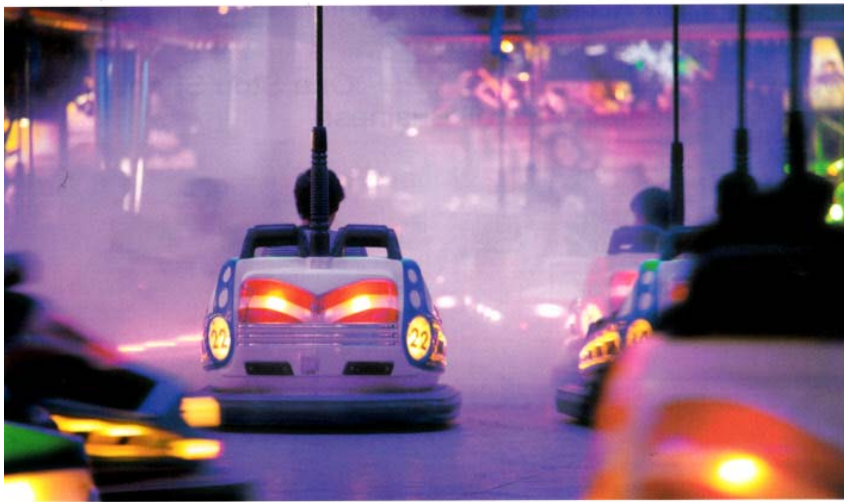


Client: Neptune Magnet Mall	Date: July, 12
Publication: Retail Today	Page No: 32&33&34&35
Edition/City :	Media Evaluation:

IDENTITY



Entertainment, entertainment, entertainment!

INNOVATIVE AND EXCITING ENTERTAINMENT INFRASTRUCTURE IS NOT ONLY A SUREFIRE WAY FOR SPRAWLING MALLS TO ROPE IN FOOTFALL, BUT ALSO A TICKET TO GATHER INCREMENTALLY INCREASING REVENUES, FINDS ARUNA RATHOD

Even as malls have emerged as the temples of urban convergence and hubs of community activity, entertainment has developed into a vital component of contemporary malls.

Zones centred on entertainment have the ability to draw consumers to a mall, where they can choose from a variety of options like multiplexes, video-game arcades, sports facilities, kid zones and so on.

However, while multiplexes have traditionally been one of the key drivers of footfall, malls across the country are increasingly bringing in

new innovations and redefining the benchmarks for in-mall entertainment – right from the development of theme and water parks to standalone activities like rock climbing, ice skating rinks and so on.

Taking a cue from their counterparts abroad, India's new, bigger-than-ever malls are roping in the formats of successful international entertainment concepts. "Increasingly, malls are being positioned as family entertainment and shopping centres," observes S.Raghunandan, CEO of Prestige Retail and chairman of Scai. "Entertainment is an integral part of the mall now,

and in our country, given the lack of public spaces and recreation areas, entertainment centres go some way to bridge the gap."

The importance of entertainment options lies in the fact that it makes the mall environment vibrant and more appealing to the public, thus contributing towards increasing footfall and the increasing amount of time spent inside. Moreover, it can create a differentiating factor for a mall to give it a stronger and more distinct identity.

At the core of the expansion of entertainment concepts is the fact that retail spaces – and particularly

Client: Neptune Magnet Mall	Date: July, 12
Publication: Retail Today	Page No: 32&33&34&35
Edition/City :	Media Evaluation:



IDENTITY

malls — are becoming increasingly relevant for consumers, and this is reflected by the way mall spaces are developing. According to Abhishek Kiran Gupta, head of research at Jones Lang LaSalle India, Mumbai alone witnessed around 4.8 million sq-ft of new operational mall space by the end of 2011, and this is expected to grow to 6.9 million sq-ft by 2013.

