Future Gazing

Trends Forecast 2015

WHERE IS INDIA GOING?

Mega-trends that you can't ignore in 2015

The intervention of design is most powerful when it understands and works in sync with all the elements of a system to arrive at most powerful and efficient solutions that can impact lives of people and society at a large. In order to understand these systems one needs to map Socio- Cultural- Economic-Political trends that are bound to define how and why people are behaving the way they are and what shapes are these systems taking.

Trends cannot happen in isolation, they tend to intersect and work in tandem with each other. Most often, small cultural shifts can lead to emergence of behaviors that become mainstream over time. Thus, trends can also be an offshoot or outgrowth of long term trends that have been spotted and snowballing over years. While many trends and counter trends can be spotted at any given time, in this document we have explored a few macro level Indian consumer behaviors and lifestyles trends which are here to stay with us for a while.

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1. SEQUESTER

In this digital era, it is almost impossible to keep away from constant buzz and chaos and hide from the public eye. Burdened by this clutter, people are increasingly seeking more depth and meaning and are craving for some personal time, away from the stimulus of the internet and technology.

People look forward to having some 'alone-time' to seek clarity and peace of mind, be it though solo trips, exploring wider vistas or cultures and local communities, or experimenting with newer forms of indulgences like food, adrenalin pumping activities, art forms, etc.

At the same time, leisure time is not only about pleasure anymore instead it is as much about self-development. People are also becoming increasingly aware of the ethical impact of their everyday lives and are becoming way more cautious towards the ethical status of the things they do, buy and support. A rise in endless avenues for hospitality and leisure can be seen as one of the manifestations of this trend.

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2. THE NEW CONSUMER

As the world gets increasingly globalized, demographic models of consumer behavior are getting dated. People across age groups and markets are constructing their own identities more freely than ever. Consumption patterns can no longer be defined only by 'traditional' demographic segments such as age, gender, location, income, family status.

Society is now too fluid, ideas too available, the markets too efficient, the risk and cost of trying new things too low to pump this wave. This is creating immense opportunities for transferring, interest-based and much more focused innovations from one demographic to another and vice versa.These rapidly evolving scenarios are, in turn, giving rise to new business ideas that were earlier unheard of.

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3. KNOTTY AFFAIRS

Rapidly changing social patterns, media and globalization are influencing, bending, and reshaping our conventional thinking while at the same time holding us back and keeping us rooted to the age-old norms. This dichotomy is giving rise to an uncertainty in the society, affecting how contentment and happiness in relationships is getting redefined.

People are open to experimentation and are delimitating relationships by looking for something more liberal, fulfilling, and convenience-driven. Relationships are transient and marriage and children are no more the essential check points in life. Also, as people live longer, more and more are starting new families at a later age and households are expanding to include multiple generations. On the other end of spectrum, with more and more people staying away from families and living in single or shared households, fulfillment and bonding is sought in friends and flat-mates or even pets who become surrogate support systems in the new territories.

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4. BLURRING BOUNDRIES

A new convenience culture is on a rise, wherein people yearn for a flexibility of balancing out work and leisure time. Learning on the go / pleasure on the go/ business on the go is gaining popularity and technology is serving as the enabler.

People are combining business travel with holidays, passions and interests with work, knowledge with entertainment (apps and games) - which is increasingly blurring the boundaries between the time for work and leisure. Offbeat and alternate- side careers are on a rise and people are turning their hobbies and passions into career opportunities. This blending of work and personal lives in turn is impacting how we look at work and personal spaces, paving the way for new age products and elements that can seamlessly transverse through offices, homes, hospitality industry, transport industry etc.

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5. MOLLYCODDLE

"Kids grow up so fast!" This cliché of parenting is becoming truer and truer by the day as children today are literally growing up faster- both mentally and physically. At the same time, obsessive parenting is on a rise and kids are treated as the new age accessories, the shiny trophies that parents take pride in flaunting.

Parents', who are otherwise unable to spend time with their kids, try to cover up and compensate by splurging more and more on endless activities and materialistic pleasures for kids. Factors like immense exposure and influences through internet and media, rigorous scheduling of children's lives from an early age are giving rise to a generation of pampered, savvy kids. These kids are not only making purchasing decisions for themselves but also influencing the choices of their parents. Alongside, markets are responding to this trend by coming up with wide range of dedicated products and services that are exclusively conceptualized for this emerging breed of influencers.

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6. COLLABORATE-CO-EXPLORE

In the connected society we live in, a rapidly evolving model that leverages the power of Internet, smartphones, and social networking has skyrocketed in popularity. These continuous social and digital engagements have made it highly convenient to connect and interact with like-minded people, share common experiences and indulge in activities of similar interest.

Consumer behavior is now rapidly shifting to being more selective, socially conscious, and collaborative- giving rise to a large number of interest driven groups that are willing to work towards common causes or goals. These new groups are largely challenging the conventional patterns of consumption- be it in the way people are seeking education, viewing career and employment options, or even the way social causes are driven. On the other hand, this wave has also lead to a new start-up culture amongst younger brigade. We are witnessing more and more neighborhoods in metros becoming thriving ecosystems, nurturing these startups.