

Comfort Times

by ISPF

How
customisation
of mattress
work for the industry?



22 Challenges in distribution of bedding products

18 Building a better bed: The role of manufacturers and suppliers



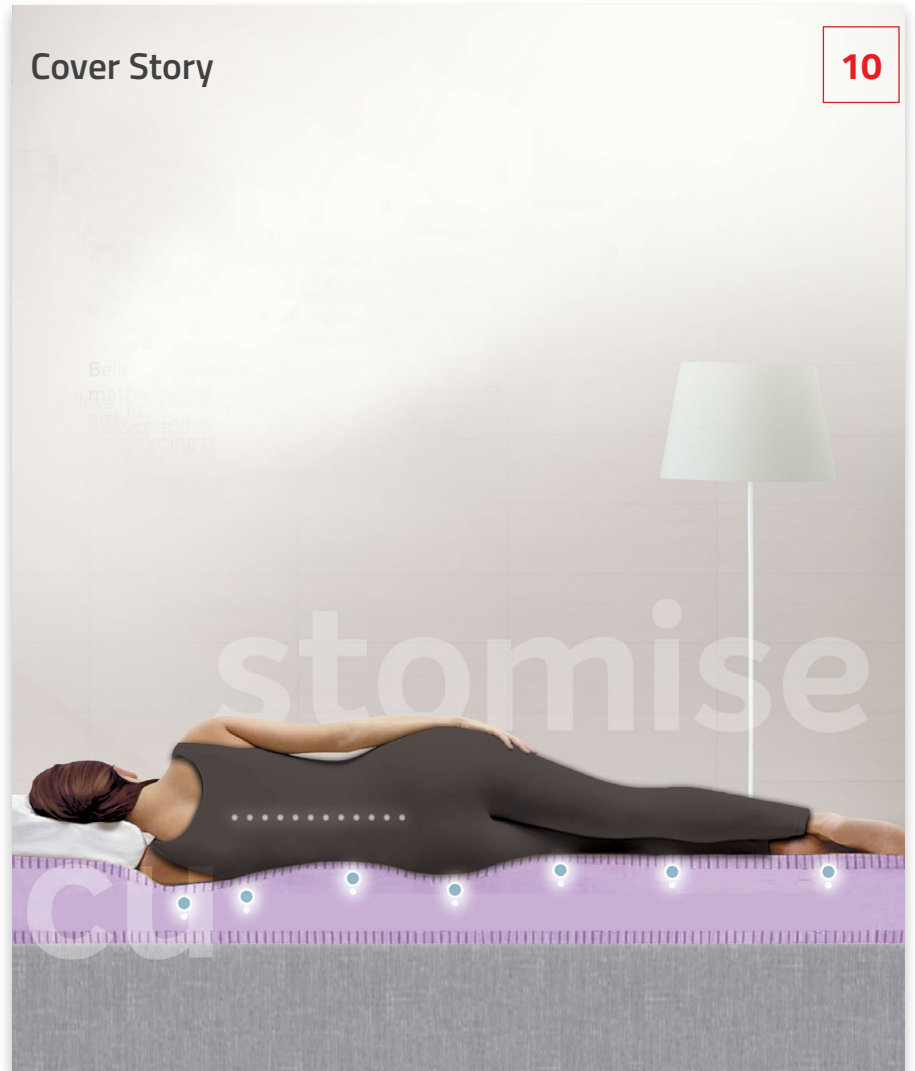
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Cover Story

10



How customisation of mattress work for the industry?

Believe it or not, the age of custom-made mattresses and sleeping-products has arrived. But what is waking up and what is interrupting this new industry wave?

Editor

S. Sundaresan

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Interview

34



We sleep on a Mattress but spend on a Sofa

Raghav Menon, CEO/Executive Vice President, Mattress Division, Sobha Ltd.



Design-Thinking, Customer-Centricity: Perfect Materials for a Good Mattress

Subodh Mehta, Senior VP, Godrej Interio

History

48

Turning points in India's Mattress Industry

In a country where the local cotton ginner would sew a bed in days, branded mattress wouldn't take roots so fast. But the opportunity was there and it was only a matter of time.



Feature List

18



Building a better bed: The role of manufacturers and suppliers

The manufacturers and raw material suppliers are working together fruitfully in order to serve the best to the customers

Challenges in distribution of bedding products

22

Old mattress & Health: Exploring the relation

26

No time to snooze

30

Get a pillow that suits your requirement

38

How Digital Natives are showing a new way to Traditional Players

41

Reports

55



November 2018
Mattress Industry
Forecast

INTERNATIONAL SLEEP
PRODUCTS ASSOCIATION
ISPA

ISPA releases 2018 Mattress Industry Trends Report

Events

52



ISPF organises Retail Training Program at Hyderabad

Inaugural edition of Sleep Expo Middle East ends on a high note

58

OTHER STORIES

India News

8

Global News

9

Sleep Facts

56

FROM THE EDITOR



We are called 'Comfort Times'. But in this issue we have chosen to confront a lot of uncomfortable questions flanking the industry. Yes, it is the third issue and we have already come a long way in understanding the industry in terms of both depth and contemporary context. But in this issue, we dial the level of courage and curiosity many levels higher.

As you will notice, the cover story itself, picks a crucial question that the industry is grappling with. Customisation – we try our best in this story to get into as many layers of this concept as possible. We give you its upsides; the deterrents that hold this force back; as well as the many on-ground realities that envelope the utopia of a personalised product.

Similarly, we become brave and examine another critical challenge that afflicts the industry in our feature on distribution struggles. We delve into factors like transportation, storage and quality that punctuate this industry aspect.

We also apply the same sharp eye and nose to other issues and ideas that are going to have a pronounced

role in the future of the industry. We talk about new materials used inside and over a bed, we discuss the impact of digital marketing as well as the disruption ushered in by digital natives for traditional players, we unravel the unpleasant side of old mattresses from a health perspective, we explore the potential of new elements like mattress servicing and sanitisation, and we argue again about the role of associated products like good pillows in contributing to better sleep.

Of course, as always, these deep dives are peppered with interesting observations, multi-dimensional analysis, engaging examples, entertaining trivia and relevant updates in the industry.

We have aimed to take a closer and deeper look at some important questions this time. The idea is to get the industry out of a comfort zone. The goal is, like this magazine's very first page intended, to create better sleep and happier customers.

Hope you get something out of this issue. Hope we can accelerate that goal together and better.

Happy reading. Happy questioning.

S. SUNDARESAN



INDIAN SLEEP PRODUCTS FEDERATION

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SERVICE

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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.

Contribution for a noble cause

Taking a novel initiative to support the human life highly impacted by the Cyclone Fani that hit the Odisha state in the first week of May 2019, Century Mattresses has contributed Rs 5 lakhs to the Odisha Chief Minister's Relief Fund. This contribution has been made by the company with an aim to empower the Odisha state government in providing critical support in terms of rebuilding homes, devastated infrastructure and ensuring the necessary daily needs of the victims.



INDIA KA SLEEP SPECIALIST

On an aggressive growth path

Taking a step towards aggressive growth, online mattress start-up Wakefit is aiming to achieve Rs 260 crore in FY20. By the end of this fiscal year, the company expects to earn Rs 80 crore revenue and Rs 8 crore net profit which would be up from Rs 27.6 crore revenue and Rs 2.2 crore net profit that it earned in fiscal 2018. The company also aims to expand its warehouse network in the country from four to seven and add 50 people to its team by the year-end 2019.



New product on the fore

The Indian mattress industry is marked by yet another innovative product launched by New-Delhi based online sleep solutions brand Durfi. The flagship product of the company, Cotton Candy memory foam mattress is designed to keep the back aligned and has all the features to allow comfortable sleep. The best part about the product is that it is fully customisable. Also, it is directly shipped to the customers, which means that the middlemen are eliminated and this makes the product highly affordable. As per the company, "The product aims to provide a quicker response at dispersing heat and properly regulates body temperature as compared to traditional memory foam. It features 100 percent



pure high resilience comfort layer with airflow technology. Further, the Cotton Candy foam mattress has a base support orthopaedic layer for ultimate back support and is dust mite barrier and insect-free."

Sleepwell introduces Neem Fresche to protect you, while you sleep.

Sleepwell's Neem Fresche treatment in all its products promises to provide its consumers an Invisible Shield of protection against microscopic allergens.

According to online reports, several allergies - asthma, rhinitis and contact dermatitis were found to be more prevalent among the Indian population.

Another Global study highlights that the market of

Allergic Rhinitis is growing. The market of allergic rhinitis will grow at the CAGR

of 7% during the forecasted period of 2017 to 2023. The allergy or hay fever can be avoided by preventing one from coming in contact with the allergen. With this sensitivity towards allergens, consumers are becoming more conscious of their Health & Wellbeing. While consumers ensure the regular cleaning of their house and assets for freshness, the core of the furniture cushioning, mattresses and pillows remain unaddressed due to its built-up structure.



Sleepwell

Our body's perspires and sheds old skin. These particles make way for harmful microscopic microbes to flourish, which further, leads to various allergies and health disorders. Understanding this need of today's Health Conscious customers, Sleepwell has introduced Neem Fresche treatment to all its Mattresses, Furniture Cushioning, and Home Comforts Products. Neem

Fresche provides an invisible Shield of protection against microscopic allergens by

preventing their breeding over a period of time. Sleepwell's Neem Fresche is based on the collaboration with their International Partners - BioScience from Australia that combines Traditional Power of Neem and a powerful Bio Active Agent Fresche. Fresche Bioscience comes with an International Certification of US- EPA. Importantly, Neem Fresche Treatment does not Degrade with Frequent Washing or Cleaning and is environmentally safe.

Global mattress market forecast

It seems that the global mattress market is all set to see a major boom as numbers support this fact. As per a recent research report by the Transparency Market Research, global mattress market is expected to rise at a CAGR of 6.5 percent for the forecast period between 2017 and 2024 to reach a valuation of US \$43.43 bn by the end of 2024. The report also states that particularly developing countries, Asia Pacific region, Africa and Latin America are expected to see increased mattress sales due to growth in the domestic, commercial activities, hospitality industry and rising disposable income of the people.



New entrant in the mattress industry

In a bid to evolve as a complete lifestyle brand, luxury textiles maker Sferra has added a new product category i.e., mattress in its bouquet. The company forayed into the mattress segment by introducing two styles of mattresses. The handcrafted and made-to-order Sonno Notte mattresses have exceptional features. As per the company, *"The mattresses which come in three sizes feature zoned innerspring coil system to relieve pressure points paired with high-performance natural & foam materials and hand-tufted wool rosettes."*

Fine Linens

SFERRA

ITALY 1891

Donation for a good night's sleep

Allswell Home, an online luxury mattress and bedding brand managed by Bonobos, a men's clothing company that is owned by Walmart has extended support to Good360 which is Alexandria, Virginia-based charitable organisation. Keeping up to its belief that everyone deserves a good night's sleep. Allswell Home provided mattress and financial donation to the foster children. In line with this, the brand

Allswell.

also hosted a donation drive on its Instagram page on May 15, 2019, wherein the social community was asked to comment on the post with a bed emoji. Each bed emoji triggered a specific donation amount from Allswell. Further, the brand has also promised to donate an additional \$25 to Good360 up to \$250,000/year for every verified product review their community submits.

In search of Slumber Star Intern

Houston-based, mattress speciality retailer, Mattress Firm has announced its search for the next Slumber Star Intern with the second annual Snoozetern internship. The selected candidates are expected to serve as the company's sleep influencer. This is believed to enable the social media followers of the company to have a first-hand look at the company's culture, testing, teasing new and upcoming product launches. This will also help the company in catching the attention of social media followers through engaging content.

SAATVA launches adjustable Solaire mattress

New and innovative product has yet again hit the mattress industry. This time, Saatva, America's online luxury mattress company is in the news for the same. The company has launched a precision adjustable Solaire mattress with six luxurious layers of comfort and 50 adjustable firmness options. The company claims that the product is

made from 100 percent natural Talalay latex comfort layer with five-zone lumbar support, contouring memory foam for pressure relief, breathable organic cotton cover, moisture barrier to protect precision components, integrated, whisper-quiet inflation system and dual remote controls with real-time firmness display.



Compton purchases new plant

The plant of Royal Sleep Products in Fort Worth, Texas has been bought by Compton, California-based manufacturer Diamond Mattress. As per the reports, this purchase will give Diamond Mattress another 60,000 square feet of manufacturing, warehouse and distribution capacity and the ability to offer faster shipping to an expanding customer base in the central and southern United States.

How **customisation** of mattress work for the industry?

Saves nine annoyed customers. Yes, believe it or not, the age of custom-made mattresses and sleeping-products has arrived. But what is waking up and what is interrupting this new industry wave?



Getting a mattress was enough. One 'had' to make peace with it. Irrespective of one's body type, sleeping-position, preferences and quirks about sleep; there was always that 'one mattress for all'.

But like a couple in Bangalore who had different requirements and sought personalized mattresses, there is something adrift across mattress aisles. If one person has back issues and the other needs a softer feel, sooner or later, they will both need a personalised product instead of something that they both have to compromise on.

That is happening. People are not only asking for, but also getting, mattresses that can indulge one person's needs 'exclusively'. Yes, from firmness level, number of layers, splits, height, frame, spine alignment to temporary adjustments – mattresses have entered new contours of customer satisfaction. They are ready for a much-due industry evolution – the era of 'Customisation'.

Various ways of customisation

Size! That comes fixed from the company. As Mr. Sameer Kalra, Owner, Maharaja Furnishings, Rajasthan points out, *"The only possibility at our end is simply cutting as per customer's requirement; and that too only for foam mattresses. For spring and coir formats, this size-cutting can only happen at the company's end. The support, or special needs, for this aspect or something else - that a retailer needs help on- only gets a manufacturer's attention when a considerable level of sales is accomplished."*

Turn to Mr. Mahendra Pokharna, Head of a Sleepwell showroom (Vinayak Showroom) in Udaipur, and he would also aver that yes, size is the main customisation need that has emerged in the market. *"Most models come with a fixed configuration and size is the only thing that we can personalise for a customer. It is a market of about 60 percent non-standard sales right now. Most companies address these non-standard size requirements upon order. It takes anything from three days to ten days for the company to furnish a requirement."*



There is something adrift across mattress aisles. Consumers are not only asking for but also getting, mattresses that can indulge one person's needs 'exclusively'. From a personal preference of surface firmness levels(extra firm or soft), mattress built-up customization, doctor's recommendation for spine alignment, mattress size & shape, thickness, number of layers, splits, height, frame, to temporary adjustments – mattresses have entered new contours of customer satisfaction. Consumers are ready for a much- due industry evolution – the era of 'Customisation'.

In Mr. Mahendra Pokharna's assessment, most customers are satisfied with the level of size and quality that is available now, with no other peculiar customisation needs spotted yet. Mr. Sameer Kalra also tells that right now 6/6 and a half inches, three by 6-one-fourth inches etc. are dominating the market in contrast to the just one size of six by three inches that was prevalent earlier.

But that is bound to change as times roll on. Are we not spotting Casper, Rocky Mountain, Tempflow, Helix Quiz, Create-a-Mattress, Dreamfoam,

Reverie, Luxi, PlushBeds and ReST chasing a new market opportunity - 'lack of customisation'? The offerings and options that some players, both new and old, have started to bring on to the shelves are truly unprecedented. They do not make a customer adjust to a mattress but do the opposite. They ask for, anticipate, and adjust to a customer's unique needs – and then give a mattress that fits her/him to the T.

A look at a spectrum of ways in which customisation is showing its unmistakable presence will tell a lot about this big industry-shift. Today,

mattresses cannot afford to be just mattresses. Customers can be offered a buffet of alternatives to get a really-bespoke mattress:

Just what the Doctor ordered

Well, a Helix survey notes remarkable variations in sleeping-positions to start with. It revealed that 66 percent customers are side-sleepers, 18 percent are back-sleepers, 16 percent are stomach-sleepers and 35 percent wake up with back-pain. To add to these differences, there is another preference-box. There were 51 percent who tend to sleep hot, 28 percent like a plush-feel bed, 32 percent like a firm-feel bed and 60 percent like a medium-feel bed.

Medical experts and holistic wellness consultants confirm the argument that such numbers often make. *“People have forgotten to sleep right. They do not even know what position they sleep in. How can we expect them to sleep right when they sleep in a sad state of awareness thanks to the addiction-spree of alcohol, blue-screens and poor lifestyle choices?”* Dr. Saroj Sharma, Head, Kala Ashram Wellness Centre who gets severe cases of insomnia and depression at the centre, cautions about the heightened need for a conscious choice in sleeping right.

