

Comfort Times

by ISPF

**COVID-19 Impact
and Recovery –
A peek into the
Bedding Industry**

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Sleeping well in the
COVID-19 Times!

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Indian Retail Market
Performance- Modern
Mattress - Round 3

27 New Business Opportunity
Demand for Medical
Mattress zooms in Corona
times





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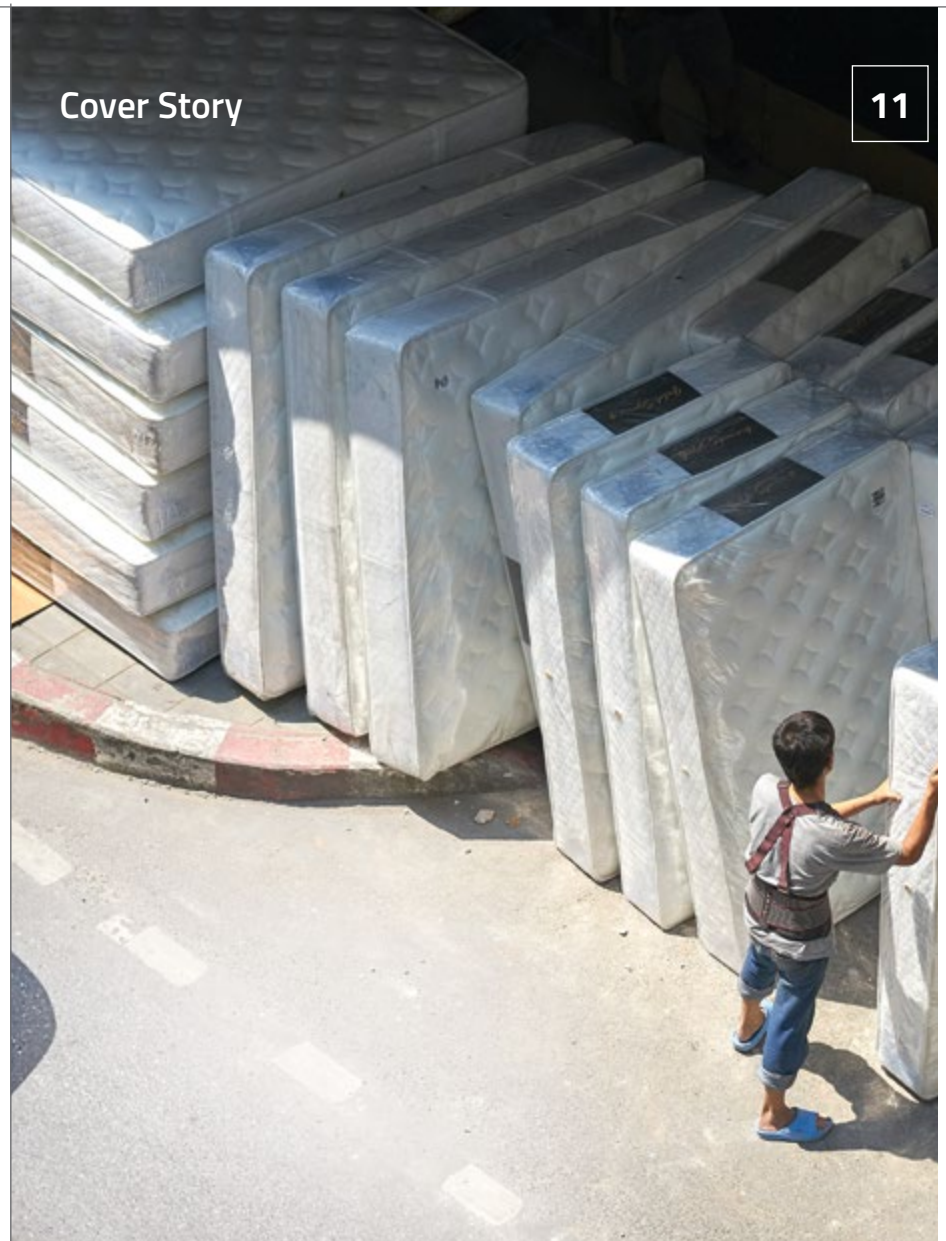
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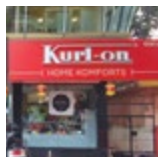


What a Bug!

The Impact of COVID-19 on the Mattress Industry

The pandemic has shaken up a lot of businesses all over the world. While many industries struggle to find tiny signs of survival and resilience, how much spring does the sleep-industry need to bounce back? Or is it already up and about?

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New Business Opportunity: Demand for Medical Mattress zooms in Corona times

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The future of the mattress industry is as layered as a typical bed – there are some short-term changes and some long-term directions worth making room for

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Mattress Industry Research Findings: Indian Retail Market Performance- Modern Mattress - Round 3



ISPF organised survey to estimate the quarterly sales and growth of mattresses in India

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FROM THE EDITOR



How are you feeling today? It is extra special to say 'Hello' to you amidst this unique phase of lockdown, uncertainty and social distancing that we all are going through. God knows, when we will shake hands again and share a conversation face-to-face in some meeting – like old times. But till then, I am glad to see that people from our industry brethren are marching ahead with unprecedented will-power, patience, hope, resilience and agility. Yes, we have suffered some dents. True, we have gone through some really abrupt surprises. For sure, the business has been weaving its way through some unfamiliar terrains of chaos, confusion and economic challenges.

But as you can see in this issue, the lockdown has brought in some unexpected positive changes for the industry. An interesting customer survey reveals that people are finally realising the importance of sleep-health and value of investing time and money in a good mattress. The same epiphany is being reflected in the kind of demand, needs and trends that industry players have been witnessing in these last few months.

In fact, the industry has learnt some of its best lessons through this crisis. We have understood new layers of customer demand. We have morphed our way confidently and creatively from bricks to clicks. Amidst all this disorientation, we have managed to survive, to innovate and to serve our customers.

In this issue, we bring to you some of these insights that companies and brave leaders share with a lot of candour, generosity and positive perspectives. Our cover story, industry interviews and ensuing features examine the impact that COVID-19 has caused – and that includes the good, the not-so-good and the new. We also uncover how new shifts are

taking centre stage. It is fascinating to see how legacy players are embracing technology and online models with strength and creativity. It is impressive to see how some players have already started working on health as a key plank for serving customers better. It is also interesting to unfold the unexpected ramifications that mainstream changes have injected into our industry. Everything from Work-from-Home models, remote work, home improvement projects, binge watching, lockdown recipes, real estate shake-up to heightened health awareness has brought strong and positive ripples into the industry.

Also, a bigger surge of positive side-effect is coming our way as shifts like work-from-home, demand for medical mattresses and hygiene products, focus on ergonomics etc. gather more traction.

As we get ready to enter the Six-Foot Office, we are already experimenting with the Six-Foot Store in our industry. Radical marketing and servicing approaches have emerged during the lock-down. Customers should be ready for better experiences, stronger service and innovative offerings as lockdowns ease. The path that the industry has picked during the pandemic will continue and strengthen as things get better.

I speak on behalf of so many experts, players and customers when I say that the future is full of new and sunny possibilities. We are going to come out stronger, brighter and better from this unusual phase. We are all hoping for that 'tomorrow'. Let us keep learning – from each other, from customers, from other industries and from the crisis. I am very sure that the next issue would be about a fresh injection (pun intended) of positive news – in every way, for our industry, and beyond. Keep reading!



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MANAGING COMMITTEE MEMBERS

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Centuary Fibre Plates Pvt. Limited



Kurlon Enterprise Limited



Tirupati Foam Limited



Duroflex Pvt. Limited



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SERVICE

INNOVATION

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.

Duroflex puts across positive message on Lockdown

As the COVID-19 pandemic has hit every industry hard, the the sleep and wellness industry too is trying out newer strategies to cope with its impact. Mathew Chandy, Managing Director, Duroflex – one of the leading mattress brands in the country, said in an interview to a business news website that the company's focus has shifted from profitability to liquidity in these times of crisis.

With a majority of professionals working from home, Duroflex has been putting across a positive message in these times of gloom, focusing on the importance of sleep hygiene to stay focused on work. To further help its customers keep anxiety at bay, the company organized Sleep Therapy sessions and launched a campaign called Better Tomorrow. When all other companies are going the digital way to promote their products, Duroflex opened a retail outlet and an experiential centre in Bengaluru on July 1.

Wakefit.co introduces second round of 'Sleep Internship'

Wakefit.co, has announced the pre-registration process of the second season of its programme, 'Wakefit Sleep Internship'. Under this programme, selected candidates are required to sleep for nine hours every night for a period of 100 nights. After the success of its first season that saw over 1.65 lakh registrations. Like last year, Wakefit.co is looking for the best ways to round up the sleepyheads from across the country. Pandit Janardhan Dhruve famous Face Reader from the Netflix show 'Indian Matchmaking' along with Naveen Kaushik, the 'boss' from last year's Sleep Internship, will review set of profiles to determine which candidates can make it to the final interview round of the internship.

Sleepwell Offers a Cocoon

Sleepwell's latest mattress offers different feel on two sides of same bed.

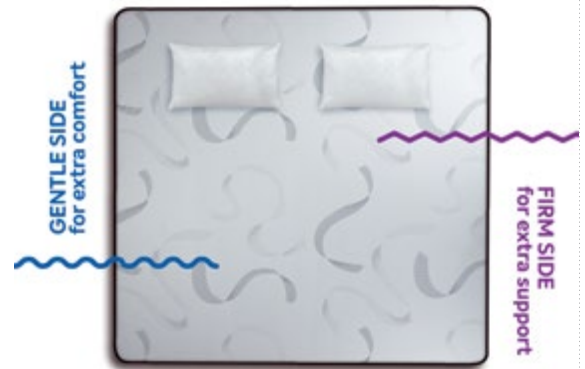
Cocoon Mattress that offers different feel on two sides of the same bed has been launched by the country's leading mattress brand Sleepwell.

With this, partners can customise their side of the mattress by interchanging the top two layers of the mattress. They can change it from firm to gentle or the other way, depending on their preference.

Cocoon is a triple-layered mattress with customisable top two layers and core bottom layer for support. The top two layers have a different feel on either side – gentle and firm. The customer can change the feel of the mattress by interchanging the layers – from gentle to firm or the other way. It allows partners to have the mattress of their choice, just by interchanging the top two layers.

 Sleepwell COCON

India's 1st customisable mattress



Startups think of new strategy to grab market share

The startup storm has taken over the sleep industry too, with a flurry of brands using the direct-to-consumer marketing method to push their products. These companies, which include Wakefit, Wink & Nod, NAP Cloud and Flo, etc. have worked out a strategy to cut out the middlemen

and commissions by offering their products online at a lower price. They have adopted the – Mattress In a Box – to appeal to the customers and grab the market share. As of now, established brands like Sleepwell, Kurlon command almost 50 percent of the market share.





Introducing
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The power of Neem Fresche is available exclusively in the entire Sleepwell range

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NapCity offers personal sleeping spaces

NapCity, which makes pods mostly used in airports for travellers to take a quick nap on the move, has started offering these pods as safe private areas for sleep without coming in contact with anyone in these times of COVID-19. Company president Stephen Rosenfeld said the pods are being sold as “private space as a service”, and the company is pitching with hotels, offices and wellness centres for the product. Rosenfeld said that firms will soon be looking for ways to use spaces like Napcabs, which takes up a mere 50 sqft area.

Dow giving new Life to Old Mattresses

If stacked, mattresses discarded in Europe every year would exceed the height of Mount Everest – by 678 times. Approximately 30 million mattresses are thrown away, and most of this bulky, non-biodegradable waste-stream ends up in the landfill. Through its RENUVA Mattress Recycling Program, Dow aims to reduce this mountain of waste by giving polyurethane (PU) foam from end-of-life mattresses a new life. The program will take discarded mattress foam and turn it back into raw material (polyols) through chemical recycling, the process of converting waste into feedstock. The new raw material will then be used in flexible or rigid foam products to go into applications such as building insulation boards and even new mattresses. To make this happen, Dow Polyurethanes has been working with recycling companies, equipment and material manufacturers, brand owners and other value chain participants in Europe to put in place a new business ecosystem to create a circular economy for polyurethanes. The program aims to divert up to 200,000 mattresses from landfills in France every year.

COVID-19 wreaks havoc on sleeping patterns

COVID-19 has wreaked havoc on the global economy, public health systems and industries from tourism to summer camps. Now, doctors say they’re seeing an influx of patients with disrupted sleep patterns linked to financial anxiety, fears of the virus or a lack of daily routine. In China, researchers surveyed 801 frontline healthcare workers and found that compared to the general population, they tested significantly high on a scale used to measure insomnia. Left untreated, insomnia could lead to lasting health repercussions, including weight gain, heart disease, hypertension and diabetic predispositions, said

Dr. Raymond Gottschalk, medical director of the sleep disorders clinic at McMaster University. “We know that sleep restriction, sleep deprivation and/or sleep disruption can shorten lives,” Gottschalk said.



25% of US adults report of sleep deprivation

Chronic sleep deprivation is common in the workplace. About 25% of US adults reportedly suffer from insomnia, and a similar number report regular patterns of excessive sleepiness. Unsurprisingly, sleep disturbances increase the risk of cancer, depression, and heart problems. They also decrease productivity. Meta-analytic studies show that sleep deprivation is a strong inhibitor of workplace performance, primarily by deteriorating mood.

Lack of sleep leads to detriments in job performance, productivity, career progression and satisfaction, and an increase in job-related accidents, absenteeism, and counterproductive work behaviors.

Conversely, better sleep has been linked to improved memory, knowledge acquisition, and learning. Even short naps have been found to have significant positive effects on work performance.

Virus impacted children’s sleep too

The coronavirus crisis is having a significant impact on children’s sleep, with anxiety and lack of routine causing serious disruptions, experts have warned. The Millpond Sleep Clinic in London says there has been a 30 percent rise in sleep inquiries from parents about children aged five to 13 compared with the same period in 2018-19. A common issue is that children are going to bed later and sleeping in more. A survey of 2,700 people in April gave the

early warning sign about the long-term negative impact coronavirus is having on children’s sleep.

It supports a newly published paper from the Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry that suggests the potential for sleep problems to emerge or worsen during and following the pandemic is high. The survey found that 70 percent of children under 16 are going to bed late – but are also waking late (57 percent).



What a Bug!

The Impact of COVID-19 on the Mattress Industry

The pandemic has shaken up a lot of businesses all over the world. While many industries struggle to find tiny signs of survival and resilience, how much spring does the sleep-industry need to bounce back? Or is it already up and about?



As the world waits with bated breath for a vaccine, some of us may have been tempted at some point to search about the evolution of the very idea of a vaccine. Interestingly, most vaccines are nothing but some doses of the bacteria or virus itself. When administered carefully, and with a proper plan, even a harmful element can change into a helpful antidote.

No one would understand that better than players in the mattress industry. For years and years, both top-tier and emerging businesses here have struggled with many deep-running issues – a dominant unorganised texture of the market, lack of standardisation, customisation challenges, distribution problems, lack of innovation and absence of customer awareness, to name a few. What was the most unwieldy one here, however, was the perception of ‘sleep’ per se. Neither the average customer bothered about the importance of a good mattress or a sleep-accessory, nor the marketers talked about sleep-health as part of their promotions.

So when everyone was forced to not just stay indoors but also work from there during the lockdown, a strange shift happened. People suddenly realized that the more time they spent at home, the more they paid attention to the comfort and quality of that thing called ‘mattress.’ Among other home renovation efforts; spending on, and upgrading, products related to sleep also came on the top of the Indian customer’s radar. At the same time, the industry was grappling with general issues that were causing trouble in other business segments due to the pandemic – like lukewarm economic outlook, dip in overall spending, a long pause on retail activity, logistics and supply-chain bottlenecks. So has the crisis worked like a vaccine or as a virus? Did the pandemic emerge as good news or bad news for the industry?



Consumer Behaviour – It all begins and ends there

Ask Ankur Bisen, Sr. Vice President - Technopak

KEY TAKE-AWAYS

COVID-19’s Ripples on Economy and Consumer Index

- 55 percent consumers are most likely to buy groceries online. Even traditionally dominated sectors were forced to go digital.
- There is a trend of selectiveness in spending
- In the scenario of highly effective economic interventions and effective public health response, return to trend growth with strong world rebound returning output to 2019 Q4 levels in late 2021.
- Even if health response stays effective, the situation will change in case of partially-effective interventions – this means showing slow long-term growth and muted world recovery for rebound returning output to 2019 Q4 levels in late 2022.
- In the case of ineffective economic interventions, slow long-term growth with insufficiency to delivery full rebound returning output to 2019 Q4 levels only until 2026

Source: McKinsey & Company COVID-19 US Consumer Pulse Survey

Advisors about the overall retail landscape and consumer mood that the pandemic has created and he gives a peek into a segment that is helpless because of economic constraints. *“The collapse of demand and dip in household income are aspects that have affected the total money scenario for an average household. That means a suspension of discretionary consumption – like holidays, weddings, tourism, jewellery, luxury activities, hotel stays etc. The focus on value is suddenly becoming paramount. People are either suspending those purchases or toning it down – like a used car or a lower-priced car instead of a new one.”*

But Ankur Bisen, Sr. Vice President - Technopak Advisors also reflects on the new experiences that the customer has gone through and which are going to define lifestyle in a big way. Home improvement is a key consumer interest area now. *“People are spending more time at home. They are ready to spend on space and visibility. Functional categories of household segment will see a jump. Compact-seized bed solutions or bed-cum-workstations or any such innovation – would be something that a customer will willingly spend on.”* It is a good time to ride on the wave of new trends – like storage-beds, hygiene products and concept-beds, he illustrates.