Malls are aiming to deliver huge spaces that span over 500,000 sq-ft to emerge as destinations for the entire family. For instance, the GETLOST zone at Neptune Magnet Mall will feature 70,000 sq-ft dedicated solely to entertainment. It will house a Drop Down Tower, a Merry Go Round, game simulators, a six-lane bowling alley and a short-putt golf course. "The USP of the centre will undoubtedly be the 2,500 sq-ft ice skating rink with real ice," says Sanjay Prabhu, the mall's chief managing officer.

ENTERTAINMENT RULES

With the maturing of consumer tastes, both new and existing malls are also reinventing their fare to keep the

WEEKENDS AT THE MALL

Malls have become major weekend destinations, with shopping, entertainment and dining all under one roof. Michelle Sequeira, mother of a nine-year-old boy, visits Inorbit mall in Vashi every weekend. She believes it to be the safest place to keep her kid entertained while she shops. "I make a one-time payment and he is taken care of for hours. I then shop for my groceries in air-conditioned comfort from a great range of merchandise," she says.

Parents are increasingly hosting children's birthday parties at mall entertainment centres. "With the stress of homework and tuitions, these centres are a boon. At a fixed price, one is provided complete entertainment. Meals at the food court are at reasonable prices," says Anish Bhalla, father of two school-going boys.

Teenagers are also regulars at mall entertainment centres. "These centres are great places to unwind and meet friends on holidays and weekends," says 15-year-old Rohan Borkar. Be it the summer or the monsoons, malls are the best places to be in. Parking is not an issue and one is ensured of clean surroundings and comfortable spaces.

consumer engaged. One of the greatest challenges they face is finding entertainment anchors and amenities that will differentiate them from the competition. Cinemas and family entertainment centres alone are no longer enough; there needs to be a range of entertainment options even though there is often a limited number of chain entertainment tenants that a mall can choose from.

Therefore, many Indian mall developers are taking an active role by developing and operating their own entertainment venues. Such offerings are as critical as zone planning and tenant mix for a shopping mall.

Malls are public places and they perform a role that is bigger than mere shopping destinations, and thus entertainment is crucial to retain and acquire new customers and shoppers.

Client: Neptune Magnet Mall	Date: July, 12
Publication: Retail Today	Page No: 32&33&34&35
Edition/City :	Media Evaluation:

IDENTITY

WHAT'S IN STORE

R City Mall in Ghatkopar will launch KidZania: a "unique edutainment concept" for the first time India. "Nation for kids", KidZania emulates the workings of a real city and engages kids with adult role play. They can be pilots, surgeons, firemen, TV producers, radio hosts and car mechanics for the day. A global phenomenon with over 20 million visitors across 10 locations in 7 countries, KidZania is the fastest growing global edutainment brand. With 13 more locations in development, including its launch in Mumbai in 2013, it is poised to become one of the most successful kids brands in the world.

Meanwhile, Growel's 101 Mall offers Timezone, a family entertainment centre, a self-managed and operated Kids Carnival zone, alongside a four-screen multiplex. Kids Carnival offers adventure activities like water zorbing, bungee jumping, carousel and adventurous rides. The rides change periodically to stay relevant and keep stay away from monotony.

Freeze will be Pune and Maharashtra's first ice-skating rink within a mall. Pan India Paryatan (PIPPL), a part of the Essel Group, has announced this as their first brand extension project — EsselWorld Freeze. Spread over 5,520 sq-ft in Pune's Inorbit Mall, it will consist of an ice-skating rink, a snow world and a cafeteria that will serve coffee, beer and mocktails.



choose to visit the nearest shopping mall within a reasonable travelling distance or driving time, or opt for a mall that offers a unique experience."

Supporting this view, Shreesh Misra, centre director for Phoenix Marketcity in Kurla, Mumbai, says:

"Research highlights that both entertainment-orientated shoppers and cross-shoppers seek fun and enjoyment at a mall. Regardless of their shopping motivations, positive experiences translate into a higher probability of repeat business. Therefore, entertainment can be part of an effective strategy to increase visits and shopping centre profitability."