Many medical practitioners have often lamented poor sleeping-position as both a cause and an effect of back-pain. To maintain the natural curves of the spine in bed is essential, but not so easy. If a doctor recommends someone with a herniated disc to sleep in a foetal-position or if someone with lower back-pain is prescribed a reclined-position – we know that the way we sleep is not a trivial matter when it comes to spine health. Stress on back, head and shoulders can be easily controlled by using the right mattress. And for that; cognizance of what one needs, and lacks, is crucial.

Dr. Yatin J Patel, a board-certified pulmonologist, published author and sleep physician who is a passionate advocate of a lifestyle founded on healthy and happy living, corroborates Dr. Saroj Sharma’s concerns when he

Customisation Types

A look at a spectrum of ways in which customisation is showing its unmistakable presence will tell a lot about this big industry-shift. Today, mattresses cannot afford to be just mattresses. Customers can be offered a buffet of alternatives to get a really-bespoke mattress:

1. **Mattress built up:** Arrangement of layers and foam-densities for a customer’s body type and firmness preference
2. **Mattress Firmness:** Sleeping surface firmness and feel preferences for individuals changes as per their body type. So it becomes important to have ideal firmness for each mattresses.
3. **Mattress Fabrics:** Fabrics that can reduce moisture or can offer lumbar support or control heat-variations
4. **Mattress Size:** Ability to fit to a given bed-size or frame
5. **Temperature control:** Cooling comfort layers for hot regions
6. **Dual Sided:** Two-sided dual comfort mattresses and customisable beds for couples with different needs
7. **Body Support:** Capabilities like body contouring and zoned support for various regions – head, lumbar area, waist, hips and feet
8. **Adaptive Mattress:** Responsive and adaptive coil, foam, weight-distribution micro units and layout choices



9. **Different Materials:** Types of material that can cater to differences in temperature, bounce and breathability
10. **Motion Isolation:** if a sleeping partner shifts weight of one side of the bed, the other side does not get affected
11. **DIY boxes:** Grid-based options that a customer can unzip and then use to configure a mattress. One can arrange the foam barrels and cells as per one’s needs. Firmness levels are categorized in different colours so it is easy for a customer to design one’s own firmness utopia
12. **Different mattress:** Different mattresses for side sleepers, back sleepers, stomach sleepers etc.
13. **Medical Support:** Pressure-point support so that side sleepers or medically-sensitive cases can get the right support
14. **Smart mattress:** Smart mattresses with sensors that can adjust materials and shape to differences and sleeping-position every night. They read body heat-maps, pressure hot-spots, and roll-over patterns so that compressors inside the bed can automatically balance air pressure beneath several body parts – hips, head, side, spine, feet etc – but so slowly and subtly that the sleeper does not wake up untimely or in an abrupt manner
15. **Customer Preference:** Quiz-based shopping where a customer is equipped with better knowledge of what one truly needs and then given options that fits
16. **Orthopedic mattress:** Mattresses that can align to different weights, sleeping-positions and pressure points. Ex: Orthopedic mattresses
17. **Memory Foam:** Foam and spring mattresses with an upper layer of gel memory foam so that they can mold as per the shape of the body no matter what one’s sleeping-position is
18. **Life-stage-based options:** That adapt to injuries, pregnancies or special athlete-needs

talks about the poor state of sleep health in India. *"Sleep health globally has been ignored and more so in rapidly developing country like India. The young population in our nation is so preoccupied with chasing success that it ends up ignoring sleep quantitatively, and more importantly, qualitatively. This sleep-deficit retards their executive performance. Their creativity, problem-solving, and optimism get adversely affected."*

Dr. Yatin J Patel observes, and deals with, a lot of sleep-disorders at his private practice, Sneeze & Snooze Clinic, Indiana. As the Medical Director of the Center for Sleep Studies at Goshen Hospital and 'The World's Only Sleep Doc with a Notre Dame MBA', as he prefers to introduce himself, Dr. Yatin J Patel makes sense when he points out the unique differences that every individual has pertaining to the way one sleeps. *"Yes, within a predefined range, each of us has unique sleep needs. My wife needs six-and-a-half-hours to feel alert and energetic all day, while I need seven hours of sound sleep to be at my best. According to the task force convened by the American Academy of Sleep Medicine and the National Sleep Foundation, we need sound sleep of seven hours - give or take thirty minutes."*

He welcomes the burst of new sleep products that aim to fill the void of

"To understand the value of customisation and pay money for customisation - that is still far off for India, except for a few customers"



Tushaar Goutam,
Director, Sheela Foam

unique sleep needs. But he maintains that the bigger issue is our lack of focus and our ignorance as to the importance of sleep in helping us live a full and a productive life. *"Once you have made that commitment to getting a sound sleep of seven hours, then you can look for products that can help you achieve that."*

These insights and questions find an echo elsewhere too. Mr. Tushaar Gautam, Director, Sheela Foam observes that the fundamental research that is underway at the company (on the basic science of sleep) has revealed different needs for different kinds of bodies. The issue that the industry, hence, confronts is 'how to communicate this to customer – through sales channels, doctors and other means'. *"We are*

getting there. As of now, to understand the value of customisation and pay money for customisation - that is still far off for India, except for a few customers."

A peek from the other side

Making good listeners in the form of mattresses is not going to help users alone. It is good lumbar support for the industry as well.

Mattresses receive the least bit of attention while making homes. But, gradually the urban Indians are realizing the importance of good sleep and it's direct impact on our health. Mr. Gaurav Gulati, a noted branding expert, author and Personal Branding & Brand Engagement Consultant. *"Hence, the mattress industry - by encouraging customisation - is providing the consumer with simple, smart, and effective sleep solutions. Sound sleep makes a sound mind!"*

However, such an evolution also needs new models and approaches from the industry so that customisation is a durable, pervasive and easy-to-execute strategy.

The platform-based approach pioneered by brands like Casper is worth reckoning while discussing customisation in the industry. Casper, as Mr. Daveed Kuruvilla, Director, Restolex Coir Products Pvt Ltd notes, was revolutionary in its implementation of a new business model of selling directly to the end consumer. *"This sort of approach would work anywhere as it reduces prices for the customer, provides trial-periods etc. When this approach began, players like Casper marketed their product as a mattress that's perfect for all. This clearly was not the case as different people like different things. Now Casper offers multiple types of mattresses, even incorporating springs. So would the approach of selling directly to customers online work? Most definitely. Would marketing one mattress to suit all work? Probably not."*

Mr. Gaurav Gulati explains this ahead from a marketer's angle as well. *"If Casper manages to position itself as a perfectly-priced premium brand with good storytelling, trust me, they will be*





unstoppable after all Crocs footwear success in India too is completely based on comfort and health, who wears it for fashion and style. Yeah, it may be a show-off for some."

But Mr. Gaurav Gulati also underlines the demand side here. *"Basically, what all customers consider while purchasing a mattress is their health condition and sleeping experience on a particular mattress."*

Mr. Nirbhay Gupta, CEO, Coirfit Mattress observes that with a paradigm shift in the choices of consumers, it has become mandatory to cater to the fast-growing demands of the consumers. *"We have been in the industry for more than 31 years but the amount of customisation requests we get every day is nothing compared to the scenario 30 years ago."*

He explains how an entire mattress customisation is now possible based on the choice of fabric type, edge design, size, comfort level and even the inside-layer configuration. *"Therefore, we give an option to provide a completely customized mattress while guiding the user about the various advantages of different mattress layers. We understand when it comes to health; there should be no scope of carelessness or misguidance."*

While customers are willing to experiment with a hybrid of latex + memory-foam mattress or a medium comfort memory-foam mattress, Mr. Nirbhay Gupta stresses that the company does not believe in crafting the same for them till the time it is made

"We have been in the industry for more than 31 years but the amount of customisation requests we get every day is nothing compared to the scenario 30 years ago."



*Nirbhay Gupta,
CEO, Coirfit Mattress*

sure it will completely suit the user's body. *"Because it is not just about selling a product but also about proffering a good sleep experience to the end user."*

"With more than million satisfied customers, Coirfit has a wide range of mattresses made to suit each person's sleeping needs. We aim to deliver the best mattresses keeping in mind all the preferences of the buyer. To accommodate our customer demands, we rely on every major to minor attention while designing the mattress. From mattress comfort to mattress look, we work towards developing innovative, yet personalized, sleep systems for the users."

So customisation is good, but how much of it can be real?

The Real Cut

There are many factors that can add new arguments on the customisation aspect, when one looks beneath the superficial layers. Mr. Saurabh Sharma, General Manager, Godrej Interio,

says, customisation of mattress is an interesting scenario of our country. During our research, we found that there is an absolute lack of awareness. Today, in India, branded companies are serving only 15 percent of the bed requirement. The remaining 85 percent is getting their bed made by local manufactures or carpenters. Many of them, including the customers approaching them doesn't know that the standards exist. The relevance of standardisation is important when you need many items from different companies to complete the solution. Hardware industry, Sanitary industry, Construction industry are some of the examples. For using the bed for sleeping purpose, you need many other items like mattress, bedsheets, pillows etc which is manufactured by different companies. In order to get everything fitted well on the bed, standardisation is a must. We observed that customers build their bed without the knowledge of this and later get into the trouble of buying customised mattresses, bed sheets etc. which will end up in an expensive and time-consuming affair for them.

Mr. Saurabh Sharma slices the issue further and says, though we are well equipped to do customisation of any model, we are encouraging our customers and channel partners to promote standard variants for the benefit of them. This will help in reducing waste of material, time, effort and in the end help us offer our products in a highly competitive price and faster delivery.

If the mattress industry in India is ready to give that ease, comfort, and

“As we all are different in our body structure and sleep requirement, one type of mattress cannot offer correct solution to everyone. Hence its critical to have personalised mattresses according to the body type. In future as people get more aware about sleep, we believe customisation in this direction would be more in need.”



Saurabh Sharma,
General Manager, Godrej Interio

experience to the people; that Casper gave to its customers and could grow exponentially, the model can be worked out here too, reasons Mr. Gaurav Gulati.

This strategy can disrupt and challenge many legacy models and complacent players. But the rewards can be attractive enough. After all, what better and deeper way of creating differentiation and loyalty than giving a customer something that fits like a square peg in a square box unlike the 'square peg in a round hole' options that customers have been living with for years now. This also makes sense because mattresses are still, comparatively a low-frequency but a high-involvement purchase in a customer's lifecycle. Customisation caters to not just physiological differences but psychological ones too – and with a real tangible product – not just a brochure.

“Fixtures and position of layers can make a really big change in mattress formation. We are always eager to guide the end users about the properties and functions of different materials used in mattress making. Therefore, we aim to fulfill these orders with our expertise knowledge and to help these consumers get a mattress that fits them instead of



a 'one size fits all.' Coirfit's Mr. Nirbhay Gupta adds.

Mr. Daveed Kuruville adds that any mattress maker who values their brand name would have to positively align themselves with sleep and wellness issues, regardless of being an online player or a brick-and-mortar/touch and feel player.

Users are more aware, as Coirfit's Mr. Nirbhay Gupta explains, than before regarding their health and have become extremely conscious while picking a mattress for themselves. *“Whether they buy their sleep haven online or offline, they are inclined to research about it before opting for one. A concomitant aspect of this research and their needs leads to an inception of getting a mattress customised to suit their body preferences. However, as sleep experts, it falls into our hands to make sure that each product offering is genuine and eases their sleep related issue.”*

It is about time. It seems.

Pebbles in the Nest

But customisation costs. Not only to the customer who is still facing heavy-priced labels for purchasing custom-made stuff, but also to the mattress-maker. After all, it is a process that entails special materials and special effort. The special manufacturing costs not only include the coils and layers needed in never-before varieties and assortments but also expenses of hand-made mattresses. Let us also not forget to

“We should first start encouraging people to know about mattresses before we can encourage them to customise.”



Daveed Kuruville,
Director, Restolex Coir Products
Pvt Ltd

count in all the special manpower force that designs, engineers, creates and assembles custom-built mattresses.

Customisation, as industry players will aver, is an expensive foray. It is not always cost-effective.

Mattress industry never encourages customisation of their mattresses, but they are left with no option when sales of furniture beds are non-standardised and due to this, mattress competitors, too, supply customised mattresses to retailers – as a candid Mr. Nitin Gupta from King Koil India also reveals.

To add to that, there is a trial-period that is a make-it-or-break-it rule of the new game.

Casper, gives both to the customers. It offers, along with the painless purchase experience, a trial period of 100 days. And if not satisfied full refund, Mr. Gourav Gulati observes. *“The full refund is the most motivating strategy for Indian Consumer, let's not forget Amazon*



Customisation of sizes in Indian mattress industry is a major problem which brings a lot of growth- and opportunity-resistance for supplier players in the industry

positioned itself in India highlighting 'Hassel Free Returns & Refund', and Flipkart, too, did the same. And this works perfectly for Indians."

In the assessment of Mr. Nirbhay Gupta, even though there is a colossal urge for customised mattresses, not many brands are offering customisation besides basic size customisation. To quote around five to ten percent of orders are up for customisation and not much development is happening in the mattress industry related to these demands. *"Only size customisations are being catered to."* Just like what retailer Kalra told us at the onset.

Customisation of sizes in Indian mattress industry is a major problem which brings a lot of growth and opportunity resistance for supplier players in the industry. Mr. Nitin Gupta from King Koil India contends,

"Internationally there are about six to eight standard sizes; and brands improvise their production with least wastages due to standardisation. This has been possible due to strong furniture associations to create beds of standard sizes, which looks absent in India."

On the difficulty level for a manufacturer, Mr. Tushaar Gautam dismisses some assumptions. "There are some opposing forces playing at each other. The time constraint that most customers give in the way they demand mattresses – certainly makes it a little difficult for a player to customise. But the whole industry is designed to customise because of the way production can work. The basic module is there but certain attributes of customisation like layers, thickness etc. can be built upon this. Manufacturers are already customising based on size and all we need is some other aspects that can be blended in.

In any condition, it is important that customisation is sincere, authentic, enduring and definitely, not something that comes across as another sales-gimmick.

To manage this 100 percent is not possible but yes, today people are smart buyers, Mr. Gourav Gulati agrees. *"They don't simply buy anything, they know they have the rights to express their experience with the brand. There may be one or two or say few people, who can be dodged,*

What brands expect from retailers

1. Retailers have to educate consumers about the materials used in the mattresses, new technologies incorporated in these materials, their feel, longevity etc.
2. Retailers should educate consumers on the role of mattress and pillows for sound sleep.
3. Retailer should provide important feedback and suggestions that they receive from the consumers.
4. Retailers should share buying behaviour of consumer time to time.
5. Some of the mattress retailers also sell furnishing. When a customer is looking for a mattress retailer should not divert his attention to buy a furniture.

but once they leave their negative reviews about the product, rest of the prospective buyers become alert. And today customers shop only after reading reviews."

Mr. Daveed Kuruvilla feels that the onus of identifying a sales-gimmick falls on the customer. *"So for a brand's marketing to be called out as a sales-gimmick with no real differentiation in their product, the customer will need to have done enough research and comparisons to see a product for what it is. If the customer knows what's on the market they won't fall for great marketing of an inferior product."*

This hints at a big role that industry players need to fill in that will not just sell customised mattresses but ensure that people see it as a valid product proposition and need-fulfillment. This is more than a functionality or a frill. It is a about a psychological need that has to be addressed sincerely and smartly. It will, first, need a lot of homework; and, then, quite some legwork before one can confidently say that a customised mattress is up for grabs in one's product menu.

“Internationally there are about six to eight standard sizes; and brands improvise their production with least wastages due to standardisation. This has been possible due to strong furniture associations to create beds of standard sizes, which looks absent in India.”



