

# Panel Discussion : Technology Today

## Merging the world of craft, design and science

Link to recording: <https://youtu.be/HPcYbgjaPrc>

**2nd June 2020:** This webinar was attended by over 200 member exporters from PAN India basis including Mr. Ravi K Passi, Chairman, EPCH; Mr. Raj K Malhotra, Vice Chairman, EPCH; and Mr. Rajesh Rawat, Joint Director, EPCH. This was organised in course of IFJAS Virtual 2020. This was graced by Ms. Christine Rai, Chairperson, Buying Agents Association of India (BAA).

Moderator of the event, by **Ms. Anika Passi**, Country Manager, India Sourcing office, The Warehouse Group, New Zealand, introduced the panelists - Ms. Rohini Suri, Member-Governing Body, Buying Agents Association; Ms. Priya Sachdeva, Director, Iwaton Consultancy; Ms. Nupur Batra, Founder, Designer, Craft based label- Ananya; Mr. Anil Bose, Dy. HOD, Arch College of Design and Business; Ms. Anuva Baid, Owner, Anuva (Dileep Industries); and Mr. Karan Ahuja, Director, Ahujasons.

In her presentation, Ms. Anika Passi mentioned about softwares being used for communication for designing, trend forecasting, design sampling as well as a means of information exchange between buyers and manufacturers in the present environment of travel restriction as Spring Summer 2021 trends (courtesy BAA) played in the background and indicated (1) The Fabric Masks - a new accessory; (2) Woven Crafts that include artisanal weaves, in a non traditional way using light & heavier weight raffia, wicker, straw, fishnet, mesh and leather; (3) Less is More - buying better rather than more, designs that stand the test of time, natural colours - Eg.- slouchy cotton bags, oversized totes;

(4) Responsibly Designed products; and (5) Jewellery-handcrafted, beaded, hammered, delicate, milimastic, semi-precious and in sets.

### PANELISTS



**Ms. Rohini Suri**  
Member-Governing Body,  
Buying Agents Assn.

An astute and result oriented professional with decades of extensive experience in the areas of Top Management Buying, Sourcing, Product development, Vendor development, Client relationship & management.



**Ms. Priya Sachdeva**  
Director, Iwaton Consultancy

20+ years' experience in B2B sales, strategy consulting, operation, balancing in-depth market knowledge and product specialisation to bring commercial relevance to businesses. Managed WGSN's South Asia business for over 12 years.



**Ms. Nupur Batra**  
Founder, Designer,  
Craft based label- Ananya

NIFT graduate and MSc., MPhil in textiles and clothing. Realises her dream of reaching out to the world with her craft based label ANANAYA. Undertaken national and international projects with various craft mediums.

### MODERATOR



**Ms. Anika Passi**  
Country Manager,  
India Sourcing Office,  
The Warehouse Group,  
New Zealand

Business leader with 25+ years of global sourcing experience in Lifestyle products. Expertise - Business Development, setting up offices, new business ideas, startups and leading change management initiatives.



**Mr. Anil Bose**  
Dy. HOD, Arch College  
of Design and Business

BFA, Delhi College of Art; Masters, NID Ahmedabad. Industry experience of 25 years with TV based studios and prestigious companies for motion graphics, e-learning development, corporate communication and branding.



**Ms. Anuva Baid**  
Owner, Anuva  
(Dileep Industries)

Specialises in handcrafted modern jewellery. Her work traverses through traditional craft techniques and unusual raw materials, deconstruction of conventional forms and mixing of cultures & ideas.



**Mr. Karan Ahuja**  
Director, Ahujasons

Born in a family whose business has been at the helm of handcrafting the finest shawls, stoles, scarves since 1979, especially pashmina, he has done extensive research, market study and trend interpretation to take the business to new heights.

**Ms. Priya Sachdeva, Director, Iwaton Consultancy** highlighted the importance of technology as an enabler for manufacturers to help them gain market access, improve process output efficiencies & increase productivity; help with real time data for forecasting that in turn helps make focused & sharp business decisions in the evolving world order; drive quantum growth in the 'new normal' helping supply chain to become



transparent and react faster to demand; impact economics of customisation making the leap from design-to-product faster and aid in speed to market.

