

Comfort Times

by ISPF

How to make a common man buy a mattress?



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The Dream-Catchers are Here

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The Future of Hospitality



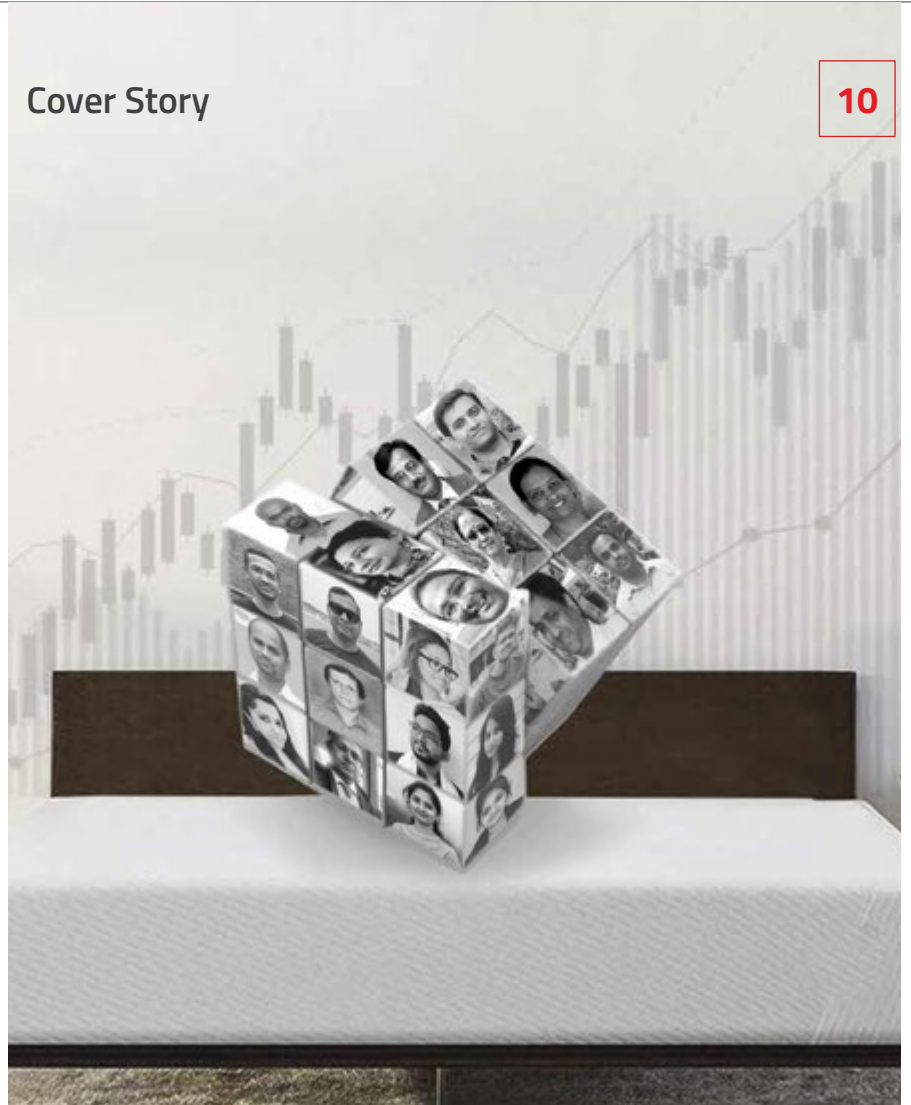
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available to browse together with the customer.*



Cover Story

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HOW to make the common man buy a mattress?

Comfort Times did a survey to check the reality, we have found that branded mattress market still has to do a lot to reach out to the common man.

Editor

S. Sundaresan

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Interview

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Customer is the King Quality is the Queen

Mr. Archit Gupta, MD, King Koil
India



Waking Up Positive What's That Like?

Mr. Thomas Varghese, General
Manager, MM Rubber Company Limited



Luxury now that is a lot of hard work

Mr. Deepak Mehta, MD,
Tirupati Foam

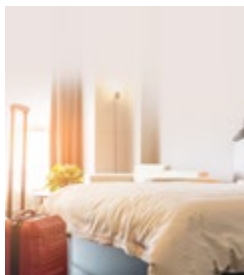
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Digitisation The Dream-Catchers are Here

Technology may not be the pixie-dust some believe it to be. But it is not a rock either. Applied well and at the right time, digitisation can bring staggering leaps in a company's profits.



Rest, Sleep & Revitalise The Future of Hospitality

The major part of hospitality industry is good comfortable sleep. The rise of the wellness awareness is moving industry further in coming years. The hospitality industry has always cared about rest but...

Making mattress last to not your life-time, but for its life-time

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World Sleep Conference 2019 promotes sleep health

The World Sleep Congress provided participants from around the world with unmatched opportunities to exchange scientific ideas and experiences in sleep medicine

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FROM THE EDITOR



It was in the 18th century when mattresses started their initial journey into European homes. Till that time, Cotton and Wool were used as fillings for beds and later included items like horsehair and coconut fibers (coir) were included. Around 1850, cast iron spring was used in chair seats from which it developed to the concept of the coil spring bed. Heinrich Westphal invented the first innerspring mattress in Germany during 1871. It took more than 60 years for his creation to be accepted by the common man.

Coming to 2019, when Comfort Times did a survey on mattress usage in India by a common man, we realised that still, we (mattress industry) are far away in making the common man buy a mattress for his good health.

Our cover story has an opinion from a different set of people across many cities in India who have shared their concerns in buying a mattress. It is the responsibility of the mattress industry to address these concerns for the growth of the industry.

It is a fact that today mattress usage is limited to some of the metropolitan cities in India and brands still need to make in-roads into semi-urban and rural areas. Yes, our survey has found out that many retailers have mattress showrooms in Tier-II and III cities. However, the required sales are not happening among these retailers.

This edition also talks about the digitisation of the mattress industry - starting from manufacturing to retail sales. Our article finds that most of the enterprise software like ERP or an SCM is functioning in manufacturing units and retailers also use software applications like inventory management, POS, etc. Our article suggests how some of the new and upcoming technologies like IoT or AI can benefit the industry further.

There are a few other important articles that we have covered in this edition for the benefit of the mattress industry.

I hope you all read them and absorb the best.

S. SUNDARESAN



INDIAN SLEEP PRODUCTS FEDERATION

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Sheela Foam Limited



Centuary Fibre Plates Pvt. Limited



Kurlon Enterprise Limited



Tirupati Foam Limited



Duroflex Pvt. Limited



Godrej & Boyce Mfg. Co. Ltd.



Sobha Limited



M. M. Rubber Company Limited



Real Innerspring Technologies Pvt. Ltd.



Nilkamal Limited





SERVICE

INNOVATION

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.

Sheela Foam acquires majority stake in Spanish firm Interplasp



Rahul Gautam,
CMD, Sheela Foam

Sheela Foam, a leading manufacturer of Polyurethane foam in Asia Pacific has acquired a majority stake in Spanish firm Interplasp SL for €42 million (\$46.7

million) to expand in Europe. Sheela Foams sells Sleepwell brand mattress in India.

Through a unit, Sheela Foam will be acquiring 93.67 percent stake while three key managers of Spanish firm will continue to hold the balance stake. This acquisition would open new opportunities for growth for the company and help Sheela Foam to mark a strong presence in Europe which is the world's largest polyurethane foam market.

Interplasp, which was established in 1987, makes polyurethane foam for bedding, furniture and other applications in Spain and Portugal. The company has a manufacturing facility

in Yecla, in Spain, with a capacity to produce 22,000 tons of polyurethane foam. It also markets some of its foam to Morocco.

The acquisition will enhance the company's prospects as the target entity has ample growth opportunities in Morocco as well as other North African markets.

Another major advantage of the acquisition is that Sheela Foam will now be able to negotiate the prices of raw materials for the consolidated quantity and have the option of procuring raw materials from India, Australia and Europe. The company will also benefit significantly from the cross-fertilisation of technologies and product portfolios in all three geographies.

Sleep survey ranks Indians on top for good sleep

Indians sleep well and now facts also prove this. As per the Philips Global Sleep Survey 2019, "Indians get best good night's sleep in the world followed by Saudi Arabia and China." The Survey was conducted online by global market research firm KJT Group on behalf of Philips among 11,006 adults aged 18 years and older in 12 countries. While the best sleepers were found in India, the worst on the chart was South Korea followed by Japan for poor sleep habits. Other important findings included that adults in India (36 percent) and the US (30 percent) were the most likely to sleep with a pet in their bed. However ISPF Survey says that Indians need to consider quality of sleep and understand the health benefits from mattress usage.



Siesta rooms in offices

Now, one would be able to sleep in office in especially designed nap room. Well, it is not a joke but reality. Wakefit, a Sleep Solutions Company which manufactures mattresses, is pushing for the 'Right to Nap' at work and in lieu of this, will be installing nap/siesta rooms in offices. This is in line with Wakefit's survey that showed Indians believe that napping at work will help them stay alert. Nearly 86 percent respondents strongly advocated a nap room. Wakefit has partnered with Rentomojo and Cloudnine hospitals to collaborate with organizations for employee wellness.

New product on the fore

The Indian mattress industry is marked by yet another innovative product launched by pioneering and innovative mattress brand—Duroflex. Given the fact that issue of back pain is faced by people of all the age groups these days, the company has come up with Duropedic—India's first orthopedic mattress certified by the National Health Academy.

Duroflex collaborated with orthopedists from National Health Academy to design the mattress that provides the most advanced back support system available in the country. The mattress design is based on a first-of-its-kind 5- Zoned Full Prone Support System, a technology that provides advanced support that the back needs.



New technology to revolutionise sleep market

The pillow and mattress industry of UK is ready to witness another technological innovation as a start-up from Manchester with its invention of a new type of foam technology for pillows and mattresses claims to revolutionise the UK's domestic and medical sleep market. Based at Manchester Science Park—Levitex® has created a unique range of sleep products that offer a 'gravity-defying' night's sleep for users, following a series of independent clinical trials with the University of

The Optimum Surface for Sleep

Levitex

Salford. The technology in Levitex provides a surface that is soft and comfortable whilst offering the right level of firmness and the unique properties of the foam are not affected by temperature. The foam technology is also backed by Dr Ilan Lieberman, a pain medicine consultant at the University of South Manchester Hospitals.



Global mattress market forecast

It seems that the global mattress market is all set to witness a major boom as numbers support this fact.

As per a recent research report by the Transparency Market Research, the global mattress market is expected to be valued at ~ US\$ 40.5 Bn in 2019, and expand at a CAGR of ~ 7 percent during 2019 – 2027 owing to



numerous factors including increasing expenditure on home furnishing and growing preference for interior designing. Other factors that are expected to propel the growth of the mattress market during the forecast period include rising home ownership, increase in urbanisation, rising income and purchasing power and improvement in lifestyle

Organic mattress wins an award

The organic mattress market is growing rapidly and organic mattresses are increasingly being recognised at various platforms. This is reaffirmed as the certified organic mattress manufactured by OMI for its retail partner Nest Bedding



has won the Eco-Excellence Award in the eco-bedding category of the home segment. The award was conferred by the Natural Child World (NCW) magazine. The award-winning mattress is sold throughout the US



in Nest Bedding showrooms and online at the Nest Bedding website. OMI not only manufactures organic mattress but also certified organic sleep products exclusively for Nest Bedding. The company aims to continue its mission of manufacturing certified organic sleep products for the growing health-and-wellness oriented consumer segment, be it under its brand or for its key partners.

From online mattress retail to off-line store

Previously an online-only mattress retailer—Leesa Sleep, has opened its first brick-and-mortar store

at Hudson's Bay in Canada. The company manufactures mattresses that offer three layers of foam for support, pressure relief and comfort to accommodate different body types and sleeping styles. The company also has Leesa Hybrid in its kitty which is a luxury

leesa

mattress that combines foam technology and an individually wrapped pocket spring system which provides edge-to-edge support. Apart from that, Leesa also offers pillows made of its signature foam. The Leesa mattresses and pillows can be purchased online or off-line in 78 Hudson's Bay stores across Canada. The product range starts from C\$790 for a twin foam mattress and C\$95 for pillows.

HOW

to make the
common man buy
a mattress?



Comfort Times did a survey to check the reality, we have found that branded mattress market still has to do a lot to reach out to the common man. Urban consumers are moving slowly towards the branded mattress market but semi-urban and rural areas are still looking at unbranded mattress segment.

The mattress industry is moving from unbranded to branded market slowly. The branded market comprising large, mid-size and smaller manufacturers constitute around 34 percent of the market, with around 20-25 players spread across the geographies. Implementation of GST has narrowed the price gap between branded and unbranded players leading to an increase in opportunity for branded mattress players.

Consumer-driven factors such as increasing population, rising urbanisation, and improvement in institutional infrastructure (housing, hospitality and healthcare segment) are key growth drivers for entire home & living industry including mattress market. The high share of players in the mattress market can be attributed to the efforts and investment made by mattress players to increase consumer awareness about quality of sleep and importance of mattresses through development of retail infrastructure and marketing activities.

However, when Comfort Times did a survey to check the reality, we have found that branded mattress market still has to do a lot to reach out to the common man. Urban consumers are moving slowly towards the branded mattress market but semi-urban and rural areas are still looking at unbranded mattress segment.

Urban India and Branded market

According to Market Pulse report, of the total sales of 18.6 million mattresses, new beds demand account for nearly 7 million mattresses every year. The furniture channel caters to this new demand every year. Mattress sale has grown at approx. 3 percent in volume

terms in the first quarter 2018-19. Foam contributes to more than 50 percent of mattress sales. Organized sectors contribution has increased from 37 to 47 percent in summer.

Results showed that about 73 percent Indian adults want to improve their quality of sleep. This means that they are unable to get good sleep of 7-8 hours each night. There are various reasons for not getting good sleep. When it comes to improving sleep, 31 percent Indians prefer to meditate (vs Global average of 26%) and 20 percent try natural/organic sleep aids (vs Global average of 18%). Other reasons could be use of unsuitable mattress for sleep.

To overcome the issue sleeplessness, people are now looking for using best-available mattresses. This is being

supported by rise in income levels and health consciousness among the people. The demand for customised and luxury mattresses is expected to increase in the coming years, whereas companies may come up with new techniques to utilize their resources and technologies better. Mattresses are no longer considered as mere consumer durables, they are an indicator of the quality of life.

The growth in the mattress market is largely led by factors such as, increased income levels and infrastructural developments, in terms of increased number of residential units and hotels in the country. Demand for construction is growing in India, with the rising awareness regarding mattress types and brands. Among various sizes available, king size mattresses are the most preferred one, and comfort

SURVEY

I am planning to buy a mattress or I own a mattress

38% of respondents

Mattress are too expensive a commodity

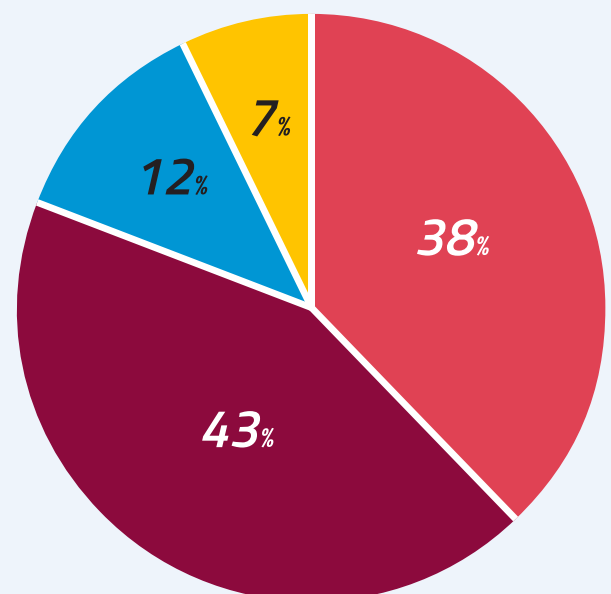
43% of respondents

Mattress emits heat

12% of respondents

Difficult to shift/Not tried mattress/bulky/and other reasons

7% of respondents





Benefits

- Uniform support to the back
- Comfort
- Support
- Breathability
- Durability
- Hygiene



Needs attention

- Durability
- Hard to move
- Dust mites
- Motion transfer
- Obsolete technology
- Heating effect
- Takes time to adjust to different positions
- Strong odour
- Cost



is the most important factor for their dominance in the market.

