

Comfort Times

by ISPF

HEALTHCARE INDUSTRY

An opportunity for the Mattress Industry

22 Mattress Accessories
A part of the sum

32 Sleep Economy
To dream of the
perfect sleep





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Cover Story

12

Healthcare Industry: An opportunity for the Mattress Industry

Healthcare, sleep health and mattresses have always shared an intimate relationship, but it is only now that it is coming to the surface with full force

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Interview

29



We consider ourselves to be more of a long-distance marathon runner rather than a short sprinter

Mr. Siddharth Malani, Managing Director, Shree Malani Foams Private Ltd. and Mr. Uttam Malani, Executive Director, Centuary Fibre Plates Pvt Ltd.



"We don't see ourselves as a player offering a large number of products"

Mr. Raunak Agarwal, Managing Director, Raunak Coirs Ltd

36



"Our research will help consumers to choose the right type of mattresses"

Mr. Kundan Kankariya, Managing Director of Kontak Comfort Pvt. Ltd

41



"We have a Planet Goal of reducing GHG emission by 25 percent"

Mr. Alok Tewari, Regional Commercial Leader - West Asia for Colorants & Ingredients

48

Feature

22



Mattress Accessories: A part of the sum

Mattress accessories have been around for a long time. It is widely believed that they serve only the purpose of beautification. Taking a look at mattress accessories under a new light

Sleep Economy: To dream of the perfect sleep

32

Sleep economy is all about mattress industry, market size, consumer satisfaction and its economy.

Mattress retailers need to focus on the millennials they are the future market

37

Millennials are creating a huge impact on the mattress industry. It is important to understand how to evolve the right concepts to target this population and hold its interest.

Fixed beat

42

ISPF training programme helps retailers with sales, strategies and more

To help offline retailers ISPF is organising training programmes across India to face the current marketing and sales challenges

ISPF expands its sustainability initiative - Mattress circular journey: A green industry for a green earth

49

Mattress circular journey and sustainability

World of Sleep is not a concept but an experience: ISPF

56

World of Sleep is aimed at providing better sleep solutions to the consumers

OTHER STORIES

Editorial

5

India News

8

Global News

10

Back of the Book

64

FROM THE EDITOR



From where we stand today, it is plausible to imagine a future where sleep information and technology is fully integrated into the consumer's home and lifestyle. Picture this: an automated sleep reminder would go off at bedtime, with a fully synced home environment where all lights would switch to yellow wavelength and all electronic devices would enter a sleep facilitating mode. The environmental conditions like temperature, humidity, noise, and air quality would also be regulated for maximum comfort.

The mattress firmness and temperature could be customised and even automated. Relaxing music or soothing white noise would automatically start at a set time and gradually quieten and shut off as sleep onset is detected. Sleep disturbances such as excessive movement, snoring, sleep apnea, etc can be detected and recorded for future diagnosis. A graduated light and sound alarm designed to wake the patient in light sleep and ensure full alertness upon awakening. Special functions for daytime naps or treatment of jet lag would be optional.

We can say with much conviction that technology is aggressively taking the lead in analysing as well as optimising sleep health. The focus is on enhancing the quality by

personalising the experience to a greater extent. Data is acting as the main component here, bringing to these innovations' precision and inclusiveness. As much as we're seeing the increased application of technology in achieving these goals, science is also trying to incorporate organic ways to generate a wellbeing optimised sleep with a greater sense of personal satisfaction.

One important point which is interconnecting technology and sleep is Mattress. Technological innovations are making inroads into Mattress manufacturing. Today we can buy a mattress which automatically adjusts as per our body structure and pressure points. These innovations in mattresses are because of varying health requirements of each individual. This is being recognised by the healthcare industry worldwide and they are working with Mattress manufacturers to provide medical mattress and customised mattress for patients.

This edition of Comfort Times talks about healthcare and Mattress industry and how they can complement each other.

Looking forward to your valuable suggestions and comments

S. SUNDARESAN



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ISPF VISION

- ▶ To promote the sleep products industry by enhancing consumer awareness on quality sleep, while setting benchmarks for its products and services.
- ▶ To represent the industry with a commitment to the society and the environment.

Shree Malani Foams and Milliken extends their partnership

Shree Malani Foams Pvt. Ltd is expanding its portfolio via the long-standing partnership it formed with Milliken & Company's Chemical Business in 2008. About four years ago it began focusing on using Milliken's Reactint liquid polymer colorants to develop deeper, darker shades of PU foam to help further differentiate its products in the competitive mattress market.

Milliken – the market leader in India for colorant sales for the PU slabstock industry – chose Shree Malani as its partner for "Dark Color" initiative, recalls Tushar Bhardwaj, Country Manager – Polyurethane for Milliken Chemicals in India. The company says both its CenFlex slabstock foams and Resilia high-resilience foam products have benefited from unique dark shades of colors that were amongst the first such foam grades to hit the market. "Our latest development project with Milliken is to bring in a fresh look to our mid- and high-range foams and develop deeper colors across various foam densities, keeping in line with our brand strategy of being a valued-added player", says Siddharth Malani, MD of Shree Malani.

The company also says it benefits greatly by using Milliken's digital Reactint Color Studio, which allows users multiple ways to find a Reactint formulation for any Pantone shade.



Springfit aims Rs 1,200 crore turnover in next 5 years; listing expected by 2025

Mattress brand Springfit plans to achieve a turnover of Rs 1,200 crore in the next five years, helped by development from homeground and trade markets, says Money Control report. Quoting Springfit Executive



Director Nitin Gupta, a Money Control report says that the Delhi-based organization might attempt to get listed on the stock trade in the following 2-3 years. With the fiscal year ending on March 31, 2022, Springfit achieved a turnover of around Rs 250 crore and aims to grow almost double this fiscal year to Rs 450-500 crore.

Springfit is very much confident about doubling their revenue from Rs 1000 to 1200 crore, over the following five years with extension. The greater part of the new gradual income

should come from the forthcoming Meerut and Vadodara plants. Besides, the company is expanding its distribution footprints and plans a two-fold jump in the total count of exclusive showrooms.

Sleepsia secures \$2 million funding from parent company Agile Ventures

Pillow and sleep accessories manufacturer-to-consumer (M2C) brand Sleepsia has raised \$2 million from its parent company Agile Ventures, says The Economic Times report. Sleepsia will use the funding to expand its customer base in tier-II and tier-III cities, the company said in a statement.

"So far, we have served 200k happy customers. And now with the recent funding, we are planning to bring 250,000 more sleepers onboard," Dheeraj Kapoor, Director of Sleepsia said. The company is also looking at a new range of pregnancy pillows, couple pillows, baby pillows, baby memory foam pillows, car pillows, chair pillows, comforters, and microfiber bed sheets.



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Future Mattress plans to capture 20 percent market share in UAE

UAE-based Future Mattress has announced its plans to capture 20 percent market share in the mattresses sector in the UAE. According to the news report by Khaleej Times, Muhammad Adil Mirza, CEO, Phoenix Medicines and Future Mattress recently informed this to the media in Dubai, adding that his company is also keen to tap 15 percent market share in pillow segment. He mentioned that the country presents a favourable business environment for investors and excellent infrastructural facilities coupled with professional expertise and personalised services give the UAE an edge over other countries. The product line of the company includes Bonnell Spring, Pillow Top, Euro Top, Pocket Spring and Memory Foam Mattress. The company also manufactures medicated mattress.



Somnus Mattress International LLC establishing operations in Cherokee County

Somnus Mattress International LLC, a manufacturer of hybrid, memory foam mattresses, announced plans to establish operations in Cherokee County. The company's \$13 million investment will create 55 new jobs.

Somnus Mattress International LLC produces multi-layer mattresses that combine memory foam with an innerspring system. The mattresses are compressible and roll packable, which leads to more efficient shipping.

GLOBAL HYBRID MATTRESS MARKET 2022-2026: Market is poised to grow by \$1.42 billion

The "Global Hybrid Mattress Market 2022-2026" report has been added to ResearchAndMarkets.com's offering. The publisher has been monitoring the hybrid mattress market and report says it is poised to grow by \$1.42 bn during 2022-2026, progressing at a CAGR of 8.2 percent. The market is driven by an increase in online retailing, the highly developed offline retail sector in developed countries, and the growth of the real estate and construction industry. Also, the growing demand for eco-friendly mattresses and the growing need for multifunctional beds will lead to sizable demand in the market.



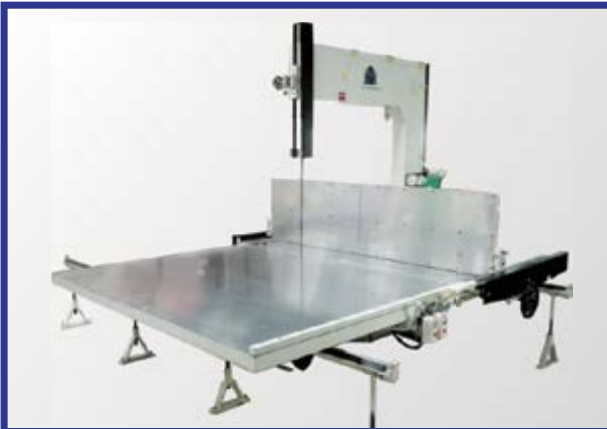
Sealy introduces Eco-Friendly and Responsibly-sourced Sealy Naturals Collection

Tempur Sealy International announced that it is introducing Sealy Naturals, a new eco-friendly mattress collection made with responsibly-sourced materials.

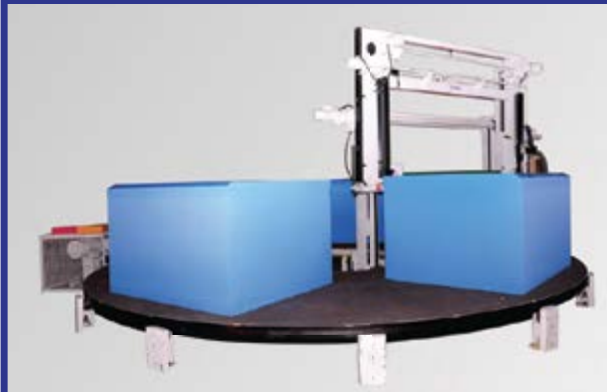
The new Sealy Naturals mattresses combine environmental responsibility with the comfort and quality that consumers have come to expect from Sealy. The mattresses are created with 100 percent natural latex and ethically-harvested wool—for comfort, breathability and support—and a cover made from a blend of materials including soft hemp and organic cotton. Each Sealy Naturals mattress is also built using a hybrid innerspring and latex design, and uses techniques such as hand-tufting, for a beautiful, durable and environmentally-friendly construction.

"The introduction of the Sealy Naturals collection embodies our commitment to sustainability and environmental responsibility," said Scott Thompson, Tempur Sealy Chairman and CEO. "We are proud to offer these new mattresses to the growing number of consumers who are interested in natural and sustainable products, and who also look to Sealy for a great night's sleep."

Sealy is pursuing independent third-party certifications that will ensure Sealy Naturals mattresses are made with quality materials that are both responsibly-sourced and environmentally-responsible.



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HEALTHCARE INDUSTRY

An opportunity for the Mattress Industry



As humanity consciously keeps on striving to enrich every aspect of life, health is taking a centre stage. The past few years have been a major catalyst to this actuality. Sleep health is finally being seen in connection to our everyday wellbeing and overall quality of life. The attitude had previously been that of responding, shifting to predicting and preventing later. Now sleep health is seen as more of an investment, a lifestyle element to be enriched and optimised to max.

Technological integration has also given a big push. Data is driving innovation of accessories that are user friendly and facilitate a highly personalised experience. The momentum is that of going back to basics but with the assistance of technology. Mattresses are a prerequisite for optimised sleep health. But not just any mattress, a technologically equipped mattress that is best suitable to your sleeping habits and needs is the right choice. Healthcare, sleep health and mattresses have always shared an intimate relationship, but it is only now that it is coming to the surface with full force.

What is sleep health?

Sleep is undoubtedly an essential human function. We've experienced it ourselves. The feeling of going to bed after a long tiring day and waking up the next morning completely revitalised and ready to hustle is unbeatable. But how do we define this subjective feeling and most importantly, optimise it? In spite of its universal relevance, sleep health is still very unique and subjective, and thus, somewhat difficult to be admitted to a watertight definition. However the basic parameters do find widespread relevance.

Dr. Marishka Brown, a sleep expert at NIH explains *"Healthy sleep encompasses three major things. One is how much sleep you get. Another is sleep quality. The last is a consistent sleep schedule."* So basically sleep health includes adequate sleep duration (7-9 hours/night for adults), sleep continuity (the ability to fall and stay asleep), sleep regularity, feeling refreshed and alert after waking up and a sense of satisfaction with the overall quality of sleep.

First step: breaking myths

There has been a common belief that sleep is just *"down time,"* when a tired brain gets to rest, says Dr. Maiken Nedergaard, who studies sleep at the University of Rochester. *"But that's wrong,"* she says. Your brain is still working. Nedergaard and her colleagues discovered that the brain has a drainage system that removes toxins during sleep. *"When we sleep, the brain totally changes function,"* she explains. *"It becomes almost like a kidney, removing waste from the system."*

Everything from blood vessels to the immune system uses sleep as a time for repair, says Dr. Kenneth Wright, a sleep researcher at the University of Colorado. *"There are certain repair processes that occur in the body mostly, or most effectively, during sleep,"* he explains. *"If you don't get enough sleep, those processes are going to be disturbed."*

As the world of sleep finally gets its due attention and resources for extensive research, we can finally pin point at exactly how it makes a difference. Studies have shown that unhealthy sleep impacts metabolism, immune function, mood, cognitive performance, and mortality

Another sleep myth is that one can *"catch up"* on sleep. *"If you have one bad night's sleep and take a nap, or sleep longer the next night, that can help,"* says Wright. *"But if you have a week's worth of little sleep, the weekend isn't sufficient for you to catch up."* In fact fatigue has been found to be a leading cause in accidents.

When sleep deprived, alertness and reaction time are impaired as much as driving while drunk. It can also lead to medical errors and industrial accidents. The pandemic also deterred the sleep health of essential workers, especially medical professionals. The findings of a study conducted by the University of Florida shows that optimal sleep health is an antecedent of daily mindful attention in nurses. Improving sleep may provide important benefits to their well-being and to the quality of patient care.

Sleep Health finding its place in the larger realm of healthcare

The pandemic-triggered mindfulness in regard with our body, its functioning, and needs has been no less than a silver lining in these arduous times. We have come to acknowledge the necessary connections which were previously easily overlooked. Sleep and its unparalleled contribution to overall health is one of these phenomena getting re-enforced.

We spend a third of our lives sleeping. Most experts have concluded that getting enough high-quality sleep may be as important to healthcare and well-being as nutrition and exercise. There ought to be a good reason why this evolutionary miracle i.e. the human body assigns it such considerable significance.