Indeed. If we thumb through McKinsey & Company COVID-19 US Consumer Pulse Survey, we will notice that Consumer confidence index dipped 7 percent in March YoY, but consumers overindex for healthy products: 75 percent are showing strong preference to exercise and healthy eating.



K. Senthilprabhu, Vice President, Sales Mattress & Cover division, Global Textile Alliance India Pvt Ltd.

reasons that there is not much difference during the crisis. *“As lockdowns open up, people are buying mattresses for increased usage at home and weddings. It is a positive side for the industry. A lot of new companies, specially online ones, are doing good.”*

Sanjeev Kapoor, CEO, Indian Silks also feels that crisis has been a blessing in disguise for the industry. *“The online segment is doing very well. The People are investing in a good mattress due to quarantine periods and work-from-home scenarios. Online segment will dominate the industry and unless it is a high-involvement purchase with a strong brand pull in the customer’s mindspace, people will lean towards online orders and price attractiveness.”*



Mahesh Narayanan Gopalamudram, Chief Operating Officer (COO) in Sheela Foam, and Chairman of Indian

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Polyurethane Association (IPUA) echoes this shift. *"There are two ways to look at the impact. People are now upgrading and that is helping the furniture and bedding industry. We are witnessing a spike in the European and Australian markets. This is because people are saving time and money from other activities - like eating out, vacations etc. This surplus time and cash has awakened people that they need to invest in essentials. When you are sitting on a chair or couch or bed for long hours during the lockdown, you want to upgrade it. In India, we are still on a rebound to a certain level for the online segment. The organised segment is not as strong because of uncertainty, containment and lockdowns."*



Mathew Chandy,
Managing Director,
Duroflex Pvt. Ltd

points out at another interesting shift – sleep has got comfortably perched on the health plank now. *"It is now more widely understood that good sleep can boost your immunity from viruses by 4x. Previously seen as a lifestyle industry, the pandemic has helped to place the mattress and sleep industry closer to the health and wellness space."*

Even the latest U.S. Census Bureau report is a big hint here. Turns out that home centers, hardware stores, garden centers and building materials suppliers realized a year-over-year sales spike of 22.6 percent. This dominated all retail categories except for online purchases. Retailers are now serving the home improvement market as homeowners are doing projects during the pandemic. Another research, from Consumer Specialists (a research and consulting firm specializing in home improvement related industries) and the Home Projects Council, notes 57 percent of homeowners putting an emphasis on home improvement during the first three months of COVID-19.

Looks like these homeowners spent \$1,750 making home improvements. A lot of them (66.9 percent) explained time as the primary reason driving their efforts. As many as 50 percent of homeowners said - *"time at home made*



me more aware of things that needed doing".

It was also observed here that home improvement project intent during the next year is actually up slightly despite the pandemic.

So the wave had already started. It will not subside after the pandemic and may, in fact, find more force as people look at their homes differently and for longer hours now. It is not hard to imagine the depth and volume of spending that will come into home-improvement spill-over areas. Mattresses and home comfort products would ultimately gain from the positive ramifications of the surge that is being witnessed in home improvement space. Customers have been woken up to the vast realm of possibilities and needs that they are now realizing due to the extended lockdown. The spending on mattress as a category can be discretionary and replacement-oriented also but it would, nonetheless, be a segment where customers are paying attention. Unlike other businesses that have been deferred to a 'post-lockdown' category in the customer's mind, this space would find a new wave of demand that has to be met with the right offerings, experience, service and innovation by the players of the industry.

KEY TAKE-AWAYS

Not-so-Side Effects of COVID-19

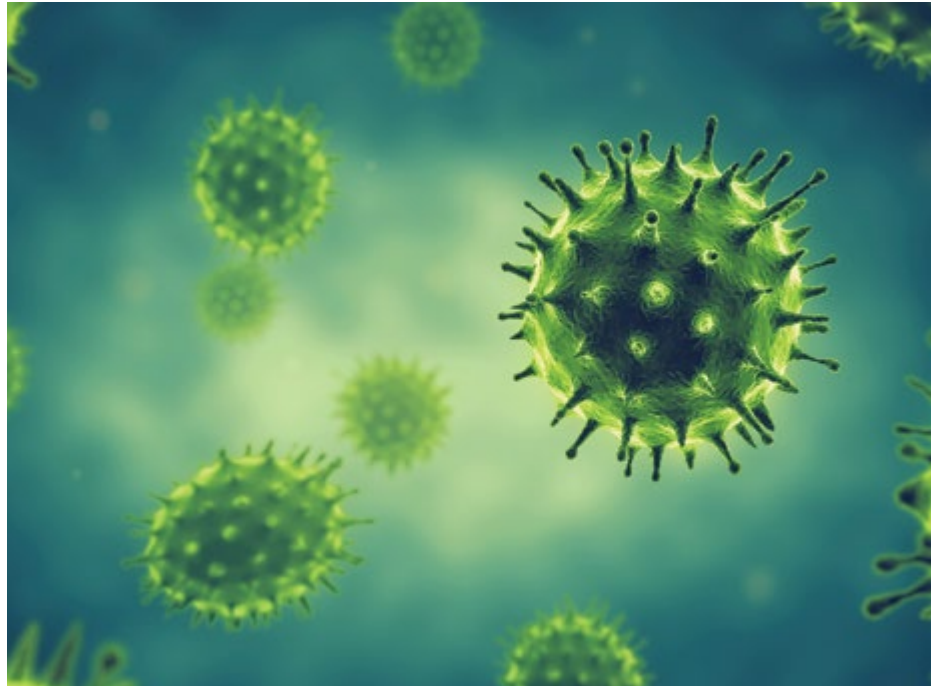
1. Supply chains take a hit
2. Logistics becomes a challenge due to fluctuating lockdowns
3. Job uncertainty and economic environment affects discretionary spending
4. Increased awareness and respect for sleep products
5. Consumers start paying attention to, and start spending on, home improvement
6. Online sales pick up on the demand side
7. Players start diversifying heavily towards online offerings
8. Redundant marketing expenses get wiped away
9. Brand value loyalty manifests in a strong way
10. New health-oriented offerings in high demand and more launches in progress

Supply Chains and Factories – Surviving the Blow

It is not hard to dismiss the dent on manufacturing and logistics that has been felt due to the pandemic. But the

Bain Macro Trends Group raised the Coronavirus Situational Threat Report (SITREP) Index from level 6 to 7. This level implies that businesses should activate second-level contingency planning. The index is scaled to facilitate the calibration of business-contingency policies along a stepped continuum—from normal operations (level 0) to severe global recession with global-scale operational disruptions (level 10). It is adjusted to take into account a continuum of milestone events that reflect the increasing severity of the epidemic's effects on the business operating environment.

Source: Bain & Company



impact suffered by manufacturing is only serious on the supply-chain side while for other functions the impact is starker, deeper, multi-dimensional and less temporary - as shared by Mahesh Narayanan Gopalamudram, COO, Sheela Foam, *"In manufacturing, we are 70 percent of where we were. But sales and marketing are a tad stressed out. However, post-lockdown lot of things will change forever."*

Speaking on the lock down effect on logistics and supply chain, he says that the lockdown has impacted logistics and supply-chain majorly. *"We realized two points when government imposed lockdown. First it would be hard to get contractual employees and logistics would be difficult due to non-availability of drivers and restrictions at check post and vehicular movement etc. So, we decided to simplify most of our manufacturing and supply chain process increased more automation. This helped us in maintaining supply-demand equation. Even our supply chain partners could manage in sending required raw material with the existing and available stock"*, he adds.

He explains that consumer-side facing business areas have been severely affected while manufacturing areas are not laden with as many worries as those functions have. After

Home and health has taken a priority - now more than ever - which has made people realize the importance of sleep, that has been a blessing in disguise for the industry. Online segment will dominate the industry

so they are still not affected badly. But at the end of the day if demand does not pick up, it will affect everything."

He is also noting a shift in the way product quality and component-focus will be embraced now. "Our company, as an adhesive maker, has an opportunity to work with a cross-section of the industry - like dealers, unorganised players, organised players etc. We see that, going forward, those companies that will become nimble with cost structure and go-to-market strategies will fare better than traditional networks and approaches. We have already started witnessing a transformation from brick-and-mortar to omni-channel models; and this trend will only amplify ahead. A lot of ecommerce start-ups will proliferate ahead. Aspects like semi-automation, and quality consumables will get stronger. So consider that adhesives may make five to seven percent of mattress manufacturing but in terms of risk of failure, the impact is very significant.

Another change will be that of industry consolidation in favour of organised players. This is because some unorganised players may not have deep pockets to survive the pandemic. Going ahead, the real craft for any company would be in its business model. The

all, a lockdown brings down customer mobility to a significant degree.



Brijraj Desai, Manager, Adhesives, Industries
Chaitanya Business Industrial Pidilite Limited

surmises that the short-term outlook is bad but the mid-term and long-term view is good for the organised segment. *"There is a direct impact on manufacturing and logistics because of frequent lockdowns. The supply chain has suffered from erratic production and scheduling issues due to lack of clarity on interstate transport movement. Functions like marketing can still be remotely managed*



Families are making homes more comfortable – that means a demand for furniture, specially antibacterial or non-corrosive materials

Sales of items from hand soap and mouthwash to vitamins have gone up 29 to 162 percent since February 2019 in countries around the globe:

Source: Nielsen and Kearney

organised segment would be able to bounce sooner than others because of financial resilience and better brand equity.”

The Bitter-Sweet Reality

While people may have realized the importance of home comfort and products like mattresses during the lockdown, it would be imprudent to shrug away the hard changes that this period has inflicted on the industry.



Raghav Menon, CEO Mattress Division at Sobha Ltd. presents a candid picture of the scenario when he

explains the 50 percent impact that the market has suffered. *“Stores are closed. People are reluctant to go for a touch-and-feel shopping. Except for groceries and staples, people will hesitate for long*

before spending the same way they did before the Covid crisis. There is a heavy uncertainty hanging in the air about jobs, retrenchment and income stability. Savings, as a word, has acquired new and serious connotations now. How can we expect mattresses, which are still part of non-essential and discretionary category of consumer spending, to not be affected? We have to operate in a lean and mean fashion now. Overheads have to be reduced in a drastic way. At the same time, transport is not easy when different states follow different guidelines. Logistics is not the same anymore because containment zones differ for every region. This is a time of constant flux. Not much planning is possible in such a period. It is a wait-and-watch phase.”

A strange corollary of this situation is the way online segment has picked up. Raghav Menon, CEO Mattress Division at Sobha Ltd. also cites how the company has introduced different offerings for leveraging the online momentum. *“We have launched new variants so that it is easy for customers to understand what we offer. Also, people have realized the significance of a mattress during the lockdown so some of them want to replace a really-worn-out product. We are catering to that demand with online sales. Online options have been a saving grace for many companies. If we lost 50 percent business offline, we captured 40 percent online so the net loss impact of Covid crisis is just ten percent. Logistics is also easy here*

because we are shipping with disclaimers and with demand-based quantities. A major help here is from availability of rolled format of mattresses. Both customers and transporters find the rolled version better.”



Ankit Garg, CEO and Co-Founder of Wakefit is of the opinion that as People spend more time on a sofa or a bed,

they are realising the ergonomics of furniture. *“Conversations have moved to aesthetics, ergonomics and the value of a mattress now. People spend more time in their house so they realise the importance of the home products. Overall, demand in the online segment has gone up (30-40 percent in the last four months). It is a tectonic shift in the mindset of people. People are forced to choose online for even smaller-budget items so this has led to a decent acceptance of the online model in India. India is experiencing a big shift that way. It will affect the online segment with a strong growth rate.”*

Mahesh Narayanan Gopalamudram, COO, Sheila Foam reflects, *“In the past, a dining chair or bed was not an office desk - and not for eight hours. But now the thought is different. It is a drastic change which will spill-over to real estate segments. Similarly, the mattress industry will see a big shift. This is a good change and will bring 20 to 40 percent transformation in the industry, I reckon.”*

Strangely, but strongly, the cash flow has changed a lot during the pandemic. Raghav Menon, CEO Mattress Division at Sobha Ltd. reasons how online sales is all about upfront cash. *“There is no delay or 60-90 days waiting period that the offline dealer model usually has. Also, the big and glossy sops that companies used to offer dealers and distribution are absent. International travel, fancy holidays and hotels – all that unnecessary expenditure and marketing weight has thinned down. Online is definitely the way forward. That said, the degree of control available for offline model is higher than online format.”*

So home-improvement spending and online channels seem to have come into the spotlight during the lockdown.



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It is evident in the McKinsey survey as well that the speed of going online has accelerated for consumers – with 20 to 60 more consumers who are now digital. This indicates a metamorphosis of demand – and turns out that it is unlikely to reverse quickly. All that is manifesting into new behavior patterns – like switching has accelerated.

Interestingly, as per Moengage, North America and India have seen a notable jump in active users respectively, on online shopping apps. Consumers in Southeast Asia have showed some hesitation to shop online because conversions have plummeted to its lowest.

What Next?

Let's look at what 'Innovation in a Crisis', a report from McKinsey & Company told recently. This survey of more than 200 organizations across industries indicated that over 90 percent of executives expect the fallout from COVID-19 to fundamentally change the way they do business over the next five years. Most of them are asserting that the crisis will have a lasting impact on their customers' needs.

Ironically, the most important need here – innovation – can easily be put on a back-burner as businesses focus on 'survival'. The report notes that executives are busy weighing costs, driving productivity, and implementing safety measures against supporting

innovation-led growth. Investments in innovation are suffering. Most executives feel that they will return to innovation-related initiatives once the world has stabilized. They want to secure the core first until the path forward is clearer. But may be the smart thing to do is what merely a quarter of these executives are doing – capturing new growth as a top priority (first- or second-order). It is easy to belong to the 60 percent that did so before the crisis hit. But that's not going to drive businesses into the post-survival set of challenges and opportunities. It is easy to lose sight of innovating when all hands are on the deck. But this is exactly the time to look for the new swathe of customer needs and market gaps that will unfold once the storm is past and once the dust settles. The industry should make sure that it is riding the waves of 'attention to home' and 'health' in a strong way and with the right offerings. That is something that cannot be postponed until the lockdowns ease out.

Innovation is the best way to move forward. Many players are moving to significant value engineering and are trying to also bring hygienic products anti-microbial qualities in their portfolio. Companies are also ensuring that when it comes to the store experience, the buying process is done in sanitised, spacious, well-aerated and low-risk environments.

The industry should be prepared to

KEY TAKE-AWAYS

Give them simplicity, safety, transparency and accessibility when consumers return

Kearney investigated four potential recovery scenarios for society and the economy

- A rapid return to business as usual - no major second wave of cases materialises and a rapid consumer confidence recovery happens
- Disruption and recovery – with multiple waves, social distancing restrictions, consumer adjustments to the new scenarios
- Disruption hits hard - Consumers don't adjust. 'No normal' state for confidence recovery
- Slow consumption engine - no major second wave of cases but ongoing economic crisis affects recovery

Kearney research reckoned that only scenarios C and D are probable. Disruption can hit hard and consumption will be suppressed for a sustained period of time.

continue and build up on the momentum after the lockdowns ease out. Once the lockdowns lift properly, there would be two segments that will be strong and will grow from value-addition by mattress makers: hygiene and offerings like anti-bacterial or anti-mosquito products as Sanjeev Kapoor, CEO, Indian Silks tells.

K.Senthilprabhu, Vice President, Sales Mattress & Cover division, Global Textile Alliance India Pvt Ltd also feels that in the next few months when things normalise, we expect good momentum in the retail segment. *"There is a lot of demand in the online segment."*

Consider how Vivek Iyer, Partner, Financial Services, PwC assesses the scenario here. *"There is a lot of pent*

- About 46 percent of Indian businesses feel 'very strongly' impacted by the pandemic
- Almost 54 percent felt they were as well prepared as they possibly could be
- Some 29 percent of Indian businesses indicated they are operating as normal
- About 73 percent of them talk about either having a management that is sufficiently agile or being strong overall and able to manage with a number of adjustments
- Two percent of businesses in India feel that their long term survival is threatened
- The most important aspect for around 42 percent of Indian businesses - is to review their suppliers' ability to weather future uncertainty.

As many as 64 percent of Indian businesses see the current environment ensuring positive changes to their products / services

Source: HSBC's Navigator report 'Building Back Better'. As per a survey conducted on more than 2,600 companies across 14 global markets - including 200 firms from India

up demand that will see some traction as people emerge out of the lockdown. While the lockdown has surely impacted the medium of delivery of the demand, the demand exists. I will try to explain this with an example. If there is a demand for a pair of t-shirts, the same would be ordered by a digital app (Myntra for example) rather than buying it from a store. The demand for clothes is there, but the medium of delivery is digitally enabled. The Z shaped recovery basically stems from many examples like this where pent-up demand would explode and then settle back to the long-term trend level.

Consumption is not affected in a hard-to-redeem way during the lockdown, the way he sees it. *"Discretionary spending will be back to its original levels, as discretionary spending came from a certain demography that*



was unable to spend during the lockdown. As mentioned earlier, so far as the mode of delivering the demand is within the acceptable parameters of social distancing, the discretionary-spending will be back."