Mattress market in India

If we look at the mattress market size in India it is around Rs 14,000 crore, according to Market Pulse research, growing steadily. If we add bed-linen and other bedroom products, that's another Rs 4000-5000 crore market. But the market is largely comprised of unorganized players. The market comprises of only a small portion of the total population of over 100 crore.

This opens up a huge market opportunity for the mattress industry. In India, organized players sell mattresses through two mediums, one is offline and the other is online. Offline mattress market consists of retail sales of mattresses from dealers/distributors or own franchised stores. On the other hand, online mattress market consists of sales which occur through e-commerce websites like Flipkart, Amazon, Snapdeal, FabFurnish, Urban Ladder etc. or the company's own personalised website.

Retailers have a lot of stake in wooing customers to buy mattress. Retailers have to put some effort to get common man to his stores.

Though we see an increase in the usage of mattress majority of Indians sleep on 'cotton beds' which are more cost-effective compared to mattress. A Mattress, however, needs zero-maintenance as compared to cotton beds that require regular seasonal maintenance. Most of the people who are using cotton beds are from rural and semi-urban places. However, awareness campaigns about knowledge on the science of sleep will help consumers to try and start using the mattress of their choice and requirements.

Although mattresses and sleep products have a big impact on people's

lives, the industry is still unregulated. Experts observed that anybody who can manufacture mattress, can adulterate the product by filling it up with other spurious materials, nobody will know as it is not a regulated industry. The industry experts feel there is a need for some kind of regulation besides need for creating public awareness.

Survey-Urban, Semi-urban and rural areas

As part of the this survey, Comfort Times team spoke to several people in the age group of 30+ with an annual income of over Rs 8 lakh per annum to find out the reason why they are not buying branded mattress and still prefer cotton beds.

Over majority of respondents in the urban part of India like cities in Bangalore, Hyderabad, New Delhi, Mumbai etc do have enough knowledge of branded mattress and how it helps in quality of sleep. Most of the respondents do own a mattress or planning to buy a mattress in the next a few weeks.

However, we didn't get the same

CT team spoke to people from the following geographies

Urban-

Bangalore, Hyderabad, Cochin, Chennai, New Delhi, Mumbai, Pune, Udaipur

Semi-Urban-

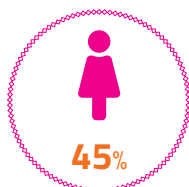
Belgaum, Mysore, Mandya, Wayanad, Kurnool, Ananthpur, Hindupur, Agra

Rural-

Kolhapur, Latur, Ratnagiri, Kunigal, Maddur, Hirisave, Chintamani, Shidlaghatta, Kozhikode, Kasargod, Kannur, Kottayam

Age group:

25-32	:	10%
32-45	:	80%
45-55	:	10%



answer when we spoke to some of the secondary cities in India like Mandya, Mysore, Pune, Dharwad, Belgaum, Udaipur, Kurnool, Coimbatore etc.

Only 10 percent of the respondents said that they are aware of the branded mattress products and they could recall a few names of mattress brands. They also said that they would buy a branded mattress in near future. Over 90 percent respondents consider that cotton beds are much cost effective compared to mattress.

Also the Comfort Times team realised that most of the people in the semi-urban and rural places are using cotton beds since 12 years or more. They haven't even thought of replacing them. Our survey team found out that very few houses have mattress in rural areas. Few of the rich landlords own a mattress beyond that no other families have mattress. In some families, only the head of the family uses cotton beds whereas other members in the family use mat and bedsheets to sleep on the floor.

How to make the common man buy mattress?

Our survey team found out that companies have been making efforts to reach out to more consumers and are

using many platforms like online, direct to consumers, social media, television, print advertisements, pamphlets, retails etc. to educate them. However retailers in these areas have to market mattress as an essential product and not expensive product.

Comfort Times survey team found out following points from the people on what makes them buy a mattress.

Branded cotton beds: Yes, people are ready to spend around Rs 5000 for the mattress or a bed. Can brands think of coming out with branded cotton beds to offer to the common man?

Buying cotton beds: Brands should consider providing exchange offer to consumers by buying their cotton beds.

EMI scheme: Some of the brands do have EMI scheme to purchase their mattress. However, most of the people whom we surveyed are not aware of any such scheme. It is the duty of retailers to spread the word about EMI scheme among the people.

Scheme for Hostels and PGs: Hostels and PGs in some of the Urban and Semi-urban areas use cotton beds. Can brands think of some scheme to promote their mattress among these places? This will help students and working professionals to understand the benefits of mattress.

Trials offers: Retailers in the semi-urban areas can consider to give 30 day trial for those who want to try out mattress. Currently retailers in these cities are hesitant to give product on trails.

Educate on importance of sleep: Retailers should try to educate common people on the benefits of sound sleep and how mattress can help them in improving their quality of life and improve health.

Indian consumers still prefer going to retail store and feel the mattress by touching or sitting on it. This is how they decide the comfort level of mattress and take their decision which makes the offline mode of distribution more popular. Hence the retail market



Executive summary

Comfort Times survey finds that the urban Indians are quite familiar with the mattress brands and their uses. However, the majority of the population in urban India, Semi-urban and rural areas use cotton beds. Comfort Times finds that people have a few misconceptions about the mattress. Some think it emits heat and long usage of mattress may affect their health. Some feel the cost of the mattress is very high compared to cotton beds. Some set of people are not aware of health hazards that would cause the use of old beds.

Comfort Times also finds that brands need to educate some of the schemes that they introduce on a regular basis. In some semi-urban areas people are not aware of the fact that mattress is offered on easy monthly installments. Such an information gap is also affecting sales and people's acceptance. Retailers are seen as the face of mattress sales in all towns. Brands should consider promoting the retailer along with their products in semi-urban and rural areas.

has dominant share in the mattress industry.

The consumers feel they can negotiate on price at the retail buying. Though this is slowly changing with an increase in awareness about the benefits and comforts mattress are providing over traditional cotton beds and deep discounts online players are providing.

Although the mattress has its advantages like good sleep, zero-maintenance, relieves pain, non-allergenic, it has its own side effects as well like durability, hard to move, dust mites, motion transfer, obsolete technology, heating effect, takes time to adjust to different positions, strong odour etc.

The local mattress market, which is tightly in the grip of the unorganized sector led by the street-side shop and the local giner, is fast shifting towards branded mattresses.

The organized mattress market encompasses of four types of mattresses namely Coir, PU foam, Spring and Combination mattress. Indian consumers usually prefer a coir mattress or a foam mattress but the demand is now changing towards plush mattresses. Organised sector is growing with rising demand of good quality mattresses among Indian urban consumers. If brands and retailers address the issue in the semi-urban and rural areas, no doubt that the mattress sales in India will double in next a few years.

Can retailers make following changes for better business?

Enhanced shopping experience: Providing customers with an exceptional shopping experience has become the top priority for businesses. Unlike earlier times, just knowing customer preferences does not suffice. The aim now is making the entire shopping experience fully-integrated. All retail showrooms of mattress in semi-urban and rural areas have to provide same seamless experience of top showrooms in the metro cities.

At a time when people seek instant gratification, customer experience has come up as the true brand differentiator. In fact, a 2013 research by Walker revealed that customer experience will eventually overtake the factors like price and product to become the main brand differentiator by 2020.

Emphasis on customer feedback: 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. Retailers should take feedback from all the people who visit their showrooms, even if they don't make any purchase.

Introduction of digital payment options: Following demonetisation in November 2016, lakhs of Indians had to resort to digital payment solutions. With the government planning to create a trillion dollar economy through digital transactions by 2022, the country is undergoing a digital revolution at present.

Thanks to a wide array of benefits including convenience, safety and security, a large part of Indian customers are now moving towards digital payments. Retailers and brands should start accepting digital payments in their stores. This will help customers not carrying cash always.

Doorstep delivery and cash on delivery: Even today, buying a mattress is quite a tedious task. One had to be physically present in a store, choose the mattress solely based on the store owner's suggestion and lastly, make arrangements to take the mattress home. Sometimes, the entire process would take 2-3 days.

Retailers should take responsibility in providing mattress to customer home. This will be an incentive for a consumer to buy a mattress. Also they should provide cash on delivery facility.

Special customer benefits: Modern businesses aim to offer their customers a VIP treatment. For this purpose, they have implemented a number of lucrative offers that include cash-back vouchers, large discounts, free trial period, extended warranty, etc. Retailers should start offering such freebies to consumers to keep them hooked.

After sales support: Can retailers call a customer after six months of his purchase to enquire about the product and offer any services if needed? This will make the customer happy and makes him loyal to that retailer. **CT**

People's OPINION

“ I would buy the mattress if I feel the product offers great value for less money. If I feel the product is of good quality and is reasonable than at other places and is cheaper than online, I would buy it even if it is not of immediate use. Based on advertisement in print and online media, I would identify the shop and check out the offer. If I have to randomly enter a shop to check the product, I would go to the one with attractive display. Not just about how the product is showcased. But of the value it provides, and the discount it offers in comparison with others.”



Preeti Patil, Latur

“ We bought 16 branded high-end mattress to replace old ones for our joint family house from retail showroom. It was word-of-mouth that took us to the retail showroom as there are many stores in any locations. Besides good offers, we received well after sales services.”



Srikanth Ammanagi, Bangalore

“ I bought branded mattress, a known and reliable brand in the market because of comfort and ergonomics. Most of the ads are informative to an extent but won't give the full and right information. However learning from others and experience helped me to buy the right mattress.”



Krishnanand Kulkarni, Dharwad

“ As compared to online buying, visiting to retail showroom provides us an opportunity to feel/ experience the products. But at retail showroom we may not get the chance of comparing different brands. Due to competition in the market I have experienced that different retailers offer different discounts on the Market Retail Price (fixed price). If we are good negotiators/ bargains then we can able to get good discounts.”



Abhijeet Kadam, Bangalore

“ After using the conventional cotton beds for years, which are uneven and uncomfortable after few years, bought branded mattress with a hope that the new mattress will have an even surface for long years and should be comfortable during all the seasons. I look for value-for-money and long-lasting product. Historically cotton mattress' prices used to be very low. Need to get used to the expensive mattresses. The companies should concentrate more on health benefits of the mattress. Now a days I buy online as they provide discounts. But, I miss the actual difference between various mattresses that can be explained in retail store.”



Sanjeev Sunkannavar, Ratnagiri



People's
OPINION

“ I purchased mattress from branded company thinking it is more comfortable and brand name it has created in the market. I learnt about the mattress on digital platform and but bought it from nearby outlet. Digital ads gave us more time to plan to buy the mattress as per our requirement. The digital ads also provided comparative information about the range of products and availability of product in nearby locations. After making buying decision, discount and combo offers made at the retail shops with freebies like - pillows and bedsheets offers, delivery free excited to purchase the mattress.”



Pavan Dixit,
Belagavi

“ I bought new mattress from a branded store so as to replace the old one. I looked at some standard measures of firm and softness of the mattress. Some ads are interesting, but most are not. I feel Ads should aid in high brand recall by showcasing the good features of the brand. But couldn't recall any brand. I feel retail stores are too stuffy and unorganised as they dump all things unlike FMCG stores. Even at retail stores we don't get a chance for free test to feel about the product, which upcoming new online players are offering these free trial to get the feel of the product before making final decision.”



Ashwin Kumar Patil, Mysore

“ Bought a new mattress to replace old one. I feel the leading names in the industry are spending on some research on sleep quality and impact on body etc. They are likely to provide comfort too. Regarding buying product from a Retail Showroom It is rare for me to buy a product, which is not in my list. May be a nice shirt may influence me to explore to buy. Presentation of products, showcasing new category products/innovative products and the range/variety at the showroom is exciting.”



Vadiraj Kulkarni, Hyderabad

“ Bought new mattress from a major brand. I feel brand should have its own outlet which convinces me of its long run and commitment and any brand for me should be advertised with some sports theme, I love it and connect with it.”

Preetam,
Shivamogga

“ Recently I purchased foam mattress from a branded company and got it assembled at home. I think a combination of different media both offline and online are essential. In addition to advertising, innovative in shop branding, and display is important!”



Jeetesh Aggrawal,
Kurnool

“ Because of good offers and discounts on good brands prompted me to buy a mattress at a showroom. The exclusive showroom have an attractive display or range of products which help us buy the product suitable for us.”



Ravindra Kulkarni,
Gulbarga

“ I bought branded top end spring mattress recently to replace old one at an exclusive showroom. I got very good discount offers and after sales services as well by the retailer. I looked at a major brand because of its name in the market. It is worth spending on the brand because we can rest assure of after sales services. Before buying I did due enquiries among friends circle who are already using the mattress and also done online analysis on price competitiveness to understand which mattress will fulfill my requirement.”



Gurnath Angadi,
Ananthpur

People's
OPINION

“ We bought a branded mattress because of comfort and quality from a retail showroom. Before buying we have done due enquires among our friends and relatives who are already using the mattress. ”



Vinuta Deshpande,
Dandeli

“ I have been using the conventional cotton beds which become unhygienic after few years. Sometimes maintaining becomes difficult in metros. Hence I am keen on purchasing the mattress because of health benefits and ergonomics. Due to my previous experience of using at the guest house and hotels my preference is for buying branded mattress. Coming to advertisements, the companies should focus on health benefits of the mattress not just comfort. The Ad campaign by PharmEasy is an interesting one which has excited me to use its services. Similar I am impressed to see the innovative Ads from Life Insurance Corporation of India about its new products in the newspapers. ”



Jagdish Kulkarni, Mumbai

“ I am looking for buying bedsheets, pillow covers. Ad campaign by naaptol.com on TV helped in making buying decision. I booked the order by calling the company and within the deadline I received material and payment was made after delivery of the product. Although I couldn't have the opportunity to check the quality of the product on hand but live demos given by hosts on TV helped in having the confidence that the product will be of good quality. I am satisfied with my decision of buying online. Other Ad camping on TV by Medimex soap was so innovative that I bought the product. ”



Sridevi, Agra

“ We usually buy cotton normal mattress - local brand. However have bought a branded mattress once, because it's more prevalent and known brand name. I believe price of the mattress are costly compared to normal cotton mattress which are believed to be good for all seasons. Based on experience from the end users after their use, bought the new mattress hence didn't concentrate much on advertising aspects. ”



Prashant Joshi, Pune

“ Earlier we had a mattress at home. It got damaged when my kids were playing on it. We had to spend few thousands to fix it. After that we haven't purchased any mattress. Cotton beds won't have these problems. It is cost effective too. ”

Bhagya Lakshmi, Kunigal

“ We purchased a mattress some time back. We had paid Rs 18,000 and bought it via online. After using it for a month, I realised that the mattress is too soft and I started getting back pain. I couldn't return that mattress since it was over 30 days. I have it at home but not using it any more. I am planning to sell it in OLX. ”



Sandeep Patil,
Bailahongala

“ Recently I visited a mattress stores to buy a product. The starting price of a coir mattress was somewhere around 20,000. Retailer offered 10% discount with a pillow as an offer. Overall, I found that it was too expensive compared to cotton beds. I didn't buy the product ”

Umesh H S, Yadiyur

People's
OPINION

“ Couple of years back we had changed our cotton beds. We got stitched new set of cotton beds. I was not too keen to go with mattress.”



Chaitra S, Kolhapur

“ A king size cotton bed costs Rs 7000 where as I have to spend Rs 35000 for a mattress for the same size. Not worth the money.”

**Shivaram,
Kasargod**

“ Though we have few showrooms in Rayachooti, I never thought of buying a mattress. For any commodity, people should find a reason to buy and invest money. My family is using cotton beds from past so many years. We never thought of discarding it. Mattress are a new phenomenon. Why we should spend money unnecessarily on some thing which I don't know.”



**Ashok Bandaru,
Royachooti**

“ I am using the mattress because of keeping good health and comfort which are very essential for maintaining balanced normal life. However, branded mattress will cost more than the local one. The companies hence involved in the industry should develop range of products that will fulfill needs to people with different economic status so that the consumers can buy the mattress.”



