industry valued at \$1.8 trillion in 2024. Projections suggest that it will reach \$2 trillion by 2032, growing at an impressive 9% CAGR. While metros have traditionally been at the forefront of this growth, Tier II and III cities are emerging as key contributors, driven by urbanization, rising incomes, and evolving preferences. Seasonal consumption trends have also been telling; during recent festive periods, retail saw a 7% rise, with categories like food and grocery growing by 14%, quick-service restaurants by 10%, and jewellery by 9%. This growth reflects the immense opportunities for brands and businesses in India's dynamic retail space.

One of the most profound changes over the years has been the rise of 'Phygital' Retail – the integration of physical and digital shopping experiences. Consumers today expect convenience and customization at every touchpoint, whether browsing online, checking product availability, or picking up purchases in-store. At DLF, we have embraced this change wholeheartedly. By integrating services like smart parking, click-and-collect options, and digital payment solutions, we have created an ecosystem where consumers can shop in a way that fits their lifestyle. Another pivotal trend shaping retail today is the growing demand for premium experiences. With disposable incomes on the rise, Indian consumers are increasingly seeking products and services that reflect their aspirational lifestyles. This shift has inspired us to bring iconic global luxury brands to our malls and create high-end environments that cater to these changing preferences. From private shopping sessions to exclusive VIP experiences, we're focused on crafting spaces that celebrate luxury while delivering a deeply personal touch.

Sustainability is another key pillar of retail's evolution in India, driven by the increasing eco-consciousness of today's shoppers. Consumers are more mindful than ever of the environmental impact of their choices, gravitating toward brands and spaces that align with their values. This shift has prompted the retail industry to adopt a wide range of green initiatives, from eco-friendly packaging and energy-efficient designs to responsible sourcing and sustainable supply chains.

At the same time, sustainability is deeply integrated into how we operate at DLF. Our malls are designed with energy efficiency at their core, incorporating

advanced waste management systems and water conservation measures to minimize environmental impact. By embracing sustainable principles, we aim to set benchmarks and inspire a greener, more responsible future for retail.

Personalization, too, has emerged as a cornerstone of modern retail. Today's shoppers expect brands to anticipate their needs and preferences, offering tailored recommendations and bespoke shopping journeys. Personalization goes beyond simply addressing a customer by name, it involves understanding their unique interests, behaviours, and values to deliver meaningful and relevant interactions. Whether it's recommending products based on past purchases, curating offers that align with individual preferences, or creating immersive shopping experiences, personalization fosters deeper connections, enhances customer satisfaction, and builds lasting loyalty.



As I reflect on my journey in this industry, it is overwhelming to see how retail has changed and yet how its potential remains untapped. The retail landscape has evolved from being purely transactional to a dynamic and vibrant ecosystem where connections are made, stories are told, and experiences are cherished.

At DLF, we remain committed to leading this transformation, creating spaces that go beyond shopping to offer something truly special environments that are personal, immersive, and unforgettable. Looking ahead, I believe the future of retail lies at the intersection of technology, sustainability, and personalization. As the retail industry continues to evolve, the key to success lies in truly understanding our consumers, adapting to their ever-changing needs, and being bold enough to innovate fearlessly. The future holds immense possibilities, and I am excited about the opportunities to shape a retail landscape that's vibrant, inclusive, and deeply connected to the people it serves. With a shared vision and a commitment to creating meaningful experiences, I believe we can redefine retail in ways that leave a lasting impact for years to come.





OVERVIEW

THE ROLE OF ENTERTAINMENT ZONES IN ATTRACTING FAMILIES AND YOUNG AUDIENCES

In the evolving landscape of shopping malls, entertainment zones have emerged as a cornerstone in attracting families and young audiences. These spaces, designed for recreation and engagement, have transformed malls from traditional shopping destinations into vibrant lifestyle hubs. As consumer preferences shift toward experiences over mere transactions, the strategic integration of entertainment zones plays a pivotal role in driving foot traffic, enhancing customer retention, and fostering long-term loyalty.

Families often seek destinations that cater to diverse age groups, and entertainment zones in malls are perfectly positioned to meet this need. Features such as kids' play areas, gaming arcades, and family-oriented attractions provide convenience for parents, quality time for families, and inclusivity for all age groups. Parents can shop or relax while their children enjoy supervised activities, while shared experiences like mini-golf or

cinema outings turn a mall visit into a memorable outing.

Young audiences, particularly Gen Z and Millennials, are drawn to tech-savvy, immersive experiences. Entertainment zones

photo-worthy setups, not only engage young visitors but also amplify the mall's appeal through social media sharing.

Entertainment zones are proven drivers of dwell time, which directly correlates with increased spending. By incorporating food courts, retail stores, and entertainment in close proximity, malls can maximize cross-category spending. Events such as live performances, workshops, and seasonal attractions keep audiences engaged and encourage repeat visits. Additionally, rotating exhibits and temporary installations ensure there is always something new for visitors to experience.

Several malls worldwide have successfully leveraged entertainment zones to attract families

and young audiences.

Dubai Mall, for instance, combines shopping with world-class attractions such as an ice-skating rink, VR Park, and KidZania. Similarly, Mall of America features Nickelodeon Universe and



can leverage technology to captivate this demographic through virtual reality (VR) gaming arenas, augmented reality (AR) activities, and e-sports tournaments. These tech-driven attractions, combined with interactive installations and

an aquarium, creating a comprehensive family experience. Closer to home, Select Citywalk in India integrates a multiplex, open-air event spaces, and engaging kids' zones, making it a favourite among urban families.

The success of entertainment zones depends on thoughtful design and placement. These spaces should be easily accessible and meet high standards of safety and comfort. Collaborative partnerships with

renowned entertainment providers can further elevate their appeal. As consumer expectations evolve, sustainability and innovation will play a crucial role in shaping future entertainment zones. Eco-friendly attractions, edutainment options that combine education with entertainment, and hybrid experiences integrating physical and digital elements are some trends that will define the future of these spaces.