As to how India Inc. should respond to the new set of challenges and how industries like wellness, mattress, home improvement and lifestyle should re-orient themselves, Iyer opines that wellness and lifestyle is a great industry to be in. *"Never has having a strong immunity been in higher demand than what it is today. So I think it's a great space to be in and any services that can be delivered keeping immunity to the core will do well for the industry."*

In his prognosis, home improvement and mattress will do well, because the work-from-home model needs home to be a far more comfortable place today than what was expected in the past. *"On what India Inc should do overall - turn this adversity into an opportunity by accelerating digitisation. That's the theme I think India Inc should go with and then dovetail all initiatives to this theme."*

Bisen also augurs that e-commerce and work-from-home would be strong for some time, for many white-collar people. That means the idea of an office is going to change in a big way, specially for industries like telcos, IT-ITeS, entertainment etc.

"The consumer is more liberated and independent now. The forced-lockdown has forced many people to work digitally

The mattress industry should look for value addition in the hygiene offerings in coming days. The new designs, innovation with health benefits like anti-viral offers could be the new path of the industry.

and differently. The view of work has changed, in a quintessential sense. This change will affect how people look at their homes – their family time and household expenses. This might lead to interest in minimalistic furniture and functional items. That is a good hint for major players which are considering serious innovations. Customers will be eager to embrace any solution that frees up space but gives comfort.

As Bisen captures well, the 'new normal' may not mean that economic uncertainty will go away. *"Sustenance and conservation of energy and resources are deep impacts of the pandemic – they will remain as strong traits of consumer behavior in the future too."*

If we look at how Mercer dissects it in its study of the estimated impact of COVID-19 on financial performance for 2020, we will see that low impact, financial performance is expected to be on or above budget for 15.55 percent.

- 90 percent executives believe that the COVID-19 crisis will fundamentally change the way they do business over the next 5 years
- 85 percent are concerned that the COVID-19 crisis will have a lasting impact on their customers' needs and wants over the next 5 years
- 21 percent have the expertise, resources, and commitment to pursue new growth successfully
- Nearly three of four executives agree that changes brought about by COVID-19 will be a big opportunity for growth, with variation across industries
- Commitment to innovation has decreased as companies work through the COVID-19 crisis and focus on short-term issues
- Exception: pharmaceuticals and medical products – that show a 30-percent increase in the immediate focus on innovation
- Two in three executives believe that this will be the most challenging moment in their executive career

Source: McKinsey & Company –
Innovation in a Crisis



"Recently, we have seen how natural and human-led disasters have caused many high profile events as well as significant losses of life and property. All this has underlined business vulnerabilities to environmental factors. That's why many players are implementing business continuity plans and adopting more sustainable business processes. Business continuity and sustainability have long and distinguished histories. We see a strong momentum for sustainable strategies and innovations ahead." adds Pankaj Gupta – MD of RP Foam Home Pvt. Ltd.

Tighten the belts now – advises Raghav Menon, CEO Mattress Division at Sobha Ltd. He does not mince any words when he says that it will be a tough time ahead because the fear factor will still haunt even as lockdowns



start to ease in a gradual way. *"People do not want to risk themselves. Recovery may be reassuring but the expenses of exposure to the disease - financially and physically- are high. Job uncertainty and financial issues will continue to have the spill-over effect here. We will have to wait for at least three quarters till the situation improves considerably."*

It seems that the industry has experienced a lot of new factors and learnt a lot of new strategies during the pandemic. Some of these shifts will survive even after the crisis is over. As long as players remember what worked and what failed, the crisis will leave something of value for the industry – long after it is over.

Going forward strategy

What is especially important to bear in mind and in strategy maps is the unwavering momentum of innovation. As experts from McKinsey & Company also advise, this is the time for identifying and quickly addressing new opportunity areas being created by the changing landscape. The crisis time means actions that are about reevaluating the innovation initiative portfolio and ensuring resources are allocated appropriately. Businesses should be building the foundation for post-crisis growth in order to remain competitive in the recovery period.

If you want to gain long-term advantages, there is a need for understanding such shifts and the opportunities they present. It is hard to dismiss how in past crises, companies

that invested in innovation delivered superior growth and performance post-crisis. Numbers show that organizations that maintained their innovation focus through the 2009 financial crisis, tended to emerge stronger and outperformed the market average by more than 30 percent. They also continued to deliver accelerated growth over the subsequent three to five years.

Businesses should be ready for new sales models, new competitors from different industries and the need for new offerings if they are serious about conquering the crisis. McKinsey & Company outlines in a report that competitive advantages shift dynamically as business models adapt to new market realities. That is why the core capabilities that made an organization distinctive may suddenly be less differentiating. It is also important to realize that while the rise of digital has been mounting similar pressures for more than a decade, what the current crisis is doing is significantly exacerbating and accelerating its disruptive forces.

In Ancient Egypt, the beetle was considered a sign of good luck because of this silent hard-worker's ingenuity and ability to always find new life through the sun. A bed bug bites humans but a good beetle is a recycler that chews plants and fibre. Whether as a good-luck charm or as a reset button, this crisis has turned out to be quite a beetle for this industry. Hope the dots are going to a sunny place as we step out to the 'new normal'. **CT**

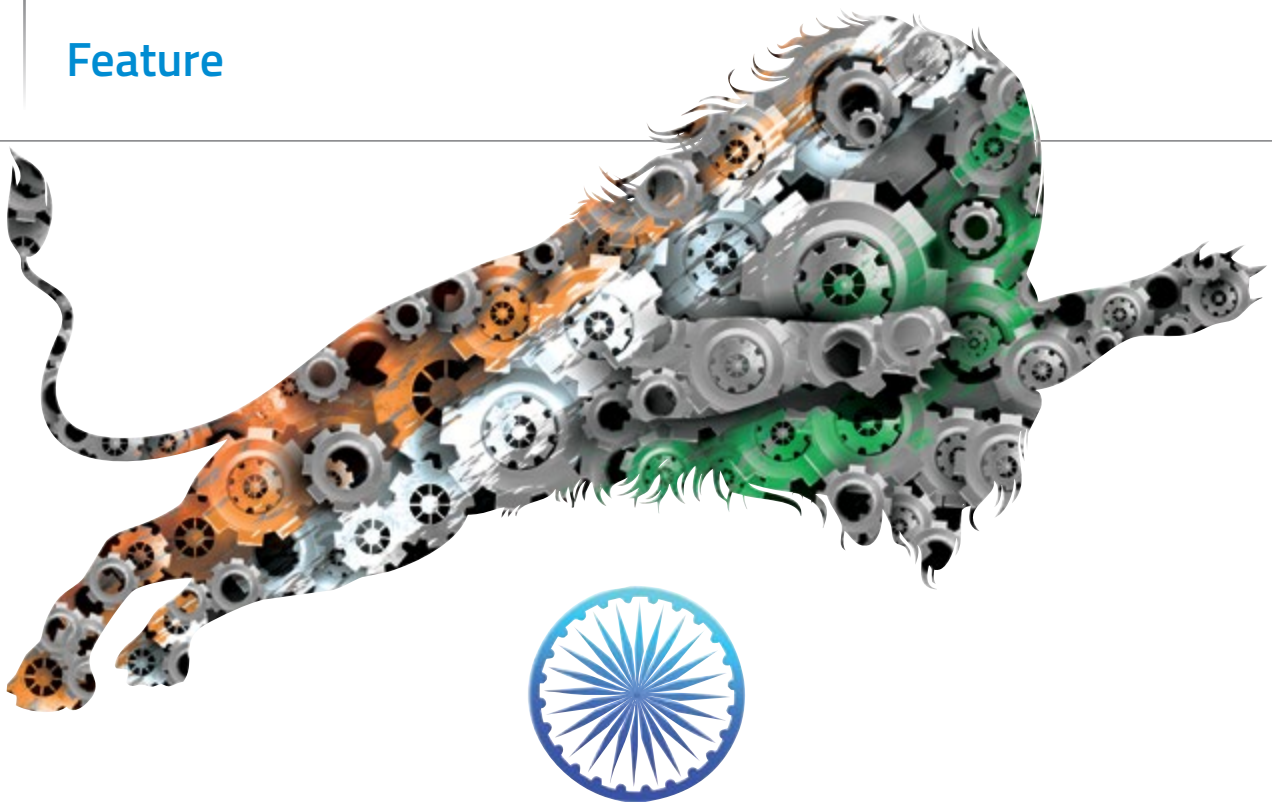
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Aatma-Nirbhar Mattress: From survival to success

The Covid19 period has had several types of impacts on our life. It has pushed the local industry to support the life in this pandemic crisis period and hence there is a voice rising for self-reliance. "Atma-Nirbhar" in mattress industry is the new challenge and the new opportunity.

The COVID-19 global pandemic has truly disrupted our lives like nothing else ever did in the past many decades. As the scourge of virus that emanated in China and spread over the world refuses to abate, countries have had to evaluate their position in relation to the epidemic. The epidemic has been an unequivocal disaster for the Indian economy. The condition of our economy was already in a vulnerable state when the epidemic struck India. With quarantine measures in place that resulted in the world's biggest and stickiest lockdown the economy took a big hit, like some collateral damage. Experts opine that with the traditional supply and demand chains broken, the country is likely to face a protracted slowdown.

The length of the COVID-19 pandemic will dictate the scale of the economic hardship, the longer it stretches, and the worse the impact will be. Recently the World Bank had stated that based on financial performance, India's economy in the current fiscal year is expected to contract 3.2 percent, downgraded from its previous forecast of 5.8 percent positive growth. The

World Bank's report mentions, "*stringent measures to restrict the spread of the virus, which heavily curtail activity, will contribute to the contraction.*"

Amidst the gloom and doom, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on May 12 addressed the nation and spelt out a plan for economic revival. He urged Indians to follow the route to 'Aatm-Nirbharta' or self-reliance. And so, he launched the Aatm-nirbhar Bharat initiative. This appeal was made along with an announcement of an economic stimulus package of Rs. 20 lakh crore that is around 10 percent of the GDP. The primary intention behind the scheme was to boost demand and improve the supply chain in different sectors of the economy. During his speech, PM Modi spoke about how "*India stands today at a point where it has to decide to become self-reliant*". He also gave a slogan, i.e. "*Be vocal to be local*" which practically means to adopt and use products made in India instead of foreign ones. This would lead to import substitution and lead to growth.

As part of his policy announcement, PM Modi also laid down five pillars for

Aatmnirbhar Bharat initiative:-

First pillar: An economy that takes quantum jumps and not incremental change

Second pillar: Infrastructure that should be world-class and becomes the identity of India that is synonymous with the idea of modern India.

Third pillar: A system that is based on the technology-driven arrangements, fulfilling the dreams of the 21st century, not the policy of the past century.

Fourth pillar: Demography which is the source of energy for a self-reliant India.

Fifth pillar: Demand, whereby the strength of India's demand and supply chain should be utilized to full capacity. He underlined the importance of strengthening all stakeholders in the supply chain to increase, as well as fulfill, the demand.

Avoiding dependancies

The Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) sector is at the heart of this domestic push by the Modi government. The MSME sector employs close to 40 percent of the Indian workforce and has a significant contribution to the GDP and export sector. Little wonder, even in his speech PM Modi emphasized the role played by the MSME sector and how it will play a critical role in the economic revival. The industry too included the Atma-Nirbhar Bharat Abhiyan, with the Finance Minister subsequently making announcements for the sector. The idea is to shore up the industry, and use it as a catalyst for economic resurgence. If the segment is revived, it will contribute significantly towards employment and increasing liquidity flow in the economy.

The push for Atma-Nirbhar Bharat is also very relevant for the mattress industry, as many of the manufacturers, distributors, etc. fall into that category. Many manufacturing companies fall under the ambit of MSMEs. The importance of this sector can be gauged by the fact that even under the lockdown, the Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium

Atma-Nirbhar Bharat is also very relevant for the mattress industry, as many of the manufacturers, distributors, etc. fall into that category. Experts opine that with the traditional supply and demand chains broken, the country is likely to face a protracted slowdown

Enterprises (MSMEs), Government of India, had issued a notification asking all business entrepreneurs and suppliers to inform the government whether they are dealing with essential items required for fighting coronavirus outbreak. The ministry has released a list, and the mattress industry fell in the auxiliary supplies list. This was especially necessary as governments were ramping up the hospital to create beds for COVID-19 patients. And hence bedding or mattresses were an essential commodity.

The changing market

The mattress industry in India has changed much in the last couple of years. Accounting for more than Rs. 11,000 crore, it is projected to reach Rs. 14,000 crore by 2021 with a CAGR of 9 percent. The growth of the industry has been boosted by the expansion of the online retail industry that has aided the manufacturing to grow at a healthy rate. This is a sterling achievement. Because the industry has gone a significant shift over the last few years from a mostly unbranded market to a branded one. The branded market comprising large, mid-size and smaller manufacturers constitute around 34 percent of the market, with about 20-25 players spread across the geographies. The branded mattress market is expected to grow at a CAGR of 13 percent over

the next five years to constitute 37.5 percent of the market by 2022.

Prompted by economic growth over the past couple of years, the home and decor industry grew in strength as well. Interior decoration as a career option has become viable and fashionable only in the past few years. Yet, a mattress, which plays an essential role in a person's life, used to be the last thing on priority. People were unaware of the different types of solution that are available, and more importantly, they were ignorant about the impact a right mattress can have on their sleep patterns and thus their health. Thankfully, the scenario is changing now, people are becoming aware of what a mattress is, and the difference between buying a cheap local brand versus buying a branded product. Primarily, the organized mattress markets comprise three types of mattresses, namely, coir, PU foam and Spring mattress. All the popular names like Orthopedic Mattress is a generic term and any bedding that provides lumbar support is ortho mattress.

According to 'India Mattress Market Overview, 2016-2022', market share of unorganized players is expected to drop drastically in the coming years. Nowadays, consumers have even started buying from international brands because of their high quality and contemporary products. In India, organized players sell mattresses through two mediums, one is offline, and the other is online. Offline mattress market consists of retail sales of mattresses from dealers/distributors or own franchised stores. On the other hand, the online mattress market consists of transactions which occur through e-commerce websites like Flipkart, Amazon, Snapdeal, FabFurnish, Urban Ladder etc. or company's personalized website.

Customers' way

Generally, Indian customers have an inclination of going to the showroom, feeling the product and then deciding on the purchase. The Indian buyer is also very price-sensitive, and any last-minute price cuts can be a deal-clincher. This is one of the reasons why the offline channel is very popular with

consumers, and this is the reason why big brands have also expanded their retail footprint across the length and breadth of India. Branded mattresses are broadly sold to two end users viz. residential and institutional. With the spurt in the housing sector, demand for branded mattresses has been on the rise, as this segment of customer is keener on quality than merely on price. According to the survey, among various sizes available, King size mattresses are the most preferred one, and comfort is an essential factor while choosing them.

Institutional demand comprises products sold in hospitality, real estate and other segments. For instance, as of now, the most significant demand for the mattress is coming from the medical side. As hundreds of beds are being created across India to deal with COVID-19 patients, there is an enormous demand for mattresses that are the right fit, namely, cost-effective and also good quality.

Here is how the new definition looks like:

Micro units: MSMEs will now be called Micro units if they have investments up to Rs 1 crore and turnover of less than Rs 5 crore. The definition earlier was on investment criteria of up to Rs 10 lakh

for Service MSMEs and Rs 25 lakh for manufacturing.

Small units: For an MSME to be defined as a Small unit, its investment limit has been raised from Rs 5 crore to Rs 10 crore with a turnover of fewer than 50 crores. This applies to all MSMEs including the Service enterprises which earlier came under the investment of up to Rs 2 crore.

Medium units: Enterprises with investments up to Rs 20 crore with a turnover of less than Rs 100 crore will now be called Medium units. Earlier, the investment limit for Medium units was up to Rs 10 crore and Service enterprises up to Rs 5 crore.

Based on these definitions, the government has announced some exciting benefits that can be availed by the companies:

- Collateral free automatic loans of INR 3 lakh crores will be provided for business, including MSME's which are badly hit by the pandemic and requires new funding to meet operational liabilities, buy raw materials and restart the company.
- Following benefits are provided under the collateral-free loan scheme:
 - Emergency Credit Line to Businesses/ MSMEs from Banks and NBFCs up to 20 percent of entire outstanding credit as on February 29, 2020;
 - Borrowers with up to INR 25 crores outstanding and INR 100 crores turnover eligible;
 - Loans to have 4-year tenor with a moratorium of 12 months on principal repayment;

KEY TAKE-AWAYS

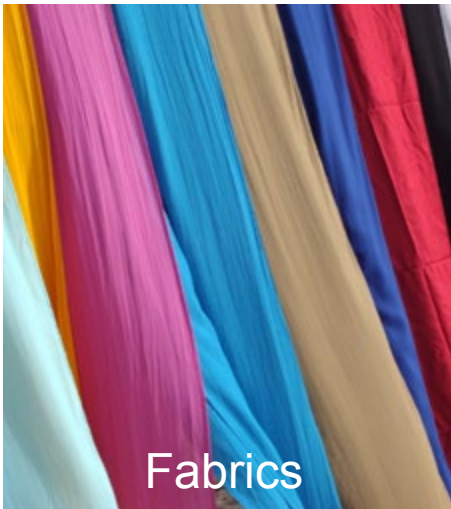
The Domestic Gameplay

The introduction of Atma-Nirbhar Abhiyaan could be a game-changer for the mattress industry in India. With the emphasis on domestic manufacturing and the benefits that will be provided to the MSME sector, there are a lot of players in the mattress industry that can avail the various benefits from the government scheme. One of the first things that the Finance Minister did was to standardize the definition of MSME, previously the characterization centered on investment and not turnover. Also, the minister made it clear that there will be no distinction between service and manufacturing MSMEs.





