

Delhi Duty Free capitalizes on surge in international traffic



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India has been top of mind for the travel retail industry, as demonstrated by APTRA's recent India 2024 Conference. And Delhi Duty Free has firmly positioned itself as a leader in this burgeoning market, notably acting as the Platinum Host Partner for this event, demonstrating a steadfast commitment to excellence in service and innovation in travel retail.

Optimizing engagement

Delhi Duty Free (DDF) has been proactive in capitalizing on the post-pandemic recovery of global travel, taking advantage of the surge in international travel from India. The company has implemented a series of strategic initiatives aimed at optimizing customer engagement and enhancing the shopping experience. "India spearheaded the global travel retail recovery with increased passenger numbers traveling abroad, resulting in stronger business growth," Ashish Chopra, CEO, DDF states. "Initiatives included enriching the product range, refining store layouts to

enhance customer flow, enhancing staff training, and driving premiumization to elevate the overall shopping experience.”

The adoption of digital technologies has been paramount for the travel retailer. “Since the installation of digital enhancements such as video walls and digital screens in our stores, we have seen an enhanced customer engagement,” says Chopra. “These technologies have allowed us to deliver targeted promotions, showcase product features and create immersive shopping experiences resulting in increased customer satisfaction and higher sales.” This emphasize on digital transformation is complemented by the expansion of their online pre-order service, which integrates online and in-store shopping to provide a seamless, personalized customer experience.



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Product innovations and local integration

DDF has proven itself a premier venue for new product launches and exclusive brand collaborations, according to Chopra. “DDF is increasingly sought out as a partner to showcase new products and exclusive launches,” he says. “Our collaborations with brands like Royal Salute for the 25-Year-Old Delhi Edition and multi-fragrance campaigns like ‘Fly With Me’ demonstrate our commitment to offering unique and innovative products that appeal to our diverse customer base.”

The integration of local Indian products such as Single Malt Longitude 77 into the retail mix plays a crucial role in the company strategy, Chopra notes, “These products not only showcase the rich cultural heritage of India but also cater to the preferences of local and international travelers looking for authentic experiences. We ensure a strong sense of place by curating a diverse selection of products that reflect the spirit of India.”

The rise of the Indian spirits market has favorably impacted DDF's liquor sales. As consumer preferences shift towards premium and exclusive spirits, DDF continues to adapt its offer. The growth is mirrored in the fragrance and cosmetics categories, which have seen significant increases due to new brands and promotional activities. "Indeed, our fragrance and cosmetics sales have experienced significant growth recently," says Chopra. "This can be attributed to various factors such as the introduction of new brands, exclusive launches, and promotional campaigns aimed at enhancing the shopping experience."



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Evolving preferences

DDF's approach is deeply rooted in understanding and responding to the evolving preferences of a diverse clientele, utilizing data analytics to tailor their service offerings. "Data analytics and customer feedback play a crucial role in our continuous improvement efforts at DDF. This data-driven approach enables us to deliver personalized experiences and enhance customer satisfaction," Chopra says.

The retailer is committed to continuously addressing the ever-changing tastes and preferences of international travelers, says Chopra. "DDF regularly updates its product selection and store layout," he continues. "We conduct market research, monitor industry trends, and collaborate with brand partners to ensure that our offerings align with current consumer preferences. Additionally, we regularly refresh store layouts to create inviting and immersive shopping environments that resonate with our diverse customer base."

Continued excellence

Looking forward, Chopra is optimistic about the growth of travel retail in India, driven by economic factors and an expanding airline network. “Our outlook for the travel retail sector in India over the next few years is optimistic. We anticipate continued growth in international travel,” he remarks, indicating his readiness to meet future market demands with continued innovation and customer-centricity.

As Delhi Duty Free continues to evolve and adapt, it aims to maintain its role as a pivotal player in shaping the future of the Indian travel retail industry, ensuring it remains at the forefront of delivering exceptional experiences to travelers worldwide.