Entertainment zones are no longer ancillary features in shopping malls; they are essential in redefining the mall experience for families and young audiences. By offering engaging, inclusive, and innovative attractions, malls can position themselves as lifestyle destinations, fostering customer loyalty and driving sustained growth. As the demand for experiential retail continues to rise, the strategic development of entertainment zones will remain at the forefront of modern mall management.





PERSONALITY OF THE MONTH



Nirupa Shankar
Joint Managing Director
Brigade Group

Before joining Brigade, Nirupa worked as a Senior Business Analyst at Ernst & Young LLP in New York and North Carolina. She holds a bachelor's degree in Economics from the University of Virginia and a Master's in Hospitality Management from Cornell University, where she graduated on the Dean's List and served as Vice President of her class.

A passionate writer, Nirupa frequently contributes articles to leading news and trade publications. She is a sought-after speaker, having participated in top-tier conferences and think tanks, including two TEDx events.

Her achievements have earned her recognition as a CNBC Young Turk and a place on the Economic Times (ET) 40 under 40 list.

Beyond work, Nirupa is a fitness enthusiast who regularly competes in triathlons, recently completing the full Ironman Copenhagen in 2023. In her downtime, she enjoys reading autobiographies and playing poker.



Nirupa Shankar serves as Joint Managing Director at Brigade Group, one of India's prominent real estate developers. Over the past 14 years, she has played a pivotal role in managing the company's hotel, office, and retail portfolios.

A serial entrepreneur, Nirupa has successfully conceptualized award-winning F&B outlets, including HIGH Ultra Lounge and Glass Kitchen & Bar in Bangalore. In 2016, she founded the Brigade Real Estate Accelerator Program (REAP), Asia's first real estate accelerator to support high-tech real estate startups. She further expanded Brigade's offerings by launching the flexible workspace brand BuzzWorks in 2019.

Nirupa also spearheaded the establishment of the SEBI-approved Earth Fund, a Category II fund dedicated to investing in technologies that enable responsible urbanization.

Your accomplishments are truly inspiring, we are eager to delve into your background and explore the experiences that have shaped your journey to its current success.

Since 2009, I have been responsible for managing Brigade Group's hospitality, office, and retail operations. Founded by my father, M. R. Jaishankar, Brigade has expanded across multiple cities and earned numerous industry accolades. Outside of work, I am deeply passionate about endurance sports. I took up running in 2015 and have since participated in marathons and triathlons. In 2023, I completed my first Ironman in Copenhagen, becoming the only Indian female participant. These challenges drive me to excel both personally and professionally.

I believe true success goes beyond profit margins—it's about the positive impact we create for our employees, customers, and communities. I aim to foster an environment where ambition and empathy coexist, promoting a culture of respect, collaboration, and open communication throughout the organization.

What is the outlook for shopping malls in India, and how will they, especially those in Tier 2 and Tier 3 cities, evolve in the future?

The outlook for shopping malls in India is promising, especially in Tier 2 and Tier 3 cities, where rising incomes, urbanization, and changing consumer behaviour are driving demand. Malls will evolve into multi-purpose

retail, but entertainment, dining, and experiential services to cater to the diverse needs of these emerging markets.

With a growing middle class and younger, tech-savvy populations, malls will integrate digital technologies, enhancing customer experiences and improving operational efficiency. Additionally, sustainability and community engagement will play crucial roles in shaping the future of these malls, making them key pillars of local economies.

What is your strategy for positioning your malls as preferred destinations for shoppers and brands?

Only a handful of builders in the country build across all asset classes – be it residential, retail, office and hotels. Brigade is one of them. A key feature of our strategy when it comes to malls is build them as part of larger mixed used townships where the synergies are many and the project becomes a destination in itself.

To position our malls as preferred destinations for both shoppers and brands, we focus on delivering a holistic, immersive experience. Our strategy includes offering a carefully curated mix of local, national, and international brands to ensure both diversity and exclusivity. We also enhance the shopping experience by creating memorable visits through experiential marketing events and thematic décor, ensuring that every visit at our malls is enjoyable and engaging for our patrons. This combination of retail variety and dynamic experiences is key to attracting both customers and brands to choose our malls.

24. This will go up to \$3900 by FY 30. This will leave a lot more monies to be spent in the hands of consumers that will lead to more spending in the malls.

Shoppers are now also seeking immersive environments that offer more than just traditional retail. The increased use of digital engagement, social commerce, and contactless payment methods highlights a growing preference for convenience and tech-savviness. To meet these evolving expectations, malls and retailers are adapting by blending physical and digital experiences, ensuring a seamless shopping journey that caters to the modern, convenience-oriented consumer. This shift is reshaping the way brands and malls engage with their audience, emphasizing both innovation and customer-centricity

Visitors primarily frequent shopping malls for multiplexes and dining, while preferring high streets for shopping. How can shopping malls address this challenge effectively?

Malls have undergone a design change. A few years ago only 8% of the mall area was allocated towards F&B. Now that has increased to even 15% of the mall leasable area. Areas allocated to FEC has also increased to about 8-10% of the mall. Malls have the opportunity to offer a unique experience that blends convenience, leisure, and exclusivity, providing a refreshing alternative to high street shopping by enhancing dining and entertainment options and introducing experiential events, themed décor, and live entertainment, malls can create a vibrant atmosphere.

Incorporating a mix of local, national, and international brands can also set mall shopping apart, offering diversity and exclusive products that high streets may not. With thoughtful integration of these elements, malls can appeal to both the practical shopper and those seeking a more immersive, enjoyable experience.

The malls also provide a safer shopping experience by offering security, parking, restrooms, and other amenities—features that many high-street retailers struggle to offer.



How do you integrate cultural and community activities into the mall experience?

We integrate cultural and community activities into the mall experience by hosting a variety of events that resonate with local traditions, interest and Seasonality. This includes organizing festivals, art exhibitions, music performances, and local flea market that reflect the rich cultural diversity of the community. We also collaborate with local artists and artisans to bring authentic experiences to our visitors, fostering a sense of connection.



Additionally, we engage in community outreach programs, ensuring our malls serve as vibrant spaces where people can come together, celebrate their heritage, and participate in meaningful activities beyond just shopping.

How has consumer behaviour evolved in recent years, particularly post-pandemic.

