



# R-VUE

**MUMBAI 2019**  
Highlights & Insights





## What is R-Vue?

R-Vue is Vue.ai's signature event that facilitates **intimate, meaningful conversations** about everything that's **changing** and **transforming in retail** with the very **people who are changing it**.

At Vue.ai, we learned that **the best way** to serve our **customers and stakeholders** better, was by **listening** to them, their stories, their struggles and their successes – and that's how R-Vue was born, **as a platform for healthy dialogue** between the entire retail ecosystem.

R-Vue is an international event – last year, it was at San Francisco, and we plan on having R-Vues in New York and London later this year.

**R-Vue Mumbai was our first edition in India.**

# Why India? Why Now?

*The country prime for a retail revolution*

India is expected to have **627 million internet users** by the end of 2019

The **retail and e-commerce market** in India is expected to grow to **\$1.2 Trillion** and **\$84 million** respectively, **by 2021.** \*

India's **beauty and personal care** segment is estimated to reach **\$23 billion by 2022**, accounting for 3% of the global total.\*\*

\*Deloitte Report on "Unravelling The Indian Consumer"

\*RedSeer Report



# Snapshots From R-Vue Mumbai

Our panellists from diverse backgrounds discussed DTC Brands, Fashion Manufacturing, Beauty, Luxury and Technology in Retail



**L-R: Ashwini Asokan, Preeta Sukhtankar, Dhruv Toshniwal & Vineeta Singh**

**L-R: Lavanya Mohan, Abhishek Agarwal, Sushant Junnarkar & Amrish Kumar**



**Sauvik Banerjee**

# Key Insights

## Direct To Consumer Brands in India



Preeta Sukhtankar  
Founder,  
TheLabelLife.com

### Know Your Audience

The Label Life was created for the **young, urban working woman who is also very active on social media**. We created The Label Life at a time when there was really no exciting or fun brand that catered to this segment.

### The Power of Influencers

When we started the brand, we were just a bunch of stylists with an idea. That's **when we roped in Bollywood stars Malaika Arora, Bipasha Basu & Suzanne Khan to represent us as our style editors - and we got noticed immediately**. Even today, we make sure they are at the forefront of everything TheLabelLife does.

### The Importance of Community

A big part of our brand is our community. We run something on our Instagram called The Label Life Book Club where we just discuss the books we enjoyed. **It's totally unrelated to our business but something our audience really enjoys**. It's all about building an **emotional connect** with them.

### Omnichannel Insights

We really thought we knew our customer based on their online browsing patterns and choices but it was only when we opened our first store did we realise that the depth of our knowledge was actually really low. **Observing our customers browse the merchandise** and give us feedback - and it was usually the smallest of things, like, which top would make the arms look slimmer that **made us aware of our customer needs at a far more granular level**



# Key Insights

## Making India More Beautiful

### How Sugar Cosmetics Was Born

I was actually the co-founder of a Beauty Subscription Box called Fab Bag. ***We'd pass feedback from our customers to the brands we worked with***, but they just wouldn't incorporate it! As a result we started losing customers. That was when ***we decided we had to take things into our hands***.



Vineeta Singh  
CEO,  
SUGAR Cosmetics

### The Power Of Word Of Mouth

Our brand is focused on the millennial Indian woman. The first product we came up with were a line of long lasting matte lipsticks that were especially suited for Indian skin tones. We launched fairly quietly but ***sales really picked up when women started sharing photos of themselves wearing it on social media***. It was something as simple as creating a shade that suited Indian skin! That's when we knew we were on the right track.

### Instagram World Vs The Real World

When we launched our foundation range, ***our line had 22 shades which is unheard of for an Indian brand***. We created a campaign called #MySkinMyChoice which went viral on Instagram. But in the real world, the darker shades just didn't sell - that was when we realized that it wasn't enough to create a social campaign. ***Beauty brands have to fight years of cultural stigma*** - in this case, that darker women shouldn't be highlighting their natural skin tone and that dark isn't beautiful! And even if it might not make economic sense right now, we're not going to stop fighting.

### Working With The Customer

The foundation stick we created was ***totally based on customer feedback*** and what they wanted. Our customers wanted foundation that was ***easy to travel with*** and we realized that most of them don't have brushes, so we included a ***brush in the other end of the tube!***

# Key Insights

## Manufacturing For Fashion



Dhruv Toshniwal  
VP Business Development,  
Banswara Syntex Ltd

### Trends At Top Speed

Before social media really took over, the time it took for a trend to get on the racks was a comfortable 6 months. **Today, with instagram creating trends overnight, brands need to hone their processes to 4 weeks!**

### Natural Vs Synthetic Fabrics

**People believe that natural fabrics like cotton and linen are the most sustainable fabrics**, but that's not necessarily true. Cotton and linen are water intensive, whereas **some synthetic fabrics like recycled polyester and viscose consume fewer resources and last longer than organic fabrics**. So it's really important to educate the consumer about the finer details of fabric.