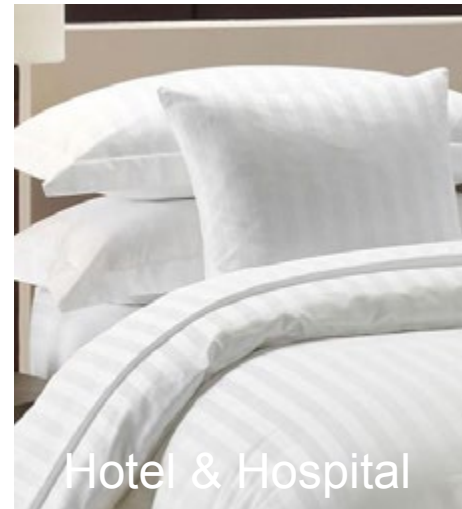
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- Interest to be capped;
- 100 percent credit guarantee cover to Banks and NBFC's on principal and interest; and
- This scheme can be availed until October 2020.
- Global tender to be disallowed up to INR 200 crores to benefit the MSME and other small institutions.
- INR 50,000 Crores liquidity to be given through reduction in TDS/TCS deductions.
- The government will facilitate the provision of INR 20,000 crores as subordinate debt for functioning MSMEs which are NPA or are stressed.
- Equity infusion of INR 50,000 crores through Fund of Funds ("FoF"). The FOF with a corpus of INR 10,000 crores will be set up. The FoF will be operated through a Mother Fund and few daughter funds. The fund structure will help leverage INR 50,000 crore of funds at daughter funds level. It will help to expand MSME's size as well as capacity.
- Fintech will be used to enhance transaction-based lending using the data generated by the e-marketplace.
- MSME receivables from Government and CPSEs shall be released in 45 days.

In short, the government is very keen and desirous to promote the domestic industry. The slew of schemes it has launched should be taken in addition to the raising of custom duty on a range of products. The government increased customs duty on several products, including toys, footwear and furniture items, intending to promote 'Make in India' and boost domestic manufacturing. On furniture goods such as seats, mattress support, articles of bedding, and lamps and lighting fittings, the import duty has been increased to 25 percent from the current 20 percent.

Financial institutions also have been asked to promote domestic manufacturing through their investments. Hence, this is the best time for an Indian company to thrive in this period.

With the emphasis on domestic manufacturing and the benefits that will be provided to the MSME sector, there are a lot of players in the mattress industry who can avail the various benefits from the government scheme.



The Pandemic Break

It is often said that in Mandarin, the word for crisis is quite similar to that of opportunity. A crisis can also be turned into a positive way. While not dealing with the social and human cost of the COVID-19 epidemic, which is unprecedented. Businesses can not only survive the trying times but also thrive if they have the money. The mattress industry in India is in that positive play. Multiple factors are working in conjunction that seems favorable. First, among the many verticals that have been impacted by the epidemic, the mattress is one of the rare ones that have seen an increase. While companies are struggling to find customers for their products, mattress companies are in the unique position of actually having to work overtime to meet the demand. With thousands of beds being added to fight against the epidemic, there is a high demand for a mattress at the moment.

Not only that, but WFH has also compelled people to look at their sleeping patterns and appreciate the value the mattress plays in that regards. Thus, individuals too are purchasing a mattress, mostly online and primarily

those from branded companies. Hence, be it institutional sales (hospitals & medics) or be it individual, the demand for mattress has been mostly unaffected by the epidemic, and on the contrary, has grown better. Yet, the industry is not altogether immune to challenges and the situation. To ensure that the business is not impacted by the epidemic, the companies need to pay attention to the following aspects:

Customer safety

Remember, the epidemic is still very much in circulation. Hundreds of people are dying every day, and thousands are infected. Thus, the customer is scared and wary. This is the time for the mattress companies to come out proactively and assure the customers with the kind of measures that are being taken to safeguard the customer. Not only should they employ and deploy such actions, but they should also highlight the same through media, like YouTube, Facebook, etc.

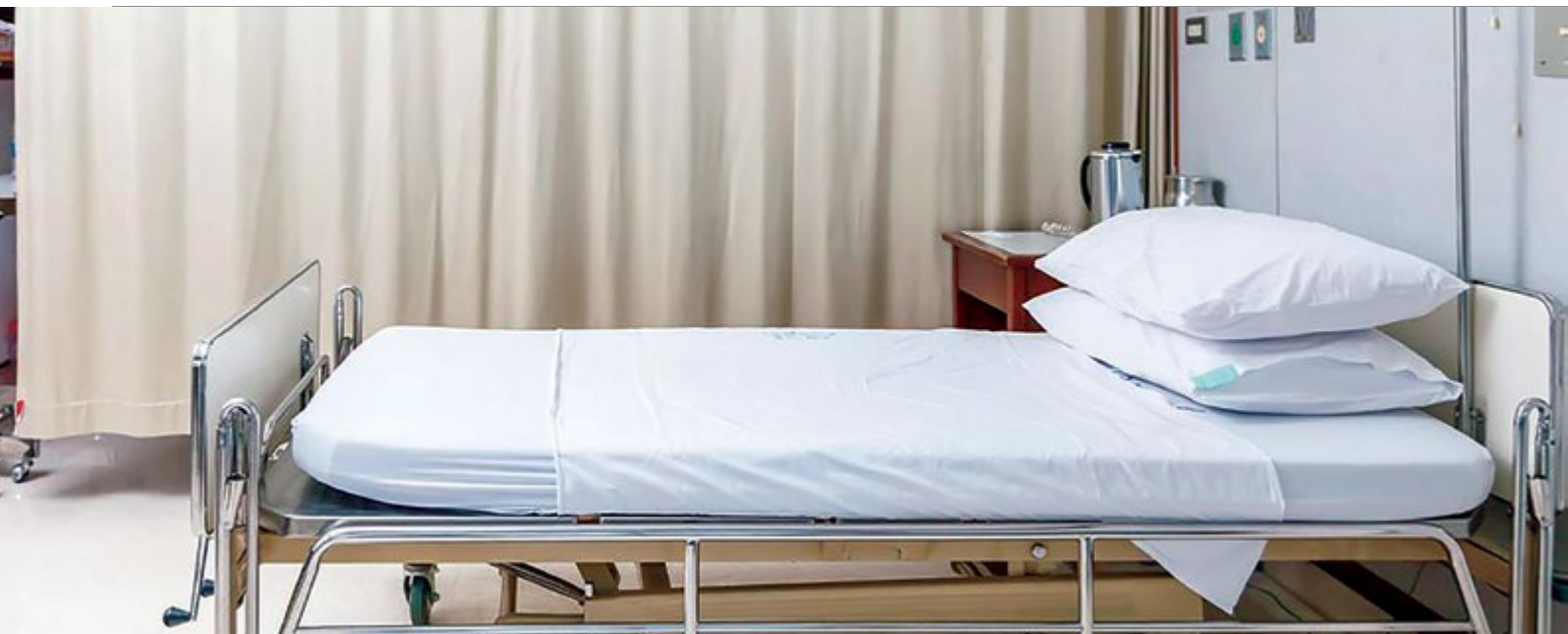
Innovate

Though it may sound complicated, it is usually the crisis that brings out the best in each of us. The best way for companies to survive this period is to be on their toes, and innovate constantly. This is the time to reinvent. For could there be a medically treated mattress that is good for the user? There are many ways in which a service or a product can be refined. This is one of those times.

Care & Share

In these difficult times, it is easy to be heartless and firm. On the contrary, this is the time to care and share with fellow beings. The least that a mattress company is doing is to treat its employees fairly by not sacking them. Also, this is a moment to share the pain of others and help them through various means like CSR.

With the government's push for self-reliance through programs like Atma-Nirbhar Abhiyan, it is incumbent about the mattress industry to make hay while the sun is shining. This is a great time to reassure customers and expand it at the same time. Companies that can do the same will thrive. **CT**



New Business Opportunity: Demand for Medical Mattress zooms in Corona times

In this COVID crisis as the need of beds for patients is increasing day-by-day, let us take a look at the industry's response to the situation in providing the Medical Mattress and also try to understand the Medical Mattress and its types

Beds, especially hospital beds, have been a critical topic of discussion in India in this COVID crisis. Various state governments across the length and breadth of India are struggling to increase the number of beds to treat the ever-growing number of patients. In this context, beds have become a national obsession of sorts. And where there is a bed, there will always be a mattress.

Not surprisingly, then mattress makers across the world see a surge in demand for their products. Not only because new beds have to be added, but because mattresses have to be continuously replaced due to wear and tear, and hygiene issues. In fact, in the first phase of the lockdown, the government had notified mattress manufacturers as an essential business.

But it is essential to differentiate between the regular mattress and medical mattress. 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.

Typical home mattresses are designed for comfort and luxury. Home mattresses are not created with a vision to make them resistant to water spills, or bacterial growth. The comfort factor is higher, and it comes at the cost of hygiene and health.

Hence it is essential to not only distinguish but also discern about the difference. Over the past couple of years, one brand of medical mattress has gained a lot of fame and recognition, and those are ortho mattresses. These mattresses are not unique in terms of material manufacture but constructed in a manner that they provide firm support to the back while sleeping. Usually, these mattresses are created from memory foam as it can distribute pressure all around the body; it does a fair job of helping to make sure no single

part of the body has too much. For this reason, a memory foam mattress is an excellent mattress for bedsores.

Types of medical mattress

Yet, the mattress that is found in the hospitals is not your regular mattresses. The reason for that is reasonably straightforward, regular mattresses are not designed to do heavy-duty work and multiple loads at a stretch. The beds used in the hospitals need to be not only durable and firm but also anti-fungal, antibacterial, latex-free and inflammation resistant.

Medical mattresses are different in terms of quality and features to ensure that patients can comfortably sleep over it. There are different types of hospital bed mattresses, including- Foam Mattresses, Innerspring Mattresses, Low Air Loss Mattresses, etc.

Each of these types boasts of different features and styles to suit the needs of patients. Foam mattresses are considered good because they are economical and light in weight. In case the patient moves, the mattress will absorb the motion and also handles the weight of the patient's body. The one aspect that needs to be paid attention to is the weight of the patient and height. Also, if the mattress has to be used for epidemic cases, it should ideally be covered with an anti-microbial cover.

On the other hand, innerspring mattresses are usually an economical choice. Crafted with evenly distributed inter-mattress coils, this mattress can either be quite soft or slightly firm, depending on personal preference. Innerspring mattresses are best suited for patients who experience several hours of mobility a day and are not bed-ridden.

In comparison, foam mattresses are economical, and lighter in weight than an innerspring. While, they don't breathe as well as innerspring, but they do absorb some shock from motion.

Patients suffering from pressure ulcers or patients at a high risk of developing bedsores, low air loss



The medical mattress is different from normal household mattress. They have different features as per the patients' requirements with a wide range of costs. They provide a suitable environment for the patients to recover soon

mattresses can provide a necessary form of treatment proven to help them. These mattresses reduce pressure on weight-bearing areas and reduce skin moisture.

There is yet another variety of medical mattresses that are known as alternating pressure mattresses. They provide the benefits of a low air loss mattress, while also aiding in circulation. They are designed in a manner that allows for inflation and deflation of air cells, thereby shifting a person's weight gently, preventing constant pressure on vulnerable bedsores. This type of mattress helps keep lung secretions and other body fluids moving and usually has side perimeters to prevent patients from rolling off the mattress.

The critical factor that works in terms of hospital mattresses is bed sores. Many cases across the world point out the problem. Free circulation of air is necessary when one has bedsores due to resting in bed for extended times. Quality airflow in the mattress also helps to prevent sweating that can affect the skin in the long run to people who spend a lot of time in bed.

A medical air mattress is also ideal for patients with delicate skin who spend most of the time in bed. Low air loss mattresses, together with alternating mattresses, can help in the treatment and prevention of pressure ulcers. However, their technologies significantly differ, but they serve the same purpose.

A low airflow mattress is designed to blow air through the spaces in the air cylinders and cover. The movement of the air is significant in that it keeps the skin dry, and it is ideal for people who sweat at night. The airflow also helps to relieve pressure so the body can remain comfortable.

Factors To Consider When Choosing a Hospital Mattress

Thus now that we know the difference between the regular and the unique medical mattress, we can move to the next aspect that is purchasing. If you want to choose a hospital mattress for a patient, there are mainly three factors

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that you should consider. These include the health of the patient, budget as well as the size of the mattress. There are different types of hospital beds and mattresses as well as customer reviews that can give you information about the best mattress to buy.

Additionally, there are a few factors that one might consider before making the purchase.

What is the need for cleaning: frequent or infrequent?

For entirely bed-ridden patients, a mattress with anti-microbial covers and seams is a must - for both the patient's and care-giver's health. Many hospital mattresses on the market currently meet this requirement. One should also look for mattresses and covers which are waterproof and stain-resistant.

What is the duration of the mattress: short-term or long-term?

An essential factor is dependent on the prognosis, how long will the mattress be in use, a patient can use long-term, as in cases of chronic or degenerative conditions. Or, the patient may simply need a more comfortable option for a period of recovery from illness or injury.

In any of these circumstances, budget and cost is a worthy consideration. Clearly, if the mattress will only serve a temporary need, it is wise to weigh the cost against features so users don't overspend on something they will not use in the long run

How mobile is the patient? Is the person using the bed going to spend

The medical mattresses are specially crafted, keeping in mind the needs and requirements of the patients, and hence they are priced higher. Quality medical mattresses are worth the value for money

12 hours on the bed or more?

If the answer is more, then, buying a right mattress is a necessity and not an option, in that case, more care needs to be taken in matching the appropriate type to avoid bedsores, ulcers, and skin shearing.

If the patient is going to spend the majority of their waking hours in bed, an innerspring mattress is not the right choice. A foam mattress that distributes weight evenly would be an ideal choice then. An even better option would be a low air loss or alternating pressure mattress. These do the best job of preventing bedsores and skin shearing.

How is the patient, restless or at ease?

Some hospital mattresses have perimeter guards for added protection against a patient rolling or falling off of the mattress. (For patients who are at high risk for

this, hospital bed guard rails are also advisable.)

Usually, the restlessness in a patient is a factor of shearing. When the skin rubs against the mattress and gets stuck there, decreasing blood circulation, the result is skin injury below the surface, and eventually, a visible sore. This is shearing. It can be pretty painful and even more tragic if the patient is unable to express due to medical reasons. For restless patients, a smooth mattress cover specifically meant to prevent shearing is recommended.

What else do I need to know about purchasing a medical mattress?

Selecting a medical mattress for a person means considering matters of comfort, health, and budget. Even with plenty of information, it's not always easy. So that you are not forced to rush into a decision, it's best to take an input of a medical professional.

Let's talk about money

Unlike traditional mattress that comes at an affordable price and a range of prices, medical mattress stand out in that regards. Since these mattresses have been specially crafted, keeping in mind the needs and requirements of the patients, they are priced at a higher range. Yet, what is essential to understand about a medical mattress is the need it matches. Patients typically are very vulnerable, and a good mattress that allows



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them to relax and have comfort goes a long way in getting them back into shape.

Good quality medical mattresses are worth the value for money since they have a particular design to cater to patients with skin break-down. The cushions are also suitable for patients who spend more time in bed. A high-quality mattress is also durable, and it can last for a long time should you decide to buy it. There are a variety of economical mattresses that can satisfy your needs as long as you know what you want. It is good to choose something that will work for you if you have any preferences.

In addition to the cost factor, one must also consider other factors like shipping and delivery options after buying a medical mattress. Many mattress companies offer convenient services to customers and deliver all purchased goods within a specific period. One can quickly obtain this information from the company's website before making the purchase.

The other aspect one should wary be about pertains to warranty and returns. Unlike other mattresses, medical mattresses are unique because patients use them. Thus, because there is a hygiene and cleanliness issue involved, therapeutic mattresses have different conditions in terms of returns, etc.

Finally, medical mattresses used

in the hospitals are standardized for a specific size and fit. There is a sort of uniformity for the hospital beds. In case these mattresses are being bought for home use, it would be much advisable to buy a hospital bed too, as it will be sturdy enough to bear the weight of the bedding and the patient.

Position the product

Medical mattresses have been in high demand these times. But a crisis can also be viewed as an opportunity by unscrupulous elements. Take the case of Arihant Mattress that advertised a "coronavirus-resistant" mattress placed in a regional daily in March. This mattress was also anti-fungal, dust mite proof, waterproof and so on, including a five-year warranty on the product. The catchphrase of the advert read, "*Anti coronavirus mattress pe soyega India toh badhega India (India will progress if India sleeps on this anti-coronavirus mattress)*".

The mattress was priced at Rs. 15,000 as much as a high-grade branded mattress are. The very day the mattress was advertised, it went viral on social media. Hundreds and thousands of posts on the mattress got the attention of the authorities that got into action over the claim. Police officials registered a complaint; the mattress manufacturer was booked for violating the law under various acts, including the Disaster Management Act. The Advertising Standards Council of India (ASCI) has also reached out to the advertiser, which has since agreed to withdraw its claims.

