

Zara opens largest store in Mumbai



Spanish Global fast-fashion chain Zara recently opened its largest stand-alone high street store in Mumbai and has also expanded its foray into e-commerce compared to the previous year.

The five-storied Zara store is housed in the heritage-listed 110-year old Ismail Building in Fort Area of South Mumbai and spans a total area of 51,300 sq ft in contrast with older stores with an average size of 20,000 sq ft. The company is also gearing up for the launch of its online store in India by the end of this year. Zara was introduced in India in 2010 and now it boasts 20 stores which will be added up continuously in the upcoming years. It also planned to absorb smaller stores into bigger ones, wherein it would close smaller ones and take their merchandise, and absorb staff into larger ones, said Jesus Echevarria, chief communications and corporate affairs officer at Inditex, the parent firm of Zara.

Zara is expecting bigger number of customers for bigger revenue with the bigger stores and hence more business in India. The Spanish firm has inked down a record lease rental deal with an annual rent of Rs 30 crore to the Supariwala Exports for the Fort store. Zara's rival H&M, which entered India in October 2015, runs 16 stores and had lately opened stores of bigger sizes. The last store it opened was in Hyderabad, spread over 33,000 sq ft.

The company will also be launching online store soon to leverage online sales in India just like how the e-commerce sale has benefited Zara in Singapore and Malaysia in Asia. Echevarria said that they do not differentiate between offline and online sales as the final revenues are integrated. Asia being one of the fastest growing markets and India's continuous growth has lured the fashion brands to invest and spur in India.

So far, Inditex has launched two brands in India including Zara, and Massimo Dutti. When asked about whether they will launch other brands, Echevarria said Inditex is not considering this in the near-term but they are definitely planning for adding more stores in country this year.