Abhijit Deshpande, Mumbai

“ I am staying in a rented accommodation. It is difficult to move mattress during house shifting. Hence I prefer cotton beds, which is easy to fold and take it out.”



**Sampath Kumar,
Chintamani**

“ Mattress emits heat. Cotton beds do not have this problem. In the long run mattress affects your health.”



**Sharath Kumar,
Cochin**

“ Not aware of the benefits of a mattress. Hence not tried. Comfortable with cotton beds, which our family is using from long time. Also maintenance of cotton beds are very easy.”

**Manasa,
Maradu**

“ Mattress generate heat, which is not good for the human body. Cotton beds are comfortable and do not have any issues.”



**Shwetha Patil,
Belgaum**

“ Mattress are very heavy. It is difficult for one person to move it around the house. Not comfortable for small houses.”



**Pallavi K,
Coimbatore**

“ We have one mattress now. Cleaning a mattress is very cumbersome. If we ask a retailer to get it cleaned, again we have to pay him for cleaning. I prefer cotton mattress.”



Ranjitha, Chilakuru

“ We are using cotton bed because we have customized cot size and the mattress we don't get it for customized size there are only standard size mattress available in the market.”



**Akhilesh,
Kaimur, Bihar**

People's
OPINION

“ Mattress are good but difficult to maintain, kids like to jump on it which will reduce the life of the mattress and there is no option to replace the existing mattress to a new one where has in cotton bed we can use the existing material and build a new bed.”

Sherlin,
Pathnamthitta District



“ Mattresses are costly when compared to cotton beds and produces heat which is not good for health and I'm staying in a second floor and very difficult to carry the mattress there even though it feels weight less.”



Bala Murugan, Tirunelveli

“ Since I have been using cotton bed have not heard more about mattress and I'm not aware of the usefulness of the mattress so I'm not using mattress in my home.”



Raju, Narkali,
Kundapur

“ Mattress available in market are not affordable and have read that it is not good for people who are suffering from back pain and also it generates lot of heat by these reason I feel mattress are more artificial in nature.”



Vidhya, Tambaram,
Chennai

“ We are very much comfortable with the cotton beds as we were using it from my childhood and it is easy to carry from one place to another place and can be easily rolled and kept in one place but in case of mattress it is difficult to move from one place to another.”



Ajay Singh,
Gorakhpur, UP

“ In my home we were using cotton beds and shifted to one of the spring mattress since the cotton bed became old, the issue we faced in the mattress was the movement of one person sleeping on bed makes a disturbance to the other person sleeping in the same bed.”



Pritam, Tulapur,
Maharashtra

“ I'm used to sleeping on floor, maintenance of cotton bed on floor is easy when compared to mattress because mattress gets dirt soon due to the softness and cleaning is very difficult. If it gets wet by some chance very difficult to dry it.”



Naveen Krishna,
V. Kota, AP

“ In my place very less people use mattress so there are hardly one or two shops and they sell the mattress at higher rate. So I prefer using cotton beds which are affordable and have many benefits.”



Sampada, Nipani

“ We are using cotton beds and thought to buy mattress but in our place we don't have a mattress outlet to purchase mattress we have to travel almost 15 km from my place to purchase so dropped the plan of purchasing.”



Rohith,
Hirisave, Hassan

“ In our home we are using a customized cot and we didn't find the customized sized bed for those cots so we are not using the mattress.”



Naveen Nelvagiri,
Haveri

People's
OPINION

“ I feel cotton beds are more traditional. Mattress use springs and foam. I feel uncomfortable with those things. We get sound sleep on cotton beds.”

Vishal A H,
Chikmagalur

“ Sleeping on mattress is not comfortable for me as I'm used to sleeping on cotton bed and feels more comfortable and relaxed. So not thought of buying a mattress for my home.”



Veeresh, Belkoolu, Shivamogga

“ Mattresses are very expensive to buy and they can't be reused when they are damaged. So we prefer Cotton beds rather than mattresses.”



Ramya, Mandya

“ We are using cotton beds in home and the durability is more. If it get spoiled also we can replace it for a lower price instead of buying a mattress which is very costly.”



Srikanth Tarun, Thiruvananthapuram

“ I have heard from one of my friends that the spring used in the mattress will loosen its elasticity soon in a year or so and cleaning of the mattress is difficult.”



Anbarasu,
Vellore, Tamilnadu

“ We are using cotton bed and not heard more about mattress and its benefits. So I'm not using mattress in my home.”



Neethika, Kaapu,
Kundapura

**YOUR
OPINION
MATTERS**





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**People's
OPINION**

“ We are using Queen size mattress from past couple of months. We really like it and I can feel the difference between a cotton bed and a mattress. I have recommended my brother also to buy the same product. ”



Karthik,
Surat

“ I am yet to decide on buying a mattress. I found better pricing in online stores compared to retail showrooms. I am planning to buy a single cot mattress during Diwali. ”



Sindhu V,
Lucknow

“ I am using coir based mattress for some time. I am planning to buy a softer mattress. I may not go with an expensive product. My budget is around Rs 10,000. ”



Sindhu Ashwath,
Kurnool

“ I am in a rented apartment and it is difficult to move around with a mattress when I change the house. Hence I prefer to go with a cotton bed, which is easy to fold and carry. I do not have any plans to buy a mattress in the near future. ”



Madhuri,
Trivandrum

“ In our house, we have a couple of single size mattress and also we use cotton beds. Only my kids prefer a mattress and our parents still prefer cotton beds. More than a cotton bed or a mattress, it is comfort that people look at. I am more of an opinion that those who have back pain, the memory foam mattress is better. ”

Sanjeev,
Pune

“ Price is the key differentiator. The cotton bed for Queen size costs Rs 6000. Good brand memory foam mattress costs somewhere around Rs 18000. Meanwhile, I can get a price reduction by giving back my old cotton bed. But mattress retailers do exchange old cotton beds for a mattress. ”



Sowmya,
Madurai





Archit Gupta, MD, King Koil India

CUSTOMER IS THE KING

Quality is the Queen

Archit Gupta, MD, King Koil India tells us how his company has been doing just that – creating better sleep experiences and quality, by using years of experience along with radical and fresh technologies and ideas.

Sleep is always the goal and every new technology that arrives, and every new innovation that is possible, should be leveraged to the fullest degree in accomplishing that outcome. **Mr. Archit Gupta, MD, King Koil India** tells us how his company has been doing just that – creating better sleep experiences and quality, by using years of experience along with radical and fresh technologies and ideas.

New leaps like an ID that suggests personalised mattress options for a couple, or an index that helps to stretch the limits of quality parameters or software that makes 'bodymatch' something more than a word in the brochure – it seems that the company is all set for making huge strides with disruptive innovations.

It spends not just time but strategic attention when it comes to research and development. Mr. Archit Gupta also tells us how that, when embedded with a global footprint, translates into ahead-of-the-curve offerings in the market. He also flattens the creases on the connection between health and

Mattresses are no more about just sleep. They are about better sleep, better backs, better health, better relationships and better technology. Here's a glimpse.



mattress quality. Looks like, mattresses have to take health aspects like back, orthopedic issues and other challenges with a whole new sense of gravity. Let us find out how all these changes and industry-shifts are panning out.

Q What is it like to be a player that is over 120 years' old? What advantages and challenges do this legacy and lineage bring? What makes your strategy unique and strong with the challenges and opportunities that have shaped up over the years, specially in the current market landscape?

King Koil, being more than a century-old mattress brand, has got an edge over others with respect to sleep technologies and improved material specifications that lead to an improved sleep experience for our customers. The legacy of King Koil brand is built over a wide spread of countries with top companies that have worked hard on the brand in their respective regions and have created a collective global brand image over time. This, in turn, helps everyone in their current market

Sleep is always the goal and every new technology that arrives, and every new innovation that is possible, should be leveraged to the fullest degree in accomplishing that outcome.



in terms of brand reputation.

Q Tell us something about the strengths and strategic edge that flow due to a global manufacturing presence? How do you leverage a global footprint as well-sprawled as yours? Any specific areas where this aspect brings in advantages that matter for this industry in particular?

The strategic edge of being a global powerhouse brand is exposure to latest sleep technologies that every country is working on. With this knowledge, we are always ready for something new and more relevant every year. Recently, we launched a research-based body-match technology called SLEEP ID which uses body parameters of couples and based on a sophisticated logic code, it recommends the most suitable mattress to that couple from a range of products, that too with up to 94 per cent+ accuracy.

Q What kind of opportunities and consumer behavior factors do these segments exhibit: Ortho products, Premium products, Luxury segment? What unique upsides and flip-sides, if any, have you observed in the hotel segment?

The major segments of market are Orthopedic and Back-Support segments; while the Luxury & Premium segment is still comparatively small. With memory foam as a new and potent value-addition in the buyers' market, it is very important for mattress brands to ensure usability in mattresses along with attention to an optimum mix.

Q What value do associations, like the ones with chiropractors and physiotherapists, bring in? How important are they for the new shifts that the industry is undergoing and for the needs that today's customers are exploring?

Yes, it is definitely a very important association for our brand and the value additions are notable. Over time, chiropractors' associations like ICA (USA) have helped us to create SleepID Body Match software through four years of research and development with King Koil USA. With the help of physiotherapists and orthopedics we have improved specifications of our products - immensely over time - and the resultant value is clearly seen through the customer satisfaction reports that we get from the market.

Q Any latest insights that you can share from the Sleep Quality

Tracking Index? It sounds like a disruptive and relevant concept. What started this idea?

Sleep Quality Index is a ranking system that King Koil developed to ensure fair rankings of our own product range on various key parameters by using processes like sleep trackers, body composition analysis, chiropractor's evaluation etc. This has given us a fair evaluation on how our own product ranks within a range of comfort and support in an unbiased and scientific way.

Q A lot of debate and discussion throbs around about the advent of technology in this industry? With the backdrop of a legacy environment and the future that is arriving with advancements in Artificial Intelligence, Internet of Things, Robotics, Automation, Customer Relationship Management etc. what is your assessment of the role of technology from here and on?

I believe that the new slew of technologies has unlimited scope of investments and returns in the longer-term horizon. We are always positive and upbeat on investments in technologies for improvements in sleep quality to our customers. It is going to accelerate the state of innovation in the industry in many ways. It is going to augment customer experience quite strongly. That's a significant goal for industry leaders and innovators.

Q How strong are segments that you see with innovations like BODY MATCH technology and alliances like iOBED?

We are seeing a major shift of our sales happening through Body match technology selection by our customers. Our prime goal, since the beginning, is customer satisfaction through better quality sleep. Firstly we focused on making highest quality products from all parameters to ensure top manufacturing standards, and then, we saw a huge gap in sales process at retail points that leads to comfort issues. Our focus on body match technology is aimed to eliminate these comfort issues by letting customers buy mattresses that suit their body needs and requirements. **CT**

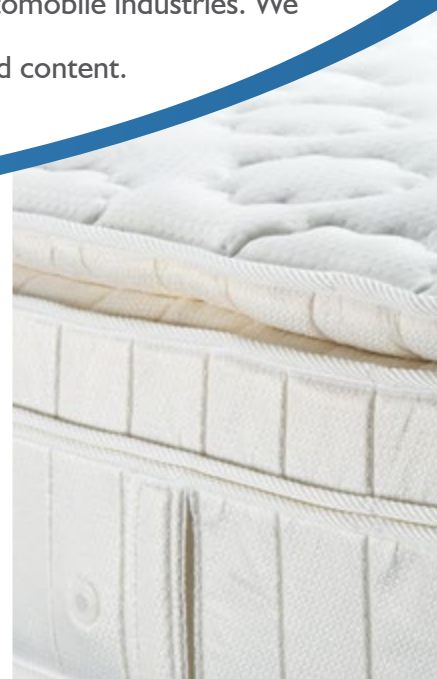
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DIGITISATION

The Dream-Catchers are Here

Technology may not be the pixie-dust some believe it to be. But it is not a rock either. Applied well and at the right time, digitization can bring staggering leaps in a company's profits.



INDUSTRY 4.0

We are entering an age where digitalisation of manufacturing is upending how products are designed, fabricated, used, operated, and serviced post-sale. It is also showing its quasi-magical impact in transforming the operations, processes, and energy footprint of factories and the management of manufacturing supply chains.

Smart manufacturing is being driven by the advent and maturation of many technologies, including: High-Performance Computing (HPC)-powered Computer Aided Design (CAD) and Engineering (CAE) software; cloud computing; the IoT; advanced sensor technologies; 3D printing; industrial robotics; data analytics; machine learning; and wireless connectivity that better enables Machine-to-Machine (M2M) communications.



There are certain Native American tribes that strongly believe in dreams as the source of something even greater than prophecy. People on the other side of the world also opine that the Great Spirit created the world on a Great Turtle's back before drifting to sleep. Just the way, back here, Hindus believe that god Vishnu dreamt of the universe while he was enjoying his cosmic sleep.

These tribes, hence, also believe in the idea of dream-catchers. Things, spells, ways that build solid and cozy webs so that bad dreams are trapped. These webs also have a hole in the centre that is designed to make room for the good dreams to make their way in. In fact, in regions like Guatemala, they have worry-dolls too. The children can tell their worries to their dolls before going to sleep.

These beliefs and legends may sound silly or outdated but they are working for someone somewhere fight bad dreams and catch good ones.

Incidentally, the sleep industry also has a new dream-catcher around its spirit, if only; it paid attention to it and hung it on the right spot. Digitisation!

Yes, in the last five to seven years, a slew of technologies have evolved and many more have emerged, changing the landscape of factories, supply chains, business processes, retail points and customer engagement to another level altogether. These technologies are trapping some bad dreams that technology, or the ill-informed and ill-invested use of it, caused-mattress makers and sleep-industry players to suffer.

The Signs of a Good Dream

What ails any traditional manufacturing set-up? Wastage, inefficiencies and flab that keep adding to the pile of unnecessary costs and thus, eating away precious margins. They also make an enterprise too slow and rigid to get to the customer in a fast and precise way. Hence, revenues take a hit. The maths is not hard to guess. When costs inflate and sales deflate, it is hard to ensure

good margins. And no matter how old or huge one's foothold is, sooner or later, things are bound to topple over.

There are many latent and ignored islands of fragmented and manual processes across the entire chain of a mattress or sleep-product's journey. From the very first nugget of an idea to the last stop at a customer's place, there is so much that can be done in a better, more efficient, smart, automated, streamlined, insightful and visible manner.

Many latest and advanced technologies such as Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP), Supply Chain Management (SCM), Order management, Inventory management, Warehouse Management System (WMS), Delivery and Point of Sale (POS) systems can help in a tremendous way to increase the efficiency of some underlying processes and save costs. Plus, the world is already setting its eyes on next-gen technologies like Radio Frequency Identification (RFID), Internet of Things (IoT), Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Robotic Process Automation (RPA) which are going to truly flip the way factories ran and the way retail or marketing worked.

This gamut of digital forces is not only relevant for factory operations or inventories but also for other stages of brands, for distributors and retailers and for any stakeholder who wants to maximize profits and deepen customer experiences.

Dr. Rajkumar Palanna, CEO, eMpulse and a digital transformation expert, dissects that whether it is a small manufacturer of pillows or a transportation company or a mid-level enterprise, everyone can reap a lot of potential in emerging technologies. *"We are looking at democratisation of technology in the new-age approach. With cloud-based and accessible-to-everyone data, the outcomes change. These areas significantly improve the operations of a company. If done right, it can mean a five to ten percent profit impact."*

So mattress industry players are



also at the right value-addition stage with new innovations and the explosion of data available for analysis. This leap can go beyond profits.

Yet, many tech firms in the Asia Pacific region are still at early stages of adoption. They view technology as an investment to expand when growth is good but they cut on it when growth slows down. According to Forrester Asia Pacific Tech Market Outlook (2019 to 2020), the region's CIOs can expect tech market growth of four percent or more in 2019 and 2020.

What is interesting is that firms in Japan, China, Australia and Singapore consider technology to be core to the business and will keep investing even in a downturn.

That should be the direction and strategy with technology. More so for an industry that has been, for long, trapped in legacy IT, misfit systems, out-dated tools and unwieldy processes.