Nitin Gupta,
Director-Retail and Channel
sales, King Koil

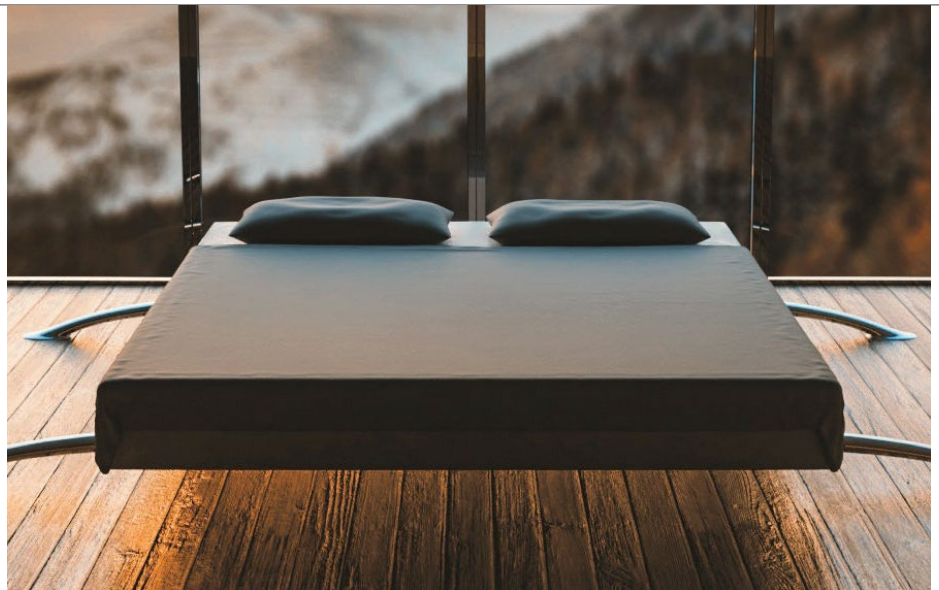
Before you ask for Jeeves

The presence of unorganised players and lack of quality standards in the industry make the situation harder to navigate, as hinted at by some top industry players.

Mr. Nitin Gupta from King Koil India opines that till the time furniture association in India really focus on this standardisation, almost nothing is possible at the level of mattress manufacturers. Needless to say, a government intervention looks like a best solution to enforce such move.

More importantly, for customisation to truly work, players as well as customers would have to rise to a new mindset and responsibility. Dr. Saroj Sharma and Dr. Yatin J Patel both are emphatic about the dire need for better sleep hygiene and awareness in today's stress-and-addiction-heavy lifestyles. People need to know how they sleep before they work on how to sleep better.

Even Mr. Mahendra Pokharna, who is from the retail side, is worried about this huge lack of awareness that customers exhibit when it comes to good sleep. "People do not know when to change the mattress. To introduce experience stores would a great idea, but basic awareness is something that needs to be first worked upon."



Mr. Daveed Kuruvilla also weighs in this factor as a pronounced one. "In order to encourage customisation of mattresses, we would first need to encourage educated customers. Customers would have to know about the materials used in mattresses, new technologies incorporated in these materials, their feel, longevity, etc. As mattresses are a low-frequency purchase this makes it challenging to have customers who are well-versed and have information enough to effectively customise their own mattresses."

We should first start encouraging people to know about mattresses before we can encourage them to customise, he suggests. "That said, there is already a niche in the Indian market made up of customers who know exactly what they want and look for custom-made mattresses, and we are glad to help them with their specific needs. After all we are in the mattress business to help people sleep."

Gaps, in the assessment of Mr. Tushaar Gautam, are starker around the communication that happens between channels and customers. "Point-of-sale is a crucial 25 to 35 minutes of communication window where a lot can be achieved ahead." But he hopes that customisation can help the industry in creating a niche market in the next four to five years.

These hopes resonate well with Mr. Gaurav Gulati's optimism too. "India is an emerging nation with a lot of cash flow; buyers are willing to spend

“The young population in our nation is so preoccupied with chasing success that it ends up ignoring sleep quantitatively, and more importantly, qualitatively.”



Yatin J Patel,
a board-certified pulmonologist

anything to experience something new and valuable."

The issue, of course then, is our lack of focus and our ignorance as to the importance of sleep in helping us live a full and a productive life, Dr. Yatin J Patel reminds. "Once you have made that commitment to getting a sound sleep of seven hours, then you can look for products that can help you achieve that."

Providing healthy sleep is the root cause for mattress industry to consider customisation. As Mr. Tushaar Gautam puts it industry has look at customisation is an opportunity for future growth. Because, yes, what can be more valuable than a mattress that has been made specially for one's sleeping whims, fancies and fantasies! Only one thing - A mind who can create such a mattress! **CT**

Building a better bed

The role of manufacturers and suppliers

Due to urbanisation, rising disposable incomes and health issues, the Indian mattress market is growing at 10-15 percent annually. Of this, the organised market share constitutes only 30 percent. However, now it is expected that the market share of unorganised mattress players which is led by street-side shops and the local operators will drop drastically in the coming years. This is because Indians are increasingly demanding branded and good quality products. In fact, the mattress/bedding market is gradually transitioning from largely unbranded to branded market which is expected to grow at a CAGR of 13 percent over next five years to constitute nearly 40 percent of the market by 2022.

In addition to people demanding good products, another reason behind this trend is that of lately, the manufacturers and raw suppliers are working together fruitfully in order to serve the best to the customers. While manufacturers are adopting innovative technologies and methods to bring out a better product, the suppliers by supplying quality raw materials and machinery are ensuring that the manufacturers are able to do.

So, this article would explore the individual contribution of manufacturers as well as suppliers and their relationship in bringing out the best mattress product in the market...

Strategies adopted by the manufacturers

1. Understanding customer's requirement:

The first and foremost thing that the manufacturers are doing is understanding the need of the market/customers very well. Kundan Kankariya, Director, Kontak Comfort Products Pvt Ltd, notes, "Over the years, lifestyle of people has changed drastically and this



The manufacturers and raw material suppliers are working together fruitfully in order to serve the best to the customers

has given rise to various lifestyle diseases. Also, these days, people have to work for longer and this involves sitting for hours together. All these issues have resulted in various sleep problems. In such a scenario, as manufacturers, we take it as our duty to give all the comfort to the customers while they sleep. For that, we engage with the customers and ask them about their health problems and then look into the best solutions that we can offer them."

Mr. Hemant Gupta, Director, Aerocom Cushions Pvt Ltd, shares a similar thought. He avers, in addition to understanding the customer's needs and suggesting the product that would suit them, we ensure that they get such products at an affordable price. We ensure that the product from inside and outside is of good quality and has a good life."

Well, this way, the manufacturers take all the possible steps to stay abreast with the market trends, their customer expectations and needs to manufacture the best mattress product.

2. Adoption of new technologies:

The ultimate goal of any mattress manufacturer is to ensure that the consumer gets all the comfort that he desires from his/her mattress. It is for this very reason that reliable and top-notch manufacturers in India are concentrating on new technologies in order to make better mattresses. Thus, the industry has naturally progressed from unorganised cotton and foam-based products to quality products with an infusion of technology. Some of the latest technologies incorporated by manufacturers to build a better product include:

a) **Combination of innerspring and memory foam:** The mattress that is prepared by combining these two types of technologies is known as the hybrid version and is considered best for all kinds of sleepers. While inner spring give better comfort (support) and sleep to the consumer, the outer layer made from memory foam gives better pressure relief and comfort.



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These days, new memory foams are also being used which have an open cell structure and this reduces heat retention, improve airflow and keep the foam cooler. Even gel memory foam is increasingly being used by the manufacturers as it provides enhanced pressure-relief and this is good for patients who have joint pain issues. Few manufacturers are also making use of variable pressure foaming technology which negates the need for chemical blowing agents.

- b) **Temperature controlled mattresses:** Few mattress manufacturers in the country are also coming up with temperature controlled mattresses which are quite popular in other nations. A perfect fit for India's hot and humid climate, such mattresses allow their temperature to be controlled with the help of remote control and thus ensure good sleep. Not just the temperature but the

elevation of the mattress can also be controlled with the help of the same remote control.

3. Increased usage of organic material:

Since past several years, mattresses were made using polyurethane foam, a petroleum-based material which emits volatile compounds that are harmful to both humans and the environment. Now, with the growing awareness about the environment, customers are demanding mattresses that do not harm the environment as well as humans and this is leading to manufacturers using organic methods and material for making mattresses. This is the reason that materials like eco-latex and bio-cotton are increasingly being used. Mattress like organic innerspring mattress and plant-based memory foam mattress are gaining prominence and attention from the manufacturers.

4. Paying attention to mattress cover:

These days, manufacturers are not only paying attention to the inner materials and technology but they are focussing on mattress cover technology as well which is also very important for the comfort and health of the customer.

Above are a few strategies that are adopted by the manufacturers these days in building a better product and expect support from the suppliers. Here, comes the importance of raw material and machinery suppliers.

Strategies adopted by the suppliers

Just like mattress manufacturers, even the present-day suppliers have woken up to the fact that it is necessary to supply the best quality raw materials so as to ensure that the end-products is good. Suppliers are also realising that it is necessary to cooperate with the manufacturers to see that they get what they need in order to develop a good product.

Thus, in order to understand what the mattress manufacturers want, suppliers actively engage with the manufacturers. Mr. Rajiv Khanna, Director, Shiv Techfabs Pvt Ltd who is into mattress ticking fabric supplies business, says, *"These days, manufacturers are demanding*


raw materials that are not only good but perform specific functions, have unique features and offer something extra. Hence, the raw material suppliers are constantly working towards supplying such materials."

He adds further, *"What is heartening to note that now not only big brands are demanding quality materials but even local mattress manufacturers are demanding them. They also want technologically advanced materials and not just run-of-the-mill stuff. This is a good sign for growth of the bedding industry as a whole."*

The new age machinery and materials are resulting in increased production and improved manufacturing operations

Not only the raw material suppliers but even the machinery suppliers for the bedding industry assume a lot of importance in contributing towards making the best product. This is because an efficient machine which is highly automated and fast can manufacture increased number of products which are of good quality and save time, money and reduce wastage. Hence, the machinery suppliers are also constantly engaged in coming up with improved machines which can help the mattress manufacturers in developing products that are of supreme quality.

Relationship between the manufacturers and suppliers

While the manufacturers strive hard to come up with new solutions to give better products to the consumers, the suppliers ensure that the best of raw materials and machinery is supplied to the manufacturers in order to help them achieve their aim. Manufacturers and suppliers can function in the best possible manner only when they work together towards a common goal that is developing the best mattress product. 

KEY TAKE-AWAYS

The mattress industry in India has a lot of growth potential. The spending power of customers is increasing. In fact, today, even an average Indian customer is willing to spend a considerable sum for a good quality mattress. Keeping this in mind, the manufacturers are increasingly coming up with some of the best mattresses that are made using innovative technology. Well, not only manufacturers but even the suppliers are making all the efforts to ensure that the best product is manufactured. Thus, it can be definitely concluded that a good product can reach the customer only with the joint efforts of the manufacturer and supplier. This presents dearth of opportunities for growth for the manufacturers as well as suppliers in India who can work together to build a better bed.

High Quality

DIAMOND

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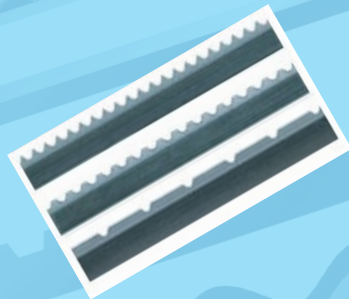
Band Knife Blade

Bandknife Blade

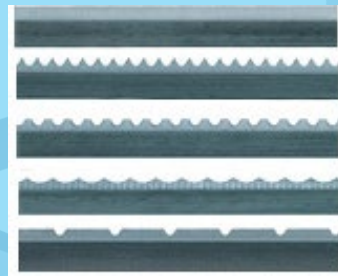


Block Cutter Blade, Vertical Machine Blade, Horizontal & Circular Machine Blade, Peeling Machine Blade, Loper Machine Blade,

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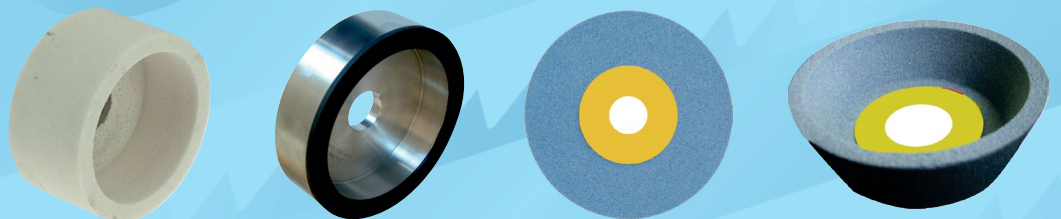
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CHALLENGES IN DISTRIBUTION OF BEDDING PRODUCTS



There are various challenges faced by mattress industry in terms of quality, transportation, storage and getting distribution network right, that if solutions aren't found in time, could derail the growth story.



How challenging is distributing bedding products from manufacturing to distributors

ISSUES FACED & SOLUTIONS FOUND

The Indian market is witnessing a shift from unbranded or cotton-based mattresses towards branded mattresses. In recent years, the average growth of Indian comfort and bedding industry was 10-12 percent per annum and this is likely to grow at a CAGR of around 15 percent in the next 5 years. However, there are various challenges faced by mattress industry in terms of quality, transportation, storage and getting the distribution network right, that if solutions aren't found in time, it could derail the growth story.

Amidst all the roadblocks the industry is able to craft innovative solutions on the go, especially in packaging and shipping. New age, internet savvy players have adopted Direct To Consumer (DTC) approach while traditional players have mostly focused on expanding and strengthening their ground level multi-tier network. Evolution and upgradation are evolving in real-time in retail touch points as well as technical innovations helping to reach the market fast and safe.

Spurred by overall economic growth, the logistics industry comprising road, rail, air and water — a \$130 billion industry is expected to reach \$300 billion by 2020 — this growth notwithstanding, the logistics is the toughest nut to crack for the mattress industry so far.

Over recent years, the sales channels for mattresses are shifting from bricks-and-mortar stores to online sales. It is estimated that the e-commerce channel claims around 10% of word

retail mattress sales.

Brands are leveraging large distribution companies to have omni-channel presence. Today, typically, customers can buy mattresses on the website and also from third-party platforms such as Amazon, Flipkart, Shopclues and Fabmart to name a few. Many companies are setting up owned stores in key markets.

Pain points

Mattresses by nature are a bulky products and expensive, which is accentuated by a lack of affordable transport companies to handle them. This restricts companies from expanding their markets geographically and forces them to run their own fleet of vehicles for deliveries thus adding overheads to their operations.

Infrastructural bottlenecks also add to the tremendous strain. Loss of transportation time & transaction time at ports, land borders adversely affects

Over recent years, the sales channels for mattresses are shifting from bricks-and-mortar stores to online sales. It is estimated that the e-commerce channel claims around 10% of word retail mattress sales

the competitiveness of exporters.

Another hurdle in standardizing shipping is a lack of prescribed size of mattresses as in western markets. This lack of uniformity in Indian markets puts an unnecessary burden on delivery logistics.

Innovations to the rescue

With the e-commerce trend, the culture of try-before-buying direct-to-consumer (DTC) model is on the rise posing logistics challenges. The ever-growing popularity of Amazon Prime model of hyper-fast deliver is putting pressure on companies in terms of scaling their business. Customers expect to get their product within one or two days.

Companies like Casper in the US — which is now coming to Indian shores — have shown radically new ways of packaging and shipping. Thanks to a decade's old technique of compressing foam or mattress material to compact forms, Casper was able to pack the mattress in a small box that can be delivered by players like Amazon. Once delivered, the pack would be unboxed to reveal a highly compressed mattress which would popup into its full shape slowly.

This whole process itself though slow and tedious, turned out to be "an experience" customers loved to have. It was sheer serendipity. E-commerce led mattress players since then have taken to bed-in-a-box and the "unboxing" phenomena to newer heights. With this, the transportation and last mile delivery was solved

but storage, inventory management still required traditional solutions discussed earlier.