Post Covid – market dynamics have changed. There is a growing middle class population with increased disposable income and they are looking to spend. The Average per capita GDP per person in India was \$2400 in FY

How do you approach sustainability and green initiatives in your malls?

We approach sustainability with a strong commitment to minimizing our environmental impact. It's always a moment of pride when our buildings are crowned with the highest accolades for sustainable practices, Brigade has more than 20 buildings (Including Orion Mall @ Brigade Gateway) that are Platinum or Gold certified buildings by LEED / IGBC.

Our malls are designed with energy-efficient systems, water conservation practices, and waste reduction strategies. We prioritize eco-friendly building materials and promote the use of renewable energy sources. Through initiatives like recycling programs, electric vehicle charging stations, and reducing carbon footprints, we aim to create a greener, more sustainable shopping experience for our customers while contributing positively to the environment and the community.

What should Shopping Malls do to become the primary purchasing destination for Indians?

To become the primary shopping destination for Indians, malls must evolve beyond traditional retail spaces. They should combine shopping, entertainment, and community engagement to create immersive experiences that cater to diverse consumer preferences. They must give customers reason to come back daily by allocating space for daily necessities such as gyms, dental clinics, cosmetic clinics, coffee shops and perhaps even co-working spaces.

Focusing on convenience through seamless online-offline integration and offering a mix of local, national, and international brands is crucial. Additionally, ensuring a safe, clean, and sustainable environment, while hosting cultural and social events, will enhance the overall experience. By becoming versatile, experience-driven hubs, malls can position themselves as the preferred destination for Indian shoppers.



How do you see the role of malls in creating socio-economic impact and driving urban development?

Malls serve as catalysts for both economic growth and social cohesion, playing a key role in shaping modern urban landscapes. Malls play a crucial role in driving socio-economic impact and urban development by fostering job creation, supporting local businesses, and enhancing infrastructure. Malls in India contribute significantly to the Goods and Services Tax (GST) revenue, as they serve as major hubs for retail sales. According to estimates, the retail sector in India contributes to nearly 10% of India's GDP, and a substantial portion of that comes from shopping malls and retail outlets housed within them (Source - Deloitte India report published in Sep 2023)

With the retail sector, which includes shopping malls, employing approximately 12 million people directly, the impact on India's labor market is substantial. These jobs span a range of functions from retail sales to mall security, customer service, housekeeping, and management roles. Beyond direct employment, malls also stimulate indirect job creation. From logistics and supply chain management to marketing, maintenance, and other support services, malls contribute to the livelihoods of millions of people who work in industries supporting retail operations. In total, the number of jobs created by malls and the retail sector can be estimated at around 20 million.

Additionally, they attract investment, promote tourism, and elevate local economies by offering diverse retail options.

What is the biggest strength of Orion Malls?

Since its inception, the biggest strength of Orion Mall has been its ability to seamlessly combine retail, dining, and entertainment in a way that creates a vibrant, all-encompassing experience. Its strategic location and excellent accessibility attract a diverse range of visitors. The mall's commitment to community engagement, through a mix of global and local brands, alongside diversified and experiential events, has made it a go-to destination. By staying ahead of trends and prioritizing customer experience, Orion Mall has become an essential part of the urban landscape, offering more than just shopping but a complete lifestyle experience.

How do you create a working environment to get the best results from your team?

At Orion Malls, we create a collaborative and inclusive work environment that fosters creativity and productivity. We emphasize open communication, where every team member's input is valued, and encourage continuous learning and development. We also prioritize work-life balance, recognizing the importance of well-being in driving performance. By nurturing a supportive culture and fostering teamwork, we ensure that our team is motivated and equipped to deliver the best results for the organization.

How do you deal with pressure at the workplace? What is the biggest challenge that you have faced in your career

I deal with pressure by staying focused, maintaining a clear perspective, and prioritizing tasks effectively. I break down challenges into manageable steps and ensure open communication with my team, which helps keep things on track.

In Retail, the biggest challenge I've faced in my career was navigating periods of rapid change in the retail industry. Adapting to shifting market trends while keeping the team aligned and motivated required resilience and adaptability. Ultimately, I view challenges as opportunities to grow and continuously evolve, both professionally and personally.

How do you deal with the challenges which you face while managing people?

When managing people, I approach challenges with empathy, open communication, and a solution-oriented mindset. I make it a point to actively listen to my team, understanding their concerns and perspectives. By fostering a collaborative environment, I encourage problem-solving together and empower individuals to take ownership of their roles. Clear expectations, constructive feedback, and ongoing support are key to overcoming challenges effectively.

Who is your biggest role model?

My father has always been my biggest role model for his visionary leadership and the values of integrity, hard work, humility and fairness that he lives by.



