



WHY CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE  
COMES FIRST IN A  
POST-PANDEMIC WORLD

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Recreating an in-store experience  
for customers, online

**R-VUE**

**CONNECT**

LEARN. CONNECT. GROW



## What is R-Vue Connect?

R-Vue Connect is Vue.ai's exclusive educational digital summit for retailers across the globe! Ever since COVID-19 began impacting retailers across the globe, we at Vue.ai realised retailers needed a platform to talk about how they were coping with the crisis and the steps they are taking to grow despite it.

As the global economy moves towards normalcy, **we want to help retailers understand the post-pandemic retail narrative, and how technology is going to impact retail.**

We've had panelists from Dunzo, Namshi.com, Depop, Milaner, Hyphen-Group, Zilingo, Sequoia Capital, Quandl, Tata CLiQ, StarQuik, Wakefitco, Nicobar, Fireside Ventures and more, and witnessed over 1500+ retail professionals registrations from across the globe!

At its core, R-Vue Connect isn't just about helping our community stay informed, but also about building a dependable community of retailers and experts that we all can share with and learn from.

## About the Speakers

### Lauryn Vaughn

Founder & CEO, The Upside



Lauryn is a consignment e-tailer specializing in sustainable fashion by selling affordable luxury. She founded The Upside, **Canada's largest high-end resale e-commerce platform** in 2015. The Upside attracts 400 new members every month and is redefining the luxury lifecycle by empowering its community by subscribing to a sustainable, circular economy.

### Kaushik Mukherjee,

Co Founder & COO, SUGAR Cosmetics

Kaushik is the Co-Founder and COO of SUGAR Cosmetics, **India's fastest growing beauty brand** with a distribution network of 1750+ branded retail outlets in more than 100 cities. He is a TEDX Speaker and alumnus of BITS Pilani and IIM Ahmedabad.



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## Content, Community & Commerce

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Retailers were at their most vulnerable in March, during the onset of the pandemic. They had no choice but to adapt and innovate to the new normal. Here's how SUGAR Cosmetics and The Upside, two retailers who belong to two vastly different segments that are united by their dependence on physical stores, coped with the changes that the pandemic brought about:



Our direct-to-consumer sales have gone up by 60% because we prioritized content over and above anything else

**Kaushik Mukherjee**  
Co-Founder & COO,  
SUGAR Cosmetics

SUGAR Cosmetics channeled their focus to **content**. Their strategy was to maximise on organic traffic and they went on to design highly optimized content for social channels. As most legacy retailers built out their digital channels very slowly, SUGAR Cosmetics already had a headstart as digital content had been their primary focus even pre-pandemic. "All the legacy brands that have fought to avoid digital are now online. And we are privileged to be at a place where we're exactly 50/50 when it comes to online sales and retail sales" said panelist Kaushik, co-founder and COO of SUGAR Cosmetics.



Our content strategy is to help women understand the potential of their closets. We want to empower them by demonstrating that their clothes are latent assets, and they can, indeed, get their money back

**Lauryn Vaughn**  
Founder & CEO,  
The Upside

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The Upside invested heavily on their **community**. To take people's minds off the pandemic, the consignment and thrift store ran a 12-week campaign called 'The Hangup' on their social channels, bringing out fun stories from a guest's closet and discussed stories like - the best resale find, the one item your husband would burn, and so on. Even today, in September, The Upside is focusing on their community initiatives. "Resale always sees a boost during economic uncertainty, so we are investing heavily in presenting this value proposition to our customer," said panelist Lauryn Vaughn, founder and CEO, The Upside.

## Record Surge In Online Activity

During the pandemic, SUGAR Cosmetics witnessed a spike in online activity like never before. Pre-pandemic, their online sales contributed to 50% of their revenue. Today, it is 75%. Moreover, the company has always seen a 50/50 split between repeat and new customers. But in June, their repeat customers dropped to 35%, not due to a lack in absolute numbers, but because of the incredible surge in new customers!

On the other hand, The Upside has moved from being 100% online to 80-20 online and offline with the launch of their new store. This move was initiated after their community of shoppers expressed the need to have a Buy Online Pick up In Store option. Omnichannel is now a must-have for the post-covid consumer.



The search-led consumer group usually dominates, but now we're seeing the discovery-led group grow because people are spending more time online

### Two types of customers online:

1

#### Search - led

They know exactly what they're looking for

2

#### Discovery-led

They browse categories and generate more revenue

### Kaushik Mukherjee

Co-Founder & COO, SUGAR Cosmetics

## Memorable Shopping Experiences, Online

As retailers accept the new normal, they are doing everything in their capacity to create a “normal” shopping experience for consumers online. By “normal” - retailers are looking to recreate in-store experiences. Smooth e-commerce experiences encourages repeat purchases and boosts customer loyalty. **How are retailers making this happen? The answer - by investing in tech, A.I. and automation solutions.**

SUGAR Cosmetics is investing in technology to improve inventory management, to deliver a seamless search and discovery experience.



The Upside doesn't let the customer compromise at any touchpoint. “A shopper must get the same experience online as they would get when they walk into a luxury department store. Just because you're not buying luxury brand new, it shouldn't be a lesser experience!,” said Lauryn. The Upside has invested in technology to remove friction on the seller side as well.



We don't want people looking at shopping online as the last resort. We want to make it the go-to “normal” option. Normalising online shopping is particularly important in a market like India in a time like this

**Kaushik Mukherjee**

Co-Founder & COO, SUGAR Cosmetics



# Questions?

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