Over the past three months of the COVID-19 outbreak, we have seen a distinct shift in the behavior of the people. As the numbers of infected patients rise across the country, so will the customer wariness and fear. Right now, people are holding on to decisions, be it purchase of investment because of the epidemic. In these times, it is incumbent on the company to provide the necessary support in terms of reassurance about the steps that are followed to make the product safe.

Since people are also concerned about the functions of the brands, it is pertinent for mattress brands to display their CSR side during these testing times. Companies should come forward and announce donations for setting up of medical hospitals. There must be a proactiveness to be part of a movement. Since the mattress is at the very heart of the medicinal solution, mattress manufacturers must be more vocal about their products, services and the impacts.

Take advantage

Also, existing players should consider the viability of the market and explore launching products. Beyond the scope of hospitals and patients, even general people will be keen to buy a mattress that is anti-fungal and antibacterial in nature. Thus a new line that incorporates all these aspects could be a success with the users. In addition to launching new products, mattress manufacturers should also be more vocal about how they are local. Ever since the Prime Minister Narendra Modi has given a mantra to promote domestic manufacturing in India, namely be "*vocal for local*" mattress companies should seize this opportunity to display their local manufacturing strength and acumen.

In the end, medical mattress as a product line will grow over the coming years. Thanks to the COVID-19 epidemic, people have realized the need for a medical mattress and how it can be useful not only at hospitals but also at homes. Even when the outbreak becomes a thing of the past, these learnings will stay. **CT**



HOME is now a priority

As people start to rediscover the importance of sleep, players like Kurlon are wide awake in tapping the new wave of demand - with products and service models that make sense to the 'new normal' customer

The crisis has brought a lot of good shifts for the industry. During this period, Kurlon reflected on some key ramifications of the current set of challenges surrounding the industry, and unveiled new innovative ideas in its strategy. Recently Comfort Times team sat with Kurlon Leadership team to understand the new initiatives to share it with the readers. **Ms. Jyothi Pradhan** - Head - Corporate Strategy; **Mr. Ritesh Shroff** - CFO; **Mr. CVL Narayana** - SBU Head - Retail & E Com; **Mr. Roozan Dotivala** - SBU Head - International Brands and **Mr. Ravi Prasad** - CPO (Chief Product Officer), explained how constant efforts to revitalize the space has helped in adding new strengths to the industry. Kurlon Leadership team also shared their reckoning of the made-in-India momentum and helped us to understand exactly why it is a significant shift for the industry.

Q Can you share some views or experiences on the impact of COVID-19 on the industry?

From a global perspective, as per feedback from our global partners, home and health has taken a priority - now more than ever - which has made people realize the importance of sleep. Though it is too early to come to a conclusion, the present trends show a good drift for the industry.

Q What happens once the situation improves? What kind of consumer behavior we might expect ahead?
Health and hygiene would be a priority. Standard operating procedures have been laid down and we are ensuring them at all levels.

Q How important are niche offerings - specially around health?
We have always tried to evolve on that front. Impeccability is always our focus. We want to meet the new set of expectations in a fast way. We have incorporated innovative ideas related to health, sleep, new designs etc. We launched two impressive products last year. We are working on anti-viral offerings now. We are working with some partners globally.

Q Any observations on the expectations of customers - specially with the advent of online channels?

Reliability and friendly service are primary customer needs. Of course, expectations have changed - innovation, data protection and personalization are gaining strength now. Selling a product is going to change. It would now be about selling a service - the paradigm will change in a marked way. Omni-channel service would be the dominant trend.

Q How does omni-channel address customers who either want only online service or who lean more towards offline models?

It is a win-win situation. A lot of growth is coming from increased usage from multiple areas, including rural markets. Retailers can take advantage of online models for better penetration. Yes, we need to be present in both segments if customers prefer one mode over another. Both online and offline models cater to different kinds of customers. Expanding beyond one's market would be accelerated with online support. Online also helps to improve logistics and visibility for better customer experiences.

Q Any lessons that we can pick from international counterparts?

The crisis has highlighted the dependence and fragility of supply chains all over the world. It has brought to light the great dependence on China. Some Indian companies have been sensitised to these risks and most of them are now in progress on the path to addressing the risks. The government's push for local focus is also a good lesson for Indian players. We should also note the importance of automation for a labour-intensive scenario like this and also for increasing productivity. In international set-ups, automation is a part and parcel



of the process. It is also moving to other parts of their businesses. This is what we are learning from international peers to emerge successfully from the crisis.

Q How much change has been experienced on the aspects of innovation and collaboration?

We have invested in advanced technologies. Nano-spring, Cool-gel and innovative latex usage etc are strong areas. We have developed a lot of innovations. In many spaces, other countries are looking at us for learning innovations. We are working on multiple projects and will roll out some interesting offerings by the end of the year. As to partnerships, we are already working with lot of players. Partnerships are the new norms of business and collaborations are what help us to leverage new strengths. They help to quicken the pace of innovation and get us to our goals faster than what we would do if we went alone. We are working with other partners in supply chain, technology and product development areas. We are keen to collaborate with people inside and outside the industry for the right thing and at the right time.

Q What about the manufacturing and machinery side? Like AI, IoT or other advancements that you are

Constant efforts to revitalize the mattress industry, help in adding new strengths. The Made-in-India initiation provides the momentum and helps to understand exactly why or why not it would be a significant shift for the industry.

considering or embracing?

Yes a lot of them. Automation is a strong direction for us. IoT is also the buzzword. We are getting into it as well as in innovations in durability and testing areas. These machines are also getting developed in India now which helps on the affordability and India-made side as well. As to collaboration, we find them useful in accelerating innovations.

Q What changes have been observed on the retail side - any challenges worth considering?

The Internet has brought in a new set of audience and expectations.

But today's customer is much more educated and informed now. This customer needs the amalgam of trust, knowledge and intelligent education instead of traditional sales-talk. The customer wants involvement in the decision-making process. They have to be provided detailed and helpful information instead of mere sales features. The retailers and the chain have to make sure they make realistic promises - whether it is about delivery time or quality. False promises won't hold anymore. High levels of service and an open communication attitude will do.

Q Are you excited about the Made-in-India thrust? Is it going to be easy or challenging, for this industry, in particular?

Machines in the mattress manufacturing space have always been imported. But replacement parts - that is an area where we depended on local talent. This new push will help us become self-reliant in a comprehensive way. We will expand strengths of local players in a good way in the coming future.

Would it be easy? Well, Quality with affordability is India's edge. Now with Government's push we need to utilise India's talent. We can get very-very attractive for both Indian and international markets. **CT**

ISPF Sleep Trends Survey Report

Sleeping well in the COVID-19 Times!

The COVID-19 global pandemic has profoundly impacted our world. Everything that we know has been disrupted. As India emerges out of the shadow of the epidemic, there's a need to realign our lifestyles and assess the impact on our lives.

These are really anxious times. People are worried about their health, well-being and livelihoods. WFH might sound easy, but it is not. There is a vast majority of people that are actually working a lot more than they earlier did, simply because they are working from home. While a natural fear response is understandable, too much anxiety can be problematic. Instead of spending time and energy worrying, why not channel that energy into what one can control — self-care. Focusing on sleep is a natural fit for working on self-care, as we know that getting enough sleep can benefit the immune system.

During sleep, your immune system releases proteins called cytokines, some of which help promote sleep. Certain cytokines need to increase when you have an infection or inflammation, or when you're under stress. Sleep deprivation may decrease the production of these protective cytokines.

To truly understand the scale and shift in sleep patterns brought on by the COVID-19 Epidemic. We at ISPF decided to do a dip-stick survey in the month of June on how Indians are coping up with the epidemic in terms of sleep-cycle. The survey was a limited one comprising of close to 50 individuals comprising a cross-section of views. The respondents hailed from different cities of India to represent a diverse view.

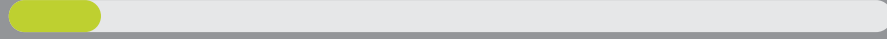
This sleep survey does not claim to be an authoritative representation, but rather insightful guidance to how things are panning out.



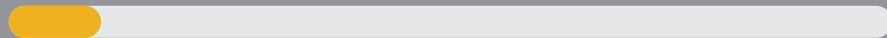
Sleep and Mattress

Do you think there is a correlation between good sleep and mattress?

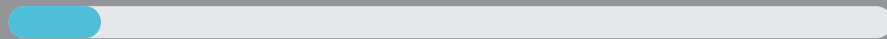
Yes -- 60%



No - 20%



Not Sure - 20%

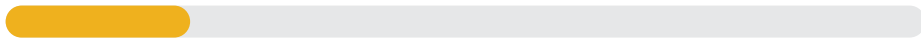


Are you happy with your current mattress or looking to change to a new one?

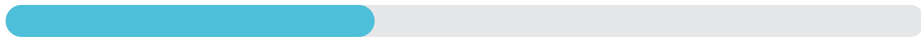
Happy with Current - 30%



Intend to Change - 50%

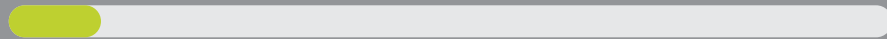


Not Sure -- 20%

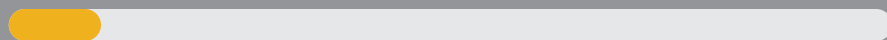


When do you intend to invest in a new mattress for better sleep?

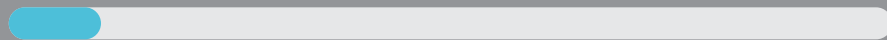
In One Month -- 10%



In Six Months -- 40%

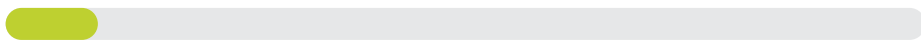


After Pandemic -- 50%

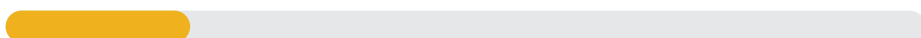


How will you make a purchase of the mattress?

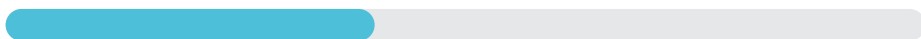
Retail Showroom -- 30%



Online - 40%



Either one - 30%



Insight

People are now getting aware about the correlation between sleep and mattress. And hence, they are keen to change the bedding. But they are holding off the purchase for fear of the COVID Pandemic. This is evident from the fact that a majority of respondents stated that they will wait for the pandemic to end to make a new purchase.

SleepFact

Mattresses used to have ropes tied around them to keep the bed from sagging. So, "sleep tight," actually meant tightening the ropes.

“Over the past couple of months, I have realised the need to change the mattress, waiting for the epidemic to get over to invest in a new one”

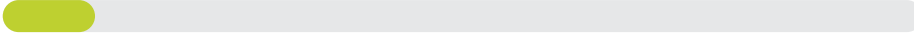


Nelson Johny,
Mumbai

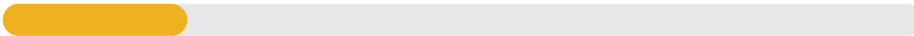
Sleep Approach

What has your sleep pattern been over the last 3 months?

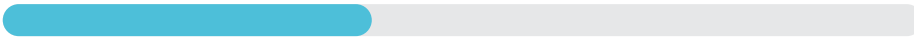
Very Good - 10%



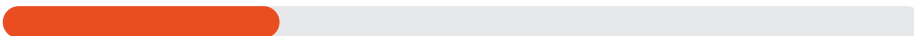
Somewhat Good - 20%



Not Very Good - 40%



Bad - 30%

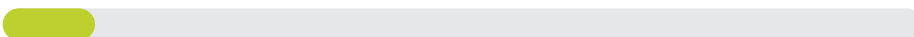


Are you sleeping longer now, than you did before lockdown?

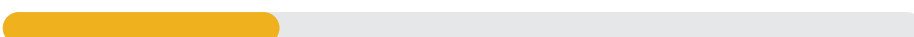


How many hours of sleep are you getting?

Less than 6 — 10%



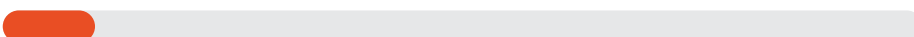
6-8 Hours — 30%



More than 8 Hours — 50%



Don't know — 10%



Insight

This is an interesting aspect of the lockdown, while people are technically sleeping more, they are not really happy with their sleep pattern. This indicates increased stress and anxiety levels. Thus, while people do have more time on hand, it does not necessarily translate into good sleep.

SleepFact

A giraffe only needs 1.9 hours of sleep a day, whereas a brown bat sleeps upwards of 19.9 hours a day.

“ Sometimes it is harder to sleep when you have so many things happening around you in terms of the epidemic. Even if you want to, it is not that easy. ”

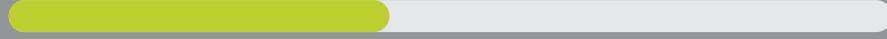


Rahul Krishnaswamy,
Pune

Sleep and Health

How often have you felt the following when you wake up in the morning?

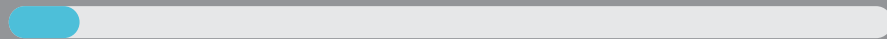
Tired: 43%



Refreshed: 49%



Don't know: 8%



Insight

One of the things that have tremendously increased in these times is watching entertainment. People are watching a lot more TV, and OTT Apps like Netflix, Primevideo, etc. these days

Do you take a quick nap at work?

Yes: 11%



No: 67%



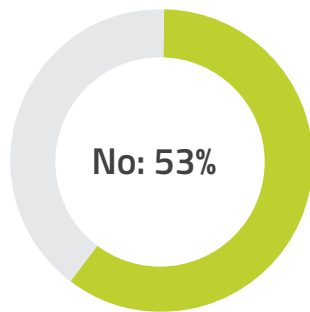
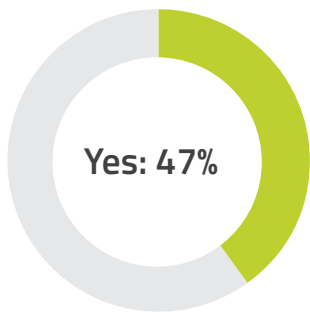
I control sleep: 22%



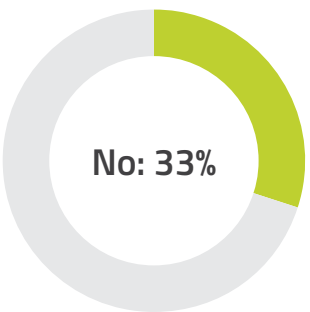
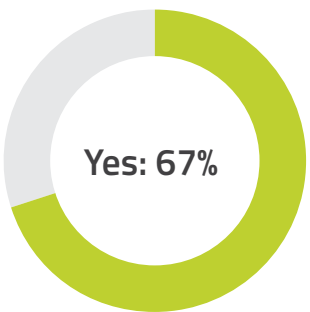
SleepFact

Dysania is the state of finding it hard to get out of the bed in the morning

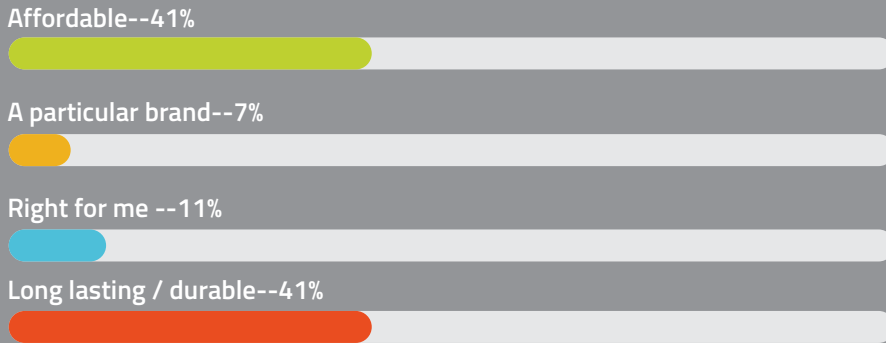
Do you suffer from back pain?



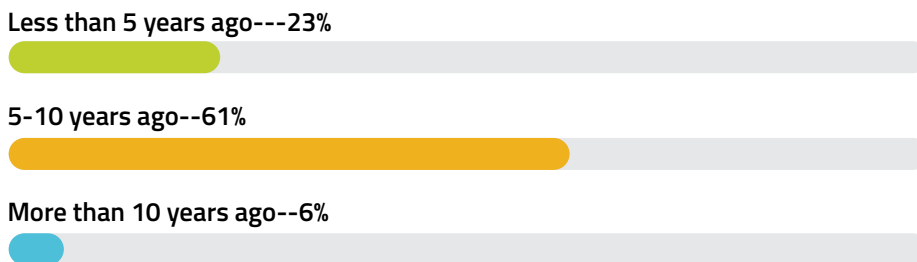
Do you snore?



