

Be the face of Paid Humanity

A Front-End Retail Bonanza for Women

Shopping is a dominant area of women from decades, mostly in fashion products and services. Already organized retail sector has introduced the Indian women to a fabulous shopping experience, which they did not experience before. With the easy disposable incomes and the willingness to splurge, the taste of Indian women consumers have changed as well. Today the new-age women have high expectations. It's all happening due to the economic liberalization, presence of MNC and substantial hike in pay structure. So is the Indian women, they not only value quality services, convenience and ambience of store but also for courtesy, care and humanity for a complete and true shopping experience. "In such a scenario, shop management becomes very crucial where sellers can ensure maximum profits as well as gain customer loyalty." says A K Sharma, a faculty in Retail Management.



At present growth of retail sector in India is reflected in sprawling shopping centers, multiplex- malls and huge complexes which offer shopping, entertainment and variety of food all under one roof, the concept of shopping has altered in terms of format and consumer buying behaviour, ushering in a revolution in

shopping in India. It has been emerging as one of the most dynamic and fast paced industries with several players already entering the market. According to an industry report over 10 per cent of the country's GDP and around eight per cent of the employment retailing in India is gradually inching toward to be the next boom industry. The retail sector grew at the rate of 25-28%. The size of organized and unorganized retail segments in 2007 was estimated at US\$ 330 Billion. The retail industry is expected to grow up to US\$ 365 Billion in this year and probably touch US\$ 440 Billion by 2010. But according to some experts, this can only be possible if women join the front end operations and merchandising in retail management. No doubt men can satisfied the need of quality service and convenience but not care and friendly attitude, which is becoming the key area of customer loyalty. Job responsibilities too vary depending on the kind of store and the size of the store one works for. For high margin apparel stores like Mango or Louis Vutton demand great poise and communication skills. But low margin and high turnover stores like Big bazaar or Subhiksha will expect speed and smile to handling store customers.

Many Indian players have already launched themselves in the retail sector. Reliance Industries Limited, one of the front runners, is planning to invest US\$ 6 billion in the organized retail sector in India. They are planning to open 1500 supermarkets and 1000 hypermarkets. Bharti Telecoms is planning a joint



venture worth £ 750 million with Tesco a global retail giant. Indian brand Pantaloons, owned by Kishore Biyani, is planning to invest US\$ 1 billion in order to increase its retail space to 30 million square feet. Such huge investments are also a factor in the growth of the organized retail sector in India.

Global retail giants like Wal- Mart, Tesco, Carrefour SA, Metro AG are also entering the retail industry in India. This is also another factor in the growth of the organized retail sector in India.



Store management is the most visible part of retail business. It has two major areas front -end operations and merchandising .Here one can operate in various capacities ranging from front end sales person, store managers, visual merchandisers to mall managers. The most critical of these is front-end management, which involved dealing with the customers directly. Front end jobs account for 80% total jobs in retail sector, thus making is key area of focus and that is the place where women can play major role as front -end executive or customer care executive. Most of the customers are fragile in nature, if the customers do not

get an efficient, courteous and caring staff to attend them, it might just put them off the store forever. This need of customer can be well satisfied by women employees in suitable order. So that's a big bonanza for women.

One needs to have cleared at least class 12 or be a graduate to get started as trainee sales person and earn a salary Rs. 5000- 9000 p.m. Although the initial salaries are not that tempting, the key is to focus on the growth prospects. A sales women can become a team leader in few months and earn as much as 10000-15000 p.m. As a team leader one has to manage a team of junior sales persons. One or two years into the job and one could rise to the position of departmental head with salary of 16000-25000 p.m. The job profile will be to achieve desired sales target, staff management and good customer relations.

