

Collective: Expanding with an international touch

Susmita Das

VM&RD

June 2013 | Volume:8 | Issue:9

This spring summer ace label The Collective, which is home to the best British brands such as Hackett, Ted Baker, Fred Perry, Vivienne Westwood, Simon Carter amongst many more, has introduced a few other ruling brands of the fashion orb to its list. The names include McQ Alexander McQueen, Paul & Joe, Comme Des Garcons Play and Love Moschino Jacob Cohen. The brand is also aiming to augment its reach in six cities across the country by the end of 2013. To know more about the brand's expansion plans, VM&RD met up with R.Satyajit, COO, International Brands and New Businesses, Madura Fashion & Lifestyle. Presented below are excerpts from the conversation.



Could you share with us Madura Fashion & Lifestyle's retail expansion strategies for the brand Collective?

The Collective is India's first multi-brand luxury retail concept and has been in operation for five years. Over this period, we have invested in building the brand and establishing ourselves as a preferred destination for the discerning luxury consumer. At the end of 2012, we were present in four cities - Delhi, Mumbai, Bangalore and Pune, with a flagship property in each city.

Given our equity as a consummate luxury fashion experience, the brand will now double its footprint over the coming year. To this effect, we have already launched three new properties, focused on the northern region. Over the past few months, we opened two new flagship stores in Delhi at Select Citywalk, Saket and Ambience Mall, Gurgaon. In addition, we have also expanded our footprint into Chandigarh with the launch of the store at Elante Mall.

Going further, how many stores are you planning to launch by the end of the year and how many by 2015?

By the end of this year, The Collective will have eight stores in six cities across the country. To our current retail presence will be added a flagship property in Chennai as well. By the end of 2015, given the current growth plans and the business scenario, we shall look to expand our footprint to about 20 stores across key cities in the country.

Which are the target cities you are focusing on?

While the major metros remain key focus markets for luxury brands, India's wealth resides also in its smaller towns. Cities such as Nasik, Nagpur, Surat etc have a large proportion of ultra HNIs - an audience that is at par with its metro counterparts in discretionary spending and is also seeking an exclusive luxury experience. A significant proportion of our current customer base resides outside of cities we are located in.

What kind of investments are you looking at for this expansion?

Each store requires anywhere between Rs 5 crore and Rs 7 crore as investments.

With this expansion, what kind of growth are you expecting?

We are witnessing significant growth in same store growth and aim to grow faster than the market.

Is there any plan to introduce something exclusive in the upcoming stores? And, will there be any change in the retail identity for the stores which are in the offing?

Most of the brands in The Collective are exclusively retailed by us. Additionally, our current business format and product portfolio allows us to be selective in the introduction of key brands in key stores. New brand introductions in the future may be for certain stores only, depending on the appetite of the market for the brand.

We have no current plans to overhaul the retail identity for the brand, but always strive to keep the brand aesthetic fresh and updated.

Are you planning to introduce any more new brands to The Collective?

The Collective offers customers an eclectic point of view through hand-picked global fashion. Our season collections are curated from the world's best luxury brands. While customers always return to us for their favorite brands such as Fred Perry, True Religion etc, we always introduce new brands to our customers every season.

Our aim is to introduce the Indian consumer to a wide range of the best names in luxury fashion - both known and new. Educating the customer about brands he may not know about is as important to us as providing him the best choice in luxury he could possibly have.

This Spring-Summer, we have introduced fabulous new marquee names such as McQ Alexander McQueen, Paul & Joe, Comme Des Garçons Play, Love Moschino Jacob Cohen - the world's premier name in luxury denim, and, Coccinelle - an Italian luxury handbag range for women

And there's more to come for our Autumn-Winter season! With these

introductions, we're also introducing these brands to a whole new customer base, and indeed, one that the world of luxury is now looking to.

With the launch of Hackett's exclusive outlet in India, are you planning to introduce any other store for the global brands which are being housed at The Collective?

There is no doubt that India is the new focus market for most luxury brands globally. With the successful launch of Hackett London, we are looking to build our international brand portfolio. Hackett currently operates three stores across Delhi, Bangalore and Chandigarh. Brands both within and outside our portfolio are in talks with us to expand their retail presence to India. We are currently evaluating a few proposals.