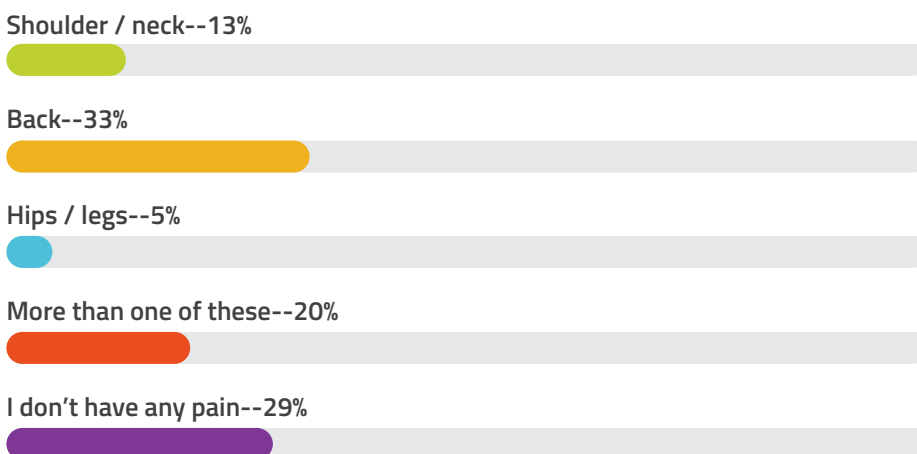
My next mattress needs to be



The last time I purchased a new mattress was



If pain disturbs my sleep, it is in my

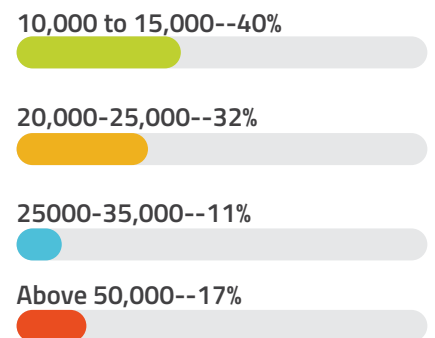


“With the sheer amount of content that is releasing on OTT platforms, it is hard not to resist. Now a days, I spend more time on watching content on OTT and sleeping some extra hours”



Bhushan Makhija, Hyderabad

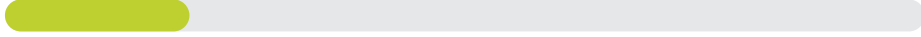
An ideal mattress will cost me



Sleep Type

Do you wake up easy from sleep?

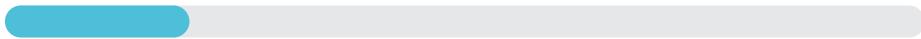
Yes -- 20%



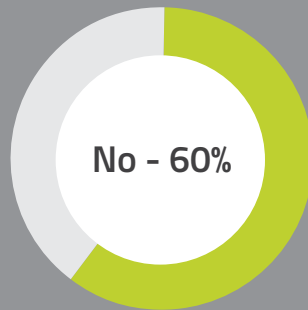
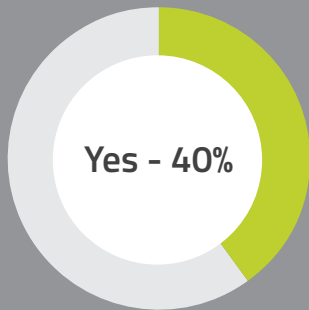
No -- 60%



Don't Know -- 20%

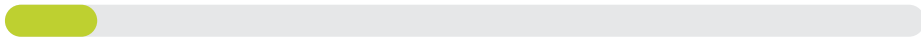


Do you have vivid dreams when you sleep?

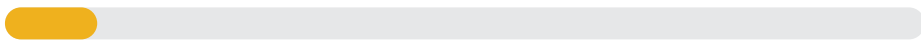


Do you get nightmares when you sleep?

Yes -- 10%



No -- 10%



Don't Know -- 80%



Insight

Sleeping patterns are very critical indicators of how well or how bad has your sleep been. The thumb rule is simple to evaluate sleep if after sleeping undisturbed for 8 hours, you still wake restless on waking up, consult a doctor

SleepFact

Within 5 minutes of waking, 50% of dreams are forgotten.

“ Dream state is pretty tough to get in the sleep. Sleeping more is not an option, you only feel lazy or groggy when you get up ”



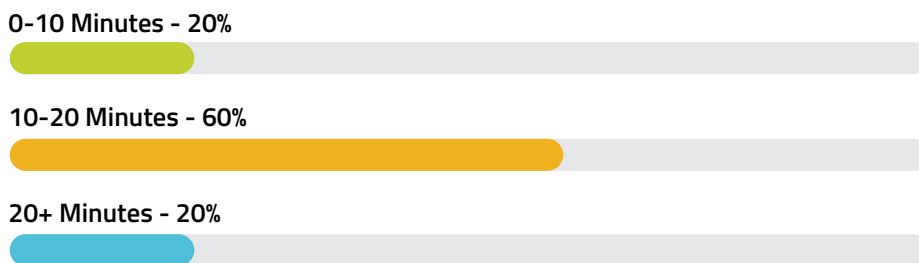
Hemant Sonak,
Mumbai

Sleep and Technology

Are you currently using any technology to track your sleep?



How many minutes do you typically spend on your phone before going to sleep?



Do you usually wake up with an alarm clock?



Insight

Technology is playing a critical role in our lives. It has invaded almost all the functions, people are using tech gadgets to track their sleep, which is good. But then, sleeping with mobile is not a great habit as it leads to sleep deprivation.

SleepFact

Sleep deprivation will kill you more quickly than food deprivation.

“ Using my fitness band, I am able to judge what is my sleeping pattern. Based on the data from the watch, I am able to discern how my mood will play out today, will I be groggy or cheerful ”

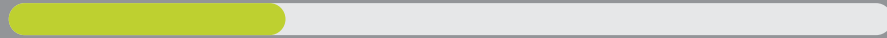


Ajay Sartape, Thane

Sleep Help

On an average, how many times do you wake up during the night?

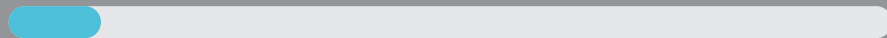
None - 30%



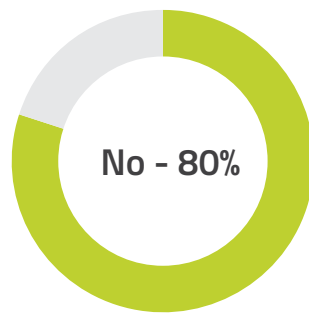
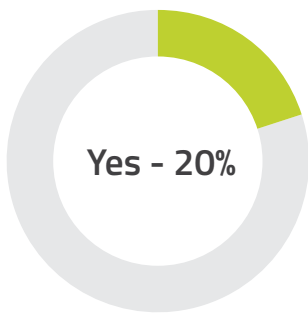
1-4 Times - 60%



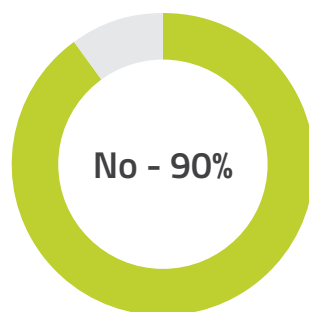
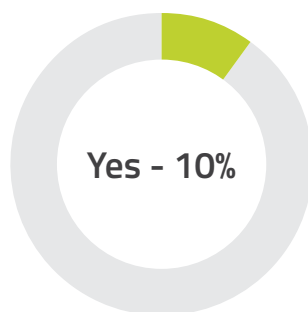
4 - 8 Times - 10%



Are you taking any medical aid for sleeping?



Have you visited a sleep doctor for help?



Insight

Sleep deprivation is not yet considered a serious problem in India. People still tend to undermine their importance or try to self medicate. Just like any other ailment, sleep disorders can be cured by doctors.

SleepFact

Humans are the only mammals that willingly delay sleep.

“ *Specialist help is necessary and required in case of sleep disorder. Just like any other function of our body, sleeping is an essential one. If the body is unable to do it, medical intervention is required* ”



Sudish Balan,
Mumbai

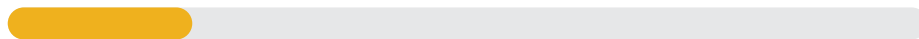
Sleep & Work

How has been your productivity?

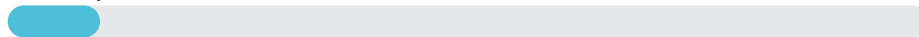
Very Good -40%



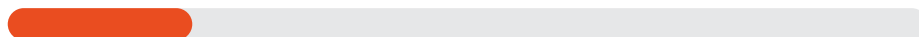
Somewhat Good -20%



Not Very Good - 10%



Bad - 20%

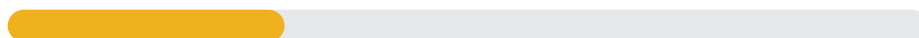


What is the first thing you do after waking up?

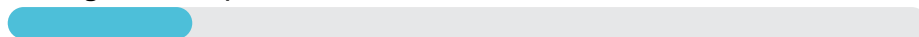
Check mobile for messages-- 50%



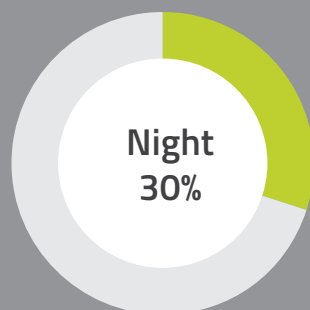
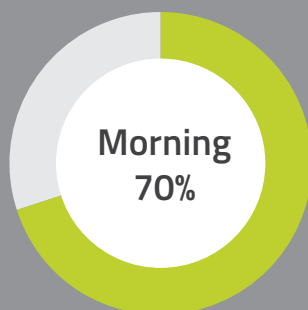
Think in Isolation - 30%



Nothing Particularly -- 20%



Do you enjoy working in Night or Morning?



Insight

With the WFH, work has become an intrinsic part of our life. people are glued to work all the time. This can increase the amount of stress that is felt by the employees.

SleepFact

The record for the longest period without sleep is 11 days.

“ It is important to strike a balance between work and life. Before the lockdown there was much emphasis laid on Work Life balance, the epidemic should not derail us from the agenda. ”



Anish Kanchan,
Bangalore



Baby steps

It has been more than three months now, as India has faced the COVID-19 crisis. Lakhs of people have been infected, and thousands have died. The sad part is that the crisis is not behind us; the numbers continue to rise. The outbreak has severely impacted the economy of India. Businesses have been trying to stay afloat in these times. While April and May were lost in lockdowns, there has been curtailed and measured activity in the subsequent months.

While on the outward, things do seem to be returning to normal, the fact remains, customers are still anxious and worried. The economic downturn has impacted millions of Indians, many having lost their jobs, or their businesses facing a shut-down. Add to it the overall set of worries about the spread of the virus itself. As a result, people are avoiding venturing out, especially in the bigger cities like Mumbai, Delhi or Chennai. The result is evident; there has been a drastic decline in sales for almost all the businesses, including the mattress industry. The case with the mattress industry is a little peculiar. Considering the size and spread of the bedding, the worries are a bit more enhanced. As a result, new sales have dwindled.

Even when the customers are making the purchase, they are looking

at value for money. Monetary factors have become a bit more critical in this crisis. As a result, people are looking at mattresses that are in the mid-range rather than going all out for luxury items. Also, there seems to be a bigger hunger for deals at the moment; people are looking for discounts and spot-deals on purchases. While remembering that discounting is terrible for the business in the long-run, this desire for discounts could be leveraged by retail shop owners on a momentary basis. It is essential to convince the buyer on the value of the purchase, rather than dwelling more on the price.

A ray of hope

Another factor that could work in favour of the mattress industry is the new Work From Home (WFH) ethic. With a vast majority of working professionals spending extended hours at their homes and working from them, it is the ripe time for companies to talk about the health benefits of peaceful sleep. And more importantly, about the correlation between healthy sleep and mattress. In our survey, almost 40 percent of the respondents were unaware of the relationship between the mattress and sound sleep. It is high time there was a concerted campaign launched, primarily through the Internet, to draw the correlation. The same could be done through adverts, or articles, infographics

or even viral videos. This could be best the time to do that.

Also, it is a known fact that mattresses are not a priority spend in India, even though we spend the vast majority of our life sleeping on them. With the WFH model in place, people are sleeping more than their usual hours, and this is coercing them to reevaluate their beddings. In our surveys, almost 70 percent of the respondents expressed their displeasure with the bedding and a vast majority indicating that they wish to replace their old worn-out mattress with a new one.

The silver lining to the dark clouds is that people are waiting for the pandemic to end and make a purchase. Almost 50% of the respondents stated that they wish to replace their current mattress once the epidemic is over. This should be a heartening news for the industry. Just like everyone else, the mattress and bedding companies in India are also facing economic hardships, but this will all pass away once the sword hanging over our heads vanishes. So, the message from the survey is pretty clear; stay firm, dig deeper and prepare for the long-haul. As they say, tough times don't last, tough ones do. This epidemic will pass away, as well. Till then, it's essential not to lose hope or give up the fight. **CT**

Work-from-home: The evolution towards a saner lifestyle

Due to the pandemic COVID-19 the new era of Work-from-home culture has begun. We are trying to analyse the pros and cons, the impact of this new necessity-built culture. Also take a look at the impact on the productivity of a person due to this lifestyle.



Work-from-home or WFH is not an invention of the COVID-19 epidemic. But, undeniably, the world did discover and embrace this work-mechanism because of the global pandemic. As cities after cities across the world went under lock-downs and mandatory quarantines, WFH became a necessity, rather than luxury.

For close to two months, millions of workers across the globe have been confined to their homes and working over the Internet. WFH has also entailed many adjustments not only on the part of the offices but also in the case of the employees.

Conventional thinking states that WFH is not a feasible option. It has long been held that employees that work from the office vis-a-vis those that do remote working are more productive. Employees at their desks or workstations not caught up in other stuff do more work. This belief ignores the amount of disturbance that is encountered in the office set up. From tea-breaks and smoke-breaks to stretchy meetings and socializing, all these factors add up and bring down productivity.

On the other hand, if done properly, working from home is not necessarily bad. Distractions at home can be managed and reduced. In fact, if done properly an employee working from home could be more productive than the one at the office because of a number of factors like fewer distractions, lesser stress due to commuting, comfort at home. Employees that work-from-home are fresher and willing to take more on their plate than the stressed ones at the office that complain of overwork.

Yet, even though the productivity gains from home-working are high, a survey by the Society of Human Resource Management (SHRM) stated that 62 percent of remote workers say they're afraid that their onsite colleagues don't think they are working as hard as them.

A couple of years ago, an extensive

Looking at the present COVID-19 situation Work-from-home has changed its status from luxury to necessity. This has also resulted in increase of productivity of employees.

study done by FlexJobs had thrown some very interesting insights into WFH. Here are a few:

75 percent of people say they are more productive working remotely due to fewer distractions.

97 percent say a job with flexibility would have a positive impact on their overall quality of life.

When asked to choose which types of flexibility they're most interested in, survey respondents said, telecommuting was the biggest draw (86 percent).

Is Home the New Office?

The whole work-from-home movement has been necessitated as a response to the COVID-19 pandemic. While WFH or remote working did exist for quite many, it was always on the sidelines, and quite frankly it was elitist; namely, only a few hope to be a non-office employee. It is only in the past couple of years that a serious deliberation has been underway on the utility or futility of WFH. As office rentals shoot through the roof, companies are realistically considering the benefits that accrue out of remote working.

The good thing about remote working is that not only can a good resource be deployed, who otherwise would have been lost out to the system. Also, the cost is significantly lower. Keeping aside the administrative savings on a remote worker, in terms of light, power, and IT spend, the employees that work-from-home are also open to working at a

lesser amount than their onsite peers. This can result in significant savings for any company that decides to opt for work-from-home.

In this regard, the big question that is foremost in the minds of everyone is whether the current arrangement that has enabled WFH is just a response to the crisis or is it going to last for good? Will companies continue to promote WFH, or will they revert back to earlier conventional ways?

By all indications the COVID-19 virus is going to stay with us for a long time, and by that logic so will remote working for WFH. Many companies have already announced that they will continue with WFH even after the lockdown has been lifted. This has been done primarily to safeguard employees and also for business continuity. If the offices are running in a remote and onsite model, there is very little chance of disruption if there are any more peaks in the case that necessitate a lockdown.

Two of India's biggest IT companies TCS and Infosys have made bold assertions regarding WFH. TCS announced that a whopping 75 percent of its 4.48 lakh employees globally will work-from-home by 2025. Meanwhile, Infosys stated that initially, 50 percent of employees would come to the office, and the rest will work-from-home. Moving on, 66 percent will be in the office, but 33 percent will work permanently from home. MNCs like Microsoft and Amazon have already given guidance to their teams to work-from-home till October 2020. Meanwhile, search-giant Google has extended its work-from-home policy for the remainder of 2020.