We welcome your feedback at editormt2008@gmail.com



THOUGHT PROVOKING

HOW IMPORTANT IS STRATEGIC THINKING

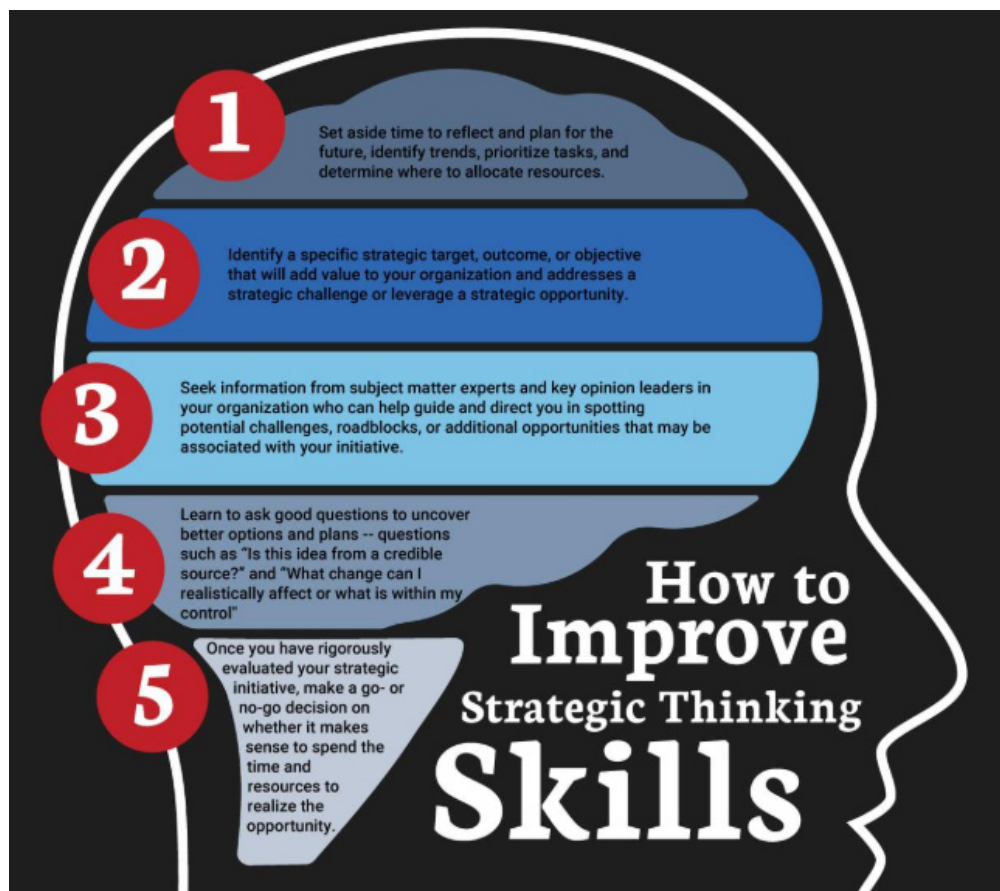
Strategic thinking is a powerful tool for shaping the future. It empowers individuals to make better decisions, enables organizations to thrive, and equips leaders to inspire and guide. In an increasingly complex and dynamic world, strategic thinking has become a cornerstone for achieving sustained success. It is not merely a skill but a mindset that enables individuals and organizations to navigate challenges, seize opportunities, and chart a course toward long-term goals. By embracing strategic thinking, we can turn challenges into opportunities and ensure long-term success in an ever-changing world.

Strategic thinking goes beyond immediate problem-solving; it is about anticipating the future, understanding the broader context, and aligning actions to achieve meaningful outcomes. Strategic thinking enhances decision-making. It equips people with the ability to evaluate options, foresee consequences, and make choices that serve long-term objectives. In contrast to reactive approaches that address issues as they arise, strategic thinking allows for proactive planning and prioritization. This results in better resource allocation, reduced errors, and a clear path forward, ensuring that immediate actions contribute to broader aspirations.

Organizations that embrace strategic thinking are more likely to experience sustained growth and success. In a world often

driven by short-term gains, strategic thinking ensures a focus on the big picture. Businesses that plan for the future and anticipate changes in market dynamics can stay ahead of competitors. This foresight builds a competitive edge, differentiating organizations through innovative products, superior customer experiences, or efficient operations. Strategic thinking transforms challenges into opportunities by fostering a culture of resilience and adaptability.

Leaders who think strategically inspire confidence and provide direction. They articulate a clear vision, guiding their teams with purpose and intent. Strategic leaders excel at navigating complexity by breaking down problems and finding creative solutions. They also empower their teams, fostering an environment where employees contribute ideas and take ownership of their roles. This collaborative approach ensures alignment across all levels of an organization and drives collective progress.



The importance of strategic thinking extends beyond the corporate world. It is equally valuable in personal decision-making. Whether planning a career, managing finances, or pursuing personal growth, strategic thinking helps individuals set clear goals, evaluate choices, and adapt to changing circumstances. For example, someone planning a career transition might assess industry trends, identify necessary skills, and map out a timeline for achieving their aspirations. This level of planning provides clarity and increases the likelihood of success.

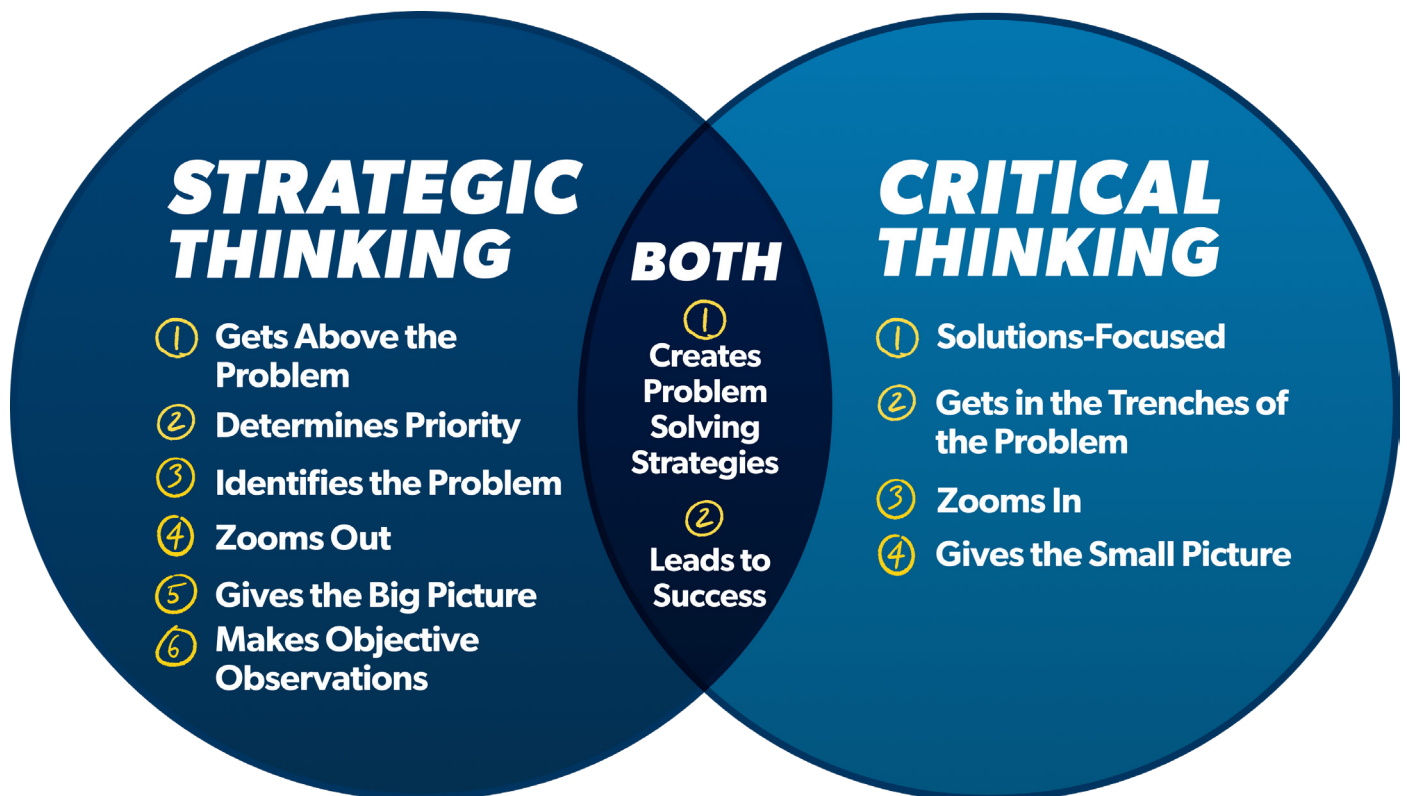
Developing strategic thinking skills requires deliberate effort. One effective way is to expand one's knowledge base. Staying informed about trends, advancements, and broader societal changes enhances one's ability to identify opportunities and foresee challenges.

