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INDO COUNT

Weaving the Indian dream with Boutique Living



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Breakthrough in digital printing



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Machine automation solutions



Supima Cotton

Strong Indian market presence



HOME TEXTILE INDUSTRY

Global home textiles trade to touch \$80 billion by 2025

Exclusive report by WAZIR ADVISORS



Mr. Asim Dalal, Managing Director,
Indo Count Retail Ventures P. Ltd.

INDO COUNT

Weaving the Indian dream with Boutique Living

By Ganesh Kalidas

Indo Count was incorporated in 1988 by Mr. Anil Jain, the Chairman and promoter of the company. In 1991 a new greenfield plant was set up in Kolhapur. This was a spinning unit for production of yarn for export. Land was acquired in Kagal to set up the home textile unit in 2006.

By 2008, another spinning unit was acquired by the company named Pranavaditya Spinning Mills Ltd. in Kolhapur, and thereby it increased the capacity for producing yarn. With around 80,000 spindles, almost 14,000 tonnes of cotton yarn were produced annually, mostly for export. But, with the start of the home textile unit, a major portion of the produce was utilised for internal consumption. Hence during 1988-2005, Indo Count was mainly into the spinning business for the export market.

With the vision and guidance of Mr. Anil Jain, there was a forward integration in getting to home textile from the spinning business, undertaken by Mr. Mohit Jain with his contemporary ideas leading to the creation of a very modern plant. The expansion in the US and other countries started with the opening up of the sales office and showroom in New York in 2011 followed by sales offices and showrooms in Manchester in the UK, and Melbourne in Australia. This also included design studios and a warehouse in Charlotte in North Carolina



Mr. Asim Dalal, MD, Indo Count Retail Ventures P. Ltd.

HOME TEXTILE INDUSTRY

in 2014. In 2015 Indo Count expanded the annual capacity from 45 million metres to 68 million metres per annum and it is currently at 90 million metres.

Mr. Asim Dalal is the Managing Director of the newly set up subsidiary company, Indo Count Retail Ventures Pvt. Ltd., to make a foray into the domestic market for home textiles. He joined the company in 2016 when they were looking to expand operations in India. He has brought his rich experience in branding and retail into the business and helped set up a venture with Indo Count and launched an aspirational brand "Boutique Living" to share its expertise in refined quality bed linen for the Indian consumer.

In 2016 Indo Count launched three brands in the US, namely, Boutique Living, Pure Collection and Revival. Indo Count supplies goods to leading retailers to Macy's, Bed Bath and Beyond, John Lewis, Walmart and many other notable foreign brands. As mentioned by Mr. Dalal, launching Boutique Living in India was one of the main objectives after launching it in the US. The company wanted to offer the same quality of merchandise to the Indian consumer.

Going by their last count, the company has established its presence in 20 States and almost 86 cities operating through Multi Brand Outlets (MBOs). They have started taking forward the objective of selling through large format stores (LFS) and also through their own website www.boutiquelivingindia.com. Opening its own store is not on the cards as it calls for an elaborate range of products. Instead, their main focus is on MBOs and LFS.

One of the biggest achievements has been to create shelf considering it being a new brand, and Mr. Dalal strongly feels that the quality of products and the designing capability is what has led to a positive response from customers. He believes that the large design team and strong emphasis on the designing capability has created a mark for the brand.

According to him, it is the combination of professionals from both branding and retail that has led to this massive growth of the company and its success.

The brand is positioned in the mid-premium segment as it focuses more on the quality rather than being a brand for the masses and likes to maintain the aspirational quality, with more emphasis on 300-400 thread count and goes right up to 1000 thread count offering the highest quality design. The company believes that the range of products



provide customers a sleep experience like never before. The product range includes bed sheets, comforters, fitted sheets, dohars, bed spreads, bed covers and a variety of other products, all of which are produced at the Kolhapur plant.

Boutique Living considers understanding the customer's requirements, quality and design to be its unique selling point. Mr. Dalal feels that there has been a gap in the requirement for good quality products and. Boutique Living has been able to fill in the gap and has hence made a mark for itself within a year since its launch.

The main feature that distinguishes Boutique Living India from its international business is the Indian consumers' preference for printed bed linen unlike in overseas where plains and solid colours are preferred. The newness of the brand and the display of its designs on a big platform has helped in drawing more customers.

The total market for the bed linen in India is expected to be around Rs. 17,500 crores by 2020, as per Technopak. There has been a need for a brand to focus on mid to premium range as most of the other brands focus on low price points meant for the masses, which are sometimes blended, while Boutique Living focus is on 100% cotton and considers Indian cotton as one of the best in the world when it comes to production of cotton.

Therefore the company claims that out of Rs. 17,500 crores the organised segment will contribute around 20-25% of the demand, which would be about Rs. 3,000-5,000 crores. This will create a large domestic market for its bed linens.

The vision of Indo Count is to grow beyond bed linen and venture into other areas of home textiles. The first step was to develop a strong base with good products and gain



wide acceptance, which is already being achieved. The next step is to introduce more products in home textiles.

In the next five years the company's aim is to achieve a level of Rs. 250-300 crores from its domestic businesses, which is achievable considering that many brands in India are already doing it.

Boutique Living is completely based on in-house operations and production and doesn't outsource any of the work to design studios. A design team headed by Mr. Asim Dalal is involved in initiation of ideas, market study and analysis of the current trends, formulating and creating different patterns, designs and colours for different seasons like summer, autumn, etc.

Currently for 2017, green is the Pantone shade. The team also needs to cater to the different zones of the country and the various regional festivals. Hence inspiration is taken from Pantone shades, WGSN, etc. The company has modern digital printing facilities too.

Boutique Living has started supplying bed linen to various hotel chains in India regularly requiring white, high thread count bed linen. The brand works closely with customers to ensure that the linen provides complete comfort while also being durable enough to meet the rigorous demands of commercial washing processes.

Elaborating on the aspect of sustainability, Mr. Dalal observes that the company has invested in a modern effluent water treatment plant (ETP) and 90% of the water used

in the plant is recycled. Some parts of the plant are also run by solar panels, thus taking care of their own power requirements.

The company is one of the largest employers of labour in Kolhapur and keeps conducting various CSR activities like setting up a skill development centre in collaboration with IL&FS where skills regarding stitching and similar activities are imparted. As many as 124 women are being trained in stitching, of which 98 were successfully employed in the industry. This is one of their ways in employing and maintaining skilled labour.

The company has also been involved in other CSR activities like educating more than 27,900 students in 71 Government-aided schools, implementing an E-learning program linked to the State education curriculum which has significantly improved academic score and reduced drop-out rates. Medical vans go around the villages providing medical services.

Mr. Asim Dalal's vision for the domestic market for Boutique Living is to improve the sleep experience of the customers by selling quality fabric and educating them on the high thread count, finishing and other features of their linen like anti-microbial finish and anti-wrinkle finish through communication and social media and many other interactive platforms. "Quality production, technological innovation and first class service are the main USPs of the brand", says Mr. Dalal. ♦



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commitment continues to take us to greater
heights...*

No. 1

**EXPORTER OF
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by



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