Conclusion

Finished product distribution is a vexing issue in any industry. It is more so in the mattress industry given the size of the product and the need for careful handling due to expensive, fragile material involved. While, traditional players have evolved a good strategy over time, the new age Amazon-like, hyper-fast age requires new solutions. While, e-com companies have turned to optimize packaging and shipping, there is still a huge scope for improvement in better handling distribution. **CT**



Solutions

1. Traditional players have shown the road to solving vexing distribution issues. As demand increased, the industry realized that it needed a better way to optimize warehouse and order fulfilment operations. Many companies prefer a logistics solution that would meet its business requirements and help it grow in the unpredictable business-to-consumer space. Most often the solution comes in the form of a third-party logistics (3PL) and warehouse management system provider.
2. E-commerce players have seen rising returns rate — though lower than five to six percent lower than that of the standard direct-to-consumer volume, it requires attention, strategic insight, and an experienced logistics partner who can accept and reroute returns to the appropriate recipients. That's where 3PL partners come to the industry's rescue.
3. A time-tested formula is to engage exclusive distributors in strategic proximity to the manufacturing units, helping reduce carriage expenses and minimize product damage.
4. A large sales personnel actively engage with key distributors thus ensuring the distribution channel is well oiled and a positive feed-back loop is created. Such a deeply integrated network of distributors and the companys' sales force help in aggregating demand signals and right-sizing the production and inventory.
5. Typically, traditional companies utilizes logistics infrastructure hired for the supply of raw materials to the manufacturing facilities for onward supply of finished products and foams to the distributors
6. Exclusive distributors are typically engaged in strategic proximity to the manufacturing facilities, which helps reduce carriage expenses and minimize product damage. Most distributors have been associated with these traditional companies over a long time — mostly over 20 years or more. Extensive and well developed pan-India sales and distribution network and retail dealers for home-comfort products.
7. The distribution network has to be well integrated with the manufacturer's IT platforms, that enables tracking secondary sales made by the distributors and dealers in real time.
8. The new GST regime has ensured that warehousing has got a leg up and it is easy to transport finished products across borders. While, traditional way of distribution was to establish manufacturing plants close to the target market, with warehousing and efficient 3PL services available, a new model is emerging — using efficient warehouse management to distribute and 3PL as a JIT partner. It needs to be seen as to how efficient this model will turn out, though.



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Old mattress & Health

EXPLORING THE RELATION

The relationship between mattress quality and sleep is almost directly proportional and both complement each other. Particularly, old mattresses are believed to have a huge impact on the sleep as well as health of the people



A mattress is a slow-moving product in India. The slow pace with which mattress sales is growing in comparison to the available market potential is a serious concern for the brands. Unorganised mattress segment still dominates most of the regions of India. Despite the brand's introducing various innovative products in the market, the frequency of mattress repurchase is still slow.

Out of several other parameters that are hindering the growth of the industry, the lack of understanding of how the old mattress is harmful to health is one of the major reasons for consumers to postpone their decision of a new mattress purchase. Consumers devote maximum time on the bed, in comparison to electronics and gadgets. However, they still spend more money on smartphones and household items. The mattress purchase takes a back seat and in India, they are bought majorly at the time of the wedding or shifting to a new house.

Old Mattress brings serious Health hazards.

Influence of mattress on health

Although Indian Consumers have now started understanding the importance of a sound sleep and are actively involved at the time of mattress purchase, they are still not aware of the challenges which their health is facing due to the old mattress they sleep on. This lack of awareness the frequency to change their mattress gets postponed and they continue with their decade-old mattress, which could still be offering them a night of sleep but not a hygienic one. Consumers do not even realise the harmful health effects it is offering them subtly.

"No one wants to think about bugs in their bed, but the reality is that bed bugs can happen even if you practice good mattress hygiene. We suggest regular mattress cleaning and we recommend our customers to change the mattress every five to six years", says Mr. Rakesh Khoday, Drapes and Sofa.

Old mattresses promote health



When an old mattress becomes a hub for bacteria, fungi and mold to thrive, it needs to be changed. consumers continue to complain about the unknown reason for their allergy problems, without even realizing once that their old mattress could be a reason for the same

issues in tangible and intangible ways.

Tangible side effects

Consumers can make out the tangible aspect of their mattress getting old with its deformation over a period of time, its uneven surface due to sagging, a compromised comfort level etc. The distortion of these physical properties affects satisfying sleep. The serious sleep disorders have been linked to various health diseases like hypertension, increased stress hormone levels, irregular heartbeats and accidents while driving or at the hospitals.

An old mattress is a house of allergens and bacteria that make it unhygienic to sleep on and leads to serious allergies and breathing problems.

Intangible side effects

The another intangible side effect, which dominantly remains unnoticed is the hygiene factor. Old mattress breeds dust mites, bacteria, and allergens over a period of time. An old mattress carries our perspiration, sweat, dead skin cells and once the mattress becomes too old, it becomes a breeding house of these allergens. These allergens require heat, right temperature & humidity to grow at a fast pace and an old mattress offers them this perfect environment to multiply.

Although it is also possible that one can still wake up fresh on an old mattress, due to the personal zone it offers. However, the person may develop breathing and other allergic problems due to dust mites and bacteria

breeding in the old mattress. The consumers continue to complain about the unknown reason for their allergy problems, without even realizing once that their old mattress could be a reason for the same.

For example, for several months, Ms. Pooja Khandelwal, a 30-year-old chartered accountant, did not realise that the dust allergy she had been suffering from past one year was actually due to the dust mites in her old mattress. *"Almost every morning, I would get up coughing and sneezing and that would continue for nearly half an hour. It was only when I consulted my doctor that I came to know that it might be due to the bed bugs and dust mites in my mattress. So, when the doctor suggested changing the mattress which was bought 15 years ago, I acted upon immediately and to my surprise, the problem subsided on its own,"* says Ms. Pooja Khandelwal. Well, this is the case with many individuals. The microscopic creatures like dust mites trigger various allergies and lead to skin problems and respiratory conditions as they damage lungs and promote a sore throat. They also worsen asthma

symptoms. Here it is to be noted that older the mattress, the more dust mites it houses.

Pain and old mattress issues go hand in hand as an old mattress can result in intense back and neck pain. As per Dr. Surendra Kumar Samar, General Physician and Surgeon, *"If you sleep on an old and unsupportive mattress (as it becomes soft after years of usage), then this can stress the ligaments, tendons and joints of the spine. Also, it makes it difficult to maintain the right posture in night which can further aggravate lower back pain. If this pain due to lack of proper sleep continue for long, then it can become chronic and cause further sleeplessness."*

All old is not gold

As per various industry reports, *"Nearly 70 percent of people who use old mattress experience various health problems at some point in life."* The sad part is that not even half of this percentage acknowledges this fact. Rather when people don't get a good sleep or wake up with a pain in back or neck next morning, they blame it on the wrong posture, pillow or

the bed structure. However, what they forget is that it is their old mattress which is a major sleep spoiler. Here is a detailed look at how an old mattress can affect sleep and overall health...

Ill-effects of an old mattress on health

1. Leads to chronic back and neck pain:

Pain and old mattress issues go hand in hand as an old mattress can result in an intense back and neck pain. As per Dr. Surendra Kumar Samar, General Physician and Surgeon, *"If you sleep on an old and unsupportive mattress (as it becomes soft after years of usage), then this can stress the ligaments, tendons and joints of the spine. Also, it makes it difficult to maintain the right posture in the night which can further aggravate lower back pain. If this pain due to lack of proper sleep continues for long, then it can become chronic and cause further sleeplessness."*

2. Triggers allergies and makes them worse:

Various microscopic creatures trigger various allergies and lead to skin problems and





Brand's Responsibilities

Its high time for the Brand's to take the initiative to make consumers aware of the harmful impact of the old mattress on their health. Once the consumer is aware of the importance of a quality mattress for their mental, physical and emotional health, they would not mind enquiring more at the time of purchase and will also be willing to change their mattress after the expiry warranty period immediately.

Now, it is upon the industry players to decode this trend and come up with more new, innovative yet affordable solutions to lure more customers and satiate their needs.

respiratory conditions.

3. **Leads to more stress:** Old mattress hugely impacts the sleep quality and lead to sleeplessness due to back pain and other issues which in turn increase the stress levels. This makes one feel tired and fatigued during the entire day and hamper productivity.
4. **Leads to snoring:** An old and unsupportive mattress can even put the airways under tension or the tissues may be sunken and this can lead to snoring. Further, since the old mattress can take the shape of the body, it can block the airways easily.
5. **Leads to obesity:** Poor sleep caused by poor and old mattress can also promote bingeing and overeating, thereby, having an impact on weight.

Simply put, when people are not able

to get sleep by lying on their old, saggy and worn-out mattress, they tend to stay awake, sometimes past midnight and usually that's the time when the body starts feeling hungry and craves for a small snack. So, this habit of eating due to boredom in night result in making them obese. Also, poor sleep can weaken the immune system.

6. **Affects memory:** Sleeplessness through old mattress can negatively affect brain and memory and lead to Alzheimer's disease. As per the study conducted by the scientists from the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism in the US, *"Those who have sleepless nights have increased level of beta-amyloid plaque in their brain which is capable of disrupting communication between brain cells."*
7. **Puts heart at a risk:** A study conducted by the European Heart Journal shows that people suffering from lack of sleep or poor sleep have 48 percent more chances of developing a heart condition as compared to those who sleep well. Thus, an old mattress which does not let one sleep well can put the heart at risk too.


Other factors propelling the need to replace an old mattress

So, when an old mattress becomes a hub for bacteria, fungi and mold to thrive, it needs to be changed. Also, when it triggers numerous daily-life health problems like back pain, neck pain, sleeplessness and poor immunity, it needs to be replaced. Well, apart from this, there are few other warning signs that clearly tell that the old mattress needs to be replaced. Here's a look at them...

1. **Mattress was purchased 10 or more years back:** No product is manufactured to last forever and same is the case with mattresses. As per the National Sleep Foundation, any mattress should not be used for more than eight years in order to prevent it from becoming a farm of dust mites and bed bugs.

Further, it states that mattress

should be replaced much before eight years if the ones using it are above the age of 40 years as the body of such people may need more support when they sleep. However, if we look at the Indian psychology, then people feel that mattress is a product that can be used for years together and should not be replaced at least for some 15-20 years unless and until, it becomes completely worn out before that. This thinking is absolutely wrong and needs to be changed just like people's old mattress.

2. **Mattress becomes saggy:** If the mattress is worn out or develops a dent-like shape in the middle or gives a sinking feeling while sleeping on a particular portion and the rest looks fine, then it simply means that the mattress has become old and needs to be replaced.
3. **The mattress loses its firmness:** The most common reason for this could be the breaking of bed springs. This again is a clear signal that the mattress needs to be replaced. 

KEY TAKE-AWAYS

Old mattresses have huge health implications. In the past years, people used to wait for long to purchase a new mattress until they experienced health issues including sleep disorders.

However, now, the trend is changing and people are increasingly becoming aware of the side effects of using an old mattress.

This is leading to an increase in demand for mattresses in the country which is having a positive impact on the mattress industry as a whole. Now, it is upon the industry players to decode this trend and come up with more new, innovative yet affordable solutions to lure more customers and satiate their needs.

No time to snooze

The industry has been embracing new ideas, models and product propositions. It is fascinating to see how it is confronting new challenges and opportunities alike – one layer at a time

The mattress-buying experience needed an overhaul from a long time and that has been exactly the gap that Mattress-in-a-Box (MIAB) players and online players have rushed in to fill. The traditional retail and mattress-buying cycle has received a new blow that is being leveraged well by players who can jump in to dance with the new song that the customer is humming.

Packing compressed mattresses in a box, making the opening and assembling parts easy for the buyer, and giving a plethora of choices in colours and types – that has disrupted the industry at a new level. To add to that, a 100-day trial period is also something that is unforeseen in the industry that has, otherwise and for decades, worked on old-school distribution channels and models.

These changes can appear daunting but they are also confronting the confusion, fatigue and complexity of legacy distribution in a huge manner. A lot of this ease and speed that define the MIAB models can be attributed

to machines that have changed the rolling and compression procedures in a huge way on the manufacturing side. Investments and fresh approaches in delivery models for the new world are also paying off for the time-starved and convenience-hungry customer.

The logistics savings are great and the quality is not compromised at all. I happily own and sleep on a Sleepy Head mattress.

As Mr. Himanshu Mehta from Himrag Coir Products Pvt Ltd seconds, MIAB as a concept is picking up fast in the industry. *"We should look up to these new trends and match them. We should be ready for a new growth trajectory that was absent in the last few years."*

MIAB is a fantastic innovation, Mr. Mathew Chandy, Managing Director,

Duroflex echoes. *"The logistics savings are great and the quality is not compromised at all. I happily own and sleep on a Sleepy Head mattress."*

If you thought these models have shaken up the industry already, wait till you see how technology is stirring everything up and about.

A new way to push buttons

From smart beds, beds that cater to needs of different sleeping-partners, gadget-armed mattresses and sensor-equipped pillows - technology, it seems, has literally made its way inside our sleep escapades.

Everything around us is beginning to be connected via the Internet: Smart TVs, Smart kitchen appliances, Smart houses - things can be controlled with so much ease today. Our mattresses will soon follow suit, augurs Mr. Daveed Kuruvilla, Director, Restolex Coir Products Pvt Ltd

"Signs of this are already beginning to show, for example, Beautyrest's Smart Base. This adjustable mattress foundation can be controlled via



Amazon's Alexa or Google's Home Assistant, which means you can adjust your position by just saying the command. It will be exciting to see Smart mattresses join the wave of interconnected household appliances."

Mr. Mathew Chandy is also excited about the Internet of Things (IoT) in products and Virtual Reality (VR) in the company's retail stores when he assesses the next currents of innovation.

Yes, technology is about to arrive like a power nap. Smart beds would be the next Gutenberg turning-point for the industry. Get ready to sleep on beds or mattresses with sensory powers to cool, heat, change shape, nudge, vibrate or wake up. The industry is blending technology and sleep in a never-before way indeed. Is the market ready? Of course! Indians are not too different from their global counterparts.



Mr. Gaurav Gulati, a noted branding expert, author and Personal Branding & Brand Engagement Consultant reminds that Indians are ready to spend on anything that is new and valuable as long as it offers something significant for the ease, comfort, and experience that customers seek.

A new way to roll

Besides these innovations, the way a bed's firmness and softness works would also undergo some changes, along with how design and manufacturing areas stay abreast of new customer needs. Look at how the market of airbed mattresses, those inflatable wonders made of Polyvinyl Chloride (PVC), is expanding. As per a research study 'Airbed Mattress Market Research Report 2019' from Reports Monitor, it is growing at a Compounded Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) of 310.0 percent during 2019-2025.

"On innovation, I think we are doing quite well. Our mattresses now look, feel and perform up to global standards." Mr. Mathew Chandy asserts as he cites #Energise mattresses that look like they have been designed by Nike. He

also points out how natural, organic and biodegradable products are a crying need.




In all these changes, what is remarkable as a pattern is how customer experience and participation is redefining the way mattresses are made. Lego-based designs - where a customer can actually assemble a personalised mattress - are making their impact already. So is the emergence of new materials. Note how gel mattresses are not just being explored in new combinations with memory foam but the third-generation foam is also coming up as a pragmatic choice for taking care of equal pressure and comfort for the human body. They are also working out well as cooling options and are resonating well with customers in the Indian sub-continent where the need for a 'breathable' mattress is quite pronounced. As Mr. Vishal S, MD, Fancy Foam indicates, there is palpable innovation happening in areas of spring and gel mattresses as well for medically-special mattresses like orthopaedic options.

A new way to sleep

Innovation is a constantly-evolving process for any industry 'to be there' as Mr. Raghav Menon, CEO, Mattress Division, Sobha Ltd. defines it. "We are also looking at investments and encouraging people to try and use new products."

But the biggest one that the industry needs, as he rightly argues, is that people need to buy 'sleep' and not just a mattress.

Even a medical expert who handles many cases of sleep disorders agrees strongly on this aspect. "For the majority of India's population, sleep education is critical. It will reduce highway fatalities. It will improve productivity of our workforce. Sleep-health will help people live a longer and healthier life full of energy, optimism, vigor, and vitality." Dr. Yatin J Patel, sleep-physician, Sneeze & Snooze Clinic, Indiana emphasizes this predicament of sleep-oblivion. 

“Indians are ready to spend on anything that is new and valuable as long as it offers something significant for the ease, comfort, and experience that customers seek”

Gaurav Gulati,
a noted branding expert, author and Personal
Branding & Brand Engagement Consultant

KEY TAKE-AWAYS

There is more underway in terms of design progress. The industry is opening up strongly to new varieties apart from traditional memory-foam and coir products. There is no room for GelTouch Foam Center heat absorption technology that keeps a person cool and comfortable throughout the night. There is space for pocketed coil motion separation for optimal body support. There are anti-microbial and moisture-control mattresses around now as well. To add to that, 'ergonomic' and 'organic' are no more distant adjectives for a mattress. They are now integral parts of many design models.

Earlier inner springs could not be compressed so now new technology and material are being introduced so that a direct-to-customer delivery can be easily unboxed and enjoyed in a few hours as the rolled-up foam expands to the desired shape. For millennials, this is an added attraction for their social media posts also. The flurry of unboxing-videos that are now a rage among Instagrammers and You Tubers can finally have something else besides chocolate boxes to zoom on.