Sheep-counting to Industry 4.0

This is the era of Smart Manufacturing, as Stephen Ezell, Information Technology & Innovation Foundation (ITIF) captured in his report in 2018.

We are entering an age where digitalisation of manufacturing is upending how products are designed,

When tools of better speed, insight and automation are leveraged; a company sees a two-pronged impact. There is a new top-line revenue growth possibility thanks to better, more intelligent and differentiated products.

fabricated, used, operated, and serviced post-sale. It is also showing its quasi-magical impact in transforming the operations, processes, and energy footprint of factories and the management of manufacturing supply chains.

'Smart manufacturing is being driven by the advent and maturation of many technologies, including; High-Performance Computing (HPC)-powered Computer Aided Design (CAD) and Engineering (CAE) software; cloud computing; the IoT; advanced sensor technologies; 3D printing; industrial robotics; data analytics; machine learning; and wireless connectivity that

better enables Machine-to-Machine (M2M) communications.' The report spells out, underlining the advent of Industry 4.0 in today's factories.

When tools of better speed, insight and automation are leveraged; a company sees a two-pronged impact. There is a new top-line revenue growth possibility thanks to better, more intelligent and differentiated products. There is also the parallel advantage of bottom-line cost savings due to more efficient and more effective innovative processes using the digital capabilities of the equipment being now used. With lean and smart manufacturing, organisations become insight-driven and that helps making the customer experience also turn more consistent and digital. Not only that, new business models can emerge out of this symphony of data, processes and speed. When production and logistics can get intelligently connected to the rest of the business, one can handle demand-supply fluctuations for sure. But there is something else too – now one can understand a customer needs proactively and have all the capabilities in place of delivering what they want.

Industry 4.0 is here. In fact, one of the most significant changes in recent years is the emergence of digital as a core component in the manufacturing process, as Mr. Raghuram Joshi, General Manager, Enterprise Solutions, Robert Bosch Engineering & Business Solutions Private Limited (RBEI) tells us when he outlines the scope of digital transformation in the Indian Manufacturing space.

"Some people call it 'Industry 4.0'; some 'Smart Manufacturing' and others 'Future Factories'. This means using IoT, AI, block-chain and other modern technologies to make the manufacturing process more efficient, predictable and equipped to produce higher quality products."

Mr. Raghuram Joshi points out another significant aspect too. There is an increasing complexity with regards to organisational processes. *"Manufacturers need to deliver a higher variety, they need to deliver the right*

sleep ables

By Centuary

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Digital Experience Investments to rise: About 53 percent purchase influencers in India say their firms put a high priority on accelerating their shift to a digital business to keep up with fast-changing expectations of consumers

Source: Forrester Report

product and they need to deliver it at the right time.”

Sharing his experience on digitisation at Kurlon, Mr. Narendra Kudva, Chief Operating Officer of the company says, *“We at Kurlon have been at fore-front of technology, and innovation is part of our DNA. We were among the earliest to adopt SAP as our ERP system 16 years ago. Today, our whole organization including the factories are running on the latest SAP 4 Hanna. It helps us streamline our entire process of procuring materials, manufacturing, logistics and customer delivery & experience.”*

While keeping up with the latest technologies, we have kept an eye out on the new technologies such as AI, IoT, RFID, RPA, and Block-chain. Some of these can have an immediate positive effect on this industry.

“RFID has been around for a while, and the greatest benefit it offers is the end to end tracking of the products, right from the production line, all the way to homes of the customers. On the manufacturing side, it offers valuable insights into the production process, tracking defects, making improvements in production. It can provide total visibility throughout the entire supply chain model”, he adds.

Speaking on the IoT, Mr. Narendra Kudva says IoT offers a way to capture lots of data. *“We can then use analytics to classify this data and apply it for different applications such as improving manufacturing, quality and customer experience. When you have large amounts of data available on hand, the next step is using ML (Machine learning) to predict outcomes. Lastly, AI offers the ultimate*

“*We have integrated our SAP with warehouse software. This integration provides us immediate information and alerts on the stock at each warehouse location is directly connected to our manufacturing units.*”



Mr. Narendra Kudva,
COO, Kurlon

solution, where all of the improvements and experiences are offered through superior humanlike thinking. The challenge with AI is that the models that are used to train the AI need to be made by humans, and there is a deficiency of trained personnel who can do that. However, with technology and computing power growing exponentially and new workforce being trained in this field, we should start seeing the benefits of these technologies as early as 2020”, he adds.

Meanwhile, Mr. Narendra Kudva says that Kurlon was one of the first few companies in India which implemented SAP. *“We have integrated our SAP with warehouse software. This integration provides us immediate information and alerts on the stock at each warehouse location directly connected to our manufacturing units.”*

Kurlon also digitised its sales force. *“We have developed an app for our sales force. This app sits on their smartphone. Through this app, the sales team can take orders from the retailer and updates it on the app. This app is integrated with our SAP at the back-end and our inventory team can get first-hand information on the product requirements. Through this app, the salesperson can order the required size or a model of mattress. This app also tracks the route of sales team”,* he says.

The Next Wave of Early Birds

When we look at new-gen technologies

like Robotics, Industrial IoT (IIoT), IoT, AI, Block-chain, RFID, Smart contracts etc. in factories and supply chains in India, the contours are fresh and exciting. Mr. Raghuram Joshi believes that new digitalisation possibilities create the opportunity to connect not just the manufacturing setup of the OEM (Original Equipment Manufacturer), but also the ability to integrate beyond their organization.

“This could include suppliers, vendors, partners and more. Closer collaboration can help all parties to work more efficiently and optimise the entire supply chain.”

But this necessitates a different shift in the mindset as well. *“While on the digitalization journey, it is important that manufacturers maintain a holistic view throughout the full product development process until the point of consumption. For this to be possible, they would need to enable the entire supply chain and manufacturing site etc., which allows them to progress and provide their product as a service. In other words, you need to enable the entire stack. As a manufacturer in the digital world, the ability to operate with a digital twin of a product will also be essential. Without this digital infrastructure, organizations risk missing out on the benefits of monetizing software and services.”* Raghuram Joshi explains.

In the landscape of emerging technologies, sensors and IoT are already standing out. The application of IoT is projected to generate \$1.2 to \$3.7 trillion of value globally by 2025 (McKinsey). This unmistakable effect would be seen in four areas specifically: operational efficiency; predictive and preventative maintenance; supply chain management; and inventories and logistics.

Imagine factories where operational efficiency gets maximized when IoT facilitates predictive and preventative maintenance. Factories can now use sensors to monitor machinery in real-time and the whole air shifts from that of a repair-and-replace to the new environment of predict-and-prevent.

The advantages of emerging



levers with fast ROI, to improve business profitability during the last decade in USA."

As per July 2018 (Forrester-SAP), about 88 percent of innovative manufacturers have started or completed their digital transformation. This stands in contrast 54 percent of other companies. Note that those manufacturers, who considered themselves to be innovative, also rated themselves highly across the board for innovation in strategy, technology, people, process, and culture. Cannot be a sheer coincidence, can it?

Looks like as tech markets in China and India mature, their tech purchases will start to shift more towards the software and services categories that dominate tech spending in Japan, Australia, Western Europe and the US. As software and services purchases rise from five percent to seven percent, it is seen that many firms in India, China and ASEAN are acquiring their first Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) and Customer Relationship Management (CRM) solutions.

As Mr. Thomas Varghese, General Manager, MM Rubber Company Limited shares, technological advancements in mattress manufacturing especially R&D, Supply Chain and Customer Relationship are always desirable and welcomed. *"The mattress industry in India is still in a developing stage and there are many miles to go. Wherever new technologies can be adapted for improvisation, including AI, the mattress Industry should opt for it."*

Mr. Deepak Mehta, Director, Tirupati Foam also weighs in the role of AI and other emerging technologies and avers that technology plays a very important role in this digital era, where every information is on the tip of the hands of humans. *"AI is still an emerging technology; what we saw in sci-fi movies earlier is now becoming a reality and hence this will also help the industry to achieve new heights. Looking into CRM, SCM, PoS deployments; this has helped a lot to track you down in your system at a macro level which helps you to understand not only your product and demand but also how efficiently and effectively; so that while reducing your*

technologies are numerous when applied inside and beyond the legacy IT fabric of manufacturing companies. Take the case of Internet of Things (IoT), for instance. If manufacturing companies install IoT sensors within equipments, they can collect significant operational data on the machines. *"This helps them to have an in-depth look at how the business is performing and enable them to find out which equipments need repairing before more problems arise. This prevents them from making more significant expenses by skipping the downtime or replacement of the equipment. Hence, investment in IoT and big data helps businesses in saving money,"* explains Mr. Karan Kumar, Co-founder & CTO, Hogar Controls.

This can be further extended to a factory scale and infrastructure. Investments in IIoT help a manufacturing enterprise to unleash pockets of productivity, efficiency, pre-emptive maintenance, agility and speed that were never even possible or plausible before. *"IIoT is related with various connected devices which help following tasks to control the behavior of the industrial devices – It is about monitoring, collecting, exchanging, analysing, instantly acting on information and much more. Hence, the convergence of IoT and big data in IIoT is an important component."* Mr. Karan Kumar is confident that edge-Computing will be in high demand as we

DIGITAL ECOSYSTEM

It has been noticed that companies with 50% or more of their revenues from digital ecosystems meet 32% higher revenue growth and 27% higher profit margin.

MIT Sloan Management Review, Thriving in an Increasingly Digital Ecosystem.

go ahead.

A Lullaby With Magical Effects

The Digital renaissance is clearly underway and would only be ignored at the cost of falling behind.

This reminds us of some observations at the McKinsey Global Institute (MGI) - the majority of value (80 to 90 percent by some estimates) created in prior industrial revolutions can be attributed to replacement of old machines with new ones.

Look at other markets. Mr. Brian Boyette, CEO, Avior Group, Phoenix, Arizona, USA observes, *"Lean and digitization has been one of the largest*

Cost of Production you can work and serve your customer."

Good Morning Robotisation and Servitization!

Many old-school manufacturing companies in India are reaping the impact of automation in transforming customer engagement as well. RPA or Robotic Process Automation is helping to expedite order delivery. One customer of Pega Systems, for instance, witnessed that processing these requests used to require agents to walk through 122 steps; and 20 of which included painstakingly cutting and pasting sales order numbers into a messy maze of systems. But after automation, customers could change and update shipment dates on-the-fly, without any human intervention. RPA can start helping companies to detect order entry errors and to whittle down the time it takes to process them.

When it comes to RPA, most enterprises seem to be crossing the 'tinkering' stage. There is a shift in the focus of RPA from job elimination to augmenting talent, digitizing processes and extending the life of legacy IT systems. As RPA moves ahead from the

The emergence of digital has enabled new non-linear business and revenue models, which is why manufacturers are reevaluating the way in which they serve their customers.

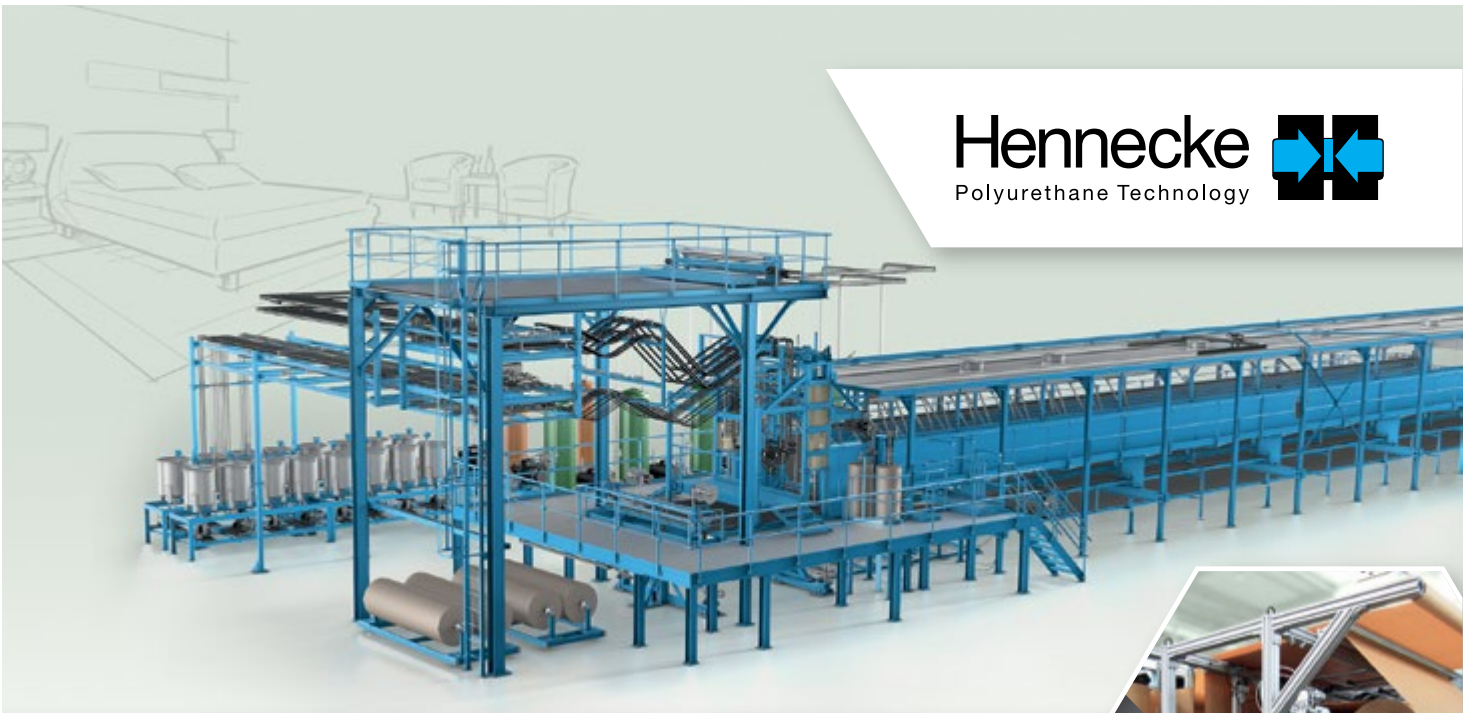
boundaries of traditional automation software, it arms enterprises in recognizing and adapting to deviations in data or exceptions when confronted by large volumes of data. An HFS (Horses for Sources) research also explains that any company which has labor-intensive processes, where people are performing high-volume, highly transactional process functions, will boost their capabilities and save money and time with RPA. Its estimates show that the total enterprise robotics software and services market will surpass \$4.3 billion by 2022 as a compound growth rate of

40 percent.

Then, there is the possibility of servitisation that is a new wave coming on the heels of Industry 4.0. Think of a mattress-maker who jumps a big shift. It stops products and starts providing complete solutions. It can now understand customers better and monetize asset data. This not only brings more revenue from services with higher profit margins but a new level of increased customer intimacy as well.

Everybody wants to get into Servitisation, but the change is not happening at the pace people would expect, Mr. Raghuram Joshi reminds. *"In the past, revenue generation or turnover in the manufacturing industry was linear in nature—i.e. the more I produce, the more I am able to sell. However, the emergence of digital has enabled new non-linear business and revenue models, which is why manufacturers are reevaluating the way in which they serve their customers. Examples like subscription-based models, 'pay as you go' or 'pay as you use' are becoming increasingly practical and relevant. End users are demanding products as a service rather than buying them as Capital Expenditure*





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(CAPEX):”

He offers an example. “A manufacturer who sells dishwashers and washing machines can also offer services for these products like preventive maintenance. However, this service can be further enhanced by utilizing a smart home platform to provide services focused on end-user convenience. This empowers customers to decide how they would like their home equipment and machinery to run, whether this is from a power usage or comfort perspective.”

Technology Trickles Into The Retail Hole

Retail space is also a new playground for many technologies as they combine data, analytics, sensors, augmentation, embedded reality and personalization into strong equations. Ask Mr. Milind Shah, Partner – MarTech, RPA & Data, DAN Consult, and one can understand the clear differentiation for technology for mattresses industry which can attract shoppers to buy through digital channels. It is being seen along 3 broad principles:

- 1. Product Visualisation:** Superior product visualisation is continuing to be a driving factor for ecommerce success in 2019
- 2. Having a Mobile-First Strategy:** Lot of decisions are being made on the go and a key mobile first strategy and with a good mobile app, digital-first firms in mattresses industries are offering a more immersive mobile experience to the users with features like push notifications, alerts, personalisation, custom recommendations.
- 3. Brand Positioning:** The Omni-channel brand positioning around mattresses, has changed from a home essential to a health product and mainly through technology and digital interventions of educating the end client and making him aware of importance of sleep.