Thus in many ways, WFH will surely be the "new normal". And home is going to be the new office. This means that we will now have to rethink the distinction between home and office. Typically, home is meant to be a place of relaxation and rest, whereas the office is the place to work. Now, if both of the places coalesce, the employee will need to design the home appropriately to meet the requirements. For instance, most of the work-based interactions

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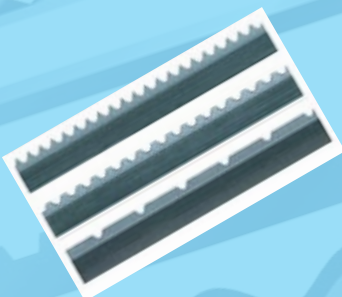
Band Knife Blade

Bandknife Blade

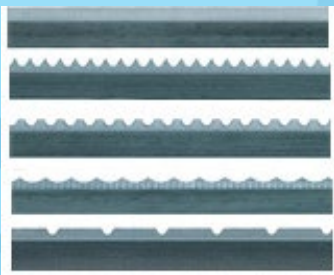


Block Cutter Blade, Vertical Machine Blade, Horizontal & Circular Machine Blade, Peeling Machine Blade, Loper Machine Blade,

CNC Blade



Oscilating Type CNC Blade

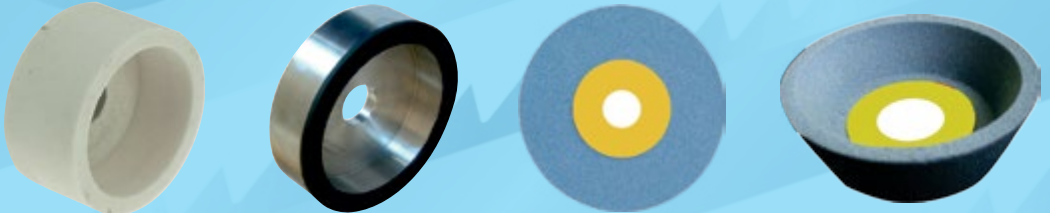


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The Work-From-Home culture does not fit all industries. The industries that need a significant work space, infrastructure can not afford their employees to sit at home.

are conducted over video-conferencing that means individuals need to create an aesthetic corner from which they can connect to their peers. Similarly, many other tweaks are required to make the home “office-ready”; for example, there is the need for high-speed internet connectivity, furniture for office equipment, and other things.

In short, just like companies need to evaluate and tweak their systems to allow remote workers; similarly, employees need to change their homes, making it more amenable for remote working. Considering that the WFH ethic is going to stay relevant for a long time to come, it makes great sense for people to start transitioning to an office-friendly home.

Impact on Office Space

Unquestionably, work-from-home will have a serious and detrimental impact on the real estate sector, especially on the commercial side. As companies double down on WFH, commercial leasing will bear a big brunt. According to news reports, almost half-a-million sq ft of office space is getting vacated due to the epidemic. Many experts consider this to be just the tip of the iceberg, as more and more companies opt for WFH, corporates would be willing to vacate their premises and shift to a cheaper and smaller place. Take the case of IBM; the multinational has multiple small offices across different locations in Bangalore. An employee can choose to work from a location that is closest to his/her home or based upon the meetings. This is called Flexi-working.

Yet, the impact of flexible working



is not going to be as profound as WFH will be. Already some of India’s top professional corporates in the information technology (IT) space are thinking about surrendering a part of their rented office space as they start to implement work-from-home for their employees even post lockdown. This is largely due to issues related to safety and productivity. With the government guidelines on maintaining social distancing at the office, namely, keeping a ‘six feet’ distance between co-workers and also to have non-essential employees working from home, the corporates are really evaluating if the arrangement could be more long-term.

Also, bear in mind, most of the corporate offices are in high-brow commercial suburbs; the leasing rentals of this place can be pretty daunting. Moving to a WFH is not only savings in terms of administrative cost but also in Capex. If the number of onsite employees is reduced companies will be able to reduce their real-estate footprint. No wonder companies are looking at that option in all earnestness. There are news reports that Cognizant transported some 70,000 desktops to its staff working from home and maybe now looking to give up the commercial space occupied by these employees. Then, Clix Capital which has nearly 600

employees — is planning to vacate half of its office space. Meanwhile, RBL Bank too has asked its admin team to pilot WFH models which could help it eventually give up one large office space.

Yet, WFH is not a one-size-fits-all; namely, there are many business functions and verticals that require employees in office space. A significant proportion of work does require professional infrastructure and cannot be shunted into employee homes. In that sense, big corporate headquarters will still be relevant. The cropping will be on the edges first. So, companies that maintain offices in tier 2 or tier 3 cities will be inclined to shift them to a WFH model. In that way, WFH is like a work-in-progress, companies are evaluating the possibilities and the savings, even as they experiment and learn.

The impact of WFH on the real estate sector will be evident in the days to come, as more and more offices move to that model, it goes without saying that there will be a sort of realignment from the leasing side, in terms of lower rentals, or attractive discounts. These could be the measures that could be employed to attract companies.

Residential homes get bigger

While the corporates are looking to cut on their footprint, the employees

Sleep also plays a major role in employees' productivity even in Work-from-home culture. A healthy sleep stabilizes the brain and increases the immunity. The mattress plays significant role in WFH environment.



are looking at increasing theirs. Till date, there was a distinct segregation between work and life. Office space was for work, and home space was for living. Since commuting to and fro to the office can be taxing, people tend to live as close to offices as much as their home loans would allow. This would lead to an issue of population density, resulting in higher prices for homes and lesser space. But to avoid the inconvenience of travelling, people would be ready to make that compromise.

Now, if that need is curtailed, there is no need to buy cramped homes in the cities, and people can easily work out of the periphery or satellite cities. This way, the pressure on the cities is diffused, and people are able to lead a more relaxed life.

WFH will force people to consider setting up an "office space" in their homes. Typically, our homes are divided into living rooms, bedrooms, study rooms, kitchen, etc. Generally, the study room or the library is set up in a casual manner, to enable relaxation; thus, it can't function as home-office. A specific corner or a room would need to be dedicated for the office, where all the calls could be taken, the lighting is perfect, the furniture is good, the connectivity is alright, etc. Essentially, this means that we will need more space in our homes, space for an office.

This need for extra space, coupled

with lower prices of real estate could result in a boom in the residential space. *"The work-from-home concept may become the next fulcrum for home-buying decisions, where the walk-to-work option had held the longest sway,"* says Anuj Puri, Chairman - ANAROCK Property Consultants. *"This, and millennials' new-found preference for buying rather than renting homes, are among the most prominent new residential real estate trends of the COVID-19 era. With the rise of the WFH culture, many may now prefer to live in more spacious and cost-effective homes in less central areas. While sufficient supply currently exists in most of the peripheries, this new demand will eventually also dictate fresh supply. Bigger homes, affordable prices and more generous open spaces in the peripheral areas will draw demand from tenants and buyers alike,"* Puri adds.

Thus, while the commercial market may see a negative impact in the medium term, the contrary might be true for the residential market. As long as the basics are right, like electricity, water and Internet connectivity, people would not be disinclined to move to the outskirts of the cities, if it allows them convenience and helps them cut the cost of living.

Refurbishing the House

Alright, now that we all agree that WFH is a reality and here to stay. Let's figure out how to make it work. As mentioned earlier, space is an important

aspect. Once that is resolved, come the other steps. Here are as they go:

Technology first

WFH is enabled and strengthened on the basis of technology. Simple things like high-bandwidth connectivity, decent laptop/desktop, etc. become critical during WFH. But even as the main things are worked upon, don't forget the little things, like mouse or keyboard, webcam, headphones, and other things that make WFH easier. Make sure all of them are in good supply.

Licensed software

In India, one of the biggest problems with home users is software piracy. Typically, the home users are most prone to use pirated software, and this makes WFH a bigger security issue. Hence, employees would need to install licensed and secured software on their machines, before starting off with WFH.

Don't forget it's home

People, especially men, have a tendency to function at extremes, they will either treat space like home or office. But a home-office is both; thus you will have the usual distractions, the kids wanting help with the homework, the dog wanting to be taken out for a walk, and so on. Don't be disturbed by these; learn to embrace them as integral aspects of WFH.

The Design aspect

There's an adage that states don't judge

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a book by its cover. Yet, that's not how real life works. How you are attired, what's in the background, etc. says a lot about you. Thus, it is important to ensure the background is appropriate to your personality.

▪ Manage expectations

It is very pertinent to realize your strength and weakness, not only as an individual but more so as a worker. Are you the social type that needs constant company? Or are you the loner, who works in isolation? Based on your characteristics and working style, you could set the expectations with the seniors at the office.

By undertaking these measures, the home can be readied for WFH. It is critical to remember that WFH is not a privilege or entitlement; it isn't something that is gifted or can be taken away. The responsibility to ensure WFH works is incumbent on both the management and the employees.

Sleep tight for better WFH

In the entire conundrum about working from home or resuming work at the office, we should not forget one important aspect. The COVID-19 epidemic is still hovering over us, and we need to safeguard ourselves. One of the critical aspects of healthy living is to sleep well. The adage, early to sleep, early to rise, makes a man healthy,

wealthy and wise, is still relevant today. Though thanks to lockdown we are confined to our homes and now have the opportunity to sleep and rest more, but a lot many individuals take the extra hours saved as a gift and use it intelligently, like spending it on some online classes or acquiring new skills.

Also, good sleep is necessary for a healthy body. It is amply proven that a healthy sleep stabilizes the brain and increases immunity, and hence sleep is a critical aspect of our well-being. Even those unfortunate cases that contract the virus they are asked to rest and sleep as much as they can for the body to recover.

But, it is important to understand the difference between good sleep that is rejuvenating and trying to sleep that does not really help. Sleep should not be confused with hours on the bed. Good sleep is typically between 6-8 hours. The thumb rule for good sleep is that, if you do not feel energetic and enthused after sleep; it was not a night of good sleep.


One of the primary aspects of good sleep and the one that is most often overlooked is the mattress. We spend almost one-third of our life on a mattress and yet, seldom do we pay attention to it. For the past couple of decades, mattress and bedding manufacturers

have deployed the best in technology and material to create an amazing experience for an individual. Even, if you are not sleep-derived, these mattresses can be the difference between a good-night sleep and a restless one. People who complain about lower back pain, etc. on waking up are in most need of these mattresses.

The good news is that these mattresses are available online, and can be ordered through multiple e-marts or brand websites. The mattress manufacturer companies have been cognizant on the Coronavirus epidemic fears and have undertaken all security measures to ensure that the customers get a safe and secure product.

Thus mattress can be a great support for the WFH movement. During these critical times, when we are doing everything in our homes from work to rest, it can take a toll on our bodies. For instance, people working from home may be unable to follow a schedule, as they did earlier. This could result in an irregular sleeping pattern and take a toll on health. So, just because one has a little more time at hand does not mean that sleep should be taken for granted.

In fact, there are many people who in the normal rigmarole of life, had been unable to catch their forty winks. This can be a great time, to work on their health, catch good sleep, work on fitness et al. Typically in big metros like Mumbai, Delhi or even in Bengaluru, people spend on an average of 3-4 hours in commuting from work to home. In addition to the time spent, it was a stress that would also play a part, like, for instance, you are running to catch a specific suburban train or trying your best to avoid traffic, so as to reach office in time. All these factors all play an important part in our lives, and we never seemed to realize it.

Work-from-home or WFH is a new evolution that brings a sort of stability and sanity in our lives. By properly utilizing it, we can be more productive for our workplace and also happier as who we are. 



Motilal Goel, MD and CEO, Pyare Lal Coir Products Ltd

Seller and Buyer – both struggle with the explosion of ‘choice’

Motilal Goel, MD and CEO, Pyare Lal Coir Products Ltd. in this conversation he takes us through what has changed and what has stayed intact and away from the wrinkles of time about what complications that industry and customers are snowed under.

From 1982 to 2020, Motilal Goel, MD and CEO, Pyare Lal Coir Products Ltd. has come a long way. He started this journey doing everything with his co-founders from scratch – from production to marketing to sales. Today, he is both intrigued and worried about the unnecessary complications that the industry and its customers are snowed under. In this conversation, he takes us through what has changed and what has stayed intact and away from the wrinkles of time.

Q You started in this industry from as early as 1982. What was it like back then? What changes have you seen in all these years and has the journey been easy?

Nothing in life is ever easy. Struggles are an important part of any journey – personal or business. We were four brothers who set up the first plant in Meerut. It was in 1982 and we handled Latex foam then. It was the dominant type in those days. Ours was the few firsts in the industry. We spent eight hours daily. From production to marketing to selling, everything was our job. In 1990, the industry saw the advent of Coir mattresses and slowly PU Foam and other varieties came in. A lot of the raw material for Coir and Latex was

dependent on South India. We decided to set up our own plant in Kerala. Now everything – Coir to rubber – comes from there. We take pride in being the prime suppliers of raw material and having unassailable strengths when it comes to in-house production.

Q Was that a strategic step? It was not an easy one but we wanted this as a strategic advantage. This has now turned into as much as 80 percent raw material usage strength. We make 30,000 to 40,000 mattresses a month, and major production happens in Kerala.

Q You must have seen the mattress business go through so many shifts?

Yes, it used to be just Latex for many years. Then came Coir, and for a long time it was pure Coir. The space later changed to combination and spring mattresses.

Q As a first-generation industry person, what disappoints you or makes you happy when you compare yourself with today’s players?

There is a big shift in business style. Today, every player offers so many formats and so many choices. We also

make 40 to 50 products. Earlier, the time spent on promotion and communication with customers was less. Things were simple back then – for both the seller and the customer. Today, we have so many raw materials, so many formats, and so many varieties and now even online channel has affected the industry. The customer may also be confused with so many options. In those days, even customers focused on a simple purchase and a long shelf life. Every mattress was maintained for at least 10 to 15 years. It was reopened, refilled or repurposed in some way. Today, people want to upgrade to new offerings at a fast pace. The culture of use-and-throw and instant upgrade is a big difference that I see.

Q What do you see when you look ahead? Any advice to peers?

The industry has a bright future for sure. With almost 60 percent of the market still not served by organized players and with so many innovations happening – the customers are shifting to a new curve of demand and modern-format appetite. But I hope that industry players should focus on quality and affordability. Even a low-tier city person or low-income user should be able to enjoy a good product at a reasonable price. **CT**

Mattress Some outlook, some introspection

The future of the mattress industry is as layered as a typical bed – there are some short-term changes and some long-term directions worth making room for



Today would be the best time to look ahead and outline the shape of a future mattress. Whether we look at what type of material we are leaning towards or what type of business models this product would gravitate to, it would be interesting to accommodate the changes right now – when the industry is on an industry cusp – the pre-COVID and the post-COVID landscape.

While the industry would not be spared from the general economic and supply chain impact that the pandemic has wreaked on global businesses, it would be a unique industry when we look at the mix of negative and positive effects of the crisis.

Spending has been hurt but home replenishment and comfort have taken precedence over other areas. This is also a good time for many innovations – specially on the component and manufacturing side – to take deep roots in the average mattress.

Overall Growth Frame

The industry was galloping at a good pace before the pandemic hit its supply and demand side in mixed ways. Let us look at a report from Research and Markets. It looks like the global mattress market had already touched a value of USD 30.3 Billion in 2019. It is being augured that the market value can reach USD 44.0 Billion by 2025. This means a Compounded Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) of 6.2 percent during 2020-2025. Another report – this one by Big Market Research underlines some key changes that are expected between 2020-2026. A prognosis by Technavio shows the mattress market is slated to grow by USD 14.36 billion during 2020-2024. This translates into a CAGR of eight percent during the forecast period.

It is hard to say where would these spikes in demand come from. One easy guess in the times of Dalgona Coffee craze is how people have been nudged towards making their kitchens and homes busier than they ever were. So we can expect that people would spend not just money but time, attention and passion on home improvement projects.

The industry was galloping at a good pace before the pandemic hit its supply and demand side in mixed ways. Let us look at a report from Research and Markets

Zooming on the Asia Pacific home improvement market, we can see that it is projected to grow at a 4.5 percent CAGR from 2019 to 2025. As Global Market Insights explains it, this growth will be due to drivers like – a surge in housing prices in populated cities thanks to rapid urbanization and internal migration. What will also affect this space is the unmistakable shift from house ownership to renting owing to changing job locations. There is also an increased availability of design options now. Interestingly, as Houzz spells out in its third-quarter 2020 renovation barometer (that studies activity among businesses in U.S. construction, architecture and design sectors) the impact of COVID-19 on the home renovation sector from Q2 is hard to miss. With 72 percent experiencing project delays, 66 percent having fewer new business inquiries, and 61 percent facing project cancellations—this has been a period which is still assessed as a significant improvement from previous reports.

This is just one of the many effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. It has been noted that a few industries will face a drop in demand, but there would be many others that stay unscathed and show promising growth opportunities. And mattress industry could be one among them.

The Inside of the Mattress

One strong change that will mark this industry is the choice and design of materials that go into it. So far, an average mattress was all about cotton, foam rubber or an arrangement of coiled springs. Gradually, it started getting

adventurous enough for filling of water, air or any variety of natural fiber.

Another big change should not be that hard to smell – yes, the emergence of a lot of antimicrobial, antifungal and ‘easy to clean’ products. We can see liquid-proof mattresses and hygiene-friendly mattresses dotting the market in a big way ahead. Also segments like hospitals can lead to a spurt in demand and innovation. The need for more beds, isolation comfort and single mattresses from a patient’s comfort perspective would be dominant.

Gearing up

Get ready next for the rise of more and more environmentally-friendly green production. Sustainable production processes and environmentally-friendly materials will be drawing more and more mattress manufacturers in a serious way. The attention on organic or natural materials is going to be strong. Players cannot afford to have harmful substances. Those who can promise manufacture from natural materials instead of synthetic materials would be leading the pack. A good example is the use of Wool - It has the ability to prevent moisture and that is a big factor that spurs the spread of moisture coronavirus. That explains why Serta Simmons Bedding is already busy developing the first antiviral mattress in the U.S. It has inked a partnership with Swiss textile innovation company HeiQ, which brings the technology that imbues textiles with antimicrobial qualities. It was originally designed for use in medical equipment. But now the material has been tested as 99.99 percent effective against COVID-19. The company is already working on certifications from the FDA and the EPA, and the technology could soon be incorporated into as much as 75 percent of its portfolio.