As the world of sleep finally gets its due attention and resources for extensive research, we can finally pin point at exactly how it makes a difference. Studies have shown that unhealthy sleep impacts metabolism, immune function, mood, cognitive performance, quality of life, and mortality. Mr. Sundaresan points out *"Sleep is like the first layer. Disturbance in sleep health translates into impact on a number of other body functions. Hence it is increasingly being seen as a requisite."*

Access to this knowledge along with the agility induced by the pandemic is the reason more people are finally



seeing sleep in relation to their particular health issues. Consequently they are willing to cultivate better sleep health and hygiene, as well as spend on related products like ortho or smart mattresses.

Mr. Sundaresan, Secretary of ISPF, shares another insightful observation. He says *“There is a silent procedure that all hospitals across the world follow. After every surgery or medical procedure, the patients are encouraged to sleep as much as possible. Often sedatives are administered. Sleep helps speed up healing and supports the immune system from being compromised. A well-rested person is better equipped to deal with the stresses of recovery. This points towards its obvious acuteness.”*

Dr. Shaitan Singh of S. N. Medical College Jodhpur reflects upon the change of perspective in patients. *“When we ask patients about their symptoms nowadays, they talk about changes in their sleep cycle too without any outside suggestions.”* This small behavioural change, he believes, goes on to show awareness. People are seeing sleep in connection with their overall health.

The studies, trends and economic response are evidence that slowly but steadily sleep is finally ceasing to be seen as just an isolated unconscious phenomena. It carries immense weight of our wellbeing in our waking hours and is an integral part of our overall healthcare. This awareness is spreading

wide and stimulating a positive effect on the sleep product industry. In fact, many market pundits believe the sleep industry is going to acquire a big chunk in the future sphere of healthcare.

Healthcare and Mattress: How are we connecting the dots?

A worldwide phenomenon is evident as more sleep clinics, sleep doctors and sleep research are proliferating. Not only has the scale of research and in-depth studies increased, it is their wider accessibility too that has played a crucial role.

The ties between healthcare and mattress had always been present but not necessarily loud and clear on the surface. In order to develop products and support their own sleep and wellness messages, mattress makers and industry suppliers have formed ongoing relationships with sleep research centres, universities and hospitals for decades now. They also conduct in-house research and sponsor outside studies related to sleep and wellness.

It was quite a while back that the mattress industry first asked consumers to connect their aching back to their saggy, old mattress. Many studies have proven that getting the right mattress significantly reduces back discomfort, in addition to improving overall sleep comfort and quality. It’s a connection that continues to resonate—and shows in the sales numbers. In fact the global pressure relief mattress

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Many studies have proven that getting the right mattress significantly reduces back discomfort, in addition to improving overall sleep comfort and quality. It's a connection that continues to resonate—and shows in the sales numbers



market size is expected to reach USD 2.45 billion by 2028, according to a new report by Grand View Research Inc.

Thus it is the keen interest of sleepers and handiness of the internet, working almost in a circular pattern to stimulate these recent waves of awareness and boost the mattress industry. By simply wearing a wristband, people can now access their daily health stats, thus making them more mindful and proactive.

Dr. Shaitan Singh points out another interesting behavioural change. *"People come into my cabin and start telling me all of these stats from their fitbit bands. It is kind of funny. I have to interrupt and ask them to talk about the problem or symptoms they are facing first."* Even though these stats can not be relied upon 100 percent for diagnosis, they do however make us realise the level of awareness that people are gathering thanks to these devices.

The pandemic has also altered our philosophical approach towards life at large and health, in particular. People now wish to enrich every aspect of their lifestyle. So when it comes to sleep health, they are not shying away from digging deep to understand their sleep needs and habits and eventually buying a mattress that enables a personalised experience and optimises the quality of their sleep.

Healthcare and the Mattress Industry

The COVID-19 pandemic continues to influence the growth of various industries. The critical impact of the crisis is varied, as few industries will register a decrease in demand, while several others will continue to remain unharmed and offer promising growth opportunities, says Transparency Market Research. The global outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic has caused concerns among public and health administrations. The principal problem that many nations are facing during the crisis is a shortage of medical resources. However, there may be an expanded demand for hospital beds, stretchers, and mattresses to extend healthcare capacity in local hospitals, and healthcare systems through short expansion sites. Producers from a variety of industries that are not usually associated with medical device manufacturing are looking for resources to manufacture and market the medical mattress to fulfil the ongoing needs. The global medical mattress market is witnessing an increased demand amidst the COVID-19 pandemic, which is likely to increase post-COVID-19 pandemic.

At the time when most investments are being witnessed by the healthcare sector, people are demanding innovative comforting products such as orthopaedic mattress, dual mattress, etc. In addition, the present consumers are comfortable making big purchases over the Internet, which has generated an opportunity for online businesses to transform the mattress buying experience. The regulations to shut down the marketplaces and offline sales have boosted the online product markets. By taking the market online, companies have been able to offer commodities at 40-50

percent cheaper rates than market occupants. However, constant changes in laws, healthcare policy, and guidelines can impact the size and growth potential of the medical mattress market. Limited availability and elevated cost of material might hinder the buying, and very often mattresses in hospitals are used beyond their replacement cycle.

Mattress manufacturers Medical Mattress

According to Transparency Market Research's stats, patients with a broad range of medical problems, including spinal cord injuries causing paraplegia or quadriplegia, respiratory infections such as pneumonia, or chronic obstructive pulmonary disorder can benefit from the appropriate medical mattress designed to assist in alleviating the symptoms and improving their experience. The healthcare facilities in developing economies mostly prefer gatch beds in hospitals, rural medical outposts, and geographic locations that typically experience economic hardships. The graded mattresses on these beds are mostly chosen for their durability, reliability, cost-effectiveness, and ability to be easily positioned.

Overview: Medical Mattress Market

- According to Transparency Market Research's latest report on the global medical mattress market for the historical period of 2018–2020 and the forecast period of 2021–2030, increasing health hazards and healthcare services, and growing ageing population are factors expected to boost the global medical mattress market during the forecast period
- The global population is expected to reach 8.5 billion by 2030 from 7.7 billion in 2019. Overall life expectancy is projected to increase from 73.7 years in 2018 to 74.7 years by 2023. Around 11.8 percent of the total population is anticipated to be aged 60 years or more, which will drive the global geriatric care segment, which, in turn, is expected to generate demand for medical mattresses during the forecast period.
- In terms of revenue, the global medical mattress market is estimated to exceed the value of US\$ 21 Bn by 2030, expanding at a CAGR of ~4 percent during the forecast period. Foam medical mattresses are expected to dominate the global medical mattress market.
- Medical mattresses are different in terms of quality and features to ensure that patients can comfortably sleep over it. Medical mattresses are specifically designed for much more workload, and they need to be both waterproof and antibacterial, making it an excellent choice where frequent cleaning is anticipated. Beds used in hospitals need to be not only durable and firm, but also antibacterial, antifungal, latex-free, and inflammation resistant.

India hospital beds market was valued at around USD 360 million in FY 2020 and is projected to witness a CAGR of around 9 percent during FY 2021 – FY 2026 says Techsci Research.

Government of many countries across developed and developing economies are proposing a series of investment plans for hospital infrastructure to promote healthcare development





Medical Mattress Market Growth

- Internet of Things (IoT) is serving as a communal centre for the healthcare industry and is largely influencing the medical mattress market. IoT helps to work with an application that shows important information related to patients, which leads to change in mattress settings, thus ensuring optimum comfort and cure.
- Besides big hospitals and nursing care centres, all other health facilities prefer foam and innerspring medical mattresses. The home care segment is rising, and consumers prefer hybrid medical mattresses at home for utmost comfort and relief.
- Many manufacturers are striving to increase their market share through strategic initiatives and innovation. Manufacturers are introducing technologically advanced products, which are responsible for the rise in demand for medical mattresses.
- Manufacturers are focusing on developing their distribution, marketing, and sales channels to improve their product reach, and exploring the potential of selling medical mattresses online and through direct channels such as distributors, department stores, and specialty stores.

Medical Mattress Market Dynamics

Hospital beds are undergoing a transformation with the usages of medical mattress, it is driven by factors like an ageing population, the requirement to reduce pressure sores,

and an increase in obese patients across the globe, states Maximize Market Research.

A transformation in the global healthcare environment has been witnessed. An increase in investments, which is allocated for medical beds, is expected to drive the adoption of the medical mattress. In the period of the COVID-19 pandemic, state of public health emergency has increased the demand for hospital beds, stretchers, and mattresses. Many hospitals and clinics are demanding medical mattresses to avoid such emergency conditions and enhance health care systems through temporary expansion sites. Hospital infrastructure is the prerequisite of healthcare delivery, which mainly affects medical quality. Government of many countries across developed and developing economies are proposing a series of investment plans for hospital infrastructure to promote healthcare development. The governmental investment in healthcare facilities and infrastructure in developing regions has become an essential strategy for minimizing healthcare inequity.

Medical Mattress Market Regional Insights

As stated by Maximize Market Research, Asia Pacific region help a dominant position in 2021 and is projected to continue its dominance during the forecast period. The region has high population. The rapidly ageing old population and chronic patients require greater care in hospitals. In most of the countries, hospitals are accounting the maximum share for

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the part of overall fixed healthcare investment. An increase in the numbers of beds and overnight stays in hospitals are bringing positive outcomes in population health across the region and drive the consumption of the medical mattress across hospitals. The Asia Pacific region healthcare sector is the new centre of gravity with the healthcare infrastructure. The robust fundamentals factors like presence of the large ageing population, affluence, rise in middle-class and incidence of chronic diseases are some of the driving factors behind the high adoption of the medical mattress in the region. The number of people suffering from injuries or stress-related issues are expected to increase the demand for Medical Mattresses by the Domestic sector. Growth in population, number of people visiting hospitals, preference for home treatment and use on a regular basis of medical mattress are some of the prominent factors behind the market growth.

Key players are focusing on the usage of brand specific websites and social media pages to engage consumers with lifestyle, product and usage information related to specific brands. The competition in the market is based on product quality, brand recognition, brand loyalty, price, product innovation, promotional activity, availability. The objective of the report is to present a comprehensive analysis of the global Medical Mattress Market to the stakeholders in the industry. The past and current status of the industry with the forecasted market size and trends are presented in

the report with the analysis of complicated data in simple language. As reported in Maximize Market Report.

Sleep, data, automation & more

In these modern times that we live in, the magnitude of anything can be gauged by the speed at which it is adopted into the latest technological forms and its spatial accessibility. Healthcare is no exception. In the last few decades we have seen expansion in the development and use of multi-modal sensors and technologies to monitor physical activity, sleep cycles, and circadian rhythms.

This has enabled accurate sleep monitoring at a large scale, producing a sizable amount of data. The application and scope of this data is equally wide, from epidemiological research to wellness applications, and sleep coaching for chronic conditions. The data is also helping curate a more personalised experience through various Consumer Sleep Technologies (CSTs).

Consumer sleep technologies (CSTs) are computer-based systems available to the general public for the purpose of improving or self-monitoring sleep. Their primary goals include sleep induction, wake induction, self-guided sleep assessment, entertainment, information sharing, and sleep education. Although we lack advanced level research into the adoption rate as well as satisfaction levels, market trends show CSTs like FitBit and Jawbone are some of the top sellers.

Wearable CSTs are quite popular lately. They involve an attachment or sensor placed directly on the body (e.g., bracelet), or embedded in clothing. Besides their practical application they also seemed to have cultivated a 'trendy' reputation as part of the fitness industry. Jawbone, a wristband with its claim to sense light and deep sleep, and smart alarm, has found quite a few patrons.

Then we have CSTs which are non-wearable physical devices embedded into the user's native sleep environment. Unlike wearable CSTs, they don't rely on physical touch that in itself could hamper sleep but rather gel in with the sleeper's natural setting. For example Sleep Number is a bed that allows the user to adjust mattress firmness, elevate the head or foot of the bed and, in the event of bed partner snoring, independently elevate the bed partner's side of the bed.

Temperature regulation plays a big part in the quality of sleep and thus is obviously being given generous attention to. A hybrid duvet from Simba offers temperature controlling features. The duvet uses an astronaut-inspired temperature regulation quality called Stratos which traps the excess heat when you're too hot, and releases it when you start to feel cold.

There are no limits with the sleeper's profile either. The SNOO smart bassinet plays white noise while it rocks the baby back and forth, speeding up if they start crying. The claim is that it can soothe the baby back to calmness in around 30 seconds, and has picked up numerous awards, been involved in medical studies into infant sleep, and calims to help alleviate post-natal depression.

These are just a few of the many revolutionising CSTs we have seen proliferating the market. Their user friendliness, synergy with everyday mobile devices, affordability, and novelty make them highly appealing to sleepers. Besides, many of the users have reported real time improvement in the quality of their sleep.

Even though we need more studies to truly learn their impact, there is one thing that can be said with utmost assurance. The most crucial way in which CSTs are benefiting users is by making the average consumer more conscious of the importance of sleep and the effect of sleep irregularities on overall health.

The way ahead for Sleep Health and Mattress Industry

Globally, in regard to sleep, we were already in a state of pandemic. The Covid-19 led to trying times which helped us cultivate awareness and a proactive approach towards better quality of sleep.

Now both, industry and academia are investing heavily in the development of less obstructive and more portable devices for the continuous monitoring of sleep. We are

enabling data acquisition at large scale over extended periods and in a more natural setting. This data is forming the backbone for crafting better CSTs, especially mattresses.

Mattresses are the nucleus of a sleep environment. While other accessories might be seen as supplementary in nature for optimum sleep health, a good mattress is a prerequisite. This fact is becoming widespread, especially evident through the numbers. According to a Research and Markets report, while India's overall mattress market has grown at a CAGR of over 11 percent in the last five years, the organised industry has grown at 17 percent and we can only expect an upward trend from here.

The entire humanity is consciously headed towards a better sleep health, and mattresses seem to be the first pitstop. **CT**

KEY TAKE-AWAYS

- Sleep health is finally being seen in connection to our everyday wellbeing and overall quality of life. It is seen as an investment, as a lifestyle element that needs to be enriched and optimised to max.
- Most experts have concluded that getting enough high-quality sleep may be as important to health and well-being as nutrition and exercise.
- Sleep irregularities faced during the pandemic have helped us cultivate awareness and become more proactive in our pursuit of seeking quality sleep, often by accessing suitable accessories and professional help.
- Expansion in the development and use of multi-modal sensors and technologies to monitor physical activity, sleep cycles, and circadian rhythms. The data is helping curate a more personalised experience through various Consumer Sleep Technologies (CSTs)
- CSTs' user friendliness, synergy with everyday mobile devices, affordability, and novelty make them highly appealing to sleepers.
- A future where sleep information and technology is fully integrated into the consumer's home and lifestyle.
- Mattresses are the nucleus of a sleep environment. While other accessories might be seen as supplementary in nature for optimum sleep health, a good mattress is a prerequisite.

MATTRESS ACCESSORIES

A part of the sum



Mr. Abraham Pious owns and runs a mattress retail store in Bangalore and Cochin area each, part of a 43 year old family business. The store's persuasive name 'Mattress at Bangalore' is indicative of his simple and coherent style of speaking. He comments, "a few years back had you called me asking questions about 'mattress accessories' I would have gone blank for a second." Abraham sure has a sense of humour but let his words linger a minute more and they'll make absolute sense.