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Mr. Raghav Menon, CEO/Executive Vice President, Mattress Division, Sobha Ltd

We sleep on a Mattress but spend on a Sofa

Mr. Raghav Menon, *CEO/Executive Vice President, Mattress Division, Sobha Ltd* raises some bitter truths and some exciting hopes alike in this candid interview where he explains the focus on premium-market, the conspicuous gap of experience stores and the walls that stop customisation from taking a good shape. It's a handy blue-print for anyone eager to construct a better industry ahead.

Q How did the company, a formidable name in the real-estate sector, enter into this space? Can you share your journey's highlights, so far?

We have a strong legacy in the real-estate industry. The division catering to sleep and wellness was incubated out of pure passion. We sell wellness, not sleep or mattresses— that is the focus that we strive for.

India is now ready for products that are in the upper-end bracket and are carefully crafted for the customer who wants to buy premium, high-quality products and not just any mass-market product that does not understand their needs well enough. This emphasis on high-tier quality segment is a careful decision that we took during the inception of this division.

Q What is the role of backward and forward integration in this industry?

Integration is a big advantage for the real-estate industry – both forward and backward directions help. We have

always been known for rigour, quality and a strict adherence to timelines. We do not sub-contract too much and a major part of our delivery is driven by in-house teams. That explains why we have always been on-time and also

Right now, I can observe a lot of product-centricity. It is not enough to know what you, as a player, want to sell. One has to know what a customer needs – or whether a customer can afford what you have to offer – these are questions that are important ones to ask when thinking of innovation.

before-time in terms of our delivery record. That is an edge that is provided with the use of smart backward integration and complete control over the entire chain.

We are the only company with hundred percent backward integration. We are now delivering the same standards and choice for customers by completing the sleep and wellness part of their homes.

Q What is the Company's strategy and industry-focus?

We started off with institutional sales, and then forayed into retail. We have variants that are into premium segment but not into mass segment. We have a lot of products across the spectrum of springs, memory foam and latex mattresses. But we are positioning ourselves in a special category and catering to a specific class of customers.

Q Any specific reasons for choosing the top-of-the-pyramid here?

Mass market is a segment that is

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predominantly price-driven and it is difficult to sell quality sleep when the focus is less on mattress quality but more on the tag. For us, top quality is a passion – be it in real estate, furniture or in mattresses.

Q What are your observations on the state of innovation in the industry?

We try to do our best, in whatever way we can to be more innovative and quality-conscious. The industry needs to align to what the customer actually needs instead of what it wants to sell. We have to move towards customer-centricity. Right now, I can observe a lot of product-centricity. It is not enough to know what you, as a player, want to sell. One has to know what a customer needs – or whether a customer can afford what you have to offer – these are questions that are important ones to ask when thinking of innovation.

Q What is the significance of customisation for the industry, presently, for a region like India?

It is a very important industry move. In fact, eighty percent of our retail sales are from customised mattresses. In India, this strategy is even more relevant. Mumbai has a different space requirement than a house in Karnataka, so how can the same-sized mattress be sold in both regions? Why should I tell my customer to change his/her cot? Why can I not offer something that fits a customer's specific size and feature requirements?

I remember an instance of a couple who shopped for a mattress from us. Each person had a different requirement. One had back problems and the other needed a softer feel. We construed a specific product as per their needs. The only thing we requested – never change sides from now on.

Q It sounds like a major gap and an opportunity with new advantages?

It is a brilliant strategy that benefits the industry. Even in high-end houses, a lot of personalisation happens so why not in the case for mattresses? Do we not have different bed sizes in a guest

I remember an instance of a couple who shopped for a mattress from us. Each person had a different requirement. One had back problems and the other needed a softer feel. We construed a specific product as per their needs. The only thing we requested – never change sides from now on.

bedroom vs. a master bedroom vs. a children room? So how can the same mattress work in every room? Every mm difference can be a huge one when it comes to the mattress experience. We need different products for different towns and also for villages.

Every city and village sleeps differently. But in India we still have three sizes sold as prominent ones – King, Queen and Single. The irony is that mattress, per se, is a personalised thing but is sold in the most standard options.

Q How easy or tough or apt is it to customise a mattress for the Indian customer?

Some companies have tried customisation in India but the ratio is very small. In India, till date, it is often a carpenter that makes a cot in every house. Plus, customisation is an expensive foray. It is not always cost-effective. There are a lot of unorganised players in the market. It is hard to figure out what is inside a mattress once it is wrapped up. We also need more quality

standards in the industry. So far the only specifications that are present are for coir format.

Q What are, in your assessment, the top challenges that the industry faces in India?

Mattress is still the last thing on any person's mind. People would spend a lot (and frequently) on a sofa or a car that they sit on/in for hardly two hours a day. But a mattress, where they spend eight hours, is sidelined in the priority order. This is not the case in some international regions. There people place a lot of significance to sleep products.

In Europe, people can take as many as six to eight months to decide on a mattress. We need to cultivate the importance of sleep in our culture too.

We need experience centers, sleep stores etc. so that people can experience the product before a purchase. Some big players are trying to bring solutions in this area but real-estate costs, among other factors, are holding the industry back, as of now. It is a Catch 22 situation in some ways. This is a gap that needs both customers and industry players to wake up and resolve. Sleep cannot be a low-priority area.

Q What are your observations on consumer behavior when it comes to mattress buying?

We sleep on a Mattress but spend on a Sofa. That is indeed the tragic irony that has kept the industry tossing and turning for long. People are ready to expend ridiculous buckets of time and money on a sofa or a car where they spend just two hours a day. But do they give a mattress, where they actually reboot for the next day, the fair share of attention it deserves? **CT**

“In Europe, people can take as many as six to eight months to decide on a mattress. We need to cultivate the importance of sleep in our culture too. We need experience centers, sleep stores etc. so that people can experience the product before a purchase.”

Raghav Menon,
CEO, Executive Vice President, Mattress Division,
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Get a pillow that suits your requirement

The quality of pillows is one of the most important things that stands between you and your sweet sleep leading to a happy day

Oh, just how we long for a peaceful undisturbed sleep and waking up well rested and refreshed. It is said that a night's good sleep is the secret behind active minds and creative thinkers. We often forget some simple things that help in getting a good night's sleep. One of the most important things being pillows. If your grandmother told you not to use too many pillows, thank her. Pillows play a vital role in the kind of sleep that we get. Now, let us look at some facts to help us appreciate our body.

If you knew that your head weighs 4.5-5.5 kilos, perhaps you would take

better care of it – you will be more careful choosing the right pillow. What more, your neck contains seven of the spine's 33 vertebrae. It is no surprise then that the neck pain, stiff neck and even persistent headaches could simply be the result of poor pillow support while in bed sleeping.

Technicalities

A golden rule while buying a pillow is: a good pillow should hold your head in alignment with your shoulders and spine as if you were standing in an upright posture. A soft pillow may feel good but if it is too soft your head may flop, curving the neck. On the other hand, if the pillow is too hard may will give you a crick in



A widely reckoned dealer of State of Art machineries like, Computerized Shuttle less Multi Needle Quilting Machine, Computerized Lock Stitch Quilting Machine (Shuttle), Tape Edge Machine, Roll Fabric Embroidery & Quilting Machine, Side Panel making machine, Single Needle Quilting Machine (Comforter), Tape Edge Table (Mattress Edge Closing Machine), Mattress Spring Coiler Assembler, Non Woven Production Line (Thermo Bonding/Spray Bonding), Pillow Filling Machine, and All Kinds of Mattress Making Machineries etc., re-defining the parameters of quality, technology and innovation.

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the neck.

Your spine, head, hips, shoulders, and neck find support from many intricate bits and pieces that make up the muscles, bones, and joints. When you sleep, a pillow plays a vital role in supporting and protecting them. The kinesthetic purpose of a pillow is to keep the upper body aligned when lying down. It counter balances the supine position of the body and relieves pressure from joints and muscles. That's precisely what we are advocating. A good pillow supports the body as it rests and helps to restore it from physical, postural, and nervous pressure that builds up over the day. Without the ability to recover, your spine, neck, shoulders, and more could be at risk of serious disrepair.

If you do not move about and change posture while sleeping then you may not be sleeping right and well – now don't wake up to see if you are doing so, just relax and sleep and you will be moving about. You do not just get into bed, lie down in a specific position, and then remain there for eight hours. However, people favour a particular position. This position is either on one of their sides, on their back, or their stomach. Did you know that there are specific pillow types if you prefer one of these postures more.

Sleeping patterns and body weight

For instance, stomach sleepers need a pillow that will not elevate their head too much, to avoid putting a strain on the neck. Therefore, the thinnest pillow is best. Additionally, a pillow under the stomach can help to prevent back pain for stomach sleepers. With or without a head pillow, stomach sleepers can also benefit from a thin pillow placed beneath the hips to help even out the spine. It is, though, generally regarded that stomach sleeping puts your spine and neck out of alignment during the course of your sleep and hence is not advised.

People who prefer to sleep on their side will benefit from a pillow with medium thickness, allowing their head to be raised just enough to keep it aligned with the spine. A contoured



What's your pillow type?

Pillows are more important than we think they are. They help you align your neck and spine during your sleep. You may have attributed a hard thick pillow for that crick in your neck sometime or the other.

To avoid, always pick up the right pillow. Every mattress maker has on offer a great variety of pillows and you should really put some time in choosing the one that suits you and your body, the best.

pillow will also work well. Such people will find solace in a pillow placed between the thighs.

Back sleepers should pick up wedge pillows or pillows that are medium-thick. For those individuals who do have any position that they spend a majority of their time in or combination sleepers, a pillow with a mix of different types of fillers will likely allow them to adjust the pillow to their needs.

When a back sleeper lies down on an innerspring or firm mattress, small gaps develop between the lower back and the mattress, as well as between the neck and the mattress. Memory foam and contouring mattresses address the space between the lower spine, letting the hips sink deeper down into the mattress as the memory foam hugs the lower back.

With or without a head pillow, stomach sleepers can also benefit from a thin pillow placed beneath the hips to help even out the spine.

Types of Pillows

Mattress and pillow makers have a wide variety of pillows available for you. If you're a side sleeper, go pick up a firm pillow, and one with an extra wide gusset to help bridge the distance between your ear and shoulder. (Instead of a pillow that has just a top panel sewed directly to a bottom panel, a gusseted pillow has rectangular panels along all four sides that increase its thickness.) You might also sleep with a pillow between your knees to better align your spine. **CT**



How Digital Natives are showing a new way to Traditional Players

Indian players have to pickup learnings from their counterparts from US. Some of the mattress companies in US are using online platform for reaching out to consumers. At the same time they are also facing the challenges

The digital natives are knocking on the doors of the traditional \$1.4 Billion mattress industry in India. With the online only players making \$ 41 mn (INR 290 crore) in an industry which has over 60 percent dominated by unorganized sector, this is a significant portion. It is to be seen how much would the new entrants make up in the estimated 9 percent CAGR. Rising income levels and health consciousness, growth in the real estate and hospitality sector are some of the key factor in this phenomenal growth.

All this action is happening in an Indian mattress market which is estimated to be dominated by unorganized sector making up to 70 percent of the total market share. Contrast this with the \$9 billion industry

in the US (IBISWorld) with just three companies – Serta Simmons Bedding, Tempur Sealy and Select Comfort – raking up over 75 percent of the market share. However, there are new entrants changing the rules of the game.

Traditional mattress business

Let's look at how the traditional mattress business operated in the India. Prior to the new entrants, the mattress industry was defined by well entrenched, decades old group with atleast 3 decades of mattress manufacturing history dating back to pre-independence era or early independent India. Over a period of time many foreign brands either have been brought in by incumbents or entered through primary dealerships.

Though established brands strived

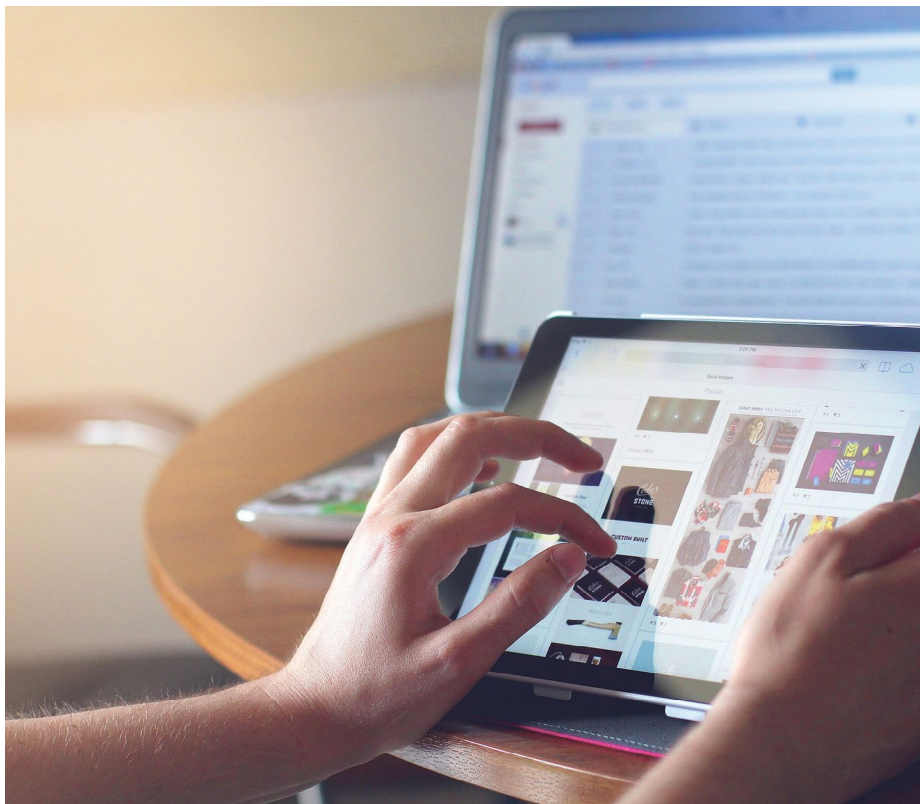
to bring in new ideas revolutionizing the way well-heeled and globe trotting populace slept, logistics, infrastructure and last mile delivery issues plagued this industry. The growth in the sector has been slow and has for years lived with the dominance of unorganized, our friendly neighbourhood mattress maker. Nevertheless, the last five years has seen a sea change in the way the industry does business. Thanks to the digital natives, who leverages the networking power of the Internet to sell directly to the consumer, now characterised by the DTC model (Direct-to-Consumer).

Traditional Practices

Traditionally, buyer's experience has been the biggest barriers in the Indian market. Indian sleep market resonates with a survey by Better Sleep Council, which throws some interesting facts. For consumers, the experience of buying a mattress has been pretty poor. Consumers are confused about when to replace a mattress and how much to spend. They're overwhelmed by the choice of product options and the awkwardness of trying out beds in public. Moreover, the beds are hardly differentiable to an untrained eye of a consumer. Not surprisingly, few would disagree that the mattress industry is inviting change.

Price mark-up is another feature of the traditional mattress industry. This coupled with lack of transparency made it difficult for consumers to make their buying decision – Often difference between a INR 10,000 mattress and a INR 20,000 one could be a few additional springs or a couple of extra inches of cushioning. Bulk of the pricing would be because of the inherent overheads in the supply chain which includes manufacturer's profit, C&F agent's cost, retailer's profit and overhead, and various sales commissions.

Meanwhile, there has been visible shift in the consumers' perspective. Informed by the global sleep industry, Indian consumer's focus is now on the comfort and functionality of the product. To their credit, the traditional players have been striving to be in line with the changing consumer preferences. Both



Showrooms are for touching, feeling and getting an experience of the product first-hand. But when it comes time to make a purchase, the millennial consumer is prompted to order online

offline and online retailers have adopted a variety of innovative strategies to ensure customer satisfaction.

The mattress industry has seen some aggressive campaigning online. Established players are now taking to social media to run their campaigns. Their primary target is the millennials whose aspirations are inspired by the global sleep trends. So instead of selling mattress products, these players are selling sleeping sound and staying healthy.

Products that "disrupts the market" is also contributing to the change in the traditional model of how things were done (in delivery, marketing, services, etc.). Consumers find such options easier, cheaper, and better when compared to the traditional incumbents.

New Digital Players

Mattress startups aren't alone in capitalizing on this trend. Consider the success that eyeglasses firm Warby Parker has seen or what's happened in the razor blade industry. In 2010, Gillette had conquered 70 percent of the American razor blade market with margins as high as 60 percent. However, since new, cheaper, DTC subscriptions services Dollar Shave Club and Harry's have emerged, Gillette's market share has fallen to 54 percent. The same story has played out in the Indian market.