As people keep struggling with other health issues like back and posture-related problems attributed to uncomfortable sleeping surfaces, we might witness enhanced adoption of airbeds, waterbeds and foam-based mattresses. Any offering that brings in superior comfort through even distribution of pressure and body

KEY TAKE-AWAYS

As we can see, five years from now the industry is expected to embrace many big and small changes. Some of them would be stark and some would be incremental. Some of them will evaporate with the end of lockdowns and some of them will continue and gather speed after the crisis is over. It is an interesting time to be in the mattress industry – whether you are a legacy player, a new name, a big name, a small name or a bold entrepreneur. The future, however, would belong to players who tap these shifts early instead of well, just sleepwalking through them.

weight and a health benefit will have a pronounced presence in the market. People will also feel a heavy slant towards customised mattresses that can help a specific user in a specific way in relaxing the spine while sleeping. There would be a deeper use of organic mattresses that are manufactured with natural and environment-friendly raw materials, such as wool, natural latex and organic cotton. These would include organic innerspring mattresses, natural latex mattresses and plant-based memory foam mattresses.

Also remarkable enough is the way a mattress would be served. The bed-in-the-box concept has already garnered a lot of love from disruptive players and customers alike. It has easily turned into this decade's prominent revolution in the mattress industry. This format has made both compression and delivery easy and a spill-over effect of that is the huge growth in online mattress sales. This trend would be accelerated more and more in a time period when people are putting special emphasis on contactless delivery and intensive hygiene efforts.

Speaking of new formats, the advent of smart mattress can now turn into a compelling trend. These are



One change that will mark this industry is the design of materials that go into it. The materials are getting adventurous like filling of water, air or any variety of natural fiber. There is an emergence of antimicrobial, antifungal and 'easy to clean' products

products laced with sensor technology that is specifically designed to monitor the sleep patterns and routines of a user – like tracking how long a person sleeps and the duration of their REM cycles, physiological factors like body temperature, heart rate, and breathing. These products are also becoming augmented with features like firmness settings, surface adjustments, alarms, flexi climate control, and internet connectivity. Reports have pointed at a surge in demand for Smart Mattress in the regions of North America and Europe.

Overall, the global Smart Mattress market stands at 322.6 million USD in 2020. It can hit 6271.6 million USD by the end of 2026. This means a CAGR of 52.2 percent during 2021–2026.

Time for Novel Strains

On one hand, we will see hygiene and technology gaining more and more penetration inside a mattress, but at the same time customers will start asking for more creativity, comfort and customization than they ever did. This is a good time for players to experiment with new categories, ideas, textures, designs and marketing strategies. This is the best time to capture the attention of those users who have started to spend more time on a seat or a bed due to the lockdowns.

As people spend more time at home, new designs and categories would also unfold. One of them is sleepers, specifically seat cushions. So working from home, a customer can enjoy the comfort of a mattress in the balcony, on the patio or at a reading corner in the living room. This will enable these users to convert their bed or chair into an office chair. Sitting and working on a chair for a long period of time will necessitate the intervention of mattress-level comfort in this category. **CT**

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Pankaj Gupta, MD of RP Foam Home Pvt. Ltd.

Online is a new medium for the next phase of growth

Pankaj Gupta, MD of RP Foam Home Pvt. Ltd. tells us how foam based industry is expected to do in the market in the next few years and how the industry should consider online as a new medium to connect with the consumer. He also shares his expertise in high-tier quality standards, European machinery, a rigorous focus on testing and product experience to create the 'Dreams' impact that he is proud of.

Q Can you tell us some highlights of your journey in this industry since 1987. What major shifts and milestones have you experienced?

Since its inception in 1987, RP Foam has become a leading manufacturer of Luxury Mattresses i.e.. Foam, HR Foam Mattress, Memory Foam Mattress, Rebonded, Spring & Bonnell mattress as well as PU foam Mattress like HR, memory and all Technical Foam. We steadily expanded its penetration and garnered substantial market share for Mattress & PU foam. We have manufacturing plants spread over 15 acres producing finest technical foam and other comfort products in the country.

Our Dreams brand is popular among households, hospitality, and institutions.

Having made considerable progress through our journey, we now look forward to continually evolving and satisfactorily serving the rising demand for Mattress & foam and the allied products.

Q Kindly share your views on Foam based mattress industry. How big is the market and what are the growth projections for next 3 years?

Foam based mattress industry is seeing a flat growth this year due to pandemic situations. In the normal circumstances, the industry grows at around 15 percent annually. I feel from next year onwards, we would expect that the industry will come back to its normalcy and we could see a regular growth of 15 percent and above in the next few years.

Q What suggestions do you have for the industry to increase the sales during this pandemic period?

During the pandemic period, industry has realised that on-line has a big potential for sales. Earlier very few mattress brands had on-line presence but now almost all companies want to enter on-line space. I suggest industry should consider on-line as a new medium during this pandemic period to keep up sales and connect with the consumer.

Q How consumer buying behavior has changed in the last six months. What changes are needed from the Retailer to gain his confidence back?

Retailers need to focus on selling quality branded products. In the last few months, consumer is focusing more on quality products. This is evident from the increase of sales in the luxury segment mattress. Retailers need to offer the best quality branded products in his/her stores to get back the confidence of the consumer and increase the sales.

Q What changes are you seeing in the Indian consumer about mattress buying?

Indian consumers are now more cautious in choosing product. Consumers are giving more importance to quality, luxury and hygiene. Earlier price was a major factor for consumers while buying a mattress. Now, consumers are not too price sensitive. Consumers are moving towards the branded mattress market. The demand for customised and luxury mattresses is expected to increase in the coming years. **CT**

Mattress Industry Research Findings

Indian Retail Market Performance- Modern Mattress -Round 3

ISPF organized the 3rd round of market research of Indian Mattress Industry in the quarter of Jan-March 2020. The survey tracked the market size, different channels of distribution along with product mix and brands' market performances.



This is an extensive report that brings to fore many exciting insights about the market- right from the differentiation of the product categories to providing brands' market performance, and so on. One of the many interesting findings is the sectoral analysis that talks about the business potential of channels other

than retail like online, institutional and aggregators.

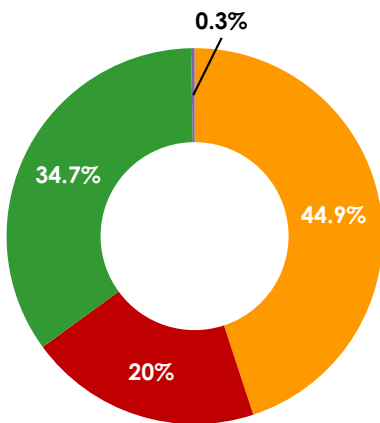
The depth and breadth of this survey can be gauged from the fact that 3166 retail stores in 131 cities were surveyed. A grand total of 37,097 transactions were analyzed across the research centers and the

surveyors even observed and recorded the promotional displays at the different stores.

The survey findings say that the organized market segment size is at 40 percent of the total mattress market in India. Let us look at few other survey findings:

RETAIL SALES

The furniture stores are contributing 45 percent of the overall sales in the market, followed by furnishing stores and mattress stores.

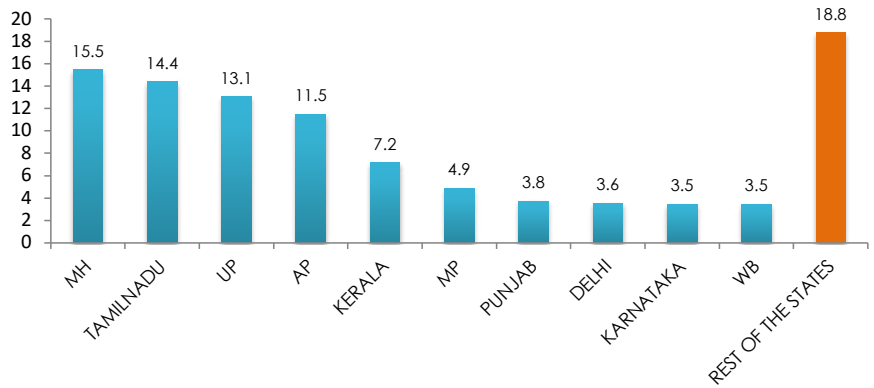


- Furniture
- Furnishing
- Mattress
- Appliance

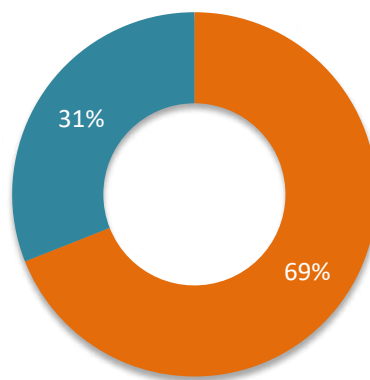
Furniture stores are the major contributors for mattress sales

Statewise contribution

The survey provides state wise sales performance. It also highlights areas with future growth prospects in top 16 capital cities for the retail business.



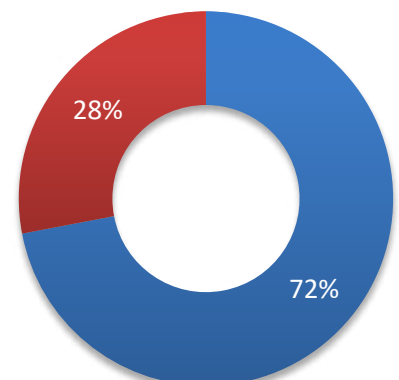
Top 10 States - Sales Contribution



- Marketplace
- Company Websites

Annual market potential for online sales – Rs. 510 Cr (Value)

Online mattress brands are gaining prominence because of convenience & economy



- Marketplace
- Company Websites

Annual market potential – 6.15Lakh (Volume)

Average price on marketplace is significantly lower than offline retail stores

ONLINE CHANNEL

The report also sheds some light on the online market space for mattresses. Sales through the online distribution channel was estimated to be around Rs. 510 crores. Online marketplaces such as Flipkart, Amazon, Pepperfry etc. account for nearly 70 percent of total sales through the channels. Remaining portion is covered by the e-commerce website of brands.

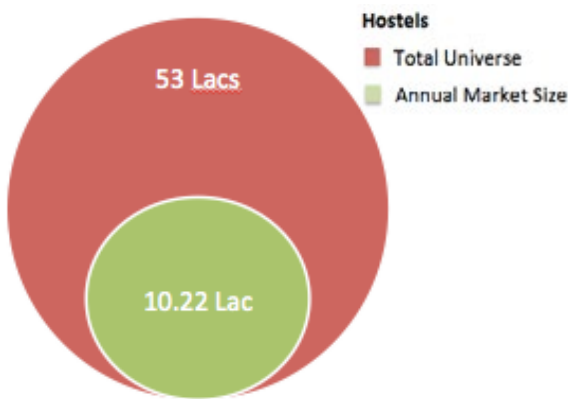
INSTITUTIONAL MARKET

For the first time, survey highlights the Institutional Business Opportunity through Hospitals and Hostels. This is an opportunity for Indian branded mattress players.

Survey also shares a few insights on how new age furniture rental aggregators have grown and how mattress companies have a role to play in this new nascent segment.

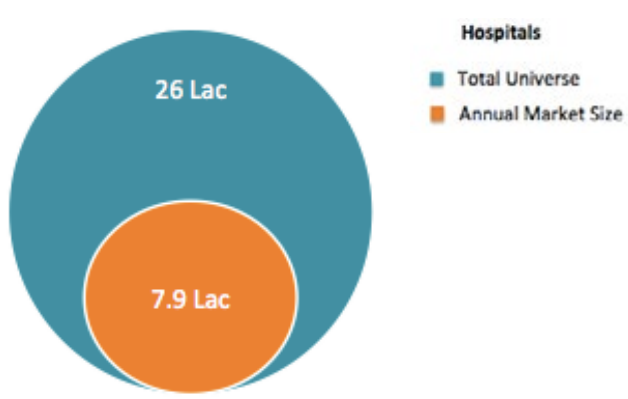
HOSTEL SEGMENT

The biggest one though, is the college and university hostels, with total available beds of 53 Lakhs. Since more students are opting for advanced studies, hostels have become a new business opportunity for mattress sales.

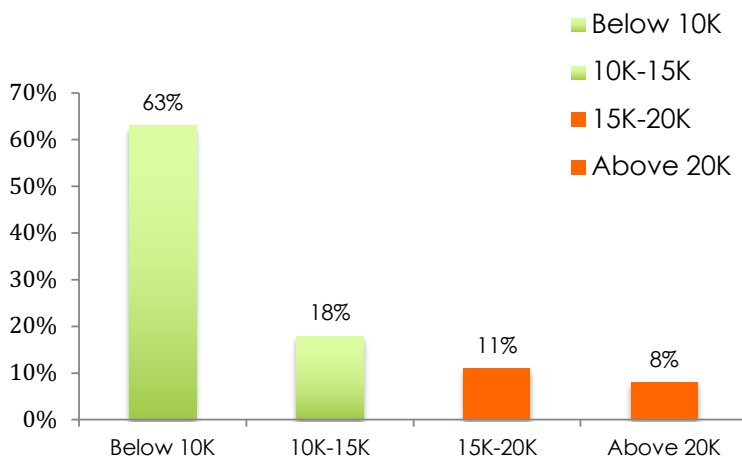


HOSPITAL SEGMENT

Hospitals are one of the largest buyers in the ecosystem, with total available beds of 26 Lakhs. Government hospitals are the major potential segment. With the onset of COVID-19, Hospitals are considered as a new dimension for mattress business from the hygiene point of view. Hospitals have emerged as one of the essential segments for the economy.



80% OF CONSUMERS PREFER TO BUY MATTRESS WITHIN THE PRICE BAND OF RS 15,000



Mattress Sale by Price - volume contribution

Consumer buying behavior

Another interesting aspect that the report touches upon is consumer buying behavior.

According to retailers, the first thing that becomes clear is that the customer is price sensitive and is looking for value for money products. This is obvious from the fact that more than half of the consumers walk into a retail store with a budget in mind.

1 in 10 customers at retail stores enquire about finance schemes, and nearly 4 percent opt for them. The customers are also curious about the composition of the mattress- almost 58 percent of mattress buyers enquire about the inside material of the mattress, thereby implying that feel and comfort are important considerations for the customers.

The survey is an interesting analysis of the industry and provides deep insights that can be gleaned from the report. Like how the organized players should expand their market share, or how digital medium can be a crucial cog-in-the-wheel.

To get more information on the survey, please contact ISPF Secretary Mr. Srinivasan Sundaresan on his e-mail: ispf.0813@gmail.com.

The best thing to do first thing in the morning is to go right back to sleep.

—Anonymous

Sleep is the best meditation.

—Dalai Lama

Don't give up on your dreams. Keep sleeping.

—Anonymous

There is no sunrise so beautiful that it is worth waking me up to see it.

—Mindy Kaling

A good laugh and a long sleep are the two best cures for anything.

—Irish Proverb

I love sleep. My life has the tendency to fall apart when I'm awake, you know?

—Ernest Hemingway

'Went to office on a Saturday'

The ordeals of new parents are never ending. From sleep deprivation to exhaustion, it is all part of rearing young children and newborns. Here is an executive from Arizona, US, who suffered from an extreme lack of sleep, ended up doing this. Hear the story from Darren, 37. "When you're exhausted, your scheduling ability just tanks. Our daughter kept us up all week, and I think I may have logged about 10 hours of total sleep. I woke up one morning thinking it was Friday, got ready for work, and drove to the office. I leave before my wife gets up, so she didn't even notice. I was like, 'Awesome! No traffic!' Then I got there, and the building was locked. I actually had to ask someone what day it was — I was like Marty McFly from Back to the Future."



Progressing with sleep (How not to!)

Sid Caesar was a very popular comedian in the 1950s and 60s in the US. He once did a routine in which he had insomnia. He was tossing and turning and disturbing his wife, Imogene Coca, so she told him he had to get help. The next night, he says, "Honey, I saw a sleep doctor today and I know just what to do." He gets in bed, closes his eyes and says, "Good night feet. Good night ankles," and moves his way up through his body. Finally he says, "Good night, brain." Long pause. "I SAID GOOD NIGHT, BRAIN!" So much for progressive muscle relaxation.

Hello! Tell me where my phone is!

I once spent five minutes searching desperately for my cell phone, complaining the whole time about it being missing, to my girlfriend, who I was talking to on my cell phone. This went on until she timidly asked "Are you using your cell phone right now?" I just hung up.



Lending sleeplessness

In the middle of the night, George was pacing back and forth in his room, unable to sleep. This woke his wife, who asked him why he couldn't sleep. He replied, "You know that thousand dollars I borrowed from Bob next store? Well it's due tomorrow, and I don't have it, and I'm anxious and can't sleep." His wife said, "Honey, I have the solution." She opened up the window and yelled

to the house next store. "Bob, wake up." A light went on in the house next store and Bob stuck his head out of his window.

She continued, "You know that thousand dollars my husband owes you? Well he doesn't have it!" Then she closed her window and turned to her husband. "There, now let him pace the floor and you go to sleep."



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