Mr. Milind Shah also reasons that in the USA as per data below from “OneClick retail” Mattresses furniture sales showed the highest increase on Amazon

“Most of the retailers do have basic software application needed for the business.”



Mr. Hormazd F Sholapurwala,
Managing Partner, Pillow Tech
Industries

with reference to last year up to 82 percent. The trend is expected to catch up in India Market as well.”

This is also a space where gaps and opportunities exist in a hard-to-miss way. Mr. Hormazd F Sholapurwala, Managing Partner, Pillow Tech industries argues that there is a lot that can be done to improve logistics and distribution parts that affect the last mile of a mattress cycle.

“There are so many apps today that are helping us get cabs and food. What if there is something that can jump in when a customer needs a specific mattress that is not immediately available with a distributor but should somehow be delivered to his/her doorstep by collaborating with other partners or entities.” This remains a ripe area for technology to revive and refresh.

Sleep-walking anyone?

All said and hoped, there is a reason somewhere that is still stopping many organizations from pushing the pedal on the new world of better profits, efficiencies and happier customers.

Manufacturers still struggle from a lack of awareness, internal expertise, and requisite internal workforce skills

Technologies like RPA are still nascent and vague; and those like IoT still face interoperability and standardization challenges.

to support the digital technologies, as indicated in the ITIF report. Most manufacturers (especially Small and Medium Enterprises or SMEs) simply don’t know where to start or how to deploy digital technologies to solve specific business problems in a way that generates a positive return on investment.

Technologies like RPA are still nascent and vague; and those like IoT still face interoperability and standardisation challenges. Dr. Raj Palanna pins it down to the need for getting foundation technologies in order first. “We need to have safety systems, ERP, information systems, inventory systems and work-flow systems taken care of first before emerging technologies like AI, RPA or Block-chain can be considered by the industry.” He also confronts the issues that digitisation may present and suggests that the mattress-industry has to start defining standards, interfaces etc. and remove the fragmented nature of technology. “The whole industry gains when everyone becomes profitable and efficient. Collaboration and competition can be nurtured in a healthy way by ISPF. Multiple companies within the overall value stream, and on the entire value chain, can bring new synergies.”

“The ROI on digitisation is so high, thanks to efficiencies plus availability of inexpensive answers - that it is almost stupid not to digitise. But there is a roadmap to it. You would need analysts and experts to guide through gaps, processes, vendors and solutions. Process understanding, deciding and implementation of technologies and change management have to be undertaken well.”

As per the results of a survey by Pegasystems on RPA and Robotic Desktop Automation (RDA), these technologies are being highly effective in streamlining work – though achieving and maintaining those results isn’t as simple as it seems.

Value from automation

It was noted that most respondents gain significant value from automating their operations with bots. Here, 67 percent said that robotic automation is

Challenges will persist and emerge. But the right approach lies in both the way one thinks about technology and the way one executes it, specially in an industry that has long been considered an old-economy one.



these setups are so diverse, you rarely have one solution that suits everyone. It is therefore, necessary to run pilots in the field and then roll them out to the larger organization."

For fully realizing the potential from Digital Initiatives, it is important to consider these programs at multiple levels, he advises. *"Digital Core – comprising of ERP, MES and PLM systems, Enterprise Intelligence Systems – MIS, CRM, eCommerce, Business Intelligence and Collaboration Portals, and interfaces beyond the enterprise like payment gateways, data sharing with ecosystem players. Missing pieces often lead to either suboptimal results or ad-hoc systems and processes that tend to complicate the technology landscape of the enterprise further."*


Lot of opportunities in technology

That said, it is a very exciting and interesting time to be in manufacturing with lots of new opportunities arising—whether that is in relation to technology or the services we can now make available, he confidently maintains.

"In this non-linear environment generally no two solutions are the same, from both a technology and business model perspective. However, taking this into consideration, whoever manages to master the combination of these two aspects is at a huge competitive advantage. The pace of change is unlike anything seen before and while not all of the components of manufacturing's digitalization are fully mature, not trying them could be a risky move. If organisations wish to remain relevant it is imperative that the adoption of new technology is high on their list of priorities."

Whether one accepts it, denies it, scrambles to it or crawls towards it, digitization is going to be the new reality.

It is time to let go of bad dreams and welcome new ones. It is time to embrace a new force, with open arms and swift footsteps.

As they say **'Catch your dream before someone else does. Only an open heart will catch a dream.'** 

even more effective than they originally anticipated, while only eight percent felt it was less effective than expected. What is tough, however, is getting to that point and staying there. The survey unraveled many important issues.

Like: Organizations are spending more time and effort getting bots up and running than anticipated. Deployment popped as respondents' top bot challenge. Almost 50 percent found bots harder to deploy than they first thought, while on average, only 39 percent of bots are deployed on schedule, and it typically took 18 months (on average) to successfully push bots live into production.

Then there was the difficulty of inevitable changes to the underlying enterprise architecture that is likely to lead to increased bot-breakage over time. As the survey unfolded, 87 percent of respondents experience some level of bot failures. Also, maintenance came up as the second biggest problem that bot users face. So with bot-breakage a near certainty, RPA and RDA can't be viewed as a set-it-and-forget-it task. As was seen, 41 percent of respondents said that ongoing bot management is taking more time and resources than expected. They (38 percent) also found bots to be adding another layer of complexity to IT. Plus, 26 percent worried about more 'shadow IT' addition issues than expected.

We cannot deny that 61 percent think bots bring more value and ROI

than originally expected. But we can also not dismiss those 13 percent that have been let down by the amount of value and ROI they've seen.

RPA is a good indicator of what can work and what can go wrong while injecting any new technology paradigm in the traditional manufacturing space.

One more thing that can go wrong is security. As per a new global survey from Sophos 'The Impossible Puzzle of Cybersecurity', IT managers are inundated with cyberattacks coming from all directions as cybercriminals exploit weak links in security that are leading to supply chain (third party vendor) compromises. As many as 27 percent of Indian IT managers consider IoT threats, 21 percent consider internal staff as the top security risks and 24 percent of Indian IT managers consider supply chain as a top security risk.

Stop tossing and turning

Challenges will persist and emerge. But the right approach lies in both the way one thinks about technology and the way one executes it, specially in an industry that has long been considered an old-economy one. Ask Mr. Raghuram Joshi and he recommends that digital transformation initiatives need to consider existing technology investments. *"A clean slate approach would not be very practical and may lead to intensive discussion around not just ROI but also acceptability from current teams. Manufacturing setups have a legacy and uniqueness of their own. At the same time*



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REST, SLEEP & REVITALISE

The Future of Hospitality

The major part of hospitality industry is good comfortable sleep. The rise of the wellness awareness is moving industry further in coming years. The hospitality industry has always cared about rest but...

The hospitality industry is on an overdrive to ensure its guests are well rested. A good night's sleep is the underlying motto. Everything around the guest comfort revolves around this. Right from lighting, to the cleanliness, from bed linen to temperature control has this single goal: comfortable sleep.

Ask travelers the top-rated thing they want out of a hotel stay, and chances are the answer is: a good night's sleep. In the years to come this is likely turn into an obsession among travelers. The rise of the wellness movement — which has an obsession with sleep is the sole reason behind the wellness clocking over \$4 trillion a year, and that number is projected to increase in the coming years.

Wellness is the new hook in travel marketing, and it's been gaining speed. The rise of wellness culture has made caring about sleep cool — and since weariness is a top complaint of travelers, it's good business sense that the hospitality industry is upgrading its sleep offerings.

The hospitality industry has always cared about rest but hasn't been serious in its goal of getting enough shut-eye that is crucial for travelers who want to feel good on business trips or vacation. Thanks to innovation in the area of sleep for years, all this is set to change.





“To help guests adjust to a new time zone or recover from their travels,” will drive business in the future and the brands that do a great job in this will stand out as preferred destinations.

So where would they start. All the guests want is a restful, comfortable night’s sleep. And what best way to achieve it but by providing a bed that is comfortable. Bedding innovations are evolving in the industry, helping guests fall asleep more quickly and giving them an all-around more comfortable sleep.

Connected sleep

Hotels will fall over each other looking to create more sleep-friendly experiences for travelers. IoT will be deployed to create connected hotel rooms with features like smart lighting for better sleep, adjustable smart beds, and more.

Connected sleep and all its potential benefits is certainly on the horizon and squarely in our sights. Given the amount of time a person spends asleep—a third of your life—imagine what a connected bed could do and learn about you? One that adapts to you and your sleep environment, whether you’re at home or in a hotel of your choice, and works in harmony with other connected devices to deliver the best sleep and recovery possible.

These types of systems would be hidden and could track how guests sleep, their heart rates and potentially other biomarkers, Weidner said.

Sleep menu and special programs

Additionally, hotels are also capitalizing

Hotels could continue exploring partnerships with mattress providers, sleep apparel brands, and other companies to capitalize on the overall wellness trend.

on room availability during off-hours with apps like Recharge and Dayuse that allow travelers to reserve short-term, marked-down stays at participating hotels to catch up on sleep.

Hotels could continue exploring partnerships with mattress providers, sleep apparel brands, and other companies to capitalize on the overall wellness trend.

Wellness-focused hotels will emerge as key differentiators offering sleep programs for guest. They will be equipped with circadian lighting features and will have *“sleep ambassadors”* on call.

Hotels will feature a special Sleep Menu for to promote better rest through a curated list of sleep-enhancing superfoods on its room service menu.

Hotels will go to great lengths to put guests into a cozy bed. For instance, the Sleep Rituals service of Raffles will be a common feature. Brands will partner with linen makers, apps and

gadget makers to offer each guest an eye pillow, *“good-night cards”*; track their sleep habits and play them back to them to encourage guests to be mindful.

Customization will be the key differentiator. Guests will gravitate to that hotel which knows how to find the perfect pillow, stock essential oils, and teas. The hotel Spa Suites will come with hydrotherapy tubs and private en-suite sauna and a cool bed for the guests four-legged companions to sleep on soundly. Off-the-bed foot massagers and Sleep-inducing relaxants will be commonplace features.

Travel Industry jumps in

Meditation and sleeping apps have already made inroads into Airlines and Cruise ships which have jumped on to the wellness bandwagon. From apps to wellness coaches to mindfulness gurus, the travel industry wants to offer travelers custom features to help them relax — and doze off — when they fly or cruise. This may sound altruistic, but business is at the center of all this. By offering wellness programs to help you sleep sounder, they tend to drive meaningful business.

Hotels that can really deliver a better sleep experience will likely see big returns on the investment. Experimentation is the order of the day. Do anything to help customers have a good night’s sleep - is the new motto. As a result, future room enhancements for better sleep have surpassed in-room technology as a service. This phenomenon will separate good hotels from the average.

Managing Sound and Light

Guests will be able to enjoy soothing background sound into the room, control it the same way they control temperature and lighting. These sounds will be able to nullify the variety of hotel noises. They will be far superior to white noise apps or clock radio style products emitting nature sounds.

Hotel brands are spending considerable time and resources in doing research into lighting and circadian rhythm so they can develop in-room controls that adjust the quality

of light throughout the day. Once fully developed, these key pads at the entry and in the sleep area will have 'scenes' that match morning, noon, and night lighting conditions. The idea being that guests may set their rooms' lighting scenes to combat jet lag and promote healthy sleep cycles.

Mattress innovations

The much-awaited innovation in mattress technology is all about temperature management design —from the inside out. A bed is also about the layers at with fiber technology giving the first layer the power to absorb moisture with antimicrobial silver. Below that, foam can help circulate air, keep heat out and provide additional comfort.

This insulates the sleeper from the memory foam layer and it provides grooved ventilation, a charcoal-infused memory foam layer to provide comfort and conformity, as well as to keep away moisture and keep the body cool with an antimicrobial knit cover.

Other trends are more convenience-oriented, allowing guests to adjust mattresses, in-room temperature, lighting and sound. Now a days massage beds are also on the rise, which are usually lower in price given their popularity.

Mattresses with EMF-blocking technology will be the next big thing in mattress technology. High-quality Quantum foam, which keeps users cool

Fabric material innovation is going to take the industry to the new levels. The fabrics that change colours based on electrical properties, destress sleepers with electro responsiveness etc.

at night. Pillows designed ergonomically help prevent neck pains by ensuring healthy sleep posture.

A Sleepy Future: 2035

Dr Ian Pearson, a world renowned futurologist looked at the sleeping products in Hospitality industry and has predicted some exciting development. Dr Ian Pearson contends that the mattress of 2035 will look and feel superficially the same as today, but on closer look, he says, will be driven by a plethora of advanced technologies. Mattresses will be able to turn soft and supple or hard and firm depending upon the guest's requirement which is sensed by the bedside monitors. This will be enabled by shape memory alloy springs and microtubules running through the foam. Electropolymers embedded in the mattress will be able to provide a good massage for the guest.

Dr Ian Pearson predicts that mattress covers, sheets, bed covers, pillowcases and sleep suits will be made from fabric that will change colour, have thermal properties and release gentle scents. Fabrics will be able to change colour by using pigments that change according to temperature or electrical fields. Fabrics will also release scents by picking up electrical properties of the skin that indicate emotional states such as stress and aid relaxation. Also, electro-responsive fabrics will be used to help de-tress sleepers so that they can obtain a good night's sleep. The electro - responsive fabric will also be connected to an alarm for people who suffer from a medical condition - so that they can sleep safely knowing if their condition should worsen during the night they will be alerted and awoken from slumber.

Sheets could even incorporate optical fiber technology that would deliver infrared radiation treatment to the body as required.

By 2035 the pillow is where the action will be. A typical pillow will house a range of soft electronics which will provide the features where it can: Detect brain, REM and sleep activity; Create soothing sounds to help aid sleep; Provide a head and neck massage; Have a microphones to allow people to chat as they fall asleep; Have scalp electrodes to enable sharing dreams with partners and friends. **CT**



KEY TAKE-AWAYS

Hotel rooms by 2035 will be equipped with Augmented Reality that will play a major role in making the guest feel at home by recreating the bedroom environs back home. The in-bed technology will allow people to feel as if they are in their own bedroom and with the aid of virtual reality, they will experience spending the night together with their partner.

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Making mattress last to not your life-time, but for its life-time

Mattresses are to be changed after their life time. The industry is looking for proper ways to dispose used ones and replace them with a new one, boosting the wellness and market together

Mattresses are one of those objects that seldom gets replaced. This is not an Indian phenomena, this is universal. Way back in 1960s, the American mattress industry found itself staring at a situation where people would not change their mattresses for a long time. So, hardly, they would change a mattress once or twice and as a result the industry would suffer, the newer technologies couldn't be pushed out into the market. Sales would mostly depend on new buyers. A typical mattress buyer would come back to buy a mattress only if she changed her home or refurbished her bedroom, which would normally happen typically once in 15 to 20 years. Thus, even before the rest of the world woke up to this acute issue of a lack of interest in changing one's mattress, the U.S. mattress industry got



together and took an unprecedented step of campaigning, to popularize changing mattresses regularly. This had a two-fold effect. Firstly, the mattress industry started innovating faster and as a result, it was able to bring new technologies to the fore. It could pass on the benefits of new studies through its new products. Secondly, sales cycle took a different turn: health-conscious mattress-replacement buyers showed up the door and naturally mattress sales went up drastically. The industry nearly tripled and quadrupled rather in a span of 8 to 9 years.

In India, we are in a similar situation that the US industry found itself several decade ago. If one looks around, people hardly change their mattress and not more than once in 15-20 years. That's too long for a product, for a repeat sale to happen. And there are many reasons for it. Mattresses, people believe, is a one-item buy which becomes more livable, the more it is used. So, one would rather sleep in the same mattress day in and day out – well night in and night out and one would rather not change the mattress just because a new one came about in the market. In a fast-changing era with people used to changing mobiles once in six months, changing mattress would still be unthinkable. So, what can one do? Mattress industry feels that a typical replacement should be in the range of 7 to 8 years. *"Millennials feel that a mattress should be changed eight to ten years,"* says H Raghunandan, a millennial who refurbished his home recently. He comes across mattress dealers who coax him by relating health benefits and why it's good to change mattresses more regularly.