### Leaders in Sustainability

Banswara Syntex **imbibes sustainability at every level**. My father takes a train to the factory, not an airplane. When we send samples, we make sure our envelopes aren't heavy because that's not good for the environment either. We have a **water recycling facility** and we use the recycled water to irrigate our farms. **Our polyester fabrics are also going to be 100% recycled from the next year**. A lot of brands like Zara have announced that they're going to be using 100% recycled fabric by 2025, but as manufacturers, **we need to lead the way** and incorporate it before the brands do.

### Digitising The Manufacturing Process

**We are working together with Vue.ai to create a platform that will help retailers track the entire supply chain**. The way we work right now is through emails, I've to send physical samples and sometimes I have to travel to where the client is myself. It's a process that hasn't been digitised yet and we are looking forward to creating that platform with Vue.ai.

# Key Insights

## Understanding The Indian Luxury Customer



**Amrish Kumar**  
CEO  
Ritu Kumar

### Who Is The Indian Luxury Consumer?

Indians don't spend on luxury or consume luxury the way the west does or even China. We've got a per capita income between \$2000 to \$2500. We're in the stage now where the value brands have scaled, which is great because now is the time consumers will start trading up.

***“The primary source of revenue for the luxury fashion industry in India will always be weddings”***

### The State Of The Luxury Market In India

India's market for luxury is still very nascent. Bridge to luxury brands still don't exist in India as yet. The market for premium brands is just opening up. In fact if you go to a mall today, the staff will tell you that the ground floor only has “premium” brands. Ask them what these premium brands are, they'll tell you that it's H&M and Zara. Barring a very few malls in the country, this is the definition of a 'premium' brand for most of country.



# Key Insights

## Personalizing The Luxury Experience



**Sushant Junnarkar**  
CEO E-Commerce  
Aza Fashions

### Location Based Personalization

One of the key ways we personalize Aza's e-commerce experience is by displaying products that are mapped to the buying patterns that are displayed by customers there. For example, a user from the Middle East will see full sleeve designs first, whereas a user from the US will see more premium, higher priced brands first.

***“We have a team dedicated to adding a personal touch to every purchase made online. We want to make the experience as customized as possible.”***

### The Importance of Store Merchandising

Every single one of our brick and mortar stores are different. If you blindfolded a staff member and took them straight to the store, they'll tell you which area we're in. We take store merchandising very seriously because Aza is all about curation. The Aza store in Juhu is different from the Aza store in Bandra - they might only be a few kilometres apart, but we know that our Juhu customer is very different from our Bandra customer.

# Key Insights

## Taking On The Luxury Supply Chain



**Abhishek Agarwal**  
CEO  
Purple Style Labs

### Demand Vs Supply

We want to operate across premium, premium luxury and luxury segments. When you're sitting on that kind of data, it becomes important to understand the value chain because investors want us to scale, but we can't because if you look at our supply side, the designers we work with don't have the bandwidth to scale operations to meet our demands.

***“We’re looking to invest in 20 designer brands over the next 12-18 months”***

### Investing In The Supply Chain

So we want to fix the supply side from the inside by investing in brands. What that does is give us access to the entire chain from production to distribution to sale. There are no gaps left. If we know that three years from now there's going to be a surge in demand, we start fixing the supply now. Most people in this segment focus on the customer side because they work with multiple brands, we would rather focus on supply because when you know there might be an issue with supply in the future, you'd rather fix it now than later.

# Key Insights

## Indian Fashion's Tech Transformation

**Sauvik Banerjee**

Technology & Digital Leadership  
(Strategy, Advisory, Engineering)  
TATA Group



### Creating A Brand Based Marketplace

Amazon had built a mass marketplace, Flipkart built a marketplace for sellers but **where did the brands go?** That's where we saw the opportunity and created brand based marketplace. Today we have Longchamp, Montblanc, Ted Baker and more

### Physical Vs Digital Presence

If I'm an Indian brand, I am going to be spending on my store layouts, not an e-commerce site. Luxury brands aren't going to be online either. If you want a new MontBlanc pen, **you've got to go to the store.**

### Adapting A Click & Collect Model For India

We turned the click and collect model on its head and decided to do ship from store. So **the stores work like ubers** - the store closest to the customer fulfils the order and ensures that we don't need to have inventory at our warehouse at all times.

### Ensuring Authenticity

How do you simplify and counter fakes? There's a very simple answer to that - **work with the originals.**



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