Reflection is another essential practice. By analyzing past decisions and their outcomes, individuals can refine their approach to future situations. Scenario planning is also valuable, as it allows individuals to explore various possibilities and prepare for uncertainties. Collaboration and diverse perspectives enrich strategic thinking. Engaging with people from different backgrounds and disciplines can challenge assumptions and spark innovative ideas. Creativity, too, is a critical component. Strategic thinking thrives on the ability to think outside the box, question conventional approaches, and imagine new possibilities. Lastly, emotional intelligence plays a pivotal role. Understanding the motivations and emotions of others enhances collaboration and helps build consensus around strategic goals.

Despite its importance, strategic thinking is not without challenges.

Short-term pressures often overshadow long-term planning. The urgency to deliver immediate results can limit the time and focus needed for strategic initiatives. Cognitive biases—such as overconfidence or resistance to change—can also hinder objective analysis. Additionally, limited resources may constrain the ability to think strategically, especially in resource-intensive environments. Overcoming these challenges requires discipline, commitment, and a willingness to embrace new perspectives.

The need for strategic thinking will only grow as the pace of change accelerates. Emerging technologies, globalization, and evolving consumer expectations are reshaping industries and societies. Those who can think strategically will be at the forefront of innovation, driving progress and creating value. By cultivating this essential skill, individuals and organizations alike can navigate uncertainty with confidence and purpose.





Unlock 20% Higher Revenues: The Secret Weapon Every Mall Manager Needs



Shopping centers today generate massive amounts of data from footfall counters, parking systems, tenant POS systems, customer loyalty programs, and building management systems. Yet, the scattered nature of this data makes it difficult for operators to access actionable insights that drive growth and efficiency.

Case in Point: Data-Driven Success Stories

Unveiling Brand Challenges in a Tier-2 City Mall

A mall in a Tier-2 city implemented a centralized dashboard to consolidate data across multiple systems. They discovered that several key brands were struggling with low sales and high operational costs. This insight prompted focused marketing campaigns and strategic tenant support initiatives, ultimately reviving those brands and stabilizing the mall's overall performance.

Reducing Costs and Improving Efficiency in a Tier-1 City Mall

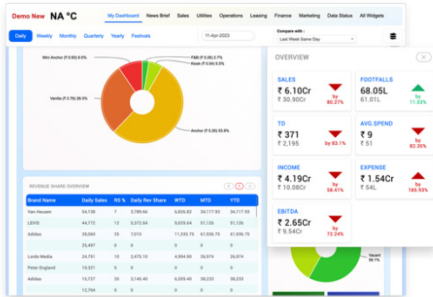
In a Tier-1 city, a mall utilized a centralized dashboard to monitor real-time operational metrics. By

identifying inefficiencies in energy consumption and streamlining staff deployment, the mall reduced operational costs by 30% and significantly enhanced team efficiency, improving both profitability and the tenant experience.

The Power of a Centralized Dashboard

Effortless KPI Tracking

Tracking complex metrics like trading density or occupancy costs can be tedious and time-consuming. Centralized systems make these insights instantly accessible.



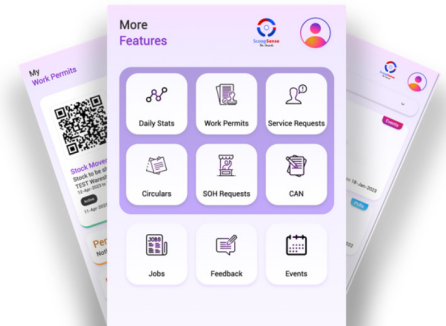
Example:

With ScoopSense, a Mumbai shopping center reduced the time to calculate trading density from seven days to just seconds. By integrating POS sales data and leasing information, ScoopSense provides operators with actionable insights at the push of a button, freeing time for strategic decision-making.

Real-Time Operations Monitoring

Day-to-day operations require constant attention to metrics like

footfalls, tenant requests, and customer complaints. A centralized dashboard streamlines this process by providing a unified view.



Example:

Using ScoopSense, an operations team gained immediate access to critical data such as unresolved tenant complaints and parking utilization. The platform's real-time alerts helped them address issues faster and improve overall operational efficiency.

Tenant Performance Optimization

Tenant success is critical to a shopping center's profitability. Centralized dashboards enable operators to analyze tenant performance and implement data-driven improvements.