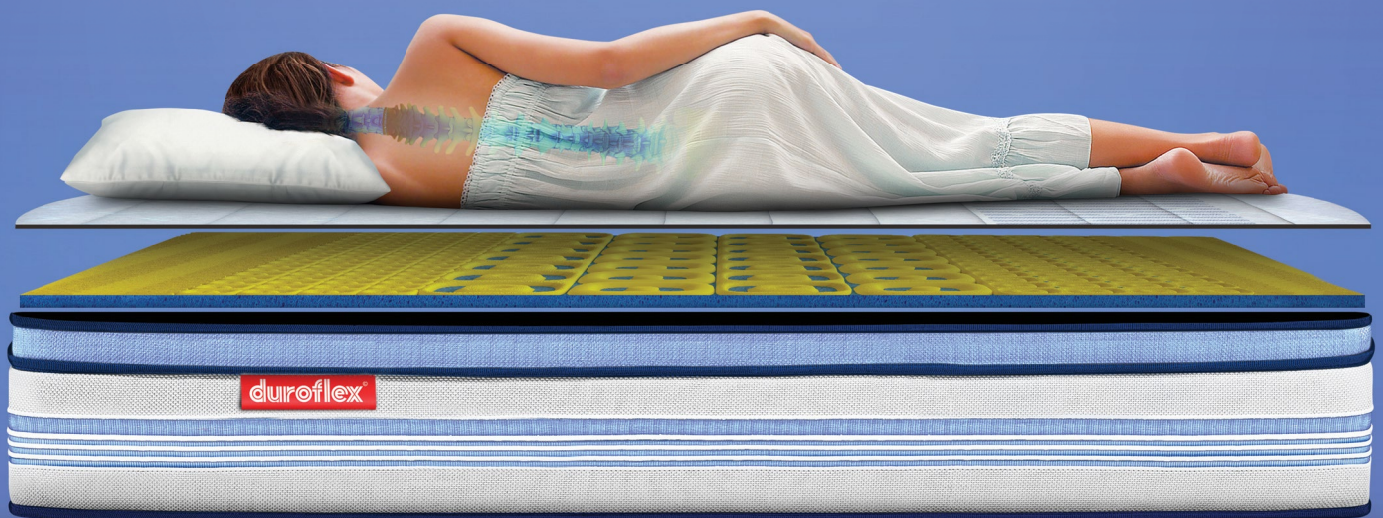
Modern businesses aim to offer their customers a royal treatment. And in India as in most developed markets, special discounts and bundlings are the rage. Not surprisingly, players have implemented a number of lucrative offers that include cashback vouchers, large discounts, free trial period,

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extended warranty, and similar. We see the trend not only in the mattress industry but also the companies operating in other sectors who have started launching special offers to keep their customers hooked.

Web Stores

For the Internet led mattress makers such as Wakefit, Wink and Nod customer experience extends beyond its webstore or a physical store. They claim that the secret is in how it is delivered and what experience the customer will have. Upon receiving their mattress, customers promptly unbox it. The very act of unboxing, unrolling the mattress is an experience the consumer cherishes, claims a mattress dealer. Even in this age of Amazon where anything can be boxed, shipped and delivered, this provides the customer a unique interaction with the purchase. Mattress companies are leveraging a unique compression technique which was around for a decade and available to everyone, and turn it into a delivery story. Their webstore and digital experience is immensely enabled by this packaging. Imagine the plight of these companies if they had to ship fully formed mattresses – the model would be unprofitable.

Another tectonic change in the way mattresses are sold is in the use of offers. Take for instance, the Wakefit's "Let's Sleep Together for 100 Nights" offer. This is a unique return back if not satisfied concept that is making waves in the industry. Apart from offering discounts for online buyers takes the "Return Back" offer to new heights. By co-opting the consumer into a "sleep experiment", mattress manufacturers are creating a huge event around "sleep". For a ever stressed urban dweller in India, this is a welcome change.

The key to making the economics of DTC companies work is balancing acquisition costs with a customer's lifetime value—how much the average customer spends on the company's products over the long term. There are generally two ways DTC companies try to do this. Those that offer expensive products that customers aren't likely to

The mattress makers are coming up with product differentiation and their ability to communicate the subtle changes they have made in their products which enhances the buyer's sleeping experience while reducing the cost of ownership

purchase frequently (a \$295 suitcase, a \$1,000 mattress) must be profitable on the first sale, and try to keep customers coming back by rolling out accessories or new product lines. Those that sell inexpensive items (razors, toothbrushes, socks) must try to lock in customers for repeat purchases, which many try to do through subscriptions.

"So many businesses are figuring out ways not to have storefronts, but showrooms," said Mr. John Eaton, a clinical professor of marketing at the W.P. Carey School of Business at Arizona State University. He cited this shift from digital nativism to brick and mortar as a marketing strategy, comparing Tuft & Needle's showroom to a billboard.


Product differentiation

Another important development is the way, the mattress makers are coming up with product differentiation and their ability to communicate the subtle changes they have made in their products which enhances the buyer's sleeping experience while reducing the cost of ownership. As per a recent survey, backpain is the most prevalent medical problem suffered by Indians. A mattress that addresses this issue square on wins no matter what the price is. Irrespective of what stuffing goes inside the mattress, the mattress manufacturers are researching on the right number of layers and density of foam and coir that gives the best

lumbar support. This is also informed by a continuous experimentation and live feedback through experience stores.

Conclusion

The digital natives are not shying away from brick and mortar, rather they are aggressively embracing it. When an automaker can put up a showroom inside a shopping mall why not a mattress experience center? Interestingly, showrooms are for touching, feeling and getting an experience of the product firsthand but when it comes time to make a purchase, the millennial consumer is prompted to order online.

This emerging spending power and attitudinal shifts around mattress purchasing, as well as the generation's familiarity with digital platforms, have encouraged companies to adopt a unique marketing approach to millennials. This quote from a Wall Street Journal article captures the mood which is universal: "The target customers are younger, often going through life changes that spur them to upgrade their just out of college mattress, perhaps a marriage or baby." 

KEY TAKE-AWAYS

This emerging spending power and attitudinal shifts around mattress purchasing, as well as the generation's familiarity with digital platforms, have encouraged companies to adopt a unique marketing approach to millennials. Indian mattress companies should takeup challenge of offering their products online without relaying on the retailer. This will give an opportunity for the company to serve the end consumer directly and address his challenges of mattress buying.



Mr. Subodh Mehta, Senior VP, Godrej Interio

Design-Thinking, Customer-Centricity Perfect Materials for a Good Mattress

Godrej Interio is a known brand in the Home & Office Furniture Category but it is now making remarkable strides in the sleep and wellness segment as well. **Mr. Subodh Mehta, Senior VP, Godrej Interio** tells us more about how some strategies and ideas are rearranging the tables in the mattress market, and why sleep tests are waking up the industry with a new intensity altogether.

Q What was the thought process and company's strategic outlook for diversifying into the mattress category?

We diversified into the Home Furniture business a few years back, although we have been manufacturing and marketing Godrej Steel cupboards since a very long time. We started nurturing Godrej Interio brand both for Home Furniture and Home Storage business; and attained market leadership in a relatively short span of time. Thereafter, we started focussing on category extensions keeping in mind two objectives. First, we wanted to complete our offering around home furniture category from the customer's point of view. We also wanted to explore new revenue streams for the business. This led to Godrej Interio exploring the Sleep products category which has a direct relationship with beds. Globally, a mattress is considered a complementary category to home furniture and is also sold at retail outlets together.

Q Can you share a peek into what drives your strategy for the

We have also seen that a customer's focus, while shopping, is disproportionately high on beds and not on mattresses, although a mattress has a much larger role to play in ensuring proper posture and healthy sleep.

mattress business?

As we went deeper into the mattress category we realised that a large part of the market, still, remains unorganised and customer needs are not being fully satisfied even today. This led to an increase in our interest in the mattress category. We are driven by our mission which is "enriching life by transforming home and work spaces". Three key rules that drive our strategy

are – First, continue to remain focussed on customer centricity and strive to deliver maximum value to our customer. Second, strive to deliver sustainable value to all other stakeholders (including our channel partners) as well. Third, make customer understanding and design thinking as our primary tools to achieve our objectives.

Q What distinguishes your offerings from other alternatives in the Industry? How important is ergonomics to the product proposition today?

Ergonomics is an important part of our product proposition as human beings spend 1/3rd of their time resting on the mattress. We have been doing some fundamental research to understand various drivers of a great mattress. Everyone is talking about right comfort and right support, but we, still, do not have any reliable metrics for measuring both these parameters.

We are also trying to understand the response of various mattress compositions to different body weights.

Also, in a highly sleep-deprived nation like India, there is a lot more to be done to develop a sleep eco-system to facilitate a high quality of sleep which can improve the overall health and well-being of customers in a significant manner. We are using inputs available from these research endeavours in designing and manufacturing sleep products - this also becomes our source of differentiation. Our new posture-support range includes many of these new gleanings and we are very happy with the response that we have received from our customers.

Q What, in your reckoning, makes the Indian mattress industry different from the global Sleep and Wellness industry?

Indian mattress Industry is still evolving and so are the Indian customers. In most of the developed world, a mattress is sold in a very specialised manner through exclusive outlets. Many companies are, primarily, in the business of selling only mattresses and related products via retail. The share of sales from specialised retail is in excess of 60 percent in most of these countries, whereas the share of mattress sales from specialised retail avenues in India is close to around 10 percent.

We have also seen that a customer's focus, while shopping, is disproportionately high on beds and not on mattresses, although a mattress has a much larger role to play in ensuring proper posture and healthy sleep. However, this scenario is changing. Health and well-being are now gaining prominence in the customer's mindshare. The relationship of sleep with health is presently being increasingly researched and understood.

We are also trying to understand the response of various mattress compositions to different body weights. Also, in a highly sleep-deprived nation like India, there is a lot more to be done to develop a sleep eco-system to facilitate a high quality of sleep which can improve the overall health and well-being of customers in a significant manner.

“ The share of sales from specialised retail is in excess of 60 per cent in most of these countries, whereas the share of mattress sales from specialised retail avenues in India is close to around 10 percent. ”



*Subodh Mehta, Senior VP,
Godrej Interio*

Industry players and their retailers have a very important role to play in bringing forth the importance of mattress in the overall sleep system through customer engagement efforts.

Q Can you share the idea behind, and the response received for, the new sleep@10 campaign?

Sleep@10 is a concept that actually emerged from the product development stage of our health mattress range. As we delved deeper, we realised this concern was much larger than the part of just selecting the right mattress. Over 91 percent of Indians are sleep-deprived. Further insights gathered from our sleep-o-meter taken by over 3 lakh Indians, informed that our children, too, are sleep-deprived. This demands for a more serious discussion and approach as it threatens the well-being of our nation.

We launched a new campaign on World Sleep Day under the aegis of our health awareness initiative- sleep@10. The new commercial released by the

Godrej Interio brand revealed that over 84 percent of children and teenagers in India are sleep-deprived! The study is based on the insights sourced from the sleep-o-meter on www.sleepat10.com, a platform that was introduced by Godrej Interio mattresses in 2016. Till date, over 3.5 lakh Indians have taken the sleep test. The video that has been released marking World Sleep Day is focused towards parents aiming at the rising threat of sleep-deprivation among children as recorded by the sleep-o-meter.


Q Coir, Inner spring, Foam and compressed products - what will endure as the most significant material ahead?

Looking at this space in the usual manner we can say that the share of innerspring and special foam is going to go up, continuously. However, we want to look at the industry not only from an inside point of view (where we get too obsessed with material) but also from a customer's point of view. Customers are looking for solutions which can ensure good deep sleep and whatever combination of material will satisfy this need will make the cut. We see composites winning the race in due course.

Q Where do you see the next innovation in this category?

Two areas where innovation is likely to happen or gather pace are as follows: Smart mattresses with all the required sensors which can respond to, and adjust as per, the exact needs of a specific customer throughout a sleep-cycle. And Green quotient of a mattress: This needs to increase both in terms of the use of green material, processes and reduction of transportation carbon foot-print.

Q What keeps you excited about the future?

Our mattress team derives maximum satisfaction from a delighted customer. Whenever we get a message from our customer appreciating a great product experience or shopping experience, we get excited. Such messages make our day and motivate us to come to work the next day with renewed energy. 



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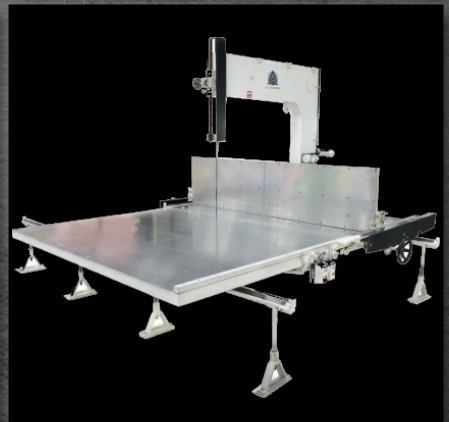
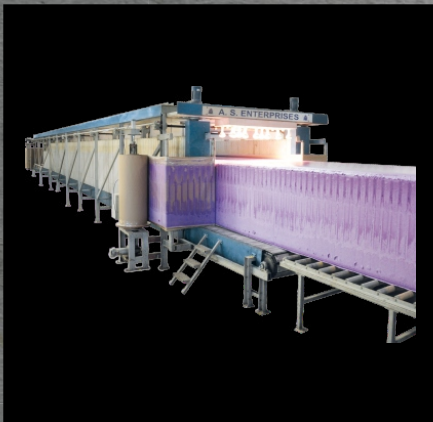
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Turning points in India's Mattress Industry

India's tryst with modern beds started in right earnest in the late 50s and early 60s. Soft cotton cloth fillings, the down feathers of birds, animal fur made up a royal bed. The others made do with coarse cotton beds and charpoyas made of bamboo or jute and layered with cotton fabric for softness.

Post colonial India saw the advent of cotton and coir filled beds and it took modern days, as recently as mid-90s for Spring and foam to make inroads into the Indian psyche.

The mattress industry pioneers Kurlon, belonging to the Manipal group, Duroflex, and Sheela Foam along with Centuary had to expend crucial resources in educating a reticent Indian consumer who was shy to talk of beds in public on the one hand and on the other, did not give much importance to how he sleeps. Sleep was a necessary evil for the utilitarian millenials who believe that Sleep is the gateway to greater productivity and achievements.

A Revolution in Material & Technology

The first breakthrough came through rubberised coir. Kurlon pioneered the rubberised coir industry in India. Kurlon mattresses are made of millions of tiny coir fibres which keep the body at a static temperature Kurlon uses vertical compression technology to give more spring action to the coir in a mattress.

During a trip to Europe, Mr. Ramesh Pai of the Manipal group, came usage of compressed, curled coir for car seats. He was determined to bring that to India. On his return, he learnt that coir was a very basic industry in India manufacturing only retted fabric. He decided to value-add the entire business and set up a company to pioneer the rubberised coir industry. To put the concept in motion he

chose Karnataka as the beneficiary state and brought in Austrian technology to extract fibre from coconut husk and curl it into ropes. A slew of opportunities now opened up. Rather than restrict himself to just mattresses he also developed an ancillary range of products such as cushions and mats. That venture became Kurlon.

Around the same time, two other manufacturers were launching their own products, ahead of its time for a country which slept less and less luxuriously.

In a country where the local cotton ginner would sew a bed in days, branded mattress wouldn't take roots so fast. But the opportunity was there and it was only a matter of time.



Duroflex commenced production and soon was bagging public sector and defence contracts. Sheela Foams started manufacturing in 1972. Kurlon tied up with Dupont and Sealy, both US-based companies for the manufacture of poly fibre and spring mattresses in 1998. A common manufacturing facility was set up at Dobersepet near Bangalore. In 2004 the company ventured beyond providing just the sleeping comfort of a mattress and extended its product range into the home comforts segment.

Well heeled consumers who frequented western countries were the first converts. In a country where the local cotton ginner would sew a bed in days, branded mattress wouldn't take roots so fast. But the opportunity was there and it was only a matter of time. Soon there were more players in the market. Real Innerspring Technologies (Sleepzone), Peps, Centuary, Prime Foam, MM Foam and the likes made a beeline. Foreign players such as Sealy, Tempur-Pedic, Serta, Hastens, Spring Air, Magniflex, and King Koil either tied up with Indian manufacturers or opened a distribution arrangement in India.