Myths holding back mattress replacement

Okay, now, let's see myths that is holding people back from changing mattresses.

Myth number one, a mattress becomes better as it gets old. This belief is so common that it has taken on a Gospel proportion. People really refuse to even move the mattress around and tend to sleep in the same position for years.

Mattress industry should come up with innovative ideas to get people to change mattresses and build the culture of changing mattresses as India is known for recycling old materials and this also sends message of being green-friendly

Myth number two, new technology mattresses are bad for health. A lot of negative propaganda goes around, especially with synthetic material as opposed to pure cotton and spring.

Myth number three, industry likes to push new mattresses that's why they are coercing you to change. Nothing could be further from truth. The industry wants consumers to be get the best of the latest innovations in sleeping products.

Myth number four, there cannot be a better mattress than what I am using. Similar to Myth 1 and three but people close their minds to newer studies and newer, comfortable material that's proven to be healthy alternatives.

Myth number five, new mattress requires adjusting oneself and takes a lot of time to do that. Acutall, newer mattresses are more easily adaptable than plain on coir-spring or cotton-spring mattresses.

Myth number six, new mattresses are way expensive and there is absolutely no return on investment. Actually, it is the other way round. Newer mattresses are more affordable than the old ones, and offer better health benefits that older material mattresses.

Let us look at reasons why people need to change mattresses.

1 If your mattress is more than 7 years old: Mattresses do have limited

life-time. Typically, mattresses have a life-span of about eight to 10 years.

- 2 The mattress is saggy:** Buy a new mattress if you notice a shape change in your mattress especially, where your body weight tends to rest the whole night you sleep in. Sagging can occur with almost any mattress material (aside from waterbeds). No matter which material is used, mattress tend to sag in the sleep area after a few years. If it continues, you won't get the much needed lumbar support and it can harm your spine over long term.
- 3 Your mattress is uncomfortable:** We are alarmingly prudent in adjusting to our mattress discomfort. If you feel even a bit uncomfortable with you mattress, replace it immediately. Well at home.

The upper part of your mattress consists of "comfort layers" that should support your body and provide pressure relief. Comfort layers break down over time resulting in poor sleep and body aches but in some cases, your mattress choice might have been faulty from the start, and you need to replace it.

- 4 You often wake stiff and sore:** Poor sleep can contribute to chronic back pain. If you wake up stiff and sore every day, your mattress could be part of the problem. If your back pain is worse when you wake but subsides when you stretch and move around, that's a sign that the mattress is causing or contributing to your pain.
- 5 Worsening allergies or asthma:** Mattresses tend become a home for dust mites. The protein in dust mite feces may cause allergic reactions and asthma attacks and so can the dust that accumulates in your mattress. While vacuuming, steaming, and flipping your mattress might reduce dust and mites. If these steps don't help, a new mattress might be the solution.

"Old mattress was based on the technology prevalent at the time and

day it was bought. Technology has improved way beyond bringing a lot of health advantages," says Rakesh, a linen retailer.

Make Changing mattress easy

All said and done, changing mattresses is not easy. Changing a mobile phone is very easy. You can go and exchange a mobile phone or just put it away in your cabinet, so that you can use it some other time or give it away to someone else. And mattresses cannot be given away to somebody else or can be easily stored for later use.

There are no good exchange programs for mattresses. Mattress cannot be easily disposed off. Changing a mattress brings with it a tonne of headache which consumers just cannot handle.

"I think if we communicate to the

consumer how easy it is to change a mattress, then perhaps there will be a 20 to 30% more conversion to changing the mattresses," says Senthil J, a hospitality laundry service provider. Our mattress industry should come up with innovative ideas. It has to get people to change mattresses, pillows and bed covers. In India, we are known for recycling old material. Exchange programs should be a way of recycling old materials and this also sends out a signal of being green friendly.

Popularise the culture of replacing mattress regularly. When you're done with a mattress it's tempting to try to find another use for it. Handing it down to your kids, putting it in your guest room and selling it on OLX. If a mattress is no longer good enough for you to use, it's not good enough for anyone else. In particular, old mattresses are harmful for children, whose active, developing

bodies require the support of a good-quality mattress. Get the idea of giving a proper send-off to your mattress rooted in your family.

We've all seen mattresses that have been improperly disposed of. Mattresses don't belong on the side of the road, in the bottom of a lake or in the middle of a field. Your mattress did a good job for you for many years and now it's your turn to take care of it. Dispose of your mattress in a safe and responsible way:

Ask the store where you bought your new mattress to pick up your old set when they deliver the new one. Most retailers routinely offer mattress pick-up and disposal service as part of the purchase price or for a small fee. Call your local municipality, sanitation department or garbage collector. They usually have provisions for picking up larger items. **CT**

III-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 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



- 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.

High Quality

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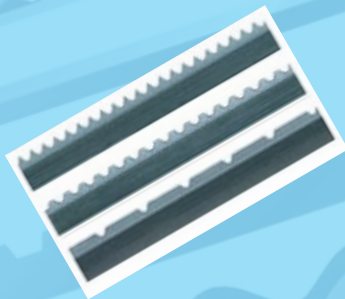
Band Knife Blade

Bandknife Blade

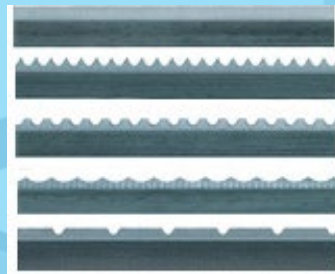


Block Cutter Blade, Vertical Machine Blade, Horizontal & Circular Machine Blade, Peeling Machine Blade, Looper Machine Blade,

CNC Blade



Oscilating Type CNC Blade



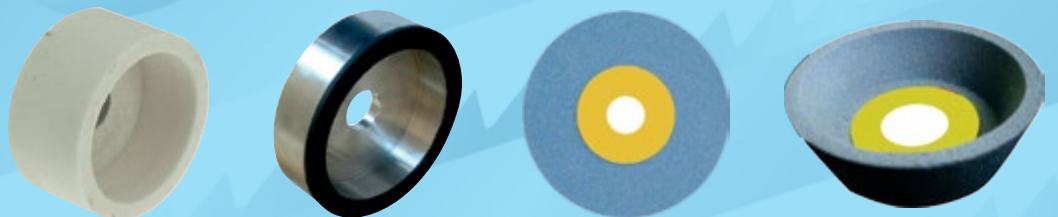
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FUTURE OF SLEEP

A country that sleeps soundly is the most advanced; a society that sleeps well is the most cultured.



Over the last one decade, the “going to bed” time has shifted significantly. It first shifted out with the advent of Television and later with the advent of Internet and now with Smartphones. Here is a brief look at the shift that has taken place. Sleep is a serious business. There are a number of OTC drugs, oils and oral medicines which promise to help a better, stress-free sleep. CBD is a major player in this case. While in the western world, it is already a staple of sleep deprived population, it is about to make inroads in India. Just to illustrate how deep CBD has moved into people’s psyche, this piece of information is crucial: 1 in 7 Americans say they use CBD products & 40 percent of users utilize CBD products for pain, 20 percent for anxiety, 11 percent for sleep.

PRODUCTS TO PUT YOU TO SLEEP

There are a plethora of products that are in Beta or lab testing phase which are about to make a debut in the market. Let us look at Beddit, a company owned by the mother of all product makers, Apple. Beddit sells a Sleep monitor and the owners of its Beddit 3.5 Monitor and App can sign up to participate in a data sharing program over their sleep and in return they get to use some of the new features before they are rolled out to general public.

Coropilo

“Become Part of The Coropilo Beta Tester Team.” announces the Beta program page of Coropilo, a New York based company which touts itself as a startup with a single goal: To change the way we experience comfort. Coropilo is a state-of-the-art “smart pillow” maker that heats and cools naturally on command.

Coropilo is in Beta. It is asking people to sign up for its Beta program so that it can come up with the best possible product. To exhort supporters it carries on its Beta Sign up page an interest bit of information from a survey by US National Sleep Foundation: “More than 35 percent of people suffer from poor sleep which can have long-term negative impacts on their health.”



India is said to be faring poorly in matter of sleep. A study says Indians sleep for an average of 6.5 hours a day, a deficit which as a country we have to make up sometime. Lack of sleep has deep impact on people’s productivity and a long range impact on health.

About what time do you go to sleep every night?

Before 10p.m.	11 percent
10p.m. - 12a.m.	51 percent
12a.m. - 2a.m.	26 percent
After 2a.m.	11 percent

Source: Exclusive Polls

Decade	Going to bed time
1980-90	9.30 pm – 10.30 pm
1990-00	10.30 pm – 11.30 pm
2000-Present	11 pm – 12 am

Average sleeping habits of Indians. Source: web

FitBit’s Sleep Score Beta

FitBit, the pioneer in wearables, is running a Beta for its Sleep Score which is compatible with FitBit Charge 3, FitBit Versa and FitBit Ionic. Everyday morning the participants need to sync their FitBit with their FitBit app on their phones and answer a few questions. This helps FitBit to understand the nature of your sleep and give it a score. It is a great way for sleep conscious folks to keep in touch with their daily mood swings, energy levels, and other parameters. It can help them adjust their day’s routine according to their score.

Dreem 2

If you are the kind of person who does not mind going to bed wearing a

headband then Dreem 2 is your kind of a product. Dreem is a futuristic product which is many things rolled into one. It is an advanced sleep monitor, a sleeping coach and trainer delivered through a CBTi therapy and is said to help you in long term sleep restructuring.

Variable Auto CPAP

This is a three decades old technology making a come back to the bedside table in many homes. Used to treat sleep apnea and sleep disorders, CPAP (Continuous Positive Airway Pressure) helps users regulate breathing; pump out CO2 and if there is an Oxygen input to pump in fresh Oxygen. The latter is used mostly in treating COPD conditions.

Smart Pillows & Mattresses

There are a number of smart pillows which improve your sleep by regulating the pillow temperature. There are pillows which play relaxing sleep sounds without disturbing your partner. Sleep trackers and monitors are now being embedded in the pillows. Bedding companies like Chilipad and Bedjet are companies that offer mattresses that heat and cool on demand.

In this data driven world, sleeping beds and mattresses are becoming smart. As part of the IoT revolution, the bed has become a source of data. The head of the bed may raise automatically sensing snoring or to reduce the risk of sleep apnea. Instead of wearing trackers and monitors on your person, you can now sleep soundly with the safe knowledge that your bed is recording your sleep data and will sync with your app automatically in the morning.

There are a number of products that are making sleep enjoyable again. Tomorrow’s products can deal with lighting, sound, ambient temperature, humidity, and when it comes to our bodily functions handle air pressure while we breathe, positively impact our brain waves and influence our cognitive behaviour. All of this to put us to good night’s sleep.

Bedding products

Cannot sleep without a blanket even in summers? We hear you! Here’s our



Beddit's programme is being looked upon as a precursor to an AI powered Sleep product which will be rolled into Apple Watch.

collection of all-season comforters for a warm, cozy sleep round the year. That's the clarion call of a popular brand, Sleepwell. This goes to show that while electronics and AI are helping us collect data and control our sleep ecosystem, the mattress industry is focusing on bringing the best physical solutions in terms of better springs, memory foam and fabric.

Today, mattresses are being redesigned from the ground up to make them mind-blowingly personalized. Wakefit is a case in point. It is interesting to note how companies are applying macromolecular science to create a new game-changing product from the same 40-year old technology of memory foam. Wakefit, for instance, touts the fact that it has 1,000 man hours of research before it came up with its best memory foam mattress.

PRODUCTS FROM INDIA

With a vision of democratising sleep in the country, Wakefit specializes in providing Orthopedic memory foam mattresses that come in various sizes. Wakefit is an Indian startup offering innovative sleep mattresses. It sells its products through its online platform and is fast becoming a household name.

Nap Nap is a baby sleeping mat that is portable and truly innovative product from India. It mimics the vibrations of a mother's womb and promises to put the baby to sleep faster. Sleeping products aimed at babies and infants are a big draw in the Indian market.

Many Sleeping labs are coming up offering innovative cures to our growing sleeplessness.

Sleep Labs

Pune, Surat, Gurgaon and Bangalore are seeing a rise in sleep labs. With the rise of knowledge economy, 24/7 connected world, the working population is over stressed. Nuclear families trying to balance work, home, children and time for themselves is making us a zombie society. The addiction of social media with the power of smartphones in people's hands is snatching away our present and the future is in danger.

Stress is the biggest issue people face at workplace and at home This is leading to people searching and finding solace in escapades, be it social media, daily visits to late night dance clubs or keeping away from people in fear of losing everything. Sleep is the major casualty in all of this. A man deprived of sleep is a zombie who cannot work, socialize or tend to near and dear ones.

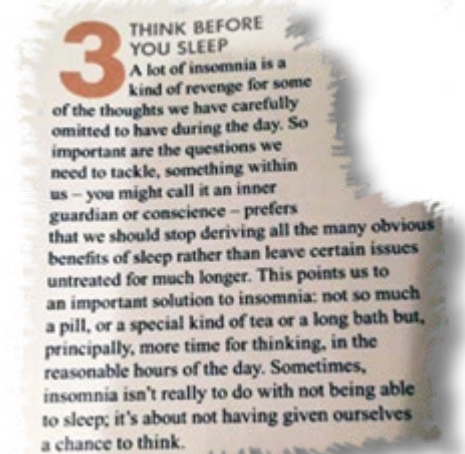
Many innovations are now springing up to help people get back to sound sleep. Sleeping Labs weren't even heard of in the past in Indian urban lingo. However, today is a commonplace phrase. Many Sleeping labs are coming up offering innovative cures to our growing sleeplessness. From studying sleeping patterns, our addictions, our fears, our

cognitive dissonance with the real world, these sleep labs are acting like detoxing centers. People come here to find solace, relax, find solutions to real problems such as sleep apnea, snoring and the likes and learn to fix their problems.

Yoga and meditation

On thing is true that although sleep products industry is a multi-billion dollar industry worldwide, it's not all technology. There are clinics and resorts tucked away in serene surroundings providing people a complete insulation from their electronic addictions and giving them a new life where they get to appreciate a non-hurried world, away from even a mundane newspaper or a television news. Mobile are a no-no in such centres.

India is waking up, rather sleeping on its timeless Yoga as a great healer of stressful life and a wonderful sleep inducer in the night. Our mattress makers are alive to this wonderful state India finds itself now. They are turning to natural material to improve the comfort a mattress provides. They are offering Yoga mats to sleeping mattresses to help you and me sleep well.



As an illustration of how traditional methodologies of Yoga and meditation and modern gadgets and smart mattresses and pillows can co-exist is here: Give more time for thinking. So "Think" is not just the buzz word you will hear from IBM or Apple. It will be now on everyone's mind. Spend a lot of time thinking in the day time and that is a great way to drive away insomnia. **CT**



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Thomas Varghese, General Manager, MM Rubber Company Limited

Waking Up Positive What's That Like?

Thomas Varghese, *General Manager, MM*

Rubber Company Limited takes us through the adventurous decades where the company not only saw, but made the industry push, the switch from cotton to latex and then from standard to body-smart mattresses. This is where we can also get a peek into the new future that is waking up

Q What made you focus on Latex foam as a major differentiating factor in this market? How well have this emphasis and this USP delivered so far?

When MM Foam started in 1957, the most comfortable and luxurious mattress available was Natural Latex mattress. Subsequently, Rubberized Coir, PU Foam also entered in the mattress market in a big way.

MM Foam, by that time, became synonymous with Natural Latex and we continued to focus on it. Today our USP is 100 per cent Natural Latex. Also, due to environmental concerns, Natural Latex mattresses are preferred by many because they are eco-friendly and biodegradable.

Q Is it easy to manufacture using Latex? How do medium and hard - core compression models play out here?