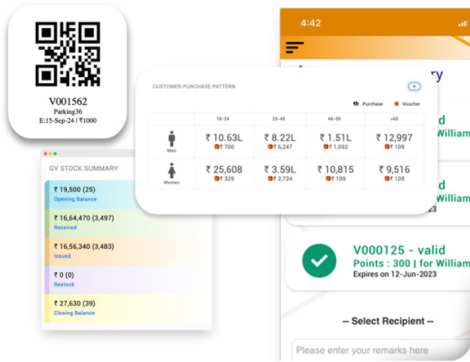


Example:

A Delhi-based shopping center using ScoopSense identified underperforming tenants with low sales and traffic. With targeted suggestions provided by the platform, including promotional strategies and store relocations, these tenants experienced a 12% sales increase within six weeks, contributing to better overall mall performance.

Marketing Campaign Insights

Understanding customer behavior and campaign performance is key to effective marketing. Centralized dashboards offer detailed insights to refine campaigns and boost ROI.



Example:

ScoopSense empowered a shopping center to evaluate the success of its seasonal campaigns by analyzing footfall data and customer demographics. These insights allowed the center to tailor future promotions, driving a 15% increase in foot traffic and higher sales.



Smarter Decision-Making with Predictive Analytics

Predictive analytics helps operators make proactive decisions, optimizing resources like energy usage and staff deployment.



Example:

ScoopSense helped a shopping center save 10% on energy costs by analyzing footfall patterns and automating HVAC adjustments during off-peak hours, demonstrating the platform's ability to combine operational efficiency with sustainability.

The Bottom Line

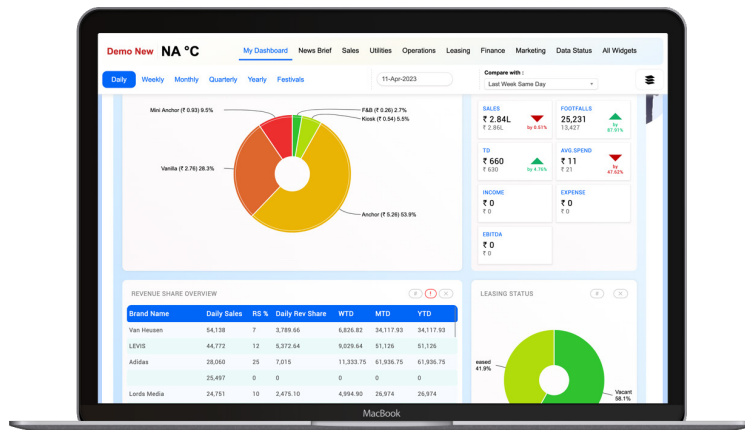
Central Command Center/ Dashboards are critical for steering the mall to profitability

By integrating data from multiple systems, central dashboard enables:

- Instant generation of KPI reports.
- Real-time monitoring of daily operations.
- In-depth tenant performance analysis.
- Effective planning and evaluation of marketing campaigns.
- Smarter resource management with predictive analytics.

Shopping centers using ScoopSense have reported up to a 20% increase in revenues, along with enhanced operational efficiency and tenant satisfaction. If you're looking to elevate your shopping center's performance and profitability, ScoopSense is the ultimate partner to help you achieve your goals.

See how ScoopSense works for your business—visit us at www.scoopsense.com





NEWS UPDATE

PACIFIC RETAIL CAPITAL PARTNERS' NAJLA KAYYEM



Kayyem's oversight of marketing for PRCP mall redevelopments over the past year has been geared toward making these properties more engaging. "Most of the malls that we work with were built at Main and Main and have strong reasons to exist within the community," she said, "but they might need some TLC, capital and elbow grease to make a bigger impact."

But Kayyem is focused on the evolution of the digital world, as well. "We're witnessing, like it or not, the emergence of AI influencers and digital personas that are making an impact on the way people interact with brands online and shop and explore," she explained. "So this year, we will be developing and testing an AI persona to personalize and provide support for tenants and enhance the consumer experience."

Young people are flocking to the likes of vinyl records, pinball arcades and throwback thrift stores, a trend that stands to create more opportunities for malls and mixed-use properties in 2025, said Pacific Retail Capital Partners executive vice president of marketing Najla Kayyem. "You're increasingly seeing this conscious effort to recapture and prioritize face-to-face interactions, with malls being cool again," she said. "It's really being fuelled by the digitally native generation, which sees novelty in anything pre-digital."

This past November, Pacific Retail Capital Partners and Synergy Construction broke ground on the mixed-use transformation of Yorktown Center in the Chicago suburbs. Plans call for scraping its former Carson's department store building to make way for new shops, restaurants and 600 or so residential units. The additions to the 12-acre site will surround a one-acre green space and community park. Retailers that are open or on the way include The Fresh Market, Dave & Buster's, Tapville Social, Ancho & Agave and Empire Burgers + Brew.

The online content will be sharable among various PRCP properties. Meanwhile, she will explore ways to ramp up tenant sales and traffic via livestream shopping. "The QVC-ification of social media platforms like TikTok Shop has really started to come to light," she said.

Kayyem, who also runs her own eponymous independent marketing agency, sees no contradiction in these simultaneous focuses on the throwback worthy and the futuristic. Over the past 25 years, her work has touched the likes of CityNorth in Phoenix; The Americana at Brand in Glendale, California; and The Grand LA and Westfield Century City, both in Los Angeles.

"No one way is the right way," she said. "You have to constantly test and evolve and innovate while always staying focused on best practices and the basics."





MARKETING TRENDS

THE SOUND OF DESIRE: HOW MUSIC SHAPES OUR LUXURY BRAND EXPERIENCE

The power of music in shaping consumer experiences is undeniable. From the moment customers step into a store, hotel, or gym, curated soundscapes influence their interactions with the environment. It's not just the genre or playlist selection that affects mood; the volume and tempo play a crucial role too. Louder music can quicken interactions and customer turnover, while softer, slower tempos encourage a more immersive and thoughtful shopping experience.

Luxury brands have long understood the importance of crafting the right auditory atmosphere. A Tom Ford store, for instance, does not rely on mainstream holiday music during the festive season. Instead, it curates sophisticated and subtly edgy playlists that align seamlessly with its brand identity. Every song played is carefully chosen to create an environment of elegance, complementing the textures and scents that surround the customer.

Music branding agencies specialize in designing such experiences, tailoring playlists to align with brand values, evoke emotional connections, and enhance seasonal campaigns. The process involves striking a balance between familiarity and discovery—introducing customers to fresh sounds while incorporating classic influences.