Mattress accessories have been around for a long time now. In fact vintage bed skirts are popular collectibles lately. It is widely believed that they serve only the purpose of beautification by hiding the legs of the bedframe and enhancing the allure using chic prints and laces. But was any object ever made without an utilitarian purpose? A heavy bed skirt that touches the floor helps prevent dust and mites from building up underneath the bed and ensures sleep hygiene and longevity.

Thence it is our perspective that has changed. It is not that Mr Abraham has recently started selling pillows or bed sheets. Sure there are some products like mattress pads that have only started to gain prevalence now. But the point is that we have started to see mattress accessories under a new light, resulting in the metamorphosis of the term itself.

Part of the sum:

We no more see accessories as an "add-on". They are seen as part of the larger bedroom environment. Every piece plays its role in optimising sleep quality and thus contributes to better sleep health. People are taking their sleep health seriously and this awareness has translated into action.

They are more willing to spend on things that guarantee better sleep quality. This has been one of the main driving factors behind the boost in the mattress accessories market. Not just that, customers' keen interest and demand for personalised solutions is driving the pace of technological innovation too.

Value addition to quality of life:

Deep down it is our values, philosophies and goals that motivate us to buy or use something. For any industry, it is crucial to understand their clientele's motivators. The pandemic years have shaken up people to review their lifestyle. Many don't want things for their bare minimum utilitarian aspect. The threshold has been raised. Every product and service is being asked how it adds value to their quality of life.

This comes as good news for the bedding industry. Mattresses and accessories are finally receiving the attention they deserve. Customers now seek not only comfort, but physical health benefits in their mattresses and accessories. These benefits stem from having a sleep experience that restores the body to its most optimal health.

Cervical pillows and lumbar support pillows are gaining much momentum globally, especially since the development of the work-from-home niche. Mattress covers are another in-vogue accessory. Customers are now more concerned about what is inside their mattress and accessories, in order to protect their own wellbeing as well that of the environment.

Market Overview: numbers run the game

Global: A market analysis report by Grand View Research states that the global home bedding market size was valued at USD 87.05 billion in 2021 and is expected to expand at a CAGR of 7.9 percent from 2022 to 2030. The boom in the housing sector and growing consumer spending on home furnishings have expanded the growth scenario for the market.

Asia Pacific (APAC) accounted for the largest share of over 35.0 percent in 2021 and is expected to witness the fastest growth over the forecast period. The command of the home textile market in the region (China, India, and Japan) has resulted in wide availability of bedding textiles, thereby expanding the prevalence of bedding products in the residential and commercial sectors.

Further segment based analysis shows that bed linens raised the largest revenue share of about 25.0 percent in 2021 and is expected to grow further over the forecast period. Consumer preferences towards quality and sustainable linens for healthier beds, greater comfort, and durability is a key factor in the segment's growth. Another notable number would be the CAGR of 7.9 percent at which the blankets segment is expected to grow. The offline distribution channel held the largest revenue share of over 65.0 percent in 2021.

India: Let's zoom in on the Indian bedding market with the help of market analysis provided by Statista. The revenue in the bedding segment amounted to USD 776.70 million in 2022. The market is expected to grow annually by 8.34 percent (CAGR 2022-2026).

Key companies profiled in the report include The Bombay Dyeing & Manufacturing Company Ltd. (Wadia Group), Casper Sleep, Inc., Beaumont & Brown Ltd., Boll & Branch LLC, Crane & Canopy, Inc., American Textile Company, Acton & Acton Limited, West Point Home LLC (Icahn Enterprises L.P.),



Kingsdown, Inc., and Portico, Inc.

Drivers & Trends:

Premium bedding items with their enhanced functional benefits, are acting as key drivers in the industry's improved performance. In addition, the critical link between good sleep and a healthy mind and body has increased the need for high-quality mattress accessories.

Pillows are seeing sustained attention and growth, resulting in a fast paced advancement in their technology too. Cervical pillows and lumbar support pillows are gaining much momentum globally, especially since the development of the work-from-home niche. Mattress covers are another in-vogue accessory. As people pour more money into high quality mattresses, they are willing to spend a bit more to ensure their longevity and care through the use of mattress covers.

Scope & Trends:

Work from bed: All the time spent at home during the lockdowns propelled people to invest in better and premium home bedding products. Work from home shifted to work from bed real quick and so did the bedding market trends. Along with the mattresses, accessories like adjustable base and back supporting pillow have found surged popularity post 2020.

Fabrics fascinate: Mattress fabrics can help to keep the sleeping surface clean and hygienic, and suppliers are looking at increasing options with antibacterial, antimicrobial, anti-allergen and similar properties. Fabrics made of organic cotton, Tencel (fibres from trees) and bamboo from rayon have found wider admiration. Recent sustainable introductions include fabrics crafted with yarns made of "upcycled" plastics.

Sustainability & luxury pricing: Customers are now more concerned about what is inside their mattress and accessories, in order to protect their own wellbeing as well that of the environment. The sustainability angle helps rationalise the higher price point, thus the correlation between luxury sleep products and the sustainability benefits they offer is growing.

Pillows crop up: Earlier both retailers and industrialists would see pillows as an "add-on" thing on mattress purchase. Many were just given away for free. Now the pillow is carving out a strong market for itself outside of the luxury segment too. Brands are willingly venturing into the accessory segment. For example, Sleepyhead now offers soft microfiber pillows at reasonable pricing that provide adequate neck support.

Real time effect: The larger sleep health environment has

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Mattress accessories can range from functional to fashionable, and include mattress covers, bed skirts, mattress pads, wheels, pillows that prop up certain parts of the body and dozens other types.

been expanding, with different segments aiding each other's growth. People now have access to wearable devices like FitBit that enable real time monitoring. You could buy a new pillow or blanket and see for yourself the way it has altered your sleep without much hassle. This gives the accessories factual backing.

Brands rising to the occasion: Mattress accessories are being seen for their potential. Brands are pouring in to not just use them as an aid for mattress sales but establish a market share of their own. Sleepyhead is one of the brands who's been escalating its efforts to capitalise on the mattress accessories segment.

Innovations: a peek into the future

The direction in which we pour our time, money and efforts into R&D says a lot about the future we're expecting or hoping to create. Let's have a look at some of the market's latest and fascinating technology and innovation to understand where the mattress accessory market is headed.

The OwlzzZ Sleep Mask creates a total blackout over the eyes. It has a 3D memory foam that lets you open your eyes while still wearing it.

Performance Fabric: Taking the term "performance fabric" to heart, BekaertDeslee has unveiled its Nightro collection of technical fabrics. These fabrics provide better recovery during nighttime for enhanced sports performance and have been developed with athletes preparing for the Olympic Games.

EDASI all-season BioGraphene: The sheets keep the sleeper cool all year long since they wick moisture and don't absorb smells. They're also antimicrobial, antibacterial, and hypoallergenic.

DozyCozy AirCozy: It is a smart pillow that can keep you from tossing and turning. It has an integrated white noise function.

Curfew Dream Blanket: The blanket is infused with broad-spectrum CBD oil, believed to reduce anxiety and induce relaxation

Hospitality Sleep Defense mattress encasement It is a waterproof zipped mattress protector that promises to

The Range: creating a wholesome sleep environment

Mattress accessories can range from functional to fashionable, and include mattress covers, bed skirts, mattress pads, wheels, pillows that prop up certain parts of the body and dozens other types. Let us look at some of the most vogue ones:

Linens: As Anjali Gupta of Kurl On Mattress store (Lucknow) says "linens are something customers tend to be really picky with." And rightly so. This is why there are plenty of options in this space: cotton mixed with polyester, rayon, bamboo etc, nylon/polyester combination and so on.

Pillows: After mattress, pillows are the ones getting their due attention in the domain of sleep health. Different combination of shapes, filling, and outer fabric makes this a highly diversified market. From temperature regulation, height adjustment to ones that help with snoring issues, the future of pillow technology is exciting.

Bases: Besides supporting the mattress and ensuring longevity, mattress bases also help distribute the sleeper's weight and maintain neutral spine alignment.

Protectors: It contains regular wear and tear of the mattress and protects from airborne allergens, dust mites and other bacteria. As people tend to spend more on better mattresses, this accessory segment sees a direct boost.

Topper: They are used to change a mattress' feel and provide extra pressure relief. Toppers can also revitalise an old mattress or lengthen the life of a new one.

Blankets: A very important accessory, helps regulate temperature and humidity for a better sleep. Electric blankets are all the craze lately.

safeguards against dust mites, spillages and allergies.

Retailers' POV

The sumtotal: How a retailer thinks about protectors, linens and other sleep accessories can be a good indicator of how much revenue they generate. An after-thought? An add-on? A freebie? If they believe a mattress set is only one part of a complete sleep system that also includes protectors, linens and other items, they can help customers see the same. Selling sleep accessories nudges the consumers to frequent the stores more often and also increases margins.

An early introduction: To successfully sell sleep accessories one has to introduce them early in the process, long before



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shoppers arrive at the sales counter and make their final mattress selection. But it is also crucial to find the balance and not overwhelm them with jargon. Mr. Abraham from Mattress at Bangalore store swears by this technique and trains his sales executive for the same.

Display matters: One clever way of early introduction is through attractive and inviting displays. One can make a couple of floor models displaying **A to Z** accessories. The idea is to curate a holistic sleep environment. Other noteworthy points are to use tactile displays that encourage customers to feel the fabric as well as displaying sleep accessories in key places of the store.

Here are some more insightful points that retailers shared with us:

“Mattress covers are gaining momentum. People are buying better mattresses and don’t mind spending a bit more for its longevity and hygiene.” say Mr. Abraham. “They are good for us too. Other items are often part of some offer or scheme by the brands. These, we can make 100 percent profit on.”

On inquiring about the sustainability angle, he said “It is yet to penetrate the customer’s behaviour in depth but sure holds potential. While natural fabrics are surely popular.” He further explains “As a country, cotton has already been our foremost choice. With rising temperature, we see its demand rising along with other natural materials.”

Mr. Abraham says “It’s hard to gauge the impact on specifically accessories’ sales. But it’s obvious. Those buying mattresses online are bound to get other things there as well.” He believes that within a few years we’ll see a more stable balance in the online-offline model. “We like to touch and feel before buying.” Offline mattress and accessories market will see return of some of the lost market share.

Another striking retailer, Anjali Gupta helps her father run his more than 2 decades old store, **Kurl-on Mattresses** in Lucknow. She too stressed upon the sudden but sustained rise in sales of mattress protectors and thinks it has great potential. She thinks “brands should capitalise on their established name and penetrate the accessories market deeper.” Customers are showing inclination for branded accessories and a name that has an exclusive line for the same could do well.

Crux:

The distress caused by the pandemic may be fading but consumers are continuing to prioritise health and wellness. They acknowledge that sleep is a key part of the equation and through the use of suitable mattress and accessories, sleep health can be improved. An increasing number of consumers are more willing to pay higher prices, but also know what they want and won’t settle for less. The sleep industry shouldn’t too! **CT**



KEY TAKE-AWAYS

- Mattress accessories are seen as part of the larger bedroom environment.
- Customers now seek not only comfort, but physical health benefits in their mattresses and accessories.
- Global home bedding market size was valued at USD 87.05 billion in 2021 and is expected to expand at a CAGR of 7.9 percent (2022-30).
- Revenue in the Indian bedding segment amounted to USD 776.70 million in 2022. The market is expected to grow annually by 8.34 percent (CAGR 2022-2026).
- Pillows, specifically cervical pillows and lumbar support pillows have seen rise in sales.
- Natural fabrics are seeing a rise in demand.
- The correlation between luxury sleep products and the sustainability benefits they offer is growing.
- Early introduction of accessories in the process along with an inviting display helps retailers with their sale.

We consider ourselves to be more of a long-distance marathon runner rather than a short sprinter



*Mr. Siddharth Malani, Managing Director, Shree Malani Foams Private Ltd.
Mr. Uttam Malani, Executive Director, Centuary Fibre Plates Pvt Ltd.*

Next generation leaders are taking over Centuary Mattress and bringing new thoughts, processes and plans to grow the company. Young leaders **Mr. Siddharth Malani** and **Mr. Uttam Malani** spoke to Comfort Times at length on Company's future, marketing strategies, digitization efforts and operations. Here's a glimpse into the enriching conversation

Q What product innovations are expected from Centuary in the next 2 years?

We are working on few product innovations for the next couple of years. To start with for the e-commerce or online offering, we are planning to introduce Pocket spring mattress in roll pack format and working on to convert spring mattress into bed in a box format. These are mainly for e-commerce channel. We are also planning to launch few innovative products for the retail market(offline) like copper infused mattress with antimicrobial and cooling effect mattresses. We feel these new set of innovative products are needed for Indian market.

Q Pandemic has changed the way consumers do the business. How did Centuary mattress adopted to this change into its products?

Pandemic has raised the consciousness of all aspects of health to people. This has also given raise to digital awareness for all kinds of people. These are big changes. We have introduced products with cost effective manner to

address these two requirements of the market. For example, all our products from entry level to high end products they have antimicrobial properties. So, we have taken a conscious call to offer such products to all. Also our products are easily available online.

Q How is Make in India initiative is helping Indian mattress industry?

Make in India is a very good initiative which helps all industry sectors. This initiative will be going to help entire industry. It has created grid for Indian global business and Indian industry and world is looking at India as a serious player as a manufacturing Hub. Earlier China was seen as a Hub in South-East Asia, which has added India now. Specific to mattress industry we have noticed in the last few years that every international company is floating enquires in India. It is also helping in exports. Few years back two or three mattress companies from India were exporting and these exports was mainly to Nepal, Bhutan and Bangladesh. Now, more than eight to ten mattress companies from India are



exporting even to European countries. This is a big change.

Q How Centuary is adapting digitization in its business process?

We have started digitization journey six or seven years back. We are one of the leading company in digitization and automation in manufacturing process. We have lot of Industry 4.0 concepts like IOT and automation are implemented in our factories and we have real time visibility of all our processes. Probably we are one of the highest automated companies in India.

Q New generation leaders are taking over Centuary Mattress. What learnings of seniors will be brought forward by the next gen leaders and what changes are expected?

Firstly we believe in stability. It is evident in the relationship we share with our suppliers and customers, many of whom have been associated with us for a large part of our 35+ years long journey. This core value of the company is bound to be carried into the future.

Second thing, we are in no rush. We consider ourselves more of a long-distance marathon runner rather than a short sprinter. Our compounded annual growth over the last 35 years has been 18-19 percent annually, well in tune with our vision and we intend to grow ceaselessly in the near future as well.

We've always put our faith in product leadership, meaning we undertake in-house manufacturing of all our products and all the major components. This not only gives us a very firm grip on the product costing but quality too.

With the new generation, we obviously expect a surge of new ideas and vision. The main role is always to future proof the company. I found the company in a good shape when I joined in 2007 and I have worked hard to ensure that I pass it on to the future generation even more robust and healthy than before.

Another important aspect is keeping up with the changes. With the speedy technological advancement, it is only necessary. Pandemic too helped lay stress upon the fact that 'change is constant, not just in life but business too.'

Q What lessons did the pandemic teach the Indian mattress industry?