Technology can help in Marketing and buying, Design and Forecasting and Planning Production & Mass Customisation. Talking of tools that can be used for strengthening the supply chain, Ms. Sachdeva mentioned marketing & buying tools like 6connex, Zilingo MaaS, FlixStock, Zoom, Google meet, Google drive and DropBox. etc. For design, forecasting and sampling she mentioned Stylumia, WDSN, Rhino, Trello, Clo, Tuka3D and Poly9. For planning, production & mass customization, she mentioned Zilingo MES, Web T&A, WholeGarment and 3D Printing softwares giving an example of how a garment can be made with a yarn within 3-4 hours of finalising a design.

**Ms. Anuva Baid, Owner, Anuva (Dileep Industries)** shared her experience about her hands-on technology practices for new product and process development (jewellery). "Our product development that is an amalgamation of traditional skills with modern technology, involves advanced technology and very dedicated research," she said and briefly touched upon the raw materials (wood, ceramic, paper mache) and sustainable methods used in her processes to make each product unique. She also shared about technology use in product development graphic softwares - Illustrator, Rhinoceros & Photoshop. The process starts with studying trends and interpreting them; designs are then elaborated and collections created to be developed using softwares; when approved, the production of design commences;

the best designs are chosen and a virtual catalogue is made available for buyers; .

**Ms. Christine Rai, Patron-in-Chief, Buying Agents Association of India**

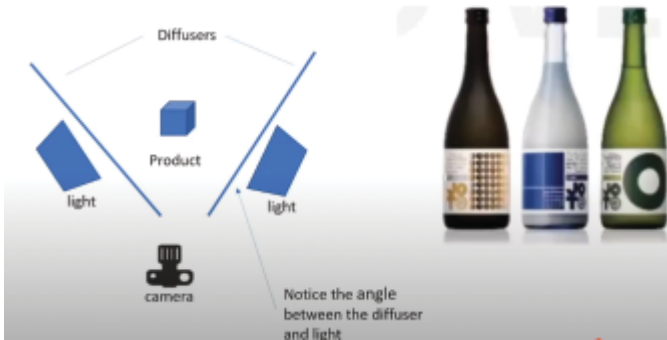


(BAA) spoke on how buying agents act as the bridge across industries in India and buyers, making sure all aspects are taken care of in the process, right from order placing to final delivery of the consignment. In this present scenario she said, "technology is a quantum leap for all of us, so it's okay to be afraid but it's important not to be hesitant to ask how this technology can work for you. It is crucial to adapt and embrace technology though many of us have been here even before the era of computers." Addressing exporters' scepticism regarding participation in virtual fairs, she said, "fairs across the world are going virtual and whatever one does somebody else will do soon, so it's important not to be afraid of getting copied but to step up one's game and stay ahead. In fact such fairs allow you to show your factories and workshops and even tell stories about your crafts that could not be possible in physical fairs. So let's use the opportunity!"

**Mr. Karan Ahuja, Director, Ahujasons** shared about his company's (shawls, stoles & scarves specialist) design oriented methodology. Technology is used in every stage, right from design development to marketing. For designing they use various graphic design softwares like Photoshop and for communication they use Trello, etc. These help them to communicate with buyers in the complete design journey, increasing efficiency in the process. In marketing too technology is used wherein in this pandemic times that cuts out travelling, buyers are sent e-Catalogues and meetings are conducted virtually. He concluded by saying that virtual shows are the thing of the future and way to tell our buyers that we are ready, India is ready."

**Mr. Anil Bose, Dy. HOD, Arch College of Design and Business**, a visual design communicator developing interactive content, animation, illustration, etc. shared about the importance and relevance of product photography. He shared photography basics to be mindful of, while developing virtual product

### Shooting with correct gradual shading



### Diffusion panel to soften flash light

This lighting step requires a DSLR/Mirrorless camera



d e s i g n  
development,  
transitioning the  
process from  
sketching and hand  
work to doing things  
with softwares in  
lesser time, albeit  
with the initial  
struggles. She also  
mentioned of how

catalogues, especially in context of websites and participation in virtual events. Lighting, background colour, textures, products, camera angle, camera lens, etc. are the basics that may be simple but turn out to be very crucial in the final product presentation and appeal, he said. He assured that simple techniques with basic equipment can even bring out excellent results, he emphasised.

**Ms. Nupur Batra, Founder, Designer, Craft based label-Ananya** shared her experience about the technology shift in

the virtual platform is the way forward and is changing the way business is done in today's times. From doing a sampling product laboriously that may have suggested changes from the buyer and lead to frustrations, to doing the same process with clicks of a button, saving time and offering more options (proactively) - it has become very rewarding. "Embracing technology is a way to connect more easily with buyers and show them India is ready," she concluded. ■