Younger audiences are drawn to music that feels relevant and current, often inspired by trends on digital platforms. At the same time, brands must ensure a timeless appeal that resonates across generations.

For some brands, music is an integral part of storytelling. Menswear labels, for instance, often curate their playlists to reflect the lifestyle associated with their collections. A designer might envision their ideal customer's journey—where they are going, what they are wearing, and what music they are listening to—and shape the store's soundscape accordingly. This blend of upbeat and understated tracks creates an ambiance that invites customers to explore and engage with the brand at their own pace.



Holiday season

The holiday season heightens the need for brands to establish a distinctive atmosphere. While some embrace nostalgic Christmas classics, others avoid them altogether to maintain their unique sonic identity. In many cases, luxury brands opt for subtle seasonal influences rather than overtly festive playlists, ensuring that their signature style remains intact. The challenge lies in creating a sound that feels fresh, familiar, and aligned with brand values without falling into predictable patterns.

Crafting the perfect playlist requires a deep understanding of a brand's identity and customer expectations. Some companies provide detailed briefs—including color palettes, fabric samples, and mood boards—to ensure a seamless sonic match.

Others offer broad directives, leaving music curators to interpret the desired ambiance.

In either case, the goal remains the same: to evoke a specific emotion and enhance the shopping or hospitality experience.

Music is also a crucial element in spatial design. Hotels, for example, tailor their playlists to guide guests through different experiences within the property.

The entrance may feature calming music to transition visitors from the outside world, while the main lobby and dining areas introduce more vibrant sounds that align with the energy of the space. Similarly, luxury retailers use music to encourage extended browsing, adjusting tempos and volume levels to influence customer behaviour.

The impact of music on luxury brand experiences extends beyond retail. High-end restaurants integrate carefully curated playlists to complement their ambiance, ensuring that the music enhances rather than distracts. Some establishments take this approach even further by incorporating personal vinyl collections or themed time slots, allowing the soundtrack to evolve throughout the evening. The goal is to create an auditory signature—music that becomes synonymous with the venue, much like the unforgettable score of a beloved film.



For ; it is an essential layer of design that contributes to the overall brand experience. From the selection of artists to the consideration of tempo and lyrical content, every element is meticulously curated to evoke the desired emotional response. Whether it's a boutique, a hotel, or a fine dining establishment, the right soundtrack can transform an ordinary visit into an unforgettable sensory journey.





BUILD A ROUTINE

Often it is difficult to set aside time for a fitness routine in the middle of a busy workday. But there are some routines in yoga that are not demanding and about 15 minutes of practice, followed by a short meditation, can get you going for the day. They can even help you adhere to a drill and consistency, which can improve flexibility, muscle tone, mental focus and stress levels.



**How yoga can be your 15-minute fitness pill you won't forget:
Try these routines**

Kati Chakrasana (Side Twist Standing)

1. Stand with your feet shoulder-width apart and arms by your sides.
2. Inhale deeply and raise your arms parallel to the floor, palms facing each other.
3. Exhale and twist your torso to the right, bringing your left hand to your right shoulder and your right hand behind you.
4. Maintain the twist in your spine.
5. Hold the position for 5-10 breaths, then inhale and return to the centre.
6. Repeat the twist on the left side, following the same steps.



Benefits

Kati Chakrasana makes your spine flexible and strong, improves digestion, tones the waist and strengthens core muscles and reduces stress. Regular practice improves posture and blood circulation.

Parsvakonasana (Extended Side Angle Pose)



1. Start in a standing position with your feet shoulder-width apart.
2. Turn your right foot outside.
3. Bend your right knee to a 90-degree angle, aligning it directly above the ankle. Keep your right hand on the floor.
4. Stretch your left arm overhead, aligning it with your body.
5. Keep your chest open and look straight.
6. Hold the pose for a few breaths, then slowly come up and repeat on the other side.

Benefits

Parsvakonasana stretches your legs and opens your hips, strengthens your arms, legs and core muscles, thereby improving balance and stability. Stress-busting too.

Yog Mudra

Begin by sitting in Padmasana. Start by stretching your legs out in front of you.

1. Bend one leg and place its foot on the opposite thigh, sole facing upwards.
2. Then, fold the other leg and place its foot on the opposite thigh. Keep your spine straight and relax in Padmasana.
3. Place your hands behind your back and clasp your right wrist with your left hand.
4. Take a deep breath in, and as you exhale, gently bend forward from your hips.
5. Aim to touch your forehead to the ground or as far as comfortable, keeping your spine stretched.
6. Hold the posture for a few moments with steady, mindful breathing, then inhale deeply as you return to the seated position.
7. as you return to the seated position.



Benefits

Yog Mudra improves concentration and focus and balances the nervous system.

Padma Parvatasana (Lotus Mountain Pose)



1. Sit in Padmasana (Lotus Pose) with your spine straight and shoulders relaxed. Keep your hands next to your body, facing upwards.
2. Inhale deeply and raise your arms upward.
3. Stretch your arms and lengthen your spine, gently lifting your torso upward. Interlock your fingers or keep your hands parallel. Hold the posture for 5-10 breaths, keeping your gaze steady or eyes closed.
4. Exhale, lower your arms and release your legs from Padmasana.

Benefits

Parsvakonasana stretches your legs and opens your hips, strengthens your arms, legs and core muscles, thereby improving balance and stability. Stress-busting too.



SCAI NEWS



Gopal Machani



Najeeb Kunil

We are delighted to share that **Mr. Gopal Machani, Managing Director of MGB Felicity Mall**, and **Mr. Najeeb Kunil, CEO of Pioneer Property Zone Services Private Ltd.**, have joined the SCAI Board of Directors.



TRENDS WATCH

2025: WHAT CONSUMER WANTS?

As the retail and online landscape evolves, a notable trend is emerging: a shift from relational to transactional consumers. Transactional customers prioritise price above all else when making purchasing decisions. They diligently shop for the best deals, actively seek out discount coupons, and may even engage in haggling to secure the lowest price.