The resilience of the supply chain was tested at length. Everyday supply chain was disrupted because of the global as well as local lockdown. As a result, stress has come to be laid upon building a lean and agile supply chain which is equipped to deal with such shocks.

Second thing to note is that the Indian mattress industry never really had much global recognition. However, post-pandemic, the export market has opened for us. The resilience of the Indian industry put it in a better position to capitalise in the post pandemic global market.

Third point of course is the elevated consumer interaction through online methods. The obvious cause was that staying at home meant more time on the internet. Many brands have reported an increase of as much as three times the previous numbers.

Another important realisation that didn't even surface with full force during the first lockdown was that employers who took care of their workforce during the lockdowns came forth in a position to capitalise on the rebounded demand. While those who undertook layoffs and salary cuts turned out to be myopic. The lesson: changes as unfortunate as lockdowns might come and go but one must always value and support their biggest asset, the workforce.

Q You launched an exclusive mattress for babies. How is it doing in the market and what percentage of revenue is being contributed by it?

We entered this segment with the intention of carving out a new category itself. We also readily understood the difficulty posed by the social norms, like parents making the baby

sleep with them. Of the 3 years, the initial two were mostly about investing in educating the parents. According to the American Paediatric Association and the research conducted by us through third party institutes, it is evident that sleeping on a specialised surface made of natural materials is essential for a baby as their physical and psychological needs are different from adults.

It has been an enriching experience. It has helped elevate our brand image and in future, we hope to see sustained interest from many players. People want good options in baby mattresses but are not aware of where to find them. Perpetual awareness ought to help with the same.

Q Mattresses are being sold through LFS, D2C, omni channels etc, besides the retail stores. Do you think they can all co-exist in the future?

I am 100 percent sure of their coexistence. Even during the pandemic, we doubted offline retail's survival. But as time has proven, offline channels have only shown upgradation and willingness to innovate, keeping in line with the speedy growth of online channels. Many have invested in curating better ambience and experience at the store.

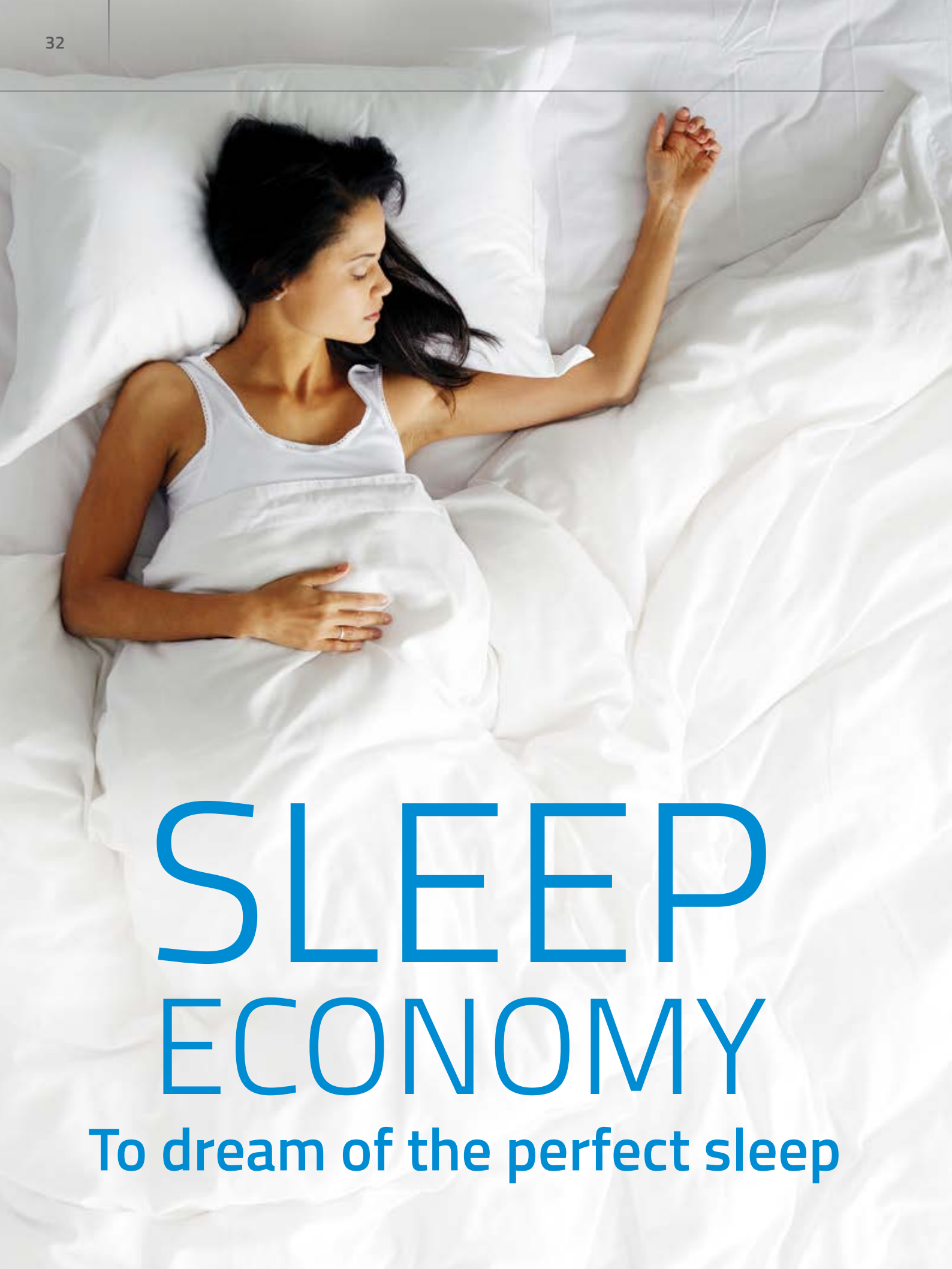
A consumer, besides accessibility to the products, needs at least 2-3 touch points for interacting with the brand before making the final purchase. Hence different channels could cater to various roles. We're also in an exciting stage where omnichannel is still evolving. So in my view, all the channels will surely remain but the dynamic in which they work together in a harmony is still an evolving discussion.

Q The unorganised sector commands 60 percent of the share in the market. What are the marketing challenges in such a scenario for the brands?

Yes it is a typical challenge in the Indian market, and not just to the mattress industry. The unorganised sector is quite robust. Firstly, I believe it is the lack of standardisation that is hurting the industry. Let's elaborate. In western world there are five standard sizes- twin, queen, king, Cal king or full. However in India we have 18 standard sizes across varying thickness besides the thousands of non-standard options brands are expected to cater to. Local players can easily cut the mattress to fulfil the order in no time, posing a challenge to the organised sector players.

Materials lack standardisation as well. While worldwide, certain materials are accepted as fit for foam and other parts. In India, something as inapt as EPE expanded polyethylene is used even by big market players. Thus the standard is very low for market entry. Anyone, with their low quality products can be a hyper local provider. Just one of the reasons for the unorganised sector's dominance. Yet this is also where the answer lies. We need firm standards for materials, sizes, quality checks etc. This ensures that a certain quality of infrastructure and material is used to make a standard good quality mattress. **CT**





SLEEP ECONOMY

To dream of the perfect sleep

The pandemic era has emerged as a blessing in disguise, rendering people all over the world the time and temper to reflect on their lifestyles, with a special focus on enhancing the household experience and the overall wellbeing. The momentum has already been in the making for more than a decade now. There is an evident shift in the perspective: from sleep being seen as a casual chore to getting acknowledged as a necessity with pivotal consequences. This has further aided in the evolution of the sleep solutions industry or what we call the sleep economy.

Sleep economy is more than just about sleep. The sector not only caters to the fundamental human emotions of comfort and relaxation, it helps the consumers subdue feelings of anxiety and stress, two primal forces that today's ceaselessly growing urban population confronts on a daily basis. The effect is evident as the stats speak for themselves:

The Bigger Picture

According to the Sleep Aids Market Research Report 2020 by Prescient Strategic Intelligence, North America has held the largest share in the sleeping aids market for almost half a decade now. Growing prevalence of sleep disorders, increase in healthcare expenditure and improved infrastructure are some of the main reasons for this dominance. Considerable attention also needs to be given to the initiatives and support from both, public as well as private institutes in increasing awareness about sleep health in this region.

The same report also indicates that APAC is projected to be the fastest growing region in the coming years. Elevated awareness, low cost of manufacturing, increased geriatric population and rising prevalence of sleeping disorders as well as better diagnosis are some of the main reasons for this expected growth. The population is also showing contained interest in using technological solutions so as to enhance the quality of their sleep.

Priyanka Salot, Co-founder of The Sleep Company points out, "Traditionally, the Indian mattress industry has been dominated by the informal sector leading to low quality that depended on the low-price factor. However, the scenario has been slowly, but steadily, changing as new start-ups come up with smart sleep technology products, investing in research to offer premium products to the buyer at a competitive price. Consequently, India is one of the driving markets behind the overall growth of the mattress industry in the Asia-Pacific region"

Indian Sleep Industry overview

The cause:

It is true that heightened awareness amongst the people about the importance of optimised sleep, followed by willingness and capability to spend has been a major push to the sleep industry. However larger trends have been exerting influence too. Post pandemic period has seen elevated investment in real estate. Hospitality sector has also seen a boom thanks to a general upward trend in the

Global:

According to the report published by Allied Market Research, the global sleep aids market generated USD 59.8 billion in 2020, and is projected to reach USD 111.9 billion by 2030, witnessing a CAGR of 6.9 percent from 2021 to 2030.

Revenue in the Mattresses segment amounts to USD 250.80 million in 2022 as per reports by Statista. The market is expected to grow annually by 8.05 percent (CAGR 2022-2026).

Globally, the smart bedding products have gathered a revenue of USD 32 billion in 2020 (Sleep Market: Global Outlook and Forecast 2021-2026 Report) and is expected to reach USD 45.59 billion by 2026.

According to Global Market Insights report 2021, sleep tech device market size exceeded USD 12.5 billion in 2020 and is poised to achieve over 17.8 percent CAGR between 2021 and 2027.

India:

As per the report by Statista, the Indian mattress market amounted to an astonishing USD 250.80 million as of 2022, having grown at the CAGR of 11 percent over the last half decade.

The unorganised sector dominated the Indian market, but an increased level of awareness and purchasing power of consumers stimulated the growth of the organised sector at a CAGR of 17 percent.

The same report indicates that the Indian mattress market is expected to grow annually by 8.05 percent (CAGR 2022-2026)..

tourism industry. Besides, there has been an obvious surge in Hospitals and Health Retreats. Both, residential and institutional sectors have had a positive cumulative effect on the bedding industry.

The effect:

A closer look on the Indian market through the report "Indian Mattress Market Outlook 2020-2025" by Business wire throws light on some very exciting numbers. Revenue in the Mattresses segment amounts to USD 250.80m in 2022. India's mattress market has grown at a CAGR of 11 percent over the last half decade. The unorganised sector dominated the market, but an increased level of awareness and purchasing power amongst consumers stimulated the growth of the organised sector at a CAGR of 17 percent.



The expanse:

The mattress market is divided into three tiers: tier one segment is considered as a premium mattress buyer. The Tier-two segment is the top contributor in the overall mattress market share as the largest buyer of mid and economy pricing segments. Tier 3 consists of Luxury mattresses which has the lowest penetration but is seen as the fastest-growing market in the mattress industry. The big players that are dominating the market are Kurlon, Sleepwell, Centuary, Peps, Springwell, Coir foam, Duroflex, Godrej and Springfit Mattress.

The Makeover:

Subsequently, India's sleep product market is witnessing a constant flux from international brands, native players and start-ups. With heightened awareness and the urge to enrich daily lifestyle, there seems to be a void in the market. This poses an opportunity as well as a challenge for all stakeholders present in the sleeptech ecosystem of the country.

The void or gap has catalysed into a new generation of start-ups entering the sleep market and leveraging latest technology and innovation backed by large scale data to design, develop and market their sleep accessories. Wakefit, Sleepy Cat, Sunday, The White Willow, Cuddle, Mattress Box and Wink & Nod are some of the new players trying to make the best of this new wave.

D2C models are seeing elevated adoption to make the best of the current market. Accessibility, affordability and multiple choice are the driving factors for the online consumers. At the same time, brick-and-mortar stores are also undergoing transformation. The focus is not just on the mattress, but the holistic experience of sleep as a whole. By curating a more personalised and interactive

shopping experience, they are hoping to leverage the same. In all fairness the perspective of the "Indian sleeper" is changing and so is the dynamic of the Indian Sleep Economy, promising exciting developments in the near future.

What lies ahead?

According to Aritzon, the global sleep market size is expected to reach revenues of USD 137.16 Billion by 2026 while the Indian mattress market is expected to grow annually by 8.05 percent (CAGR 2022-2026).

Shift to organised sector:

As the value of quality sleep is being realised, people are willing to know and spend more, to sleep and live better. They want to get their mattresses from a reliable source that offers after-sale services, guarantees, and consistent quality. Hence there is an evident lean towards brands. Plenty of new start-ups have been able to carve out for themselves market share too.

Upgrade is the new cool:

Those who bought coir earlier. are shifting to foam and spring mattresses. Those who had bought foam are moving towards smart mattresses. Globally, the smart bedding products have gathered a revenue of USD 32 billion in 2020 (Sleep Market: Global Outlook and Forecast 2021-2026 Report).

The smart bedding segment provides multi-sensor equipment like smart mattresses, pillows, ambient light, sound systems etc. The features are expected to improve further with dedicated investment being poured into R&D, while prices are expected to be maintained at a reasonable level so as to increase accessibility and affordability. The smart bedding segment is expected to reach USD 45.59 billion by 2026.

D2C models are seeing elevated adoption to make the best of the current market. Accessibility, affordability and multiple choice are the driving factors for the online consumers.

The digital sleep:

The bubbling digital revolution, having received a push in the covid era, along with the rise of new business models like D2C have led the way for change. Be it temperature adjusting blankets or mattresses with adaptable firmness, customers are showing keen interest and thereupon rousing investment in R&D that promises significant sleep technology advancement.

Wearable sleep accessories are seeing rapid growth as well. Their easy portable nature, user friendliness, and accuracy enable continuous monitoring. Complimenting them are applications providing support for optimised sleep. They can be synced with wearable accessories for best results. Besides, they have also established themselves as style statements in the larger 'fitness-freak' moment. Again, leaning on the reliable data from Global Market Insights report 2021, the wearables segment is projected to witness a 17 percent growth rate through 2027.

The trend of selling mattresses through online distribution channels, especially on company-owned websites as well as global and local e-commerce portals is expected to create significant opportunities for manufacturers and retailers alike. Companies are also crafting lucrative offers through attractive discounts, convenient payment schemes, easy return policies, etc. to drive the sales on e-commerce websites amidst tough competition.

Some of the prominent companies in the global market facilitating this era of "digital sleep" are Beddit (Apple Inc.), Casper Sleep Inc., Dodow (LIVLAB), Dreem, Eight Sleep, Emfit Ltd., Fitbit Inc. (Google LLC), Koninklijke Philips N.V., Oura Health Ltd., ResMed Inc., Sleep Shepherd LLC, Sleepace, Withings, and Xiaomi.