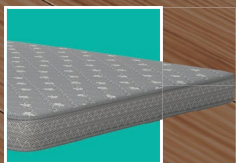


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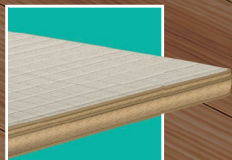
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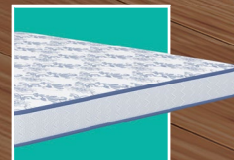
Comfort Range



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Kurlon tied up with Dupont and Sealy, both US-based companies for the manufacture of poly fibre and spring mattresses in 1998. A common manufacturing facility near Bangalore. In 2004 the company ventured beyond providing just the sleeping comfort of a mattress and extended its product range into the home comforts segment.

It took a couple of decades, not until late 90s did the market open up for branded beds and experimented with newer material. Memory foam made its debut in late 90s through early 2000s. This new material could sense body heat and adjust itself to the contours of the spine. But it was expensive and had limited buyer universe. It would take close to a decade for memory foam beds to be embraced as a mainstream product.

Selling sleep

Gone are the days when there was hardly any communication between businesses and their customers. With various social media channels like Facebook and Twitter coming into the picture, customers today have the platform to voice their ideas and opinions on a particular product, service or company. Feedback is considered an imperative factor in building a strong relationship with customers. Led by this feedback, mattress manufacturing companies are making relentless efforts to improve the quality of their offerings. To that end, there has been a significant

EBOs and MBOs became the crucial catchment point to sell branded mattresses. Selling sleep was not yet on the cards. Nevertheless, a visible shift came about in the consumers' perspective, where the main focus was now on the comfort and functionality of the product.

increase in the R&D investments in the last decade or so.

The harbinger of this trend was the Sleepwell range of EBOs launched by Sheela Foam. For the time, it was an audacious attempt to offer an exclusive store for people to walk-in and touch & feel the product. It took a while but caught on spectacularly. Most manufacturers followed suit. EBOs and MBOs became the crucial catchment point to sell branded mattresses. Selling sleep was not yet on the cards.

Nevertheless, a visible shift came about in the consumers' perspective, where the main focus was now on the comfort and functionality of the product.

Innovations in the industry

In line with the changing times, mattress manufacturing companies adopted a slew of innovative strategies to ensure customer satisfaction.

In 2006, due to a turn of favourable set of events, Mr. K Madhavan, the man who built Kurlon onto a multi-crore business, took over the mantle of Peps India, a spring mattress manufacturing unit in Tirupur which was up for sale. Madhavan's astute business sense brought Peps India, an upstart in a tug-of-war with the giants. Peps India stepped in with the motto that it will make every Indian sleep on a spring mattress. Spring had not yet caught in the Indian market. This push also brought to fore many facts including the most startling fact that an average Indian sleeps far less than any counterpart on this globe.

It took another half a decade a couple years more for this revolution to catch on though. Wink and Nod, a company inspired by the success of Casper, a US giant killer who relied mostly on the Internet to sell a new-age bed-in-box concept, brought mattress sales to millennials using their most favorite communication channel, the internet, and the mobile phone. **CT**



A big opportunity: Tap 400mn online Indian customers

After the mega acquisition of India's largest e-commerce player (in terms of market share), India can boast of three major e-tail giants and counting. Walmart, Amazon and Paytm Mall make up the e-tailing landscape today with quite a few funded startups trying to anchor in the much sought after consumer destination.

While, Walmart has a strong global physical presence in retail space but lacks in e-commerce. The Flipkart deal can spur their online presence in Indian markets. Close on the heels of this acquisition, market is agog with Alibaba making inroads into the Indian market — a much anticipated event — in collaboration with the other giant, Mukesh Ambani led Reliance. Once, Alibaba enters, the market which is already in the throes of severe competition among the incumbents is likely to enter a period of stratospheric competition. Meanwhile, Amazon is in talks to buy 49 percent stake in Aditya Birla's More supermarket chain.

The question is whether this bodes well for India, its smaller retail chains and branded stores. First, let us look at the impact of this new-found vigour in the market on the Indian economy. At the on-set is it easy to infer that the Indian e-commerce market is expected to see broad-based growth with better productivity.

The very first beneficiary of this activity is the customer. Lower prices and more variety are the order of the day. Product differentiation and localization are also creating a diverse product basket of options.

Operational efficiency is getting a leg up. Efficient supply chain and logistics is the holy grail of the industry which will only push further the



How

Building community

Retailers and brand owners have to create their own community and fan club to tap untapped online user base. Online companies like Flipkart and Amazon have established themselves in Indian market with attractive pricing and easy to shop experience. Going forward more and more consumers start using online medium for shopping. This is the right time for retailers and brands to offer their products.

Companies can build online community with the help of website, social media, WhatsApp and direct online channels like newsletters.

need for qualitative and quantitative infrastructural development. Innovation in delivery and service is the new focus. An era of Hyper-speed delivery time is ushered in. For the bedding industry, this is god-sent since the best practices brought in by Amazon and Walmart from developed markets will likely spill over and benefit local players as well.

The current feverish activities across verticals will boost output growth and increase employment opportunities fanning positive business sentiments. The deal will be subject to tax in India

so revenue gains shall add to domestic revenue receipts.

Look at the opportunity from another viewpoint. Of nearly 500 million Internet users, less than 20 percent have shopped online, while less than 10 percent are regular shoppers. Think of the opportunity with Megabucks being lined up for the titanic clash, Amazon.in, Walmart, and Alibaba (via Reliance).

The conflict & opportunities for retailers

India's large community of retail traders are not humoured. They have been protesting against the Walmart-Flipkart deal calling it a back-door entry for Walmart into multi-brand retail in India. The threat perceived is multifold. Walmart, the world's largest brick-and-mortar retail company, can now source the cheapest material globally and sell its own inventory on the platform of Flipkart. However, these could well be imagined evils. Both Amazon and Walmart before have demonstrated that they could open up the world to traditional Indian firms.

Amazon says it is enabling sellers from small towns in India by helping them scale up their businesses and leveraging the digital economy. Amazon reportedly has over 50,000 Indian sellers as part of their global selling programme; 80 percent of them are from tier 2 cities. For sellers and manufacturers, it is an incentive to produce quality products and tap the opportunity to connect with millions of Amazon's customers.

If Amazon is taking 'Make in India' to the markets, Walmart is spinning success stories of Indian manufacturers in global markets, 'Making ready for the world'. Walmart has set up global sourcing centre in Bengaluru to source India-made products to be sold in 14 foreign markets. Walmart procures over 95 percent of the goods. **CT**

ISPF organises Retail Training Program at Hyderabad



“ Topics like Know Your Product was covered in depth and in an interactive manner bringing out various views. Session on What are your Business Opportunities? was also covered in a great manner. One session that was highly informative was the Alphabet Soup by Gerry Morris. As retailers we need these sessions to get motivated and refreshed . Thank You ISPF for the initiative and a well organised program ”



P Sai Krishna, Sai Baba Furnituree, Hyderabad

ISPF organised its another series of Retail Training Program Helping Consumers Sleep Better on 18th June 2019 at Hotel Marriott, Tank Bund Road, Hyderabad.

The professional trainers from Global Talent Track Pvt Ltd were ISPF's Training Partners for this thoughtfully crafted seminar on "Selling Sleep before selling a mattress".

Mr. Purshottam Malani, Managing Director - Centuary Fiber Plates Pvt Ltd. inaugurated the function. In his opening address, he advised the dealers to focus more on the needs of the customer rather than pushing to liquidate the stocks. He also pointed out the emerging trend of e-commerce and cautioned them to impress the customers with the various features of the available products. There was also

stress on concentrating on sleep science to motivate the customers.

Around 70 dealers participated from different brands with vigor and enthusiasm. The interactive modules and role plays of this training session were appreciated by Retailers as it kept them involved, promoted the team spirit and also offered a practical learning experience.

"While introducing and presenting any product, especially the premium ones, we advise our Retail Partners to focus on three essential aspects of product presentation to consumers: Product Features, Product Advantages and Product Benefits.

It is a must that the dealer should have a thorough knowledge and understanding about the products specifications and its benefits for the consumers so that

they confidently guide the consumer on the aforesaid three significant points, which are one of the important pillars of a sales pitch that support to get the deal closed." Says Mr. S. Sundaresan, Secretary ISPF.

He also explained how to advise a customer for choosing the correct mattress to get a "Quality Sleep". This was further elaborated by him with an explanation on offering the right mattress to the right customer based on customer needs for helping them to sleep better.

The Highlights under the workshop Helping Consumers Sleep better were the Important Principles of a 360 degree Product Knowledge based on Consumer Preference that promises an enhanced level Consumer buying experience and Consumer Satisfaction

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“The training program was enlightening one with 2 key takeaways, gearing up for the next big challenge to face retail trends and taking up e-commerce with much preparedness”



Harish Batcha,
Batcha Comfort Zone,
Hyderabad.

The participants were advised to focus on Product's Unique Features and it's Consumer Benefits. The training also included enacting real-life scenario as a Consumer and Retailer conversation while selling process.

The practical case study and role-play demonstrations offered Retail Partners effective tips for handling a customer at their store.

Mr. Yashwanth Malay, from Geeta enterprises, Hyderabad, who attended this Retail Program shares his experience of this Retail Training Program with us *“ISPF training program*

has educated us on the current market situations, the potential for the growth of the mattress industry. In this training, essential tips and techniques to improve the sales were also revealed. The training experience has introduced us with the hidden obstacles that we were facing and has inspired us to change our for converting footfall into successful billing.”

Mr. Harish Batcha, Batcha Comfort Zone from Hyderabad found the Training Program as informative and a platform, where new opportunities can be discovered. *“The training program was enlightening one with 2 key takeaways, gearing up for the next big challenge to face retail trends and taking up e-commerce with much preparedness,”* he says.

The Retail Partners had also given an Aptitude Test. The qualifying Retail Partners will be awarded ISPF - Retail Partner Certification.

With a vision to enhance the Sleeping experience of the consumers and offer the finest of the sleep solutions, ISPF understands the significance of Consumer's Retail Experience and Customer Service.

The way Sleep is important for consumers, the mattress also plays an important role for better health. Since there is a lot of advancement in the

“ISPF training program has educated us on the current market situations, the potential for the growth of the mattress industry. The training experience has introduced us with the hidden obstacles that we were facing and has inspired us to change our approach for converting footfall into successful billing.”



YASHWANTH MALAY,
Geeta enterprises,
Hyderabad

mattresses, consumers can buy from a wide spectrum of customised products available in the market. Although Indian consumers have now started understanding the importance of a sound sleep and are actively involved at the time of mattress purchase, they are still not aware of the importance of mattress as an ideal sleeping surface.

With the above insight, ISPF firmly believes that Retailers should first sell sleep before selling mattresses for enhancing the consumer buying experience. ISPF's Retail Training Programs are aimed at enhancing Retail Partner's skills on Product Presentation, Product Knowledge and Customer Service.

Based on the feedback of the Retail Training Programs, ISPF will scale-up these training programs to other cities and also expand ISPF Retail Partner membership base in the coming months. **CT**



ISPA releases 2018 Mattress Industry Trends Report

The International Sleep Products Association (ISPA), the trade association for the mattress industry has recently released the 2018 Mattress Industry Trends Report to provide exclusive market intelligence that the members can use to better understand industry trends and scale up their businesses accordingly.

The report contains the latest and most comprehensive shipment, sales data available from any source on the mattress industry's current and historical trends. Additionally, as a result of ISPA's continuous efforts for identifying ways to improve the market data that it publishes, this time, several enhancements have been made in the report to make the published data more relevant, accessible and useful. Specifically, the report includes full US bedding market data including mattresses, stationary foundations and motion foundations shipped by both US producers and importers.

Further, given the growing importance of imports in the mattress industry, the report also combines data for all imported products, including mattresses, stationary foundations (including foldable and non-foldable with legs) and motion foundations into one chart, allowing readers to analyse all imported products at the same time.

Is industry on right track?

The report categorically states that the sales of mattresses and stationary foundations as a whole (including imports) grew modestly in 2018 by 7.4 and 2.1 percent in unit shipments and value, respectively. However, unit shipments and value of US-produced products fell further below 2016 levels.


Throwing light on international

trade, the report indicated that the total imported mattress units grew by 26 percent between 2017 and 2018 (to 6.8 million units in 2018) and the customs value of those units increased by 22.0 percent over the same period (to \$644.4 million in 2018). The imports of stationary foundations (including foldable and non-foldable with legs and mattress supports) increased by 145.6 and 139.1 percent in terms of customs value and units, respectively, while the average unit price increased by 2.7 percent. It is to be noted that China accounted for the largest share of 2018 imported mattresses, mattress supports and foundations with legs (85.4 percent) and customs value (84.6 percent).

The report also pointed out that in terms of unit shipments exported from the US to foreign markets in 2018, Canada remained the largest market for US-made mattresses, accounting for 63.9 percent of all exported units and 65.2 percent of the total value of those exports in 2018. Canada was closely followed by Mexico which was the second largest importer of US-made mattresses, accounting for 8.0 percent of unit exports and 4.9 percent of the export value.

Concerns for business

As for the motion foundations segment, the ISPA all channels survey showed that the market grew by 52.8 percent to 3.2 million units from 2017 to 2018, while the value of those units grew by 32.2 percent to \$1,134.3 million over the same period. However, the average unit price fell moderately in 2018 as compared to 2017.

With many such revelation and information, the 2018 Mattress Industry Trends Report promises to help the mattress industry as a whole in charting new ways for the future. 

Compared to 2017, US mattress producers shipped 38.7 million units in 2018 (a decrease of 2.4 percent), valued at \$8.3 billion (a decrease of 1.7 percent). Overall, the average unit price for all US-produced mattresses and stationary foundations increased modestly in 2018 as compared to 2017 and mattress prices decreased while stationary foundation prices posted an increase.



November 2018
Mattress Industry
Forecast

Snore Saga

What does snoring mean? Snoring occurs when your respiratory air flows through the throat. This is not a good sign because it disrupts the free flow of breathing through the nose that has an effect on your digestion and health. Here are some quick tips to control snoring:

- Sleep on your side
- Keep your head in an elevated position
- Make it a conscious habit to keep your mouth closed while sleeping
- Do some breathing exercises before sleep



Back Pain Blues

Do you have continuous back pain especially when you sleep? Then, it is high time that you check the quality of your mattress. Replace it with a hard mattress. Before that, you could also check for the mattress warranty and check with your dealer for a free replacement or repair. Most back pains today stem out of bad quality mattresses. So beware and choose wisely.



Deprived Sleep

It is said that sleep deprivation can kill you more quickly than food deprivation. Studies have revealed that even the most intelligent people lack clarity and are more aggressive when denied sleep. They become willing to give up anything to get that sleep they lacked. Adequate sleep on the other hand contributes to a healthy life.



Sleep Pattern Impacts

While a good sleep yields good health, some sleep patterns can sadly give rise to health issues. Some of them include, excessive daytime sleep that can result in constant drowsiness; sleeping immediately after eating causes obesity; sleeping on the same side can cause back pain problems and sleeping without resting the leg completely can cause leg pains.

Water and Sleep

A glass of water before sleep can

- Avoid knuckle and knee cramps
- Improve digestion
- Regulates blood pressure
- Helps in easy excretion
- Prevents strokes



Sleeping Means Lazy

There are terms such as sleepy-head and sleeping beauty. Does this mean that those who sleep are lazy? It is rather sleeping right and sleeping wrong. A standard 8-hours sleep everyday can make a person effectively active. On the other hand, over sleeping can give rise to sunken eyes and a sulkiness on an average.



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Inaugural edition of Sleep Expo Middle East ends on a high note

Dubai, United Arab Emirates: Sleep Expo Middle East, the region's first-ever summit dedicated to the sleep movement, came to a close in April leaving the public with better sense about the importance of quality shut-eye. The three-day event witnessed new collaborations and discussions between and amongst industry peers, while consumers who attended the show took great interest on the insightful conference presentations as well as the variety of sleep products and solutions showcased at the exhibit.

Getting a good night's sleep is as important as a balanced diet and regular exercise for a healthy mind and body. While there is a wealth of evidence on this, sleep health often does not get the attention it deserves.

Sleep to optimise health and wellbeing

Fuelled by a mission to highlight how lack of sleep takes a serious toll on personal health and the economy. Sleep Expo Middle East offered a first-hand look at some of the latest and most unique products and solutions in the sleep market. The event also amplified further the discussion about the need for people to prioritize sleep to optimise their health and wellbeing.