The future of consumerism is ripe with opportunity. While challenges abound—from the rise of price-conscious shoppers to the complexities of emotional spending—savvy businesses can leverage these trends to connect with consumers on a deeper level. This opinion piece analyses the key shifts shaping the consumer landscape of 2025 and beyond, highlighting strategies for brands to navigate the evolving market and capitalise on emerging opportunities. From harnessing the power of AI to fostering authentic connections, the path to success lies in understanding and adapting to a dynamic consumer base's changing needs and desires.



From Relational to Transactional Consumers

A notable trend in the retail and online space is the shift from relational to transactional consumers. Transactional customers focus primarily on price, often prioritising it above other factors. They are meticulous in comparing deals, actively look for discounts, and may negotiate for lower prices.

Businesses will need to adapt by developing strategies that cater to the distinct needs of this price-sensitive audience. This will include emphasising competitive pricing, promotions, and value propositions that resonate with transactional consumers.

From Meaningful Spending to Revenge Spending

Among younger consumers, particularly millennials and Gen Z, a transition is taking place—from meaningful spending to revenge spending. Navigating challenging times, many are turning to shopping as emotional coping, increasing non-essential purchases. Shopping becomes a remedy for boredom and fluctuating emotions, reinforcing the belief that it can enhance happiness.

Social commerce and influencers will capitalise on this trend, creating content that targets emotionally driven shoppers. However, by 2026, a counter movement is expected to emerge, with de-influencing and no-purchase challenges gaining traction. Many consumers will push back against overconsumption, embracing slower, more sustainable lifestyles. Brands must find a balance between addressing the emotional needs of revenge spenders and supporting the growing demand for mindful consumption.

From Persuasion to Honest Facts

In a digital landscape saturated with marketing, consumers are experiencing persuasion fatigue—a resistance to traditional tactics that rely on manipulation or emotional appeal. Over 70% of consumers express scepticism toward overly promotional messaging, seeking transparency and authenticity instead.



Content that informs and educates is gaining ground, underscoring the need for honest communication. Marketers should pivot to strategies that prioritise factual transparency and authenticity to resonate with today's discerning consumers.

From Digital Deluge to Digital Pause

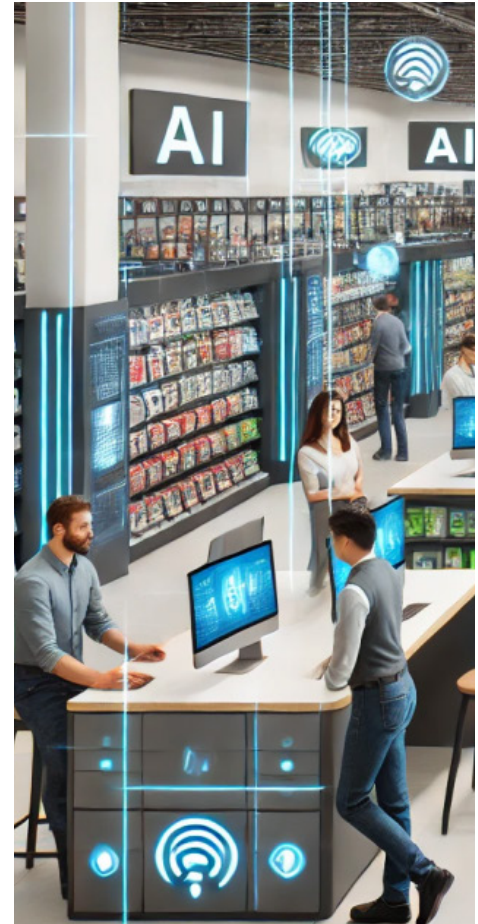
By 2025, many young consumers will step back from the constant digital influx, seeking relief from "information clog" or "cognitive clutter." This movement towards intentional engagement with technology is leading to increased interest in low-tech and no-tech solutions.

Brands can seize this opportunity by creating physical, tactile experiences that feel magical in an increasingly virtual world. Screen-free engagements and mindful technology use will redefine consumer interaction and brand activity.

Artificial Intelligence: From Skepticism to Prudent Enthusiasm

The debate over unregulated AI is ongoing, but a shift is occurring in India as more consumers recognise its potential benefits. With its first-mover advantage in the digital revolution, India is poised to embrace AI selectively, using it to streamline tasks and enhance creativity.

Solopreneurs and innovators will leverage AI tools to redefine creativity and productivity. Brands can unlock AI's potential by creating innovations that enhance consumers' quality of life. Navigating the shifting sands of the consumer landscape requires agility, authenticity, and a deep understanding of evolving consumer needs. By embracing change, adapting strategies, and unlocking new opportunities, businesses can thrive in this dynamic market. The future is now.



Warm Welcome: North India Mall, Ghaziabad



Ghaziabad's Happy Place

North India Mall is more than just a shopping center; it's a lifestyle destination. Here, you can shop, dine, meet, celebrate, and create memories all in one place. Established in 2005, it quickly became an iconic retail landmark in Indirapuram, Ghaziabad. With its twin atriums and elegant Roman-style architecture, it delights every visitor.

Embarking on a new journey of innovation, sustainability, and enhancing customer experiences. With a blend of premium brands, diverse dining options, a state-of-the-art multiplex, and dedicated community spaces, North India Mall remains committed to setting new benchmarks in the industry.

Smart Malls: Using Technology to Maximize Revenue and Cut Costs

Step into the future of retail with cutting-edge technologies that are transforming malls into smart and efficient profit centres

Why Attend?

In today's digital age, leveraging technology isn't just an option—it's a necessity. Join us for an engaging online webinar where top industry experts will explore how to:

- Increase Revenue: Use data analytics and automation to drive better rentals and SOH contracts, tenant sales and marketing campaigns
- Arrest Leakages: Use analytics to plug in Revenue leakages
- Reduce Costs: Discover AI-powered solutions for Tenant management, Facility management and automating tedious processes like Fitout

What You'll Learn

- ◆ How technology is revolutionizing mall operations and tenant management.
- ◆ Best practices for implementing digital tools that drive team engagement

Date : 07th February, 2025

Time : 3.00 PM – 4.00 PM

For information please contact: Sachin N. : +91-9029643729 : sachinnatki@scai.in

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