Innovations & the future of sleep economy

The realisation regarding the importance of healthy sleeping habits and how it promotes wellbeing in other domains of life becomes more apparent every day. Obviously the number of people seeking optimised sleep health also increases. All of this will lead to demand for more personalised solutions stimulating technological innovations that score well on affordability and accessibility too. In fact, many experts are saying that the sleep market will soon hold equal prominence alongside the heavyweights of the global wellness industry.

Last decade has seen significant expansion in the development and use of multi-modal sensors and technologies for the purpose of monitoring physical activity, sleep cycles and circadian rhythms. This has made accurate sleep monitoring possible at quite a large scale. The data generated holds potential for numerous applications, from epidemiological research and wellness apps to early diagnosis and development of intervention-based accessories.

Coupled with machine learning and deep learning systems, AI can easily automate processes, elevate efficiency and minimise errors. For example, an AI powered mattress called Emma Motion has been launched that is equipped with 360-degree motion sensors so that it adjusts itself in order to optimise the sleeper's comfort in every position.

Amidst all the excitement, it is equally crucial to objectively look at the prevailing challenges and turn them into possibilities. By tackling ignorance and spreading awareness about the importance of sleep, the industry also encourages customers to buy better which directly translates into profits. The stiff competition in the industry is healthy as it acts as a catalyst for pushing brands to make better and more affordable products.

To sum it up, it would be safe to say that the dream of the perfect sleep that humanity has been fixating on for decades seems to be finally materialising in the sleep economy of today, and the near future. **CT**

KEY TAKE-AWAYS

- North America has held the largest share in the sleeping aids market for almost half a decade .
- APAC is projected to be the fastest growing region in the coming years.
- Revenue in India's mattresses segment amounts to USD 250.80m in 2022. The market is expected to grow annually by 8.05 percent (CAGR 2022-2026).
- India's sleep product market is witnessing a constant flux from international brands, native players and start-ups.
- The wearables sleep accessories segment is projected to witness a 17 percent growth rate through 2027.
- Data and AI will lead the way for new-age sleep accessories

“We don’t see ourselves as a player offering a large number of products”



Mr. Raunak Agarwal, Managing Director, Raunak Coirs Ltd

Kolkata-based RAUNAK Group has been into sleep product manufacturing since the year 1997. Speaking to Comfort Times, **Mr. Raunak Agarwal**, *Managing Director, Raunak Coirs Ltd* says that he wishes to be in the consumer focused products rather than ‘Jack of All Trades but Master of None’. Excerpts

Q How did Raunak Coir fight the pandemic?
When the pandemic suddenly struck India in March 2020, like most of the country and industry, we also stood unprepared to tackle such an unforeseen event of this magnitude. However, the real fight started about two to three days after the National Lockdown was imposed. Suddenly there was a plethora of orders which came in from the State and Central Government agencies in the healthcare segment followed by various NGOs and CSR activities of large corporations to fight this situation with medical infrastructure. Being a part of this industry now for more than two decades, our brand recall and existing relations with these institutions helped us secure vital permissions to operate our facilities and vehicle-movement during those times of restrictions and deliver the requirements in a timely fashion.

Q What are your plans for 2022 and beyond?
Our plans for the fiscal 2022 is consolidating our position in this largely fragmented industry where geography decides the dominating player in the market for the consumer. The current fiscal is more about cementing our position in existing geographies and commencing our journey in the newer ones. We feel that as a brand as of now, we don’t envision ourselves as being a player offering a large number of products since we do not wish to be a “Jack of All Trades but Master of None” and that is the reason why we are absolutely centric on growing our brand as a consumer brand focussed razor sharp on sleep solution products only.

Q What changes are expected in the Coir mattress industry?
I cannot comment on what innovation is possible further in the production of Rubberised Coir since an industry which is already 60+ years old is already considered to be extremely mature in nature. I do hope, that in the future with the global warming becoming a reality and urban jungles creeping across India, the consumer does understand the importance of using eco-friendly sleep solutions and takes their buying decision in favour of it.

Q How does signing up as Brand Ambassador help you in marketing product?
When in the year 2021 certain brands in our industry chose to bring in prominent Bollywood brand ambassadors in the industry, we were extremely motivated and impressed by the move. We felt that the mattress industry is also gaining the lost glamour and trying to establish its importance in the consumer mind which already perceives our product having nominal relevance despite the vital role it plays in their lives. **CT**

Mattress retailers need to focus on the millennials, they are the future market



The millennials are shaping the world now. They make up more than 30 percent of India's current population, creating a huge impact on the mattress industry and retailers. It is important to understand how to evolve the right concepts to target this population and hold its interest. Being able to understand the culture of millennials will provide many advantages to the mattress industry.

Till now, the marketing of mattress products is mostly aimed at the previous generations because of their buying power. But, with the millennials having entered their earning age, the industry will have an early-bird advantage if the focus and marketing resources are also dedicated towards this population. Over the years, much research has been done to understand and market products for the millennials and the time is now for sleep product retailers to shift focus towards them.

What do we know about millennials?

The millennials often prefer a digital experience, and this is one of the primary markers that define this generation. This often leads to them having clearer ideas regarding products and making purchases. So, a millennial buyer is most likely to be sure of their purchase decisions even before actually buying the mattress.

Millennials have grown up in a world largely influenced by digital media, and they spend the majority of their waking hours interacting with digital devices. Thus, their buying choices are also largely influenced by the digital media.

Sustainability is the big yes to these youngsters as they are connected to the global community. They usually research products and their origins before making big purchasing decisions.

Sustainability, durability and environmentally acceptable mattresses do influence their decisions. For example, if the mattresses are made out of coir, recycled or natural products, the millennials will feel confident and make their purchases without feeling guilty about harming the environment.

As this has been an era of new concepts, ideas and disruptions, millennials appreciate innovations and accept technologies that improve their health in the long term. Technologies like temperature regulation, antimicrobial qualities, and foam mattresses that fit the contours are more acceptable to them.

What the eye-opening research found out

In all, 43 percent of millennials said sleep is more important to their health and they are more likely to say that they don't get enough sleep and are thus likely to buy more sleep accessories. A recent research done by the Better Sleep Council, which is the education arm of the International Sleep Products Association, suggests as much. Millennials, overall, are estimated to spend over \$300 billion in India.

Millennials have grown up in a world largely influenced by digital media, and they spend the majority of their waking hours interacting with digital devices. Online marketing and other information sources are very important to attract millennials. As the time progresses, and with the Covid pandemic in the backdrop, the focus on online marketing will only grow.

Millennials seem to make purchasing decisions faster. The study found that 79 percent of millennials spent less than a month from starting their shopping to making purchases. Since they are more likely to say that they are happy with a shopping experience, retailers should be able to sell big-ticket items to them with more ease.

Millennials are also more likely to make repeat purchases, as nearly 47 percent of the last generation said they are likely to keep the mattresses for 10 years or longer. Only 15 percent of the millennials said they are going to keep the mattresses for 10 years or longer, while 44 percent were replacing their mattresses that were less than 5 years old. This means that millennials are a stronger segment for repeat purchases and have a longer time ahead of them.

While millennials typically opt for less expensive mattresses, they are also more likely to buy accessories. But, that does not mean the focus should go entirely away from the previous generation. They continue to spend more on mattresses and are more likely sure of their purchase decisions. The previous generation has also entered into an age of solid savings, so they are also likely to buy quality and more expensive mattresses, while Millennials look out for deals.

How to include millennials in your marketing strategy

For physical stores, the older generations are more valuable than the millennials, as the previous generation still would like to touch and feel the products before making purchases rather than ordering online. The study found that 70 percent of older generations still made purchases in brick-and-mortar stores, as compared to 50 percent of the millennials. They also rely on information from in-store sales professionals and displays put out rather than online buying options.

Older people also have concrete ideas about where to buy the mattresses and what products to buy. They



are also less likely to fall prey to advertisements since they have dedicated stores that they buy from; whereas Millennials almost depend entirely on advertisements to make their purchase decisions. So, the mattress industry should definitely apportion more time, energy, attention and resources towards attracting and engaging millennials.

Online marketing and other information sources are very important to attract millennials. As the time progresses, and with the Covid pandemic in the backdrop, the focus on online marketing will only grow. As the millennials start researching even before making purchases, there should be enough information available to them online. Over 40 percent of the millennials said they were aware of the brands.

Millennials use more online sources to glean information about different kinds of mattresses, technologies and pricing. As compared to older generations, the millennials rely on online platforms and different media sources through the entire process, from making the decision to completing the purchase.

A large segment of millennials are highly certain how much they are willing to spend, and more than 50 percent would have made up their minds on the type of mattress they need and would have already selected their brand. The research also revealed that the millennials considered only one or two mattresses when shopping for mattresses, which is much lower as compared to older shoppers. This stresses the need for mattress brands to increase their presence online and attract the millennials and give them channels to know about the products rather than convince them when they actually make the purchases or visit a physical store.

This also makes it important for mattress product marketers to constantly update information online, keep working on brand building exercises, use newer technologies to hold the interest of the millennials and make payment,

purchase and delivery options easy and convenient. If the marketers wait to approach customers only when they are actually making purchases, then they would miss out on opportunities to actually sell any product.

How brick-and-mortar stores can compete with online retailers

Here are some of the pointers on how to make that happen

- Offline retailers should look at what online stores cannot and do not offer to their customers. The biggest advantage of brick-and-mortar stores is that they allow customers to touch and feel products before they make the decision to buy the mattress.
- Though doing research online is convenient and can be done anywhere, getting information in physical retail stores is much easier and less time consuming as sales people and store managers have a wealth of information on every product. They can explain to customers in simple terms the advantages of various products and offer comparative pricing on the spot.
- Millennials really value their time, and the online experience has shortened their attention span. The physical store personnel should keep in mind that a customer has taken the effort to visit the store and their time should not be wasted.
- Retailers should be able to pinpoint the exact mattress that a customer needs by asking a few questions. While this can be done online too, it takes a lot more time and a consumer has to go in circles before arriving at a decision.
- Physical stores can offer to deliver the mattress within a few hours of the customer ordering it. This is an advantage as online stores take up to a few days to make the deliveries. This should definitely be a strong marketing point. Since the physical stores have lesser distances to cover to make deliveries, they can assure the customer that the product can arrive in a better shape than online deliveries.

- The physical store can always be a better and brighter place to visit than online stores. Since the millennials have expressed being happy while shopping, the experience can be augmented with brightly-lit stores, selfie corners, instagrammable photo options and tasteful displays. One should not forget that the shopping experience is still about visiting physical shops, even if it is for window shopping, rather than going through website after website.
- When it comes to choosing a mattress, size and price are the most important considerations for millennials. Free delivery and quality also are important. Other research suggests millennials also care about sustainable materials and other innovations.
- Companies have to stay ahead of the curve and provide cutting edge technologies to be acceptable to millennials. When the millennials make their purchasing decisions, they not only go deep into the product, but also the company. Mattress firms that keep the ideals of giving back to society and helping the environment will get the thumbs-up from this generation. If the imagination of this population is captured now, it will be a long lasting association and increased, recurring revenues for firms.

Generational habits are changing, marketing needs to change too

Millennials are absolutely certain about getting good quality sleep and are willing to spend for that. Studies have found that they rated sleep above diet and exercise to support their lifestyle choices. Nearly half of all the millennials also said that they used some kind of apps or devices to monitor their sleep, something that very few people from older generations practice.

The millennials are a generation of upgrades. Like they do with their smartphones, tablets and other devices, they also want to upgrade their mattresses. The number one reason for them to buy the new mattress is to upgrade from their present mattress to a better quality mattress with improved technology. This mindset needs to be used by the retailers to develop their tactics.

The pricing and size of the mattress hugely matter to the millennials. Free delivery and quality are also equally important. More millennials had positive emotions while shopping than the older generation.

They said they experienced optimism, anticipation, serenity and joy. The only negative feeling was they were overwhelmed by the range of products that they have to choose from. So, providing the perfect product through a quick and meaningful experience is the key here.

Though the millennials are comfortable with online purchases, nearly half of them still bought mattresses from brick-and-mortar stores.

There is a lesson here, and offline retail stores can build

on their strengths to keep millennials coming back to their shops and spread the message through word of mouth, which can be amplified by online platforms. But, the time to act is now, and without the push to digitization in certain aspects of the retailer business, this will not be possible. **CT**

KEY TAKE-AWAYS

1. It is important for the retailers to target the millennial's population, as it makes a huge difference to the mattress industry.
2. Till date, the mattress industry has aimed at the 57 (35) years plus population because of their purchasing power.
3. The millennials are largely influenced by the digital media, as they spend the majority of their time on internet.
4. The study found that 79 percent of millennials spend less than a month from starting their shopping to make the purchase.
5. The study shows that millennials are the stronger segment for repeated purchase than boomers.
6. The Study shows how offline retailers can compete with the online retailers in terms of providing the shopping experience for the consumers.
7. Millennials prefer to get quality sleep and they are also willing to spend on the sleep accessories.
8. The habit of the millennials is changing and they are willing to upgrade from present mattress to a better-quality mattress with improved technology.
9. The offline retailers need to build their strength to keep millennials coming back to their shops.
10. The study indicates that boomers should not be ignored completely while the mattress industry should provide more time, energy, attention towards attracting the millennials.

“Our research will help consumers to choose the right type of mattresses”



Mr. Kundan Kankariya, Managing Director of Kontack Comforts Pvt. Ltd

As a *Managing Director of Kontack Comforts Pvt. Ltd*, **Kundan Kankariya** says quality is paramount for him and precisely the reason why he has a quality process at every stage right from the procurement of raw material to making the finished products. IN his first interview to Comfort Times, he says his company has received two patents so far and, in the process, to get third patent shortly. Excerpts:

Q What is the different market platform you are using to sell your sleep product Sleepezee? We are having our own website www.sleepezee.com – wherein the customers can directly purchase our products online. Apart from this we are also selling on GeM Portal, Amazon, Flipkart etc.

Q When did you start your company? What kind of research went to prototyping the right mattress? In 1996 – We are interested more in promoting and selling the natural coir product i.e. Rubberised Coir Mattresses – we have 2 patents for our product.

We are in the process of getting one more patent for ‘COMPUTER IMPLEMENTED SYSTEM AND METHOD FOR FACILITATING SELECTION OF BEDDING PRODUCTS’ – This patent is because of our research which will help consumers to choose the right type of mattresses. Our company has also received award from Late President Shree Abdul Kalam for the best commercializable Patent.

Q What advice would you give to new start-ups and entrepreneurs who are looking to make a splash, and make a difference in today’s market?

Be honest, sincere in whatever you do, to adopt the changes with the time and do the best for the society & needy people by generating employment.

Q According to you what are the major challenges in the mattress and sleep products industry today in India?

There are several mattress types available in the market like-Spring Mattresses, P U Foam Mattress, EPE Mattresses & so on.

Government and Coir Board must take efforts to promote the RUBBERISED COIR mattress for the benefit of the INDUSTRY. Else in near future the Coir Mattresses will disappear from the market.