It is not easy to manufacture a quality Natural Latex mattress as it involves technology and skills, and many parameters have to be observed in its production. Conversion of liquid latex into uniformed refined latex foam bubbles is to be done; and those bubbles, without breaking, need to be solidified to the required size and shape – now

that is a significant process by itself. Right from the procurement of Field / Centrifuged Latex to the water used for washing the sheet, the quality of the inputs have to be meticulously checked at every point of production. We strictly follow the testing procedures outlined in IS 1741/1960 of BIS Specification.

Regarding production of 'Medium' and 'Hardcore' - though the process is the same; the inputs and ratio are different in the manufacturing parts. As we want to satisfy various segments of our customers who demand different levels of hardness, these products are made

MM Foam seems to be going after the hard-to-squeeze and, hence, hard-to-imitate sap of innovation.

available for choice according to the customers' individual preferences.

Q Tell us something about the Pin-core technology?

MM Foam is the first company in India which started using the Pin-core technology in latex mattress

manufacturing. It is based on scientifically-designed mattress mould in the required dimension and arranging the pins within the mould endows the product a unique design. Since a Pin-core mattress has got fewer voids compared to a traditional Rubber mattress, it is more durable and resilient; and takes the shape of the body contours while also giving perfect support to the body. The Pin-type of core allows the free flow of air; hence, it is naturally temperature-controlled.

Q Online players or unorganised segment? Who is the bigger threat to the industry and why?

Unorganised segment players are increasing day after day and many of the retailers themselves are making different combinations of mattress according to customer preferences and prices. However, quality-conscious customers will always prefer a branded product which comes with an assured warranty against any manufacturing defect.

Regarding online trading, it is not a threat but it is an opportunity which can be made use of by manufacturers of good branded-products. The products can be presented through their own website or a third party platform. [CT](#)

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is the projected
size of Indian mattress
market by 2021

35 Million Euro
is the projected
size of Indian online
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REDEFINING ADVERTISING

"Embrace the language of the millennials, go mobile"
say retailers



Driving customers into stores has long been the end-goal of every advertisement campaign. With the advent of social and mobile, traditional approaches are limited in their ability to continue achieving their goals, as consumers demand more than just brand awareness to make their decision.

The consumer's time with newspapers and magazines has decreased dramatically, replaced by the smartphone and the Internet.

Brands restrict Digital Marketing to Brand Awareness. Digital social channels offer a great way to reach out to the target audience with a unified messaging. They also provide opportunities to deliver messages customized to individual preferences. This enables customers not only to be informed of the product but also be able to act based on such information. Digital channels offer the best Moment of Motivation factor, which drives sales.

Digital marketing must go beyond brand awareness. They should be local, personal and contextual. Local needs to be redefined to include more than a zip code. It must answer the questions: who, what and when, thus encompassing context and connectivity.

"Have seen how Domino's pizza redefined itself into an ecommerce powerhouse but most of their business happens at the physical stores. I think they have demonstrated the perfect recipe for driving in-store sales," says Mr. Vibhar Baya, a retailer from Udaipur. Indeed, Domino's is a great case study to new age marketing. First of all, the organization thinks of itself as an e-commerce business that just happens to serve pizza from retail stores. Second, they have adopted the 'mobile-first' approach. Building native iOS and Android apps helped them drive sales through their mobile apps. Using their online and mobile experience, Dominos has redefined the 'local' and personalized experience. Consumers can check the menu online or on their mobile app and order a takeaway or eating at the outlet.

SOME TIPS FOR BRANDS

- **Incentivize visits to retail outlets:** Use order online and pick-up in-store
- **Be mobile first:** Not necessary to have an app but helps
- Think online to offline while mapping customer journey
- Implement a success measurement and keep tweaking
- Define local in a way that goes beyond location
- Biggest of them all, allocate budget to digital like you would do for traditional channels
- Rethink traditional channels to integrate with digital

A telecalling backend helps complete the missing nuances. This strategy drives consumers to the local franchises. Not many brands have achieved the kind of success Domino's has seen. And it is replicable with contextual tweaks.

The challenge

"The biggest challenge mattress retailers face is the product we sell," says Mr. Rakesh a linen retailer. People prefer to come in and lay down on a bed to determine what's right, in terms of support and what's not. *"These days, people research online before they come into the store to buy."* The promotion experience, be it online or offline, is important in providing information the buyers are looking for before they come into the store. Brands need to have an integrated approach to promotion. Today, traditional method alone does not work. The challenge is how to promote through a mass reach channel but drive traffic to local stores.

Mattress brands still depend quite a

bit on print, and television commercials just because historically that is what has driven the business. Though we are seeing a shift in terms of money spent on newer channels, online and mobile they are not enough. *"Mobile is the new medium and has a personalized impact,"* Mr. Srinivas Rao, a linen expert catering to hospitality sector. *"Targeting buyers through mobile is certainly a lot more intuitive, so the money spent is more efficient. That's the shift that we expect brands to take more aggressively,"* says Mr. Srinivas Rao.

"Talking of local, research shows that most of our customers to a local retail store come from within a 15-minute drive or 15-km radius of our store," says Mr. K Majunath, a retailer from Bangalore's CBD. *"So, typically stores don't put a whole lot of emphasis outside of that radius. Typical strategy would be to start with the geo-target, and within that dive down into certain behavioral metrics."* In such cases, having an idea of who the customer is helps. Typically, women make these types of buying decisions. But when the price point is higher, men get involved. Thus, targeting different creatives and different ad-sets becomes key. With certain demographics we'll send a very heavy sale message. Discounts work for a particular demographic whereas for the demographic that is most interested in the quality of sleep, discounts do not sell. That's when brands need to promote through blogs and videos. The targeting is really what drives the creative that goes out into the marketplace.

The Strategy

Festivals are round the corner and households will be thinking of refurbishing their homes. A good strategy is to spend online doing SEM [search engine marketing] and things like that to drive daily sales. A catch here is that in the mattress industry, unlike a lot of other furniture retail, where you have certain huge shopping days, the window is always small. Use display advertisements in local newspapers, television and let the online channels reinforce messages.

"A key tactic is to harvest existing

CASE STUDY

Domino's Effect: Online Promotion keeps dealers network happy

Gone are the days when promotion meant releasing newspaper advertisements and TV commercials. With advent of the millennials who are more comfortable researching online before walking over to a local store, companies are adopting new techniques. *'King Koil the US brand which is now in India runs an effective retargetting campaigns and sends us warm leads, we just have to immediately respond and convert them to footfalls and sales,'* says Mr. Pradeep Prabhakar, owner of Surabhi Home Collection with the brand Pro Linen. When users visit a website through a Google search or in response to a mail campaign or mere word-of-mouth, it is as good as a visitor footfall, only on the web which is called eyeballs. Once visited, the

retargetting campaign then follows the user to platforms such as social or news portals which can pop up messages reminding the user of the brand. When a user interacts with the brand's website and fills in her details, the local store is immediately alerted with all details. It is then the onus of the local stores to convert the potential buyer. This is something akin to the model followed by Domino's pizza.

King Koil and Springfit from US are actively sending warm leads to dealers in India. However, Indian players such as Peps and Sleepwell are known to be adopting similar strategies and it is likely to grow into a multiplier force for dealer network and get to stay loyal to the brand. This approach is much more effective than static newspaper

advertisements and TV commercials, point out he dealers. This works for both B-to-B and B-to-C segments.

"For B-to-B segment a more powerful and proven approach is to participate in seminars and expos, says Rao. The leads are then routed to the local dealers. One big factor working in favour of this approach is that unlike other industries and products, direct sales do not interfere in a big way. This is more so owing to the nature of the product. So all warm leads make their way to the dealers on the ground to complete the sales cycle. *'So far, it is a happy situation, hope this will continue for this industry,'* says Mr. Edward Jeevan, director of Binary Systems, a technology delaeer who focuses on bed side monitors and gadgets for the hospitality sector.

customer base and referral sources. Because our stores are not e-commerce sites, click-through rate can't be our only metric. We should measure in-store footfalls at the end of the day," says Mr. Sri Gopal, a retailer from Coimbatore. Impression level does play a factor but that's not the end-goal. Brands can use impression data, clicks data, and anything to determine [the effectiveness] of the footfalls. They need to do a lot of creative testing, A/B testing, multi-variant type stuff to determine what was the most effective message on what we call "popularity metrics."

Brands need to give attention

"Brands do not invest so much time, attention and resource into getting this right. Brands do a big bang campaign and let the franchisees fend for themselves. They do not create a must-visit sentiment

through their campaigns," says Mr. Sri Gopal.

"One under-utilised tool is re-targeting. Brands can drive traffic into the stores using by re-targeting platforms. Re-target the visitors with a discount coupon or drive them back to the physical store for an experience session," says Mr. Rakesh. The secret hides in how we segment out by brand and use that to incrementally build our 'likes' and printed coupons, which we can track in-store in terms of redemptions.

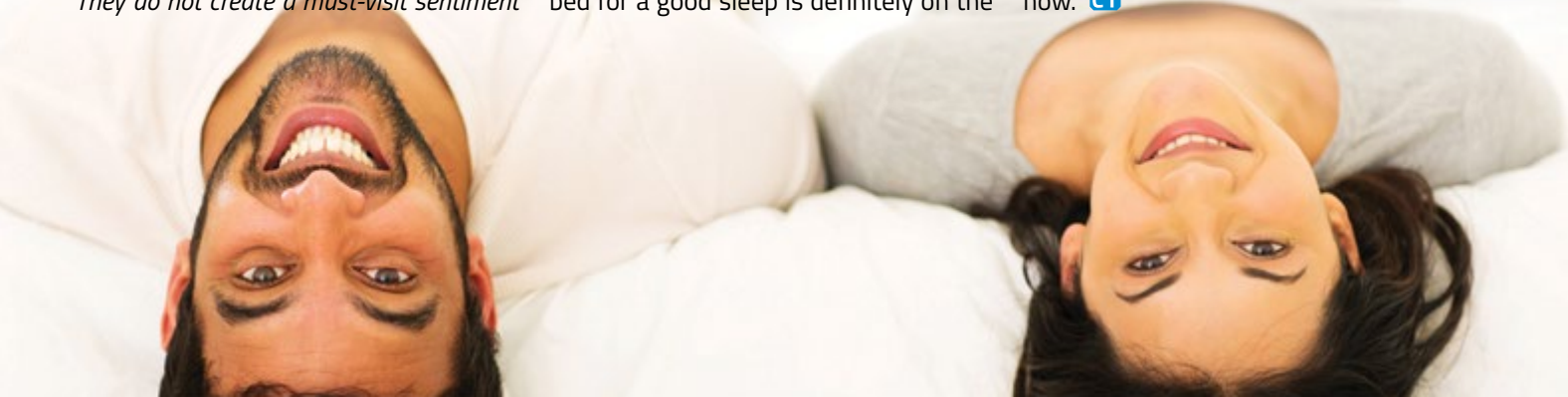
Especially when the festival season's coming up, there are a lot of refurbishing happening. Parents visiting their children visiting their parents, uncle and aunts coming over or a nephew with family dropping by. People have this desire to present their best hospitality and a good bed for a good sleep is definitely on the

cards. It's just that we do not drive our message that way. We need to respond to these needs and create shopping incentives for people to come over, experience and buy.

Innovation missing

For the mattress industry as a whole, innovation is riding high but it is not the quickest in adopting to technology for marketing. That is to do more with the distribution nature of the product and the distributors. But over the last year, there is a huge concentration on social from retailers. Mobile is becoming not-to-miss device to target.

Retailers will continue to have issue with showrooming, in terms of price competitiveness in the stores but the industry is finally starting to unveil itself with the opportunities that are out there now. **CT**



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Deepak Mehta, MD, Tirupati Foam

LUXURY now that is a lot of hard work

Let us find out from **Deepak Mehta, MD, Tirupati Foam** about the strategic material and the leadership stitches that help the company turn its dreams into realities of well-carved brand positioning planks, unique segments, body-customised products and investments in innovation

Q What outlook and capabilities made you pursue the luxury segment so strongly? What are the insights and specific aspects about this segment that you have gathered so far?

With the advancement in the digital era, consumers are getting more awareness about the product and the quality of product in which they are investing. People are studying our bedding industry and are getting aware about the health benefits and comfort related to a luxury mattress when compared to a regular mattress. Luxury products are made with thorough R&D for bestowing the best comfort to the person. The layers used for such a mattress are of higher cost and provide better comfort than a cheaper mattress.

The difference is like the seat of an economy class Airplane ticket compared to a First Class Airplane ticket or a Business Class Airplane ticket. The passengers have the same destination to be reached (which, for us, is good sleep) but the difference comes in the comfort that is provided in such classes. As a result of which a luxury mattress

Luxury products are made with thorough R&D for bestowing the best comfort to the person.

tends to provide better comfort in the form of a best quality product.

Q How does PU foam compare to other options, from the perspective of market opportunity, consumer preference, manufacturing ease and cost areas?

PU Foam, in general, has a lot of variety starting from various densities and quality-levels to various comfort-levels which can be provided to customers. PU foam has a lot of usage apart from bedding and mattress industry. It has a lot of industrial usage - like in manufacturing of shoe soles, slippers, lingerie industry, roll lamination, generator sets etc. Other options compared to PU are Coir, Cotton wool, EP, moulded foam, latex etc which have a limited usage in the industry.

Considering various market avenues, PU Foam globally has a lot of usage which we find in our day-to-day objects – hence the opportunity is there. It depends on how we grab that and make the best use of that.

Q Tell us something about new offerings like Spine Doc? What are the key innovations and expectations from these roll-outs?

Spinedoc was introduced as a product which would relieve stress on a person's spine. It is a memory-foam mattress. Today's lifestyle and working patterns have changed. Nowadays, people spend time on 3 screens the most - which are laptop, mobile and TV. Sitting in the same position the whole day, leaning on chairs and not maintaining proper posture of our body – these are everyday problems for most of us. So what we designed was not a conventional memory which is soft. The product has a blend of hardness and softness with the memory effect. What it does is - it does not let a person sink in the mattress. The hardness provides the back support with the functionality of memory foam. **CT**

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What help do retailers need from brands?

As for the mattress retailers, they also need constant support from the brands to attract more customers and increase sales of any brand products. Given that, in the present digital age, customers have become very demanding and expect much more from the retailers. Further, despite the fact that retailers have the local advantage, they often lack the resources and strategies to efficiently target the right customers. That said, still the local retailers are increasingly spending on marketing and advertising activities but they need to do much more. Here, comes the importance of support from mattress brands to the retailers in the domain. It's high time that the mattress brands realise that they need to focus upon empowering their retailers by giving them the right products, information, tools and support they need to reach new as well as old customers in the best possible manner. That said, mattress brands have a huge role in helping retailers rise to glory and increase sales at their stores.



The mattress brands need to make sincere efforts to connect with their retailers by identifying and addressing their needs and goals as otherwise brands' all marketing efforts and initiatives may never hit the right note.

There is no doubt that already many mattress and allied industry brands are taking all the possible steps towards supporting their retailers, yet more needs to be done by the brands, especially the local brands. Mr. Samir Kalra, Owner, Maharaja Furnishings, Rajasthan, notes, "We get good support and choice-range from our pillow companies. However, there is difference between branded products and local products. The former ones are great on quality. They somehow are challenging in terms of the margin-room they offer. If the inventory does not sell, the business numbers do not make sense. The market also needs more innovation for neck-support-conscious products in the pillow space."

"Some brands like Sleepwell offer low cost products like Starlite, which cost less than Rs 5000. But those products are not liked by customers. Also it offers very low margin for us," says Mr. Rohit Pandey from New India bedding and handloom stores. He says that he push Sleep-o-tek product for the customer who can offer Rs 10,000 towards a mattress. "We have a local brand called Sleep-o-tek, their MRP is 14,000 and we give a discount of Rs 2000 to customers. Our cost price in that mattress is Rs 9000. We make Rs 3000 from each sale," he says.

He also expects brands to distribute pamphlets in local newspapers with retailer address in it. "We get lot of support from local brands. They have even printed business cards for me with their branding. I asked a similar gesture from a reputed brand, so far they haven't got me," he says.