"This is a great event for people to have an intelligent understanding of sleep and its benefits. I was especially pleased with the expert suggestions I got on how to improve sleeping habits, plus being able to happy to discover innovative products from various exhibitors that will definitely help me sleep better." said, Dubai expat Mr. Insiyalani.

The show also saw a good mix of attendees from the business community. Among those who visited the show include hotel and resort managers, hospitality professionals, company owners, as well as delegates



from international brands relevant to the sleep industry.

About 40 Stalls were humming with full vibration of attracting the consumers of the Sleep Products in multiple directions. Apart from regular mattress many new products like silent pillows for the snoring people, ortho and spine care mattress were displayed. Much attention was paid on health care equipment's like fit bits, stress, relieving furniture etc.

New Technology in Sleep Accessories


New Technology mattresses, Textiles, Sleep Accessories were displayed. Latest models of quilting machines, mattress making machines, tape edging machines also made the visitors thrilling. Visitors from about 15 countries attended the Expo and from India 10 companies put up their stalls in the Expo. Many medical Doctors took part in the seminars and gave valuable advises on the concept of sleep science.

"I am personally thrilled to see the sleep industry brought to the spotlight with SLEEP EXPO 2019. It has brought the industry leaders together, and highlighted the importance of communicating brand attributes. Each brand in the industry is special in their own sense, offering unique experiences. SLEEP EXPO ME has allowed them to do so, strengthening both their individual brands and the industry over all.

I look forward to SLEEP EXPO ME 2020," said Mr. Naseem Majzoub, MD, Reach IMS.

Learnings

Sleep Expo Middle East hosted multiple events over the course of three days: the trade exhibit, which showcased some of the breakthrough sleep technologies and solutions; a two-day conference that engage attendees in thought-provoking keynotes and general sessions; and, the exciting activities at the Sleep Care Zone, where guests had the chance to try out a variety of services designed to aid them in better sleep.

Mr. Taher Patrawala, Director of Media Fusion, organizers of the event, said, *"We are proud to have taken a forefront position in advancing the sleep movement and support the growing sleep industry. I am confident that we have done a good job in rightly raising public awareness on the importance of sleep health, but equally important, we are helping industry players to push the boundaries and chart greater success with new business perspective and game-changing concepts. None of these would have been possible without the support of our generous sponsors and partners, and our pool of talented and dedicated committee members, volunteers, speakers and attendees. My sincerest gratitude to all you who made this event a rousing success."* 

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It seems like a question that's as old as time itself: "How much sleep do I really need"?

There's no perfect sleep number that can fit every person, Sleep is a vital indicator of overall health and well-being. We spend up to one-third of our lives asleep, and the overall state of our 'sleep health' remains an essential question throughout our lifespan.

Most of us know that getting a good night's sleep is important, but too few of us actually make those eight or so hours between the sheets a priority. For many of us with sleep debt, we've forgotten what "being really, truly rested" feels like.

To further complicate matters, stimulants like coffee and energy drinks, alarm clocks, and external lights—including those from electronic devices—interferes with our 'circadian rhythm' or natural sleep/wake cycle.

Sleep needs vary across ages and are especially impacted by lifestyle and health. To determine how much sleep you need, it's important to assess not only where you fall on the 'sleep needs spectrum,' but also to examine what lifestyle factors are affecting the quality and quantity of your sleep such as work schedules and stress. Following chart will give quick understanding about how much sleep one should



Age	Sleep requirements per 24 hours
0-2 months	12-18 hours
3-11 months	14-15 hours
1-3 years	12-14 hours
3-5 years	11-13 hours
5-10 years	10-11 hours
10-17 years	8.5-9.25 hours
Adults	7-9 hours

Myth: Getting just one hour less sleep per night won't affect your daytime functioning.

Fact: You may not be noticeably sleepy during the day, but losing even one hour of sleep can affect your ability to think properly and respond quickly. It also compromises your cardiovascular health, energy balance, and ability to fight infections.

Myth: Your body adjusts quickly to different sleep schedules.

Fact: Most people can reset their biological clock, but only by appropriately timed cues—and even then, by one or two hours per day at best. Consequently, it can take more than a week to adjust after traveling across several time zones or switching to the night shift.

Myth: Extra sleep at night can cure you of problems with excessive daytime fatigue.


Fact: The quantity of sleep you get is important, sure, but it's the quality of your sleep that you really have to pay attention to. Some people sleep eight or nine hours a night but don't feel well rested when they wake up because the quality of their sleep is poor.

Myth: You can make up for lost sleep during the week by sleeping more on the weekends.

Fact: Although this sleeping pattern will help relieve part of a sleep debt, it will not completely make up for the lack of sleep. Furthermore, sleeping later on the weekends can affect your sleep-wake cycle so that it is much harder to go to sleep at the right time on Sunday nights and get up early on Monday mornings.



Mr. Ashutosh Vaidya , Kurlon Enterprises Ltd

Views expressed above are Personal Views of **Mr. Ashutosh Vaidya** , Kurlon Enterprises Ltd, is no way responsible for the same , This article is written for information and education purpose and without any commercial interest. 

The Soul Never Sleeps

Mrs. Sheela Gautam

Being an inspiring mother, an extraordinary entrepreneur, an exemplary leader and a superlative woman – she played more than one role, and etched an indelible mark everywhere.

Everyone dies. Not everyone lives.

For Mrs. Sheela Gautam, however, the epitaph is different. She lived since the day she was born in 1931. As the daughter of a freedom fighter who was in and out of Jail, she tasted the pride of being a patriot from a very early age. The spirit of serving the country only blossomed further as her life took new courses.

She studied in Lucknow and married an Army Officer in 1951. But as fate would have its way, she lost her husband in 1969 at the age of 38. With the arduous goal and responsibility of bringing up two children; and fuelled with a deep desire to contribute to the industry and society in a radical way, she stepped into the world of business. By the time she was 40, she marched forth with a License for PU Foam and a dream to build something bigger than her challenges.

With frugality instilled since childhood, and with some impeccable values of hard-work, discipline and integrity to complement her goals, she moved from one pebble to another, until she added feathers upon feathers with Sheela Foam's ascent and accomplishments.

Soon, and evidently, she made it a name to reckon with in the market with not only a notable market share but also an impeccable streak of great customer service and innovation.

Anyone who looks back at this distinctive journey, does not miss to



Mrs. Sheela Gautam

15th Nov. 1931 - 8th Jun. 2019

**Mr. Rahul Gautam,
her son defines her,
as an epitome of
Integrity and Grit.**

note the perseverance and clarity of thought that she always carried, from day one to the last day she worked.

Her passion for serving the country did not stop at the pursuit of giving people health and comfort. Equipped with her father's spirit from the days of freedom movement and nation-building, she embarked on a different leadership role next. Not a surprise then that she

was greeted with the same love that her work and unrelenting rigour showered upon the country. She graced as the MP from Aligarh for not one, two, or three, but four times. She was available 100 percent of the time to her constituents.

She truly represented people with nothing else but the unadulterated intent to serve without any expectations. The infrastructure development and industrial growth that happened during her leadership echo the passion that she carried for the country and its progress.

Speaking of which, she always held the role of women high in the building of a nation. She ran an all-girls' school education close to 800 children. She was way ahead of her time and quintessentially progressive and strongly believed in equal women contribution. She always encouraged women and men to rise well above age-old practices of confinement post widow-hood. Her example and support helped numerous women to understand the value of work in achieving financial independence.

Interestingly, she always balanced her life's role with intense focus, management skills and restriction of non-value activities.

Her Son, Mr. Rahul Gautam, defines her, as an epitome of Integrity and Grit. Diligence and Morality form the legacy that she passed on in continuing ace leadership and entrepreneurship into the future.

Her memories and stories will keep pushing many leaders, women and entrepreneurs on the road to excellence. She taught us how to think, feel and live.

As a woman who changed many lives and truly lived hers, she lives on. **CT**

Do you Dream Black and White or Colored!

Was your last night's dream colored or black and white?

An interesting thing to know is that dreams lack advanced color schemes and are predominantly monochrome or subtle color scheme only a small percentage of people dream in black and white, and yet another minor see vibrant colorful dreams.

A study by the National Center for Biotechnology Information discovered in their research that people of age group 25 years and younger seldom dream in black and white as they were exposed mostly to the color television. However, older generation over 55 years of age, who grew up with little access to color television and extrovert lifestyle, reported dreaming in black and white most of the time. All-embracing, approximately 12 percent of people dream entirely in black and white.

While experiencing vibrant colorful dreams signify a motivated and progressing living, the lack of colorful and vibrant dream is a reflection of a stodgy life. Wait! While black and white dreams have been known to offer a dull lifestyle, a sharp brightness even in the monochromatic or black and white signifies that you are turning towards success, positivity or enlightenment, depending upon your motivation in life, leaving behind a dark ignorant life. So do you have colorfully exciting or dull dreaming experiences!



New Moms can now Say Goodbye to Sleepless nights!!

Can you ever imagine to discover that you can still manage to get a good night's sleep, immediately after childbirth?

We all have grown up listening to the beliefs and experiences of our grandmothers that postpartum is as crucial as pregnancy as your health needs faster recovery. Your sleepless night and depressive mood swings garnished with the cries of your newborn for unidentifiable reasons, are perfect to make you absolutely maniac. According to media reports "Approximately 70-80 percent of all new mothers experience some negative feelings or mood swings after the birth of their child. Also, the amount of adjustment that comes after the birth of a baby, along with sleep disturbance, disruption of "routine", and emotions from the childbirth experience itself can all contribute to how a new mom feels.

Often the symptoms of "baby blues" will hit forcefully within four to five days after the birth of the baby, although depending on how the birth of the baby went, they may be noticeable earlier."

It may appear that the body needs extra care due to the transformation, however, the reality is that the lack of Sleep equally makes you drained. Sleep aids body restoration and enhances our mental and physical energy.

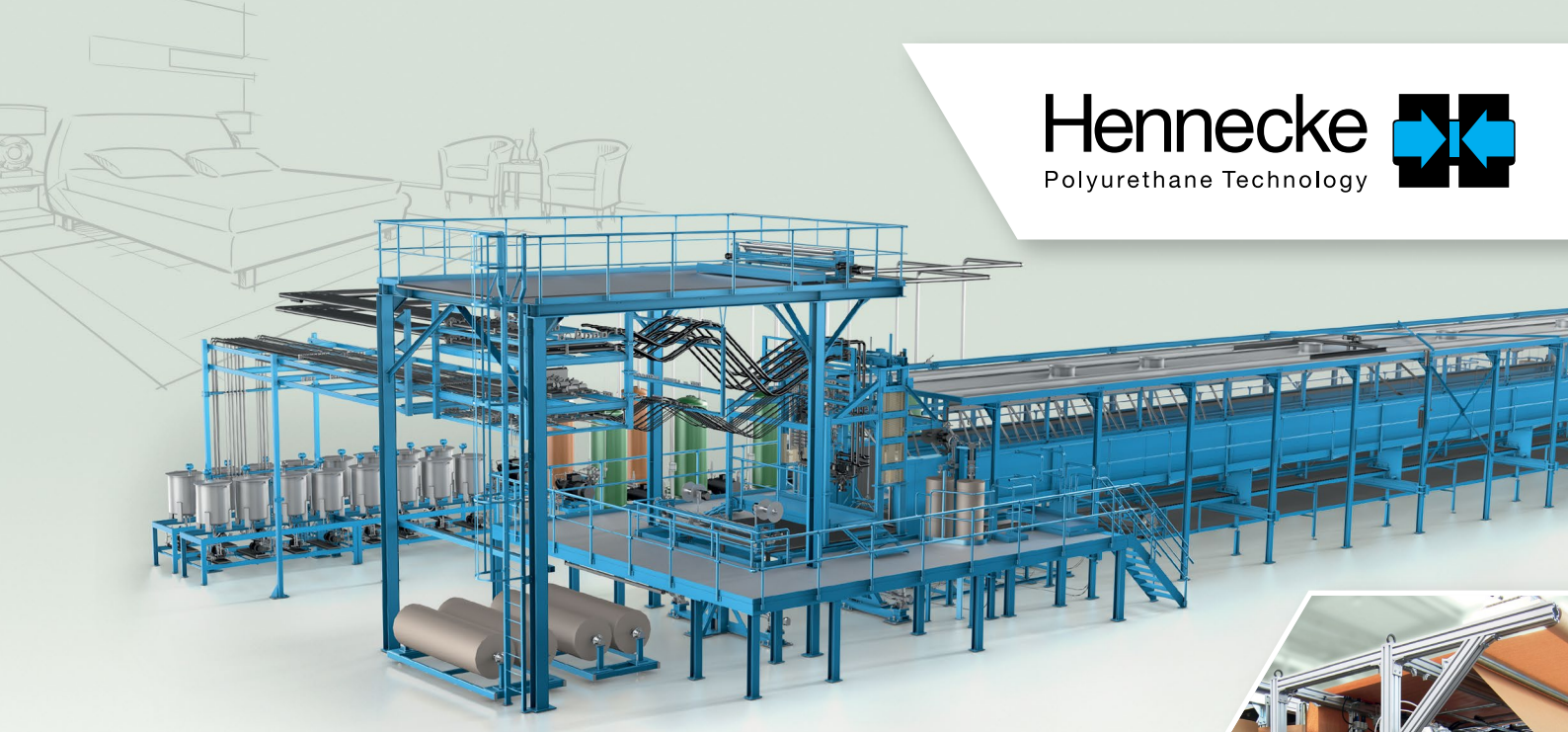
On the contrary, at the time of extreme need of sleep for your body, the sleep gets compromised maximum for taking care of the little one. Hence you must take care of your health and ensure to grab extra sleep, as your health is once again going through a complete hormonal shift and the body is preparing itself to get back to normal. But how to get it?

Mrs. Gayatri, a Medical Professional from Gurgaon, says " Newborns cry only for two reasons – either they are hungry or they want to get their nappy changed. Once these two needs are met, in most of the cases that i have come across, they sleep blissfully. The problem starts when new moms feed them and after a couple of minutes, the child rejects to take the feed. The newborn rejects as they have to put in sufficient energy for sucking the milk, that puts extreme pressure and pain on the area around the temple of their head.

Ideally, the child must be fed at least for 20 minutes. And if the child rejects to take the feed before that, slight massage round their temple relaxes them and they again start taking the feed. Once the feed is given for the recommended time period, the newborn easily drift off to sleep for the next 2 to 2.5 hours. After a month or two, they might need the feed only for ten minutes and more frequently, as their body needs extra milk to support their fast-growing body. They may also cry, as they start recognizing you also by now, for getting a refreshing walk around."

While every newborn is different, it is important to understand their need and behavioral cycle. Taking short naps whenever possible, little physical massage, writing or maintaining a diary, taking a walk outside in the fresh air, following a healthy diet plan that induces sleep, supports faster physical and mental healing will ensure that you get your share of sufficient sleep and enjoy the precious moments blissfully.

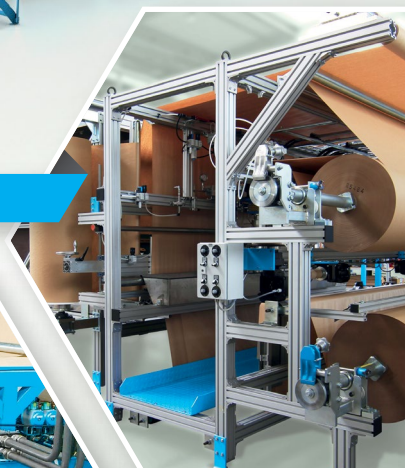
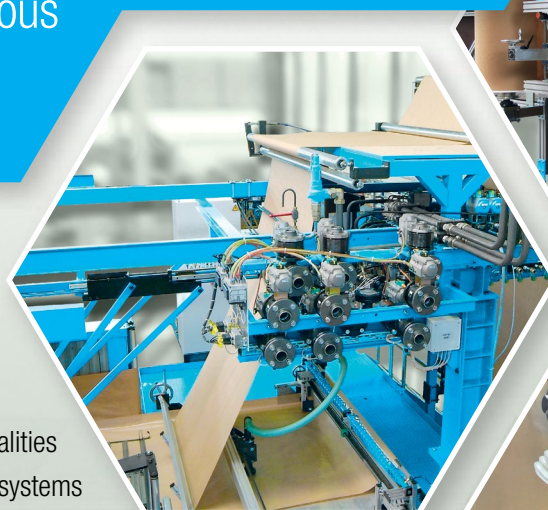




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