Q Kindly shed light on your distribution in online as well as offline space? Also going forward what are the plans to scale up the distribution? Still the online system must be much improved – the public should be made aware of coir products and its benefits. Advertisements and Promotions are very much needed – otherwise in near future the Coir Industry will be completely wiped out.

ISPF TRAINING PROGRAMME helps retailers with sales, strategies and more

To help offline retailers ISPF is organising training programmes across India to face the current marketing and sales challenges. ISPF is in forefront to provide quality training for retailers and being their steadfast ally, has been even more prompt in addressing the same. Till date ISPF has conducted over 5 seminars and 35 webinars under their Retail Partner Certification Program, thereupon successfully training and certifying 2000 retailers across the country.



As the internet and e-commerce is spreading fast and wide, the offline mattress retailers have been inventing newer strategies to increase footfalls, and in turn sales, at brick-and-mortar shops.

To help offline retailers, since the last two years, the Indian Sleep Products Federation (ISPF) has started the Retail Partner Certification Programme to help retail partners across brands handle the challenges posed by the shift to online. The training programmes became all the more relevant in the post-Covid pandemic situation as customers have been holed up inside their homes for the last two years, increasingly dependent on online mode of transactions for many of their needs.

The training session has benefited 2,000 retailers as of now, and ISPF plans to train 1,000 more this year. The programme is supported by several mattress brands to help retailers cope with the new age and increasingly connected world.

The training process has been upgraded to include how to display products, different styles and kinds of retailing, digital marketing lessons on how to provide offers, increasing online-to-offline (O2O) sales, how to react to consumers, how to tap into need-based purchases, rather than price-based, how FAB (features advantages benefits) matters to individuals, how to pitch health-specific products in the post-pandemic world, and much more.

Let us take a look at how ISPF's training sessions have helped retailers gain new ground and grow their businesses.

O2O commerce

O2O commerce is a business model that aims to move customers from online platforms to offline stores. This makes digital as well as physical shopping experience seamless before, during, and after purchasing a mattress. A customer can be lured to offline stores through online advertisements about products on display at the store, discounts being offered, and the ease of delivery of the mattress etc.

The online presence of an offline retailer helps customers acclimatise themselves to different mattress products available in store and be mentally prepared before making the purchase. This takes away a lot of the effort of in-store staffers as the customer would be relatively well informed before entering the store.

The staffers can provide any additional information required by the customer. It is a well-known fact that when it comes to high-priced products, customers do not want to make a purchase based on their online research alone. They want to visit a store, touch, feel and assess the mattress before investing their hard-earned money. Many social media platforms have e-commerce options, which can also be used to route customers to physical stores.

Studies have found that around 80 percent of customers who purchase mattresses also buy accessories like pillows, bedspreads and others. The programme gives well-informed tips to retailers about selling accessories along with mattresses

O2O commerce is the future of retail business. It shows how online and offline channels are complementary, and not in competition, with each other. The certification programme trains retailers how to use O2O customers to maximise their profits.

Consumer experience

Consumer experience inside the store is important to clinch the sale. The biggest advantage that offline retailers have is the attractive display of different mattress products and relevant and important information on each of them. Such displays help as customers would like to see how the mattress looks in their bedroom and make the informed choices.

The training program teaches retailers how to ask relevant questions to customers to arrive at a product that is the perfect fit. It is a known fact that though the internet has every possible piece of information available, it is still difficult and time-consuming when a customer decides to conduct research about a particular mattress product. At offline stores, he will get ready answers from the staff and can make decisions easily. Customers would have already done enough research on mattresses online, and it should be augmented when they come to the store.

The training programme provides retailers with the latest information on different products which helps them answer questions posed by customers. Since selecting a mattress is not just about getting a lot of information about a product, but also about experiencing it, the retailers are taught how they can display the products in the best possible way for best sales results.

Studies have found that around 80% of customers who purchase mattresses also buy accessories like pillows, bedspreads and others. The programme gives well-informed tips to retailers about selling accessories along with mattresses, which could equal the cost of the mattress itself.

Need-based (value-based), not price-based

The retailers are taught to engage customers over their sleep needs, instead of the pricing of products. This is a great way



to increase revenues for retail stores.

Though a customer could be looking for a product based on the price, it may not be best suited for his needs. This is where a well-informed retailer comes into picture, explaining advantages of different products to suit customers' needs and help them make the right choice.

When a customer purchases a mattress, they are aiming to get comfort out of it. By providing the perfect product, the customer's experience is enhanced, and the retailer is able to get the much needed brand positivity to survive in today's dynamic markets.

Features, advantages, and benefits

These factors are the best way to market a product, regardless of the product itself. If the customer is able to clearly understand the features, advantages, and benefits of a product, they are most likely to purchase it.

The goal of the retailer should be to ensure that the customer has no questions left regarding how the product is the perfect choice for them. These are the three basic aspects that retailers should fully understand in any product in order to gain new customers. The programme will teach retailers how to be informed about the products to keep themselves updated and thus help customers make purchases.

Post-Covid scenario

The Covid pandemic, over the last two years, has hit the retailers hard. But with the restrictions being lifted, businesses are returning to normal. The one important aspect of Covid was that it made people realise the importance of health and hygiene in their lives.

Since the manufacturers are increasingly focusing on healthier mattresses, the retailers should promote these important aspects, of which sleep is an important factor. Newer technology is also being adopted into mattresses to use them as purification tools.

With many mattress brands coming out with products that are more hygienic, this should be the main talking point with customers. The ISPF programme will train retailers on how to take advantage of the needs of the post-pandemic, and how customer expectations have changed in recent times.

Creating a new future for mattress retailers across the country

The ISPF training programme has been at the forefront of imparting practical knowledge and providing quality training to retailers to help them overcome different challenges. ISPF has conducted five seminars and 35 webinars under its Retail Partner Training Programme, training over 2,000 retailers across the country over the past 2 years.

O2O commerce is a business model that aims to move customers from online platforms to offline stores. This makes digital as well as physical shopping experience seamless before, during, and after purchasing a mattress.

The retailers are provided a holistic training that involves practical aspects of the trade like product presentation and retail styling product display and building consumer experience; as well as a lot of applied knowledge about sleep products, importance of sleep, health implications, sleeping surface and the pivotal role of a mattress. This helps build consumer awareness and equips the retailer with knowledge to sell sleep as an experience, ultimately fulfilling the goal of providing better-quality service and increasing profits.

During the programme, retailers are informed about the latest products, technologies and trends. They are also trained about how to make use of digital marketing strategies to increase footfalls into their stores, and in turn, increase sales. The training is also aimed at helping retailers to stay updated and to evolve business strategies. The programme includes interactive sessions and roleplaying to enhance learning.

The ISPF magazine is also spearheading the change

ISPF publishes Comfort Times, a retailer-focused magazine, every quarter. The magazine is a storehouse of information on the current and important information concerning the mattress retail industry. Every issue is packed with a number of high-quality articles on the latest in the industry, tips to retailers on increasing their profits and testimonials by retailers, sharing their experiences.

The magazine also provides in-depth articles on topics related to understanding the importance of sleep, how a change in certain aspects of sleep can impact the human body, various hygiene facts, etc. Retailers are able to better understand the customer psyche with the help of such knowledge, and also grow their own knowledge base.

It is not just enough for retailers to know different products by their names, they must have the knowledge on the specifics of each product, its advantages and the technology used. A well-informed retailer is in a better position to help the customer make the right choice. To help retailers in this, the magazine provides information about specific products and their advantages. It explains various technical terms in simpler terms to help retailers understand them fully.

The magazine is released quarterly, and can be subscribed to on the ISPF website.

The future

There have been constant innovations in the mattress industry. ISPF aims to keep pace with the latest developments and helps retailers keep themselves updated to serve their customers better.

The Retail Partners Certification Programme is one of the many means through which ISPF is able to create a better future for mattress retailers. As newer modules have been released into the programme and it has grown by leaps and bounds, many brands have also signed up their retailers to promote sales.

In the near future, ISPF will be conducting their next edition of Retail Partners Certification Programme, and have trained over 3000 retail partners. **CT**

KEY TAKE-AWAYS

1. The offline mattress retailers have been inventing newer strategies to increase footfalls, sales and mortar shops
2. ISPF training session has benefited 2,000 retailers, and plans to train 1,000 plus retailers this year.
3. The training programme helps retailers to upgrade their skills in product display, digital marketing initiatives, Promotional offers, increasing online-to-offline (O2O) sales etc.
4. The certification programme trains retailers how to use O2O customers to maximize their profits.
5. The ISPF programme gives well-informed tips to retailers about selling accessories along with mattresses
6. The Training programme taught retailers, how to engage the customers over their sleep needs, which will enhance the customer's sleep experience.
7. The training provides tips for retailers to approach and sell products as per post-pandemic requirements of the consumers.
8. The programme also helps retailers to stay updated and evolve business strategies as per market requirements.

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“We have a Planet Goal of reducing GHG emission by 25 percent”



Mr. Alok Tewari, Regional Commercial Leader - West Asia for Colorants & Ingredients

Milliken is a US Based diversified Company into Specialty Chemicals and Performance Textiles. Speaking to Comfort Times, **Mr. Alok Tewari**, *Regional Commercial Leader - West Asia for Colorants & Ingredients* - shares his thoughts on sustainability efforts of the company. Excerpts:

Q Milliken is a diversified company providing solutions to various sector. How Milliken solutions are being used in Indian mattress industry?

Milliken’s Reactint colors are used at PU Foam production stage to provide aesthetically pleasing color to Polyurethane foam which otherwise degrades into yellow colored foam negatively impacting the consumer buying experience. These colors are used by the industry to differentiate various layers in a mattress construction and cue the Comfort and other features of a mattress.

Milliken’s anti microbial – Alphasan AF provides protection from growth of fungi / bacteria in a mattress necessary for health and well being of consumers. The textile Fire sock from Milliken Textile division provides the Fire protection to mattress making the usage safe and passing stringent Fire test standards including California standards.

Recent Acquisitions by Milliken provide us a chance to develop more solutions for Indian Mattress Market with encapsulated Phase Change Materials and fragrances that shall further improve a consumer’s experience of a PU based mattress.

Q How Milliken is supporting Sustainability efforts of ISPF in its Mattress Recycle programme?

At this stage, we all are learning more and more about Sustainability, and we are part of the journey together with ISPF and other stake holders. On a Global basis, Milliken has ambitious sustainability goals – we are a carbon neutral Company for a few years now.

We have a Planet Goal of reducing GHG emission by 25 percent and zero waste to landfill by 2025 and are making good progress with publicly reported results in these areas. We are also part of Global Alliances – like AEPW which focus on systematically working on questions of circularity and sustainability.

Q Do you plan to add any product line for the healthcare sector?

Mattress Industry has a direct participation in Healthcare Industry and our products especially Antimicrobial Alphasan helps maintain hygiene of the mattresses in a hospital environment. Milliken also makes Advanced wound care dressings under the brand name Trite and Hospital grade fabrics Biosmart for curtains and linens that are anti-bacterial and anti-viral.

We are looking at opportunities to introduce these products in India and are pursuing a registration process currently. **CT**

ISPF expands its sustainability initiative

Mattress circular journey -
A green industry for a green earth

#phenkonahirecyclekaro

Let's start on some hard facts: Earth, the miraculous life-giving planet, is getting close to becoming a giant rock of garbage, one day at a time. It is no secret that our modern lifestyles provide utmost comfort and prosperity but at the cost of hampering the very delicate environmental balance. Yet it is not necessarily the 'use' itself, but the way we produce, consume and discard things that provides scope for improvement.

Cut to the chase, mattresses sure are a 'sizable' part of the garbage problem. Hard to compress, they take up to 7 to 15 square feet of space in a landfill. The decomposition process is no help either, taking upto 80-120 years depending on the material. Overcrowding of existing landfills means further encroaching of land to create new ones, land that could've been used for more sustainable and productive activities.

Unlike other modern lifestyle possessions of our's, a mattress is indispensable. It adds significant value to our life, be it in the form of a feeling of rejuvenation, immune buildup or avoiding medical bills. A mattress is not something humanity can compromise on. Hence arises the modern dilemma, personal health or the health of mother nature? The most viable solution obviously is recycling and facilitating a circular journey of the mattress in the long run.

ISPF has been the intermediary for the Indian mattress market for almost a decade now. To provide customers with the finest of sleep solutions is one of their prime goals. They also aim to enrich the bedding industry by providing crucial information, training and resources to all the stakeholders of the industry.

Though what is relevant here is the market and environment - sensitive approach at the centre of their operations. The same reason why they have been swift in finding a sustainable solution for the disposing problem of end-of-cycle mattresses. Their Mattress Circular Journey initiative in partnership with IPUA (Indian Polyurethane Association) focusses on mattress recycling to cater to the larger goal of facilitating a circular industry and subsequently furthering the cause of a circular economy for the sake of the planet. They recently launched the [#phenkonahirecyclekaro](#) campaign in Ernakulam, Kerala. Let's have a closer look!

Ernakulam Launch

The people:

On 12th April, 2022 ISPF in association with IPUA launched their mattress recycling initiative called [#phenkonahirecyclekaro](#) in a third city of Ernakulam in "God's own country" Kerala. About 60 dealers from all over the city were invited to attend the event which took place at the Pollution Control Board Office. The campaign has previously seen a successful launch in 2 other locations, Bhopal in July and Hyderabad in September of 2021.

For the launch event, some of the best veterans from

Sustainability is no more just an ecologist's term or a method along the way or a meagre USP. It has become the very lens through which we zoom in on the smallest of our lifestyle choices today. ISPF has been the intermediary for the Indian mattress market for almost a decade now

the industry were called upon to share valuable information. Mr. D. Kuppuramu, Chairman, Coir Board, Mr. M. Krishna, Marketing Director, Coir Board, Mr. Baiju, Chief Environmental Engineer as well as Mr. Thomas Varghese, General Manager of MM Rubber Company, and a part of the management committee of ISPF addressed the spirited gathering on the occasion.

The talk:

The discussion ran deep to understand the indispensable importance of recycling in the context of the bedding industry. Mattresses are integral to everyday wellbeing and overall quality of life in the long run. Furthermore, their timely replacement is a necessary step to dodge unwanted medical bills. Hence devising an adequate and sustainable mechanism to deal with end-of-cycle mattresses is a critical measure, not just for the environment but for the persistence of the industry itself. This is where the role of recycling comes in.

Retailers were informed about the procedure of the recycling initiative in the city, from collection of old mattresses to its dismantling. Useful insights were also provided about the service aspect of the campaign, how the retailers can speak with the customers during the home visit and skilfully resolve their queries. The onus was also laid upon making the customers more aware so that they are equipped to make the right choice.

The walk:

This is not the first time ISPF has worked ardently to spread awareness amongst the retailer. As Mr. Sundaresan Srinivasan, Secretary of ISPF says with much conviction: "The role of retailers is integral to the bedding industry. About 80 percent of sales are made through dealers. It is through them that the brand communicates with their customers". Hence it is only necessary that they be informed with the latest industry knowledge and trends. Not just that, in case of the recycle campaign, it is of utmost significance that retailers' curiosity is quenched with maximum satisfaction.