Another mattress merchant Kundan from Haryana Handlooms says, he

pushes Dr. Back brand mattress because of better margins. "I do deal with Kurl-on products. But when it comes to margins, reputed brands pay very less margins. I get just 15 percent on the selling price. Whereas local brands offer better margins," he says. He also mentions that sales executives from reputed brands visit his stores occasionally where as local brands offer better support and quick solutions. "I can say that these reputed brand executive never visits our stores. I have a product which has not sold from past 3-4 months. I have told company to replace that product with the latest one, but so far I haven't got any positive response," says Kundan.

He also says that the local brands put all the salient features on the cover of the mattress, which becomes easy for explaining customers.

Some of the established mattress brands are taking certain steps towards supporting the retail stores, they also need to gear up more and take further efforts in this direction. "We are getting a good support from Duroflex. They update us about their products on regular basis. After sales support is also good. However brands can think of promoting retailers



KEY TAKE-AWAYS

Both mattress brands as well as the retailers have a huge role to play in promoting the growth of the industry. They need to help each other so that the industry as a whole is benefited. While mattress retailers need to attract more customers and sell more, brands need to support the retailers in doing so by adopting various steps and strategies as listed. Thus, the mutual partnership of mattress brands and retailers can only write the golden growth story of the mattress industry in the country.

also, which is not happening currently," says Prasad from Mattress World.

Key takeaways: Steps mattress brands can take to help retailers

Here is a look at all the steps that can be taken by mattress brands to support the retailers in increasing their sales...

1. Communicating with the retailers for manufacturing and supplying the product which is best suited to customer needs: Mattress customers are becoming more aware, specific in their requirement and health-conscious. They want certain features in their mattress and if brands are not able to incorporate those features in the product, then their products may not sell at the retail store despite retailers' all the efforts. Further, there is increasing competition in the market with many mattress brands manufacturing similar products. Thus, what is needed is that brands should interact with their retailers more than often in order to know the prevailing customer requirement and market demand as the retailers are in direct contact with the customers and know the pulse of the market well. In fact, retailers communicate with the customers on a regular basis and know customers stories well. Also, they are aware of the fact that which brand



campaigns are working, what strategies can be used to drive local consumer engagement and what products are gaining attention from the customers. Thus, mattress brands need to collect this kind of valuable information from their retailers through sales representatives, in-person, over the phone or via online surveys and email and apply this knowledge to create new campaigns or manufacture unique and innovative product backed by research which when supplied to the retailers can attract more customers. Thus, through this way, brands can help the retailers in satiating all the customers' needs and thereby, increase sales.

2. Helping retailers in creating new brand experience at the store: Merely manufacturing a product that is better than the others and having a good brand image is not enough on part of the mattress brands. They need to help the mattress retailers in enhancing customer experience at the store to attract more local customers. For that, brands can work together with the retailers to create in-store events around the brand like at the time of new product launch or when any upgraded product hits the market. This initiative can greatly enhance the customer experience and thus, they would be lured to the retail store. For creating this brand experience at the retail store, mattress brands need to provide the retailers with the right materials and know-how and assist them in planning, promoting and executing these events which can actually get the customers to action. Through this way, brands can

enable the customers to have good experience that they wouldn't be able to find at any other store. Thus, these in-store events and new brand experience can motivate the customers to opt for a particular mattress brand at the retailer store which can thus, increase sales.

3. Helping retailers build their own brand: In the fierce competitive scenario, mattress retailers need to build their own brand image but they generally don't possess the know-how for doing so. Thus, brands need to come forward and help the retailers to create their own unique image which is in sync with the overall brand image. So, when a unique image of the mattress retail store is created in sync with the brand image, it can help the customers to identify the brand and its retail store easily.

4. Giving retailers direct access to the brand: It is often seen that mattress retailers want to communicate with the brand directly and share their insights and experience which can improve sales at their store. Here, what mattress brands can do is provide direct access to the retailers by bringing industry experts

Brands need to come forward and help the retailers to create their own unique image which is in sync with the overall brand image.



from the brand headquarter to the retail store. This way, mattress brands can also turn the retail store into a spot for customers to come and ask questions and learn more about the brand and this in turn can help the retailers as well the customers to get more insights about the brand. This can actually increase retail sales later on when customer makes up his or her mind to buy the mattress product.

5. Helping retailers in marketing: Local retailers generally don't have the budget and technology needed to provide their customers with a seamless, multi-channel digital journey and shopping experience. Hence, mattress brands need to step up on this front as well and try to take some burden off their retail partners by automating digital marketing processes and delivering customisable campaign components that allow them to easily target local customers.

6. Getting involved in retailers' local initiatives: Mattress brands also need to go local for their retailers. That said, for advertising purposes, retailers generally engage themselves in local events. So, brands need to use their resources and help the retailers in their initiative as this can spread a good word about the brand in the market. Further, through this, mattress brands can tailor marketing campaigns to create relevant localised content that retailers can promote easily and drive more sales at the store.

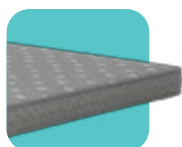
7. Rewarding the retailers for their efforts: Last but not the least, rewards to retailers by brands can also motivate the retailers to take greater action and adopt strategies to increase sales. Simply put, local mattress retailers generally lack time and resources, still they take all the possible steps to increase brand sales, so when their hard work is appreciated and incentives are given to them by the brands, then they are further encouraged to work towards increasing brand sales. These incentives can be given by brands to retailers through many ways like contest or sweepstakes or additional funds for advertising purposes. 



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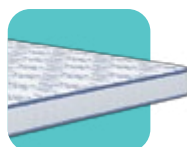
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Some Fun Sleep Facts - May be one of these is about you!

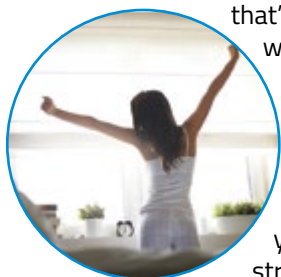
Do you have continuous back pain especially when you sleep? Then, it is high time that you check the quality of your mattress. Replace it with a hard mattress. Before that, you could also check for the mattress warranty and check with your dealer for a free replacement or repair. Most back pains today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

❖ If you dream black-and-white, chances are you are from the pre-colour TV generation.



And among the rare 12 per cent people who do not dream in colour. A study in School of Psychology, University of Dundee also showed that people with access to black and white media before colour media tend to experience more greyscale dreams compared to people with no such exposure. The research also noted some inter-group differences in the recall quality of colour and black-and-white dreams. This could mean that true greyscale dreams happen to occur only in people with black-and-white media experience.

❖ If you hate getting out of bed, that's normal, well, who likes to leave the cozy comfort of a fuzzy mattress and a warm pillow! But if you particularly struggle with this issue, then you might have a condition called Dysania. Yes, a symptom of Chronic Fatigue Syndrome or Depression or Fibromyalgia or Sleep Apnea or Anemia or a Thyroid Disorder or even Narcolepsy



❖ Ever wondered why we forget almost all of our dreams the minute we wake up? If Sigmund Freud



guessed it right, well he pretty much nailed a lot of psycho-trouble, then it is not due to our poor memory but actually thanks to a brain that is clever. Dreams constitute a lot of repressed stuff so it is no surprise that our brain wants to wipe them off as soon as we are awake. That's why in a span of five minutes of waking up, 90 per cent of our dream could fizzle out.

❖ As per a study by Prof Chris Idzikowski from Britain, 'foetal position' is the most popular position of sleep, specially for women.



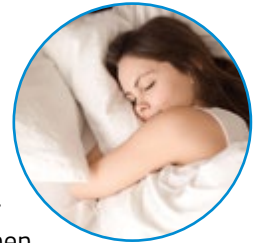
These people may appear outwardly tough but are actually shy and sensitive inside.

Ironically, the least popular was the 'freefaller position' with just 6.5 percent of people who were seen to prefer sleeping on their front. Today, this is shaping up to be a popular position too. Our subconscious posture, whether we sleep in 'soldier position - on the back' or in 'log position- on the side' says a lot about us. Only five per cent people change these preferred positions so do not fight with your partner for sleeping a certain way. They just can't help it, just the way you would struggle - it's an important part of one's personality.

❖ For anyone who takes less than

five minutes to fall asleep, it can be a sign of sleep deprivation.

❖ Women multi-task a lot so their brains need more rest. Hence, women tend to sleep longer compared to men.



❖ According to the Journal of Obstetric, Gynecologic and Neonatal Nursing, safe sleep and breastfeeding can reduce sudden infant death syndrome. It was noted (in a Florida study done by

Margie Mueller and Patricia Walton)

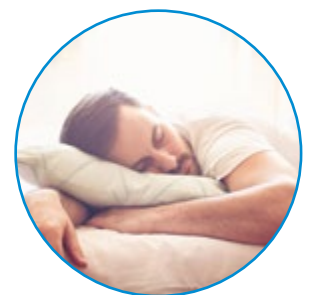
that 76 per cent fatal injuries under the age of one year are due to accidental suffocation.



Safe sleep practices like

putting the infant on the back in a safe environment and breastfeeding the infant for six months can reduce sudden and unexplained deaths.

❖ The ideal nap-time is anywhere up to 26 minutes, as per a 1995 study from NASA. And it is a window good enough to restore the body's cognitive functions.



❖ Of all the mammals on this lovely planet, humans are the only ones that delay sleep! Why do we do that! Eh!



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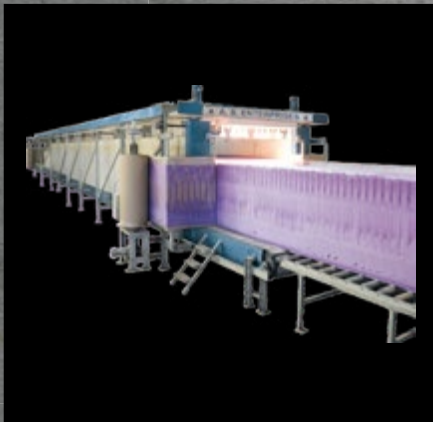
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World Sleep Conference 2019 promotes sleep health

Though we may not think about sleep often, it is crucial for our emotional and cognitive wellbeing and for improving our performance. One way that we can ensure we have good sleep is through self-awareness. The World Sleep Society Conference 2019, which was held during September last week of 2019, provided an opportunity for students, trainees and members of the public to be updated about the latest research and trends in injury prevention, with a focus on what we can do ourselves – just by sleeping.

The World Sleep Congress provided participants from around the world with unmatched opportunities to exchange scientific ideas and experiences in sleep medicine. The expo gave update about recent advances in sleep medicine including up-to-date clinical and basic research techniques. Over 5000 doctors and scientists from 76 countries were part of the sleep expo and discussed sleep disorders and the latest studies and remedies.

The Sleep Expo featured experts on narcolepsy, hypersomnia and the effect of sleep deprivation on athletic performance and injury risk among youngsters. *'The study of sleep impacts nearly every facet of health,'* said Dr. Cleto Kushida, President of World Sleep Society. *"Our organization gathers the best and brightest minds in the field of sleep to teach, learn and network with other specialists from around the world. It is an exciting collaboration of science',* he said during Sleep Expo.

Indian Sleep Product Federation (ISPF), voice of Indian mattress industry, represented India mattress industry and provided an update on its activities and future plans at the conference.

The fundamental mission of the World Sleep Society Congress 2019



was to advance SLEEP HEALTH worldwide, to encourage education & research on various sleep disorders and remedial measures, and promoting sleep enhancing products awareness throughout the world.

About 320 hours of presentations and training sessions were made in 20 lecture halls concurrently. Dr. Charles Morin, President of World Sleep Society, Canada inaugurated the session and did the closing remarks.

Mr. S Sundaresan, Editor of Comfort Times who attended the expo from ISPF, said that Mr. Henry Zeifman, President of Perfect Sleep Pad expressed interest to export their products to India. They are ready to tie up with Indian counterpart on a long term basis to promote their sleep enhancement products.

The following key observations were noted during the World Sleep Congress 2019

- The People of western world are very conscious of Sleep Health Care & Wellness
- There are thousands of sleep test labs for accurate diagnose of the sleep disorders and also equal amount of remedial products

available.

- Manufacturers of Sleep products work hand-in hand with Sleep Test Laboratories and physicians to promote sleep Hygiene and Sleep Wellness.
- Products are designed to accommodate for specific needs pertaining to sleep disorders and versatile applications.
- New products are introduced in the market frequently to let consumers try out and gather feedback.

The Learning and Challenges noted from World Sleep Congress 2019

- Take initiative to conduct Sleep Hygiene and Sleep Health Wellness campaign to promote consumer awareness on sleep disorders and remedies.
- Tie-up with Sleep Laboratories to conduct bi-annual workshops with intent to promote Consumer Sleep Hygiene and suitable sleep mattress products.
- Advise members to tie-up with Sleep aid Products and offer them as compliments along with Mattress and Pillows purchases. Example: Knee / Lumbar / Total Body – Pillows, Eye Shades, Sleep Blankets, Weighted Shoulder Wraps, Light sensitive goggles etc. **CT**



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Sheet that can detect heart health as you sleep



With an aim to help people monitor their health as a preventive mechanism to avert some of the non-communicable disorders, a team of IIT graduates have come up with an innovation. They have developed an Artificial Intelligence (AI) powered sensor sheet which is known as Dozee sensor sheet. It can be placed beneath the mattress under the chest of the user to detect indicators such as heart health, respiration, sleep and stress with medical grade accuracy. This device works on the Ballistocardiography (BCG) technology which involves measurement of the movement of heart and can be extended to find breathing and snoring. Consisting of micro-electromechanical system (MEMS) based vibro-acoustic sensors, Dozee sensor sheet comes with data accumulation and communication unit, cloud software and mobile phone and web apps. Having higher levels of accuracy than wearables, this sheet can work for all mattresses up to thickness of 18 inches and even with multiple people on the bed. Priced at Rs 7,200, the device is built specifically for home settings and requires no technical expertise to set-up. The device is developed in collaboration with National Institute of Mental Health and Neuro-Sciences and Jayadeva Institute of Medical Sciences in Bengaluru, Karnataka.

Reading before sleeping is healthy

People who read before bed not only sleep better but eat healthier and make more money. It might sound strange but interestingly, it is true. Well, a survey conducted by the mattress and sleep product review site Sleep Junkie proves so. Nearly 1,000 people were surveyed about both their sleep habits and bedtime routines which basically included the fact that whether or not they read in bed. Participants who read in bed at night ranged from those who read once a week to every night and the results were fascinating. All the respondents said that reading before sleeping promoted relaxation, reduced stress, induced sleep and lead to improved sleep quality. Also, the survey showed that those who read before bed made an average income of \$39,779 while non-readers made \$36,094. Further, the survey also pointed that bedtime readers were 12 percent more inclined to eat a healthy diet, 14 percent more likely to engage in healthy recreation and 8 percent more likely to keep regular doctor/dentist appointments. Thus, the study clearly proved that reading before bed can make you healthy, wealthy and wise.



Poor sleep in middle-age and risk of Alzheimer's disease in late-life

Poor sleep in middle-age can lead to late-life Alzheimer's-related brain changes. Yes, it is a truth which is backed by research conducted by the University of California, Berkeley. As per the study published in the Journal of Neuroscience, "Cognitively healthy adults whose sleep quality declined in the middle age were more likely to accumulate Alzheimer's disease-related proteins in the brain in late life than those whose sleep quality improved or did not change." Nearly 101 older adults enrolled in the Berkeley Aging Cohort Study were analysed for beta-amyloid and tau tangles levels as they are common predictors of Alzheimer's dementia. The study also found out that those who slept for less number of hours experienced more Alzheimer's-related brain changes later in life. The report stated, "Specifically, participants who reported shorter sleep in their 50s or their 70s had significantly more beta-amyloid in later life than those whose sleep did not decline. Similarly, participants who reported shorter sleep in their 60s had significantly more tau tangles in later life compared with those whose sleep increased or stayed the same."

Debunking the myth around snoring

Snoring may not be related to bad sleep anymore. Well, yes! The study conducted by the Toronto Rehabilitation Institute in Canada which excluded people who suffer from obstructive sleep apnea proves so. Scientists at the institute studied a group of 74 people to come to the conclusion that snoring does not lead to a bad night's sleep or cause a person to be tired the next day. The results were published in the American Journal of Otolaryngology.



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