In next step one can be assistant store manager which can fetch him/her a salary of Rs.25000-65000 p.m depending on the capability, education of the candidate and store status. The job is diverse in nature like maintain ambience of store, merchandising, store operations and staff management. Enhanced education qualification like M.B.A in marketing or diploma in retail management backed with experience and personal caliber can make you store manager in five to seven years. In any outlet, the store manager runs the whole show like display of products, staff training, business development, sales promotion and



executing day to day operations. In nutshell store manager is responsible of each and every activity in store. In an apparel store, jewelry showroom, luxury item shop and food outlet women can play key role to make store viable for ultimate shopping experience. Because such places they are face of the brand and their soft skill and informal friendly attitude can develop loyal customer base in coming years.

The next step in the hierarchy is that of an area, regional or zonal manager. This gives the chance to control the operations of several stores in specified area depending upon the scale of operations of the company. The salary is very lucrative, it may range from 100000 to 400000 p.m depending on store brand and complexity of the job. This job is highly demanding and stressful. For women some time it is difficult to have such kind of job along with family responsibility but definitely women can also enjoy such job profile and status, if they can manage at both the front.

With the entry of the malls in big way into the retail landscape, the experience of shopping has been elevated to new heights. According to Rajan Narula , managing director, the great Indian place, Noida , "Malls are treated as destinations which provide organized services but also offer a wide range of choices, brands and entertainment under one roof." Around 400 malls are coming in metros and I, II tier cities. The retail sector not only revolutionized the concept of selling, but it has also created immense job

opportunities at the shop floor level and beyond. The retail industry employs 50 million people currently. The talent short shortfall is slated to go up to 2 million by 2010. A huge chunk of these opportunities can be well served by talented women. So women can join this lucrative career where one day they can

- Gaurav Aggarwal

Generally courses duration are one year to two year. Here we have a list of prominent institutes which provide retail education in various fields:

- Asia Pacific Institute of Management, Delhi
- Amity Business School, Noida
- Birla Institute of Management And Technology, Noida
- Indian Institute of Retail Management, Delhi
- Indian Retail School, Delhi
- Modi Apollo International Institute, Delhi
- National Institute of Fashion Technology, Delhi
- Mudra Institute of Communication, Ahmedabad
- Chennai Business School, Cheenai
- K J Somaiya Institute of Management Studies , Mumbai



Festival Calendar

June

Festival Name	Date
Jamai Sasthi	9th June
Ganga Dussehra	13th June
Hemis Festival	June
Sindhu Darshan	June
Champakulam Boat Race	June



A view of colourful Hemis festival of Ladakh

Sindhu Darshan

Sindhu Darshan festival is a festive celebration of River Sindhu, which also known as the Indus. The Sindhu Darshan Festival is organised annually at Leh. The people across the country visit Leh during this festival for Darshan and Puja of the River Sindhu (Indus), which originates from the Mansarovar in Tibet



Devotee at Sindhu Darshan festival

Champakulam boat race

The Champakulam boat race festival is scheduled to be held on June. The festivities include spectacular water floats and decorated boats. This is the oldest and most popular boat race in Kerala, and is closely connected to the Sree Krishna Temple at Ambalappuzha.



A view of colourful Champakulam boat race of Kerala

Ganga Dussehra

The Ganga, one of the largest of the rivers of India, holds a significant place in the lives of Hindus. It has been sacred to Hindus from the ancient time. Ganga Dussehra is a ten days festival devoted to the worship of Holy River Ganga. The places like Rishikesh, Haridwar, Garh-Mukteswar, Prayag, Varanasi etc where Ganga flows hold special significance on this day.



Women worshipping the river Ganaga on the occasion of Ganga Dussehra

Hemis festival

In Hemis Gompa, the biggest Buddhist monastery in Ladakh, devotees celebrates the birth anniversary of Guru Padmasambhava. The colourful two-day pageant falls on the 10th day (Tse-Chu) of the Tibetan lunar month. The residents and devotees dress up in their traditional dress. Lamas perform splendid masked dances and sacred plays with drums and long horns.