Questions like "why mattress recycling? How to talk to customers about it? How does it benefit them and the



mattress industry?” are only natural to arise. At the end of the day, one can sell better when they actually believe in the product/service and the cause behind it. Besides, awareness in retailers translates to awareness in customers. And informed customers are the ones that are willing to make better choices for the sake of their personal health and wellbeing as well as the larger good, a healthy indicator for the industry.

The 3 Ws of Mattress Recycling: Why recycle mattresses?

Sustainability is no more just an ecologist’s term or a method along the way or a meagre USP. It has become the very lens through which we zoom in on the smallest of our lifestyle choices today. It is the lens through which we are analysing and questioning all domains of life itself. So, in other industries, more than often the discussion of sustainable options starts at the concept of “Refuse” or “Reuse”, recycling comes second.

However, mattress is a different piece of the puzzle altogether. Its indispensable role in healthcare makes it a necessary utilitarian product. Being a long-term investment with a considerable expense, mattresses are mostly thrown out only after extensive use. A disposed mattress, owing to the intimate nature of its use and possible health hazard, is unfit for reuse. Hence both, its quantity and quality, are uncompromisable. This is why recycling poses as the most viable, cost effective and sustainable option.

It not only enables existing landfills to last longer but saves various useful materials from being wasted. These materials, when reintroduced to the production chain, help minimise the burden on existing resources and pave the way for a circular economy.

What is the process?

It is rightly said that “To pull apart is as delicate of a task as to put together.” The efficiency with which the materials are extracted is crucial to the recycling process. The outer fabric is removed, washed and shredded to be reprocessed. The foam is recycled and used heavily in carpet padding.

Fibre repurposing is another pivotal aspect, used for stuffing pillows and reupholstering furniture. Box springs are processed in an industrial furnace to be melted and further moulded into alternative products. The scavenged materials are used in other industries, bringing down cost as well as burden on existing resources and thus paving the way for a circular economy.

Who is responsible?

All stakeholders involved in the industry have a role to play. As a manufacturer, end-of-life recycling should be considered at all the stages of product development, especially designing. This will ensure that mattresses can be recycled in a cost-effective manner, skipping the landfills altogether.

Retailers are the trusted mediators of the industry. They



With the Ernakulam launch, ISPF aims to take things a notch up. They have an agency of 7000+ people to undertake the mission. The campaign is also being pushed as a buyback drive.

can sensitise customers, facilitate pick-ups and choose to do business with responsible entities. Customer's demand and interest drives the market. By showing support for recycling efforts and participating in the same they can help make the process mainstream and bring down the costs.

The Mattress Circular Journey Initiative *#phenkonahirecyclekaro*

Looking at the adverse situation of the landfill and mattress dynamic, ISPF in association with IPUA decided to take up a proactive approach to the problem. Thus, was born the Mattress Circular Journey initiative, aimed at establishing sustainable mechanisms to deal with end-of-cycle mattresses. Through this, ISPF intends to promote the Indian Mattress Industry as a green industry.

Under the initiative, ISPF & IPUA has launched *#phenkonahirecyclekaro* campaign across 3 cities now, the latest in Ernakulam. They partner with local recycling agencies and retail stores to collect mattresses from homes and send them off to recycling units. This way the mattress skips the landfill altogether and becomes part of a circular economy. Here's how the campaign has panned out in various cities:

Bhopal:

This was the pilot project launched in July 2021, in partnership with The Kabadiwala. The old mattress is collected from the consumer's doorstep as part of an on-request service. The customers are provided with a discount redemption coupon as a token of appreciation. They can redeem the coupon against any product from Mattress Circular Journey retail partners.

Hyderabad:

The campaign was launched in September 2021 in partnership with Recykal, an innovative company using technology-based solutions for the purpose of waste management. Anyone can request a mattress pick up through the Recykal app and in exchange, will receive a discount coupon redeemable at a nearby Mattress Circular Journey retail partner store.

Ernakulam:

With the Ernakulam launch, ISPF aims to take things a notch up. They have an agency of 7000+ people to undertake the mission. The campaign is also being pushed as a buyback drive. Customers are being given Rs. 600 for a single bed

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mattress and Rs. 1200 for a double bed mattress. The monetary incentive is expected to draw in huge numbers and establish recycling as a mainstream process for end-of-cycle mattresses in the region.

Besides the obvious positive effect on the environment, let's look at how the campaign impacts various stakeholders.

Retailers:

Out with the old, in with the new! Once the customers get rid of their shaggy old mattress, they obviously look for a new one. By associating themselves as a Mattress Retail Journey Partners on the redeemable coupons, the retailers' chances of being visited elevates. As reported by Mr. Sundaresan, one of the experimental areas showed a 20 percent rise in sales. To state the obvious, retailers are more than happy for the exposure.

Customers:

A free service where people come to the doorstep to remove a waste burden (old mattress) and as a token of appreciation, you get a discount coupon or even monetary incentives. Now who wouldn't like that? Besides, nowadays there are a lot of people who are often looking for sustainable ways to deal with their waste but feel lost due to lack of options. The campaign is welcomed wholeheartedly by them.

Manufacturers:

We're in an age where customers are seeking brands that share their values and goals and sustainability is obviously big on everyone's mind. By partnering with recycling initiatives, manufacturers can help make the mattress industry circular and thus contribute to the larger circular economy. Ultimately goodwill is created for the manufacturer's name. Circular economy also means reduced operation cost and thus increased profit margin.

Impact & the way forward!

As stated above, some of the experimental areas under the campaign have seen as much as 20 percent rise in mattress sales. The direct impact on the stakeholders in the city is evident. Nevertheless, Mr. Sundaresan says "We're thinking long term." Once the campaign reaches a sizable scale, the beneficial impact on the environment can be surely sustained.

Everyone wants sustainability but one cannot deny that it requires going out of the way, both in terms of efforts, time and cost to engage in truly impactful solutions. ISPF aims to scale [#phenkonahirecyclekaro](#) to a level where mattress recycling costs less and becomes prevalent as a mainstream process. Taking things one step at a time, their next target is to undertake recycling of at least 10 lakh mattresses in the coming year.

A recent summit of IPUA & ISPF in Lonavala undertook strategizing of the road ahead for the campaign. The 3 cities are being seen as the experimentative grounds and through

these, ISPF hopes to lay the foundation for a large-scale mattress recycling campaign pan India. Efforts are also underway to seek support from UNDP (United Nations Development Project) and CPCB India (Central Pollution Control Board).

ISPF is leaving no stone unturned in establishing the Indian mattress business as a green industry. The global atmosphere also hints of an environmentally-conscious momentum in full bloom. This conducive environment coupled with the frivolous effort's points to a promising future. Maybe a day where the word "recycle" is just another chore on our daily to-do list is closer than we expected. [CT](#)

KEY TAKE-AWAYS

- Mattresses are a 'sizable' part of the garbage problem. They overcrowd existing landfills.
- Recycling helps existing landfills to last longer and saves various useful materials from being wasted, also paving the way for a circular economy.
- ISPF in partnership with IPUA has launched Mattress Circular Journey initiative across 3 cities.
- They partner with local recycling agencies and retail stores to collect mattresses from homes and send them off to recycling units.
- Latest recycling campaign launched under [#phenkonahirecyclekaro](#) initiative in Ernakulam, Kerala.
- Customers receive discount coupons redeemable at nearby Mattress Circular Journey retail partner store.
- Some of the experimental areas under the campaign have seen as much as 20 percent rise in mattress sales.
- They intend to promote the Indian Mattress Industry as a green industry.
- Through the Mattress Circular Journey initiative, ISPF hopes to make mattress recycling a cost-effective and mainstream process.

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CONNECTING. PIONEERING. TRUSTED.

World of Sleep is not a concept but an experience: ISPF



When we sleep, we are transported into a different world altogether. We experience dreams indistinguishable from reality, all the emotions and movements feel as genuine as real life. Just like the mind, the body is not completely inactive either. Forming memories, getting rid of toxic waste, repairing muscles, and strengthening the immune system are some of the many crucial functions that take place at this time.

To reap maximum benefits of this unconscious world, we need to create a sleep environment that ensures sleep that is optimized in both quality and quantity. This world of sleep consists of numerous elements. A mattress that is apt for your sleep habits and needs, appropriate lighting, noise levels, linens and in general, a hygienic and peaceful bedroom ambience.

In this highly industrialized world, as the technology-induced lifestyle disrupts our natural circadian cycle and sleep habits, technology also proposes answers to this issue in the form of various sleep products. From lights that automatically shift the wavelength to stimulate feeling of drowsiness or energy, to white noise integrated bedroom systems, to hybrid duets for temperature regulation, the range of sleep products at customers' disposal only keeps on swelling.

However in this age of mindful consumerism, awareness amongst customers is pivotal, if not a prerequisite itself. ISPF is taking on this mission head-on. The aim is to help people understand the importance of all the environmental elements that contribute holistically towards an appropriate sleep environment. ISPF regards "World of Sleep" as not just a concept or an ideal state, but as an experience or a lifestyle choice that is practically achievable by acquiring the right knowledge and sleep products, and hence, directs its efforts to push for the same.

Retailers once again play the role of a key player here. They can be the medium through which information is passed on to create awareness amongst customers. Recognising this gap, ISPF in association with HCG India curated the World of Sleep initiative to showcase Indian as well as global innovations in sleep products and trends to all the stakeholders of the sleep industry.

What led ISPF to develop this session?

One of the primary goals of ISPF is to elevate the conditions of the Indian sleep products industry in a bid to help consumers get better sleep. Educating the consumer is not all that easy, and there is an abundance of data available on the internet that can often be misleading or confusing.

Hence, they opted for the best route of educating retailers, who can in-turn educate their customers or directly provide them with the perfectly suited product. Sleep is after all a very personalized process, and the same mattress that may be beneficial for one can end up ruining another's sleep quality.

This new era of market trends strongly point towards consumer behavior where deeper meaning and value is being sought in the purchases. Without adequate direction and knowledge, the retail mattress industry risks missing on the possibilities in this lucrative market. The sale of a mattress or any other sleep product should not necessarily be based on the brand or monetary value, rather it should be through the inherent value it adds to the quality of life.

This is also why ISPF organizes training sessions for retailers to educate them about the various marketing strategies regarding sleep products. With the event organized at the World of Sleep expo, ISPF delivered an immersive experience and truly educated the minds of retailers regarding why sleep is important and how sleep products fit into the picture. To sell sleep before selling sleep





products is the mantra stressed upon.

What does the World of Sleep include?

The World of Sleep as a concept stresses upon the need for paying attention to all the elements that make up the sleep environment. It is both, the parts and the sum of the parts, that matter. Firstly, the surface i.e. the mattress holds enormous significance. This is a segment that has seen tremendous growth in terms of technological advancement and the resulting range of products, as well as the expansion of the market.

Noise is another obvious element. Noise disturbance that doesn't necessarily wake you up, can still result in sleep disruption and fragmentation. White sound machines and noise canceling curtains are gaining much popularity lately. Research by the National Library of Medicine shows that ambient sounds or soothing music are also found to help people sleep better and in cases, alleviate physical pain and anxiety. Brands are experimenting in this sector to find the perfect sound to use in automated alarms.

Lights play a pivotal role too. Our exposure to light and darkness regulates the circadian cycle. Brands are coming up with smart integrated light systems for homes. They are designed to automatically moderate the wavelength and intensity of light in various rooms to stimulate a timely feeling of sleepiness. Yet it'll be a while till these products' availability and affordability is enhanced. Philips is one such pioneer in the Indian sleep products market. Its Somneo Sleep and Wake-Up Light Alarm Clock simulates natural sunlight over a length of time during the morning so that the user is woken up gently, feeling refreshed and alert.

The ambience of the room is often an overlooked factor. If you think of it, a cluttered room is hardly a bedroom. A bedroom with a vivid color palette and loud furnishing might add to the aesthetics but won't help you get that perfect goodnight sleep. Experts suggest somber shades of color like blue, green, pink and brown are some of the best picks for a restful bedroom environment. Asian Paints has been zooming in on this market segment for a while now and is believed to launch an exclusive line of paints best suitable for a quality sleep.

It is of significance to make the customers aware about the holistic nature of a sleep environment and thus, to educate the retailers first. World of Sleep, a joint initiative by HGH India and ISPF, spearheads exactly that. Visitors get to discover the latest of global and local innovations and the newest in sleep technologies and sleep products across categories. The event showcases the latest sleep products like mattresses, bedsheets, pillows, comforters and sleeping gadgets to create the right mood and atmosphere for one to get a good quality sleep.

The realization about the importance of sleep and the need for quality sleep products has increased with the Covid

pandemic forcing a majority of the professionals to work from home. As there has been increased awareness about sleep hygiene, customers are willingly spending more and researching in depth for sleep products that suit their needs the best.

At the “World of Sleep” pavilion, experts share research findings on hygiene, the latest in sleep products and the importance of quality of sleep in reducing stress and improving the quality of life and productivity.


With 70 percent of the sleep market still unorganized in the country, there are humongous opportunities for manufacturers and retailers to tap into this unexplored market. Indians are still new to many high-end, top-of-the-shelf sleep products like mattresses, pillows, comforters, blankets, mattress protectors, sleeping gadgets, sleep supplements, sleep sprays, wake-up lights, smart bedroom gear, diffusers, drapes etc. The World of Sleep pavilion at Hall No. 12 at HGH India will provide knowledge to retailers and trade visitors, who can in turn help customers make informed decisions while buying sleep products. World of Sleep is also an ideal opportunity for manufacturers and distributors to market their products among retailers.

The highlight of the pavilion is the ideal bedrooms that have been created with all the latest technology to help traders and retailers get a feel of the real-life environment. The biggest challenge was to put up perfectly quiet bedrooms with noise levels of less than 22 decibels, which is considered ideal for a good night’s sleep.

ISPF is introducing some of the latest technologies, like white noise machines, to reduce noise from outside sources, like traffic, aircraft movement and construction work in the neighborhood. The organization is aiming to improve the quality of ideal bedrooms even more when it takes part in the HGH expo next year.

What is next for ISPF

The Indian Sleep Products Federation (ISPF) was formed with an aim to unite various players in the sleep industry, including manufacturers and retailers. The motto is to equip these players with the latest products and technologies from across the globe and country, which could ultimately benefit the customers buying sleep products. Apart from the upcoming edition of the World of Sleep expo, in which ISPF will once again host a unique and upgraded experience for the visitors; the organization has also been developing its Retail Training Programme, where retailers and distributors are given salient and relevant pointers on product presentation and information to enhance the experience of consumers.

Under the programme, already 2,000 retailers have been trained and this year, another 1,000 more will be trained during the current year. Retailers across the country are being trained in advanced selling skills, digital presence, productivity improvement, understanding consumer behavior and experience, etc. The certification programme has been appreciated by store owners, who have commended it for not only increasing their profit levels but also expanding their customer base. 