RESEARCH AND PLANNING

Research is an integral part before zeroing in on the kind of entertainment that each mall should aim to provide,

1 Sanjay Prabhu, department store and food court, entertainment is a magnet for bringing in footfall. With every kind of games, technology, rides and fun loaded in to a huge space, entertainment plays a very important role in the overall offerings a mall has." An entertainment zone is typically on the same floor as the food court and multiplex, and is designed to draw in as many patrons as possible. "The more exciting a zone is, the more people spend time and

2 Proud kids play their role to the hilt at KidZania photo.

3 Fashion shows are part of the entertainment to draw crowds at Orion mall.

money there," adds Prabhu. Prasad Rane of Growel's 101 says: "Over the years, competition between shopping malls has increased significantly, possibly due to an overdose of shopping centres and the changing consumer shopping patterns and trends. Another major contributing factor is the similarity in the attributes of most shopping malls that have similar offerings and a uniform tenant mix. Due to such obvious similarity, it is evident that shoppers will probably



Client: Neptune Magnet Mall	Date: July, 12
Publication: Retail Today	Page No: 32&33&34&35
Edition/City :	Media Evaluation:

and the location, area and target audience are some of the most important considerations before finalising. A substantial qualitative and quantitative research study should be done before arriving at the ideal size and nature of a property's ideal entertainment offerings. It is also important to have a longer maturity cycle as the amusement zone should be relevant over a number of years.

In addition, the size of the family entertainment centre or amusement zone should cover a suitable proportion of the total gross leasable area of the mall.

Malls should also research the kind of entertainment required by any specific catchment. Prabhu explains, "At Neptune Mall, entertainment is planned right at the beginning of a mall's construction phase. Under consideration are the size of the area, the ideal number of rides. The nature of the games, novelties and thrills depends on the result of this research."

Mall management primarily focuses on entertainment activities that span all age groups, and keeps in mind the preferences of customers in a given catchment. Misra says that Phoenix Marketcity attends heavily to this area of planning: "It's vital to include entertainment options that are engaging, unique and that appeal to masses. We also keep in mind festivals, seasons and other important occasions while sched-



uling the activities in the mall so we can provide a good mix of everything that a consumer wants to experience."

While it is important to address planning and research before a mall is built, this should also be seen as an ongoing task. "Once a mall is operational, customer satisfaction research should be regularly measured," adds Raghunandan.

MALL SANS ENTERTAINMENT

Can a mall survive without entertainment? They can but these malls also have to focus on a specific product or category, where entertainment is not a part of the shopping experience. Rane believes: "Speciality and theme malls can survive without an extra dose of entertainment. These are the places where the consumer will go shopping for a specific product or a category as they will offer more choice and variety under one roof.

These are destination malls meant for specific category and product like jewellery or exclusive products tailored for women, so entertainment is not a major ingredient or element for attracting or retaining footfall."

Speciality malls attract serious buyers from beyond their primary catchment areas, while offering more promotions and experiential events around their core category or business will also drive footfall. If they do provide forms of entertainment, it is likely this will be more specific than generic.

Misra, meanwhile, disagrees with this, and is of the firm belief that all malls must have entertainment options: "A mall cannot survive without the entertainment zone. A mall experience isn't restricted to mere shopping; consumers heading to malls are looking to spend quality time with their family, friends and relatives. Consumers are looking for activities that provide diversion or relief from normal day-to-day activities with movies, theaters, restaurants, bars and fun zones. Evidence suggests that there is a positive relationship between entertainment and mall profitability and value. Hence it's imperative for malls to have some form of entertainment for its target group."

Prabhu endorses this view, "Being among the largest footfall generators, entertainment centres play a pivotal role in the overall performance and profitability of a mall. However, a number of other aspects bring success to a mall, so in theory it could survive without entertainment too."

The issue is not whether a mall can or cannot survive without entertainment. It is to do with the right zoning and tenant mix, apart from obvious factors like quality of mall management and marketing activities that help sustain a property. But at the end of the day, according to Raghunandan: "Entertainment will remain a key part of the retail mix that a mall needs in order to do well." ■



4 Christmas celebrations at High Street Phoenix.

5 Diwali workshops for kids - pottery at High Street Phoenix.