KEY TAKE-AWAYS

1. The Sleep industry helps consumers to get better quality of sleep with even better quality of sleep-related products.
2. ISPF is aiding sleep industry retailers to tap into this market by educating them and providing them with marketing solutions.
3. The World of Sleep expo, conducted by ISPF in association with HGH India, showcased the various aspects of sleep with the help of two sleep experts.
4. The primary goal of IS PF is to elevate the conditions of the Indian sleep products industry in a bid to help consumers get better sleep.
5. At the World of Sleep expo, ISPF has truly educated the minds of retailers regarding why sleep is important and how sleep products fit into the picture.
6. The consumers have realized the importance of sleep and the need for quality sleep products has increased with the Covid pandemic.
7. World of Sleep is also an ideal opportunity for manufacturers and distributors to market their products among retailers.
8. The ISPF is aiming to improve the quality of ideal bedrooms even more when it takes part in the HGH expo next year.

The Sulfex Group has witnessed a fast and steady growth in the past 30 years

Sulfex Group of Companies founded in 1992, with a passion to create lasting impressions in the hearts of clientele around the globe, Sulfex has flourished as the first preference for customers. With unwavering commitment to customer satisfaction, the Sulfex Group has witnessed a fast and steady growth in the past 30 years.

Beginning as the manufacturers of exceptional quality rubberized coir mattresses, the Sulfex group has come a long way. Together, the two state-of-the-art manufacturing plants, viz Sulfex Fibre Products and Sulfex Mattress Company, strategically situated at ParassiniKadavu and Taliparamba, Kannur, northern part of Kerala State, account for a mammoth 8000 M.Tonne annual production capacity (which means over 2000 mattresses/day). Billed as having India's largest and most sophisticated plant capacity for rubberized coir mattresses as well as allied products like carpets underlays, packing pads, air conditioner filters and companion products like pillows, cushions, bolsters and a range of door and bath mats. The high density rubberized coir bare blocks that they produce are highly recommended as top layer for spring mattress world-wide.

The plants employ 400 highly skilled personnel directly, and another 2000 indirectly. Credited with ISO 9001 and BIS certifications, the plants follow all the globally accepted policies – from HACCP norms to environment care to the custom of never resorting to child labour – to the last word.

The raw materials are 100 percent natural coir fibre and rubber latex, fully replenishable resources. Harnessing its technological superiority, product excellence and care for environment, the company has created one of the best scientifically-backed rubberized coir mattress brands - Sulfex.

A business magnate who flourished amidst wind and



Mr. M T P Muhammed Kunhi, the Founder and CMD of Sulfex Group

waves to anchor his business cruise to the land of success embellishes the profile of M T P Muhammed Kunhi, the Founder and CMD of Sulfex Group. The group consists of Sulfex Mattress Co, Sulfex Fiber Products, Sulfex India Pvt Ltd, Sulfex Furnitures Pvt Ltd, and Sulfex Footwear Pvt Ltd etc, and Sulfex group has 40 Factory Outlets across South India at present and planning to open 100 showrooms in the near future. The Group has a vast organizational structure of over 500 employees.

The Sulfex Group is honoured as the high density coir bare blocks produced at the Sulfex manufacturing units are recommended by many major players in the mattress industry. A customer oriented company, Sulfex assure the use of 100 percent natural fibre and rubber latex for production.

Sulfex quality products are recognized by the Central & State Governments and a lot of Organizations. Recently Sulfex got Largest Seller of Rubberized Coir Products in India Award from Honourable Union Minister for MSME, Government of India and Social Responsibility Award from the Honourable Governor of Kerala.

Sulfex group is fast growing ahead with various business interests. Fuelled by an undying passion for pursuing excellence on all fronts. Sulfex own speciality is that we can manufacture mattresses in any size, shape, thickness according to the requirements of customers in 48 hours. **CT**



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This homegrown brand of our beloved and reliable Nilkamal Group is solely focused on providing you with that perfect sleep to healthify your sleep cycle and overall life. To bring you a comforting sleep, Doctor Dreams has scientifically crafted a specially designed unique mattress that provides a cooling effect with a layer of memory foam to ensure premium comfort. Sworn to craft the finest quality material, this will positively control your sleep cycle and ensure a healthy sleep routine.

What is ICEFOAM™?

ICEFOAM™ is a plush cooling foam technology due to its heat and moisture-absorbing nature. This cutting-edge technology allows airflow to promote a cooling effect and comforting sleep. Max ICEFOAM™ Orthopaedic mattress is Doctor Dreams' newest and India's first memory foam marvel for a peaceful night of sleep.


Pros of ICEFOAM™ technology:

1. Fabricated from premium Tencel fabric, the mattress's luxurious, soft-to-the-touch top layer offers resistance to dust, mites, and microbes and provides deep sleep for a

comforting and restful night.

2. These orthopedically approved mattresses keep a healthy balance between firmness and softness and hold body pressure to relieve body aches such as lower back pain and neck pains.
3. The cool-gel technology in this ICEFOAM™ mattress is ideal for a night of peaceful, comfortable, and uninterrupted sleep.
4. Another unique characteristic is the CNC-cut of this mattress which ensures maximum lumbar support. The mattress adheres to the shape of your body as you sit or lie down, ensuring ease and comfort.
5. The memory foam in the middle layer adapts to your body shape to balance out the even distribution of body pressure in this mattress to keep it in shape for long.

Doctor Dreams guarantees the comfort and durability of this mattress. It comes with a ten-year warranty and a 100-night free trial to ensure product quality and customer satisfaction.

This state-of-the-art technology is surely going to change the overall sleeping experience. No more regular heat-absorbant mattresses with uncomfortably soft structures causing sleepless nights. The revolutionary ICEFOAM™ Mattress by Doctor Dreams from your favourite Nilkamal group ensures a restful night's sleep in more than one way. 



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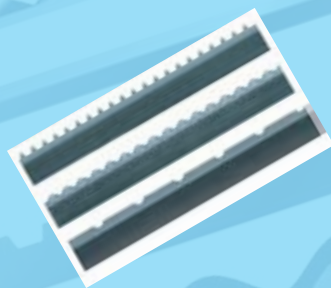
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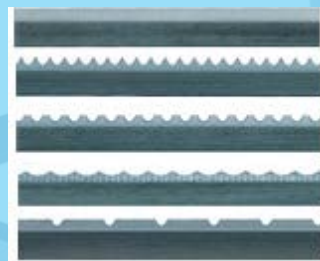


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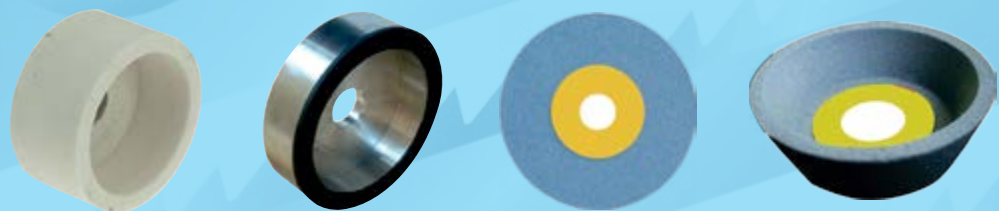


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Why your cactus maybe stopping you from sleeping?

'The reason why your cactus is so impactful in your bedroom stems from Feng Shui. This ancient Chinese practice encourages you to think about the objects you have in a room, how it relates to the overall space, and how they attract positive energy into your life. However, some objects have the opposite effect – this is the case with cacti.

Due to the sharp, defensive spikes of a cactus, it is not advised to have one in

your sleeping area as it is believed that they can transmit bad energy into the surrounding space,' explains Mattress Online's Sleep Expert Steve Adams.

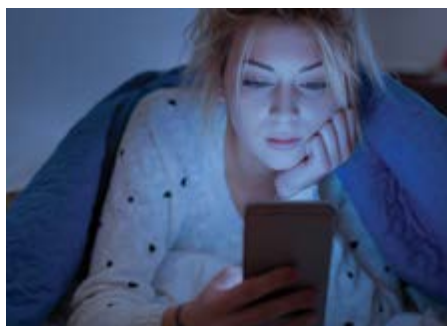
The expert explains that the cactus' thorns are thought to 'encourage feelings of anxiety and stress' that cause us to feel irritable. Therefore, it should remain away from the space where you are supposed to feel most rested.



Blue Light and Sleep

It's become a virtually unchallenged piece of conventional wisdom that exposure to blue light—the type emitted by electronic device screens—is bad for sleep. That thinking has spurred a mini-industry of innovations meant to stop those effects, like warm-toned "night mode" settings on gadgets and glasses that claim to block blue light.

But in December, a group of researchers at the University of Manchester in the U.K. published a paper in *Current Biology* challenging that notion. After exposing mice to lights that were different in hue but equal in brightness and assessing their



subsequent activity, the researchers concluded that yellow light actually seems to disturb sleep more than blue. Warm-toned light, they hypothesized, could trick the body into thinking it's daytime, while cooler blue light more closely mimics twilight.

(Information Courtesy: Time Magazine)

How Much Sleep Do College Students Get?

The vast majority of college students don't get the sleep they need, says Sleep Foundation study. During a typical semester, between 70 percent to 96 percent of college students sleep fewer than eight hours on weeknights.

Over half of college students get fewer than seven hours of sleep each night, and 47 percent report daytime sleepiness on a near daily level.

Sixty percent of college students meet the clinical criteria for poor sleep, and 27 percent are at risk for a sleep disorder.

If school and sleep don't seem to go well together, it's even worse during final exams. The average college student only sleeps 6.36 hours per night during finals week. Fewer than 10 percent sleep for eight hours each night. In one study of architecture students, a majority reported pulling at least three all-nighters per month.

Not only do students spend less time sleeping during finals week, but they engage in worse sleep habits, as well, so the sleep they do get is of lower quality.

Students are under an increased amount of stress during finals, and are more likely to increase their use of caffeine and other stimulants.

Study says that poor sleep impacts your memory, creativity, and logical reasoning. In other words, not sleeping enough impairs all the skills you need to perform well on a final exam. When students miss out on sleep, they have a tougher time paying attention, and it's harder for their brains to commit new information to memory.

Study suggests prioritizing sleep during exam week will help in getting better grades!

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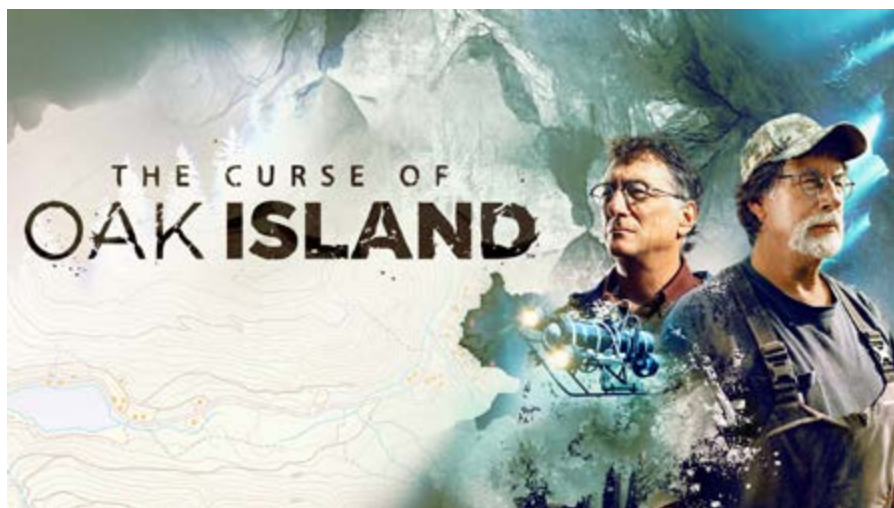
Some viewers of *The Curse of Oak Island* believe the show makes a great sleep aid

Fans of popular shows often like to express their opinions on the Internet, and fans of "The Curse of Oak Island" are certainly no different in this regard. Taking to one of the most trafficked outlets of thought on the internet, u/BoxeeBrown started a thread about how "The Curse of Oak Island" is the perfect show to fall asleep to. Notably, there wasn't much pushback. U/Abdul-Ahmadinejad agreed with the original comment and said that they fell asleep just reading that summary. U/duchoncho joked, "Sweet dreams of wood sniffing with

Billy and Gary," while u/rtk117117 added, "I love the show but I've fallen asleep a few times too."

Several others also took time to poke fun at the show, despite evidently being interested enough to frequent an online fan page. U/NeuroguyNC made light of the narrator and said that "Oak Island" is better than sleep medication. "The best show to nap/fall asleep to and it's not even close," u/GomphZIPS said, "This is the true treasure of Oak Island!"

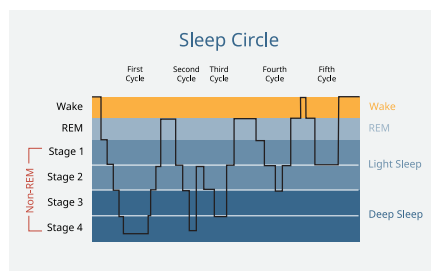
(Courtesy: [looper.com](#))



Facts about REM Sleep and REM Rebound

REM Sleep: REM sleep is the stage in which dreams occur. It is characterized by an accelerated heart rate, rapid and irregular breathing, and periods in which the eyes dart back and forth. Approximately 25 percent of the night is spent in REM sleep, and people will remember a dream more than 80 percent of the time if woken during a REM period. The average person spends nearly 600 hours dreaming each year during REM sleep.

REM Rebound: Though the precise function of REM sleep is fiercely debated, the fact that we need REM sleep is not. If frequently interrupted during sleep or deprived of it, our bodies will compensate by naturally



passing more quickly through the non-REM stages of sleep (stages 1, 2, 3, and 4) into REM sleep, a phenomenon known as REM rebound. Humans are not the only ones who need REM sleep, as REM rebound has been observed in a number of other animals as well.

(Courtesy: [britannica.com](#))

What does Vastu Shastra and Feng Shui say about Sleep Direction

When it comes to getting good sleep, you may already know about setting the scene with darkening curtains, a lower room temperature, and other healthy habits. You may have even come across information concerning feng shui and vastu shastra and their guiding principles on body position while you sleep. Feng shui is an ancient Chinese practice that focuses on energy and placement in your everyday life, including space, in order to achieve balance. Vastu shastra, on the other hand, focuses on Indian architectural balances based on science. In fact, the direct translation is "science of architecture."

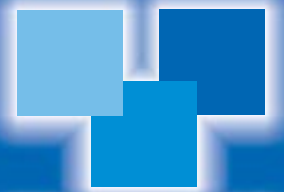
Both practices have different histories, but their principles are similar: The way spaces are designed for people can either benefit or damage your health. The recommended sleeping direction per vastu shastra is that you lie down with your head pointed southward. A north-to-south body position is considered the worst direction. This is because the human head is considered to have a polar-like attraction, and it needs to face southward to attract opposite poles while you sleep.

Like vastu shastra, feng shui is concerned with your sleeping space in terms of overall sleep quality. However, this practice is more concerned with the elements in your space and their effects on chi (energy) flow more than the direction you sleep. Ancient practitioners of feng shui prefer southward energy, only because of China's natural climate where you can experience warm winds from the south.

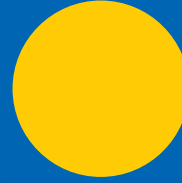
While sleep direction gets a lot of attention in Eastern medicine, there's still more research that needs to be done concerning feng shui and vastu shastra practices. It doesn't hurt to try to alter your sleep position to see whether you notice a difference.

(Courtesy [Healthline.com](#))

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