

MARCH 2025

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GLOBAL NEWS



RELIANCE CONSUMER SHAKES UP INDIA'S JUICE MARKET WITH MURALITHARAN'S SUN CRUSH

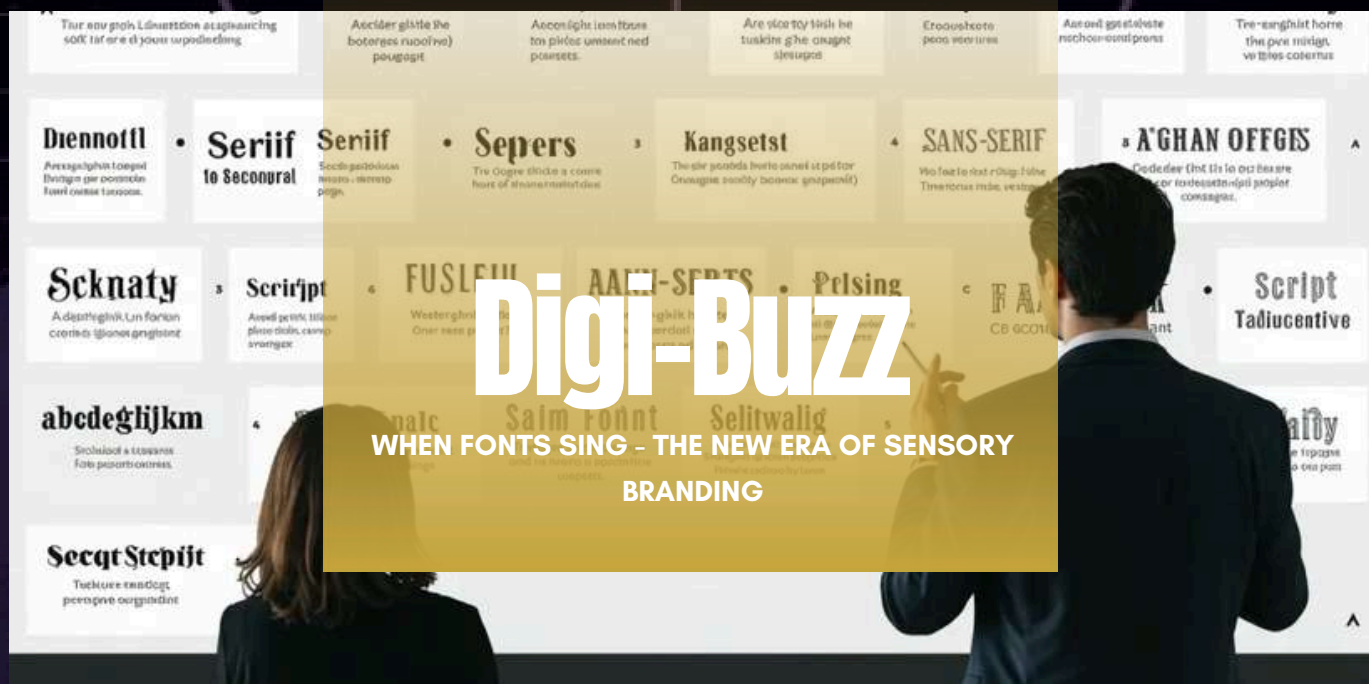


Reliance Consumer Products Ltd. (RCPL), led by Mukesh Ambani, has made a bold move in India's beverage industry by securing exclusive rights to introduce Sun Crush, a premium juice brand from former Sri Lankan cricket legend Muttiah Muralitharan's Ceylon Beverage International, to the Indian market. This strategic partnership is set to intensify competition in the juice segment, challenging established brands like Dabur's Real, ITC's B Natural, Amul Tru, Paperboat, and PepsiCo's Tropicana. Priced aggressively at ₹20 for a 200 ml bottle, Sun Crush follows Reliance's proven strategy of disruptive pricing, which has worked well in the soft drinks and energy drinks categories.

This is not RCPL's first entry into the juice market. Two years ago, the company acquired Raskik, a local juice brand from Vikas Chawla, former managing director of Coca-Cola South East Europe. With Sun Crush, Reliance is further expanding its footprint in the mass-market juice segment, leveraging its vast distribution network to reach millions of Indian consumers. The timing is ideal, as India's beverage market, valued at ₹67,000 crore, is projected to grow to ₹1.47 trillion by 2030. This expansion is driven by shifting consumer preferences and a rising demand for healthier, fruit-based beverages.

Reliance's beverage ambitions don't stop at juices. The company has an ongoing partnership with Ceylon Beverages, handling contract packaging for Campa Cola and co-creating the energy drink Spinner. This collaboration strengthens RCPL's ability to distribute beverages at scale and capitalize on India's growing thirst for refreshing, innovative drinks. With a strong marketing push and expansion plans, the introduction of Sun Crush promises to shake up the juice market, offering consumers a fresh alternative while keeping competitors on their toes. As Reliance continues to disrupt and dominate, the battle for India's beverage market just got much juicier.





Digi-Buzz

WHEN FONTS SING - THE NEW ERA OF SENSORY
BRANDING

Brands today aren't just about what you see, they're about what you feel and now, even what you hear. Monotype and Audio Socket's AI-powered platform, Fonic, is taking branding to a new level by pairing fonts with music. Fonic analyzes fonts and matches them with complementary sounds, creating a multi-sensory experience that resonates with consumers on a deeper level.

Imagine reading a brand message where the typography doesn't just set the tone visually but also plays in harmony with a soundtrack that amplifies its mood. A sleek, modern font paired with high-energy beats for a young, edgy brand. A classic serif with soft, orchestral notes for a luxury label. This innovation makes typography more than just a design choice it becomes an extension of a brand's personality.

The real game-changer? Personalized brand communication. With AI-driven insights, brands can tailor experiences that trigger emotions and strengthen connections. Whether it's digital ads, social media, or packaging, the fusion of typography and music can make brand messaging more engaging and unforgettable.

As AI continues to refine these sensory pairings, Fonic is set to transform how brands communicate. Typography is no longer just something to be seen; it's something to be heard and felt, turning every word into an experience.



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GOVT NEWS

**\$1 BILLION FUND TO EMPOWER THE
CREATOR ECONOMY**



The Indian government has announced a \$1 billion fund to support the growing creator economy, aiming to help digital content creators, influencers, and industry experts. This initiative, launched alongside the Indian Institute of Creative Technology (IICT) in Mumbai, aims to provide creators with financial aid, access to advanced technologies, and global reach.

The Indian influencer ecosystem has grown significantly, with over 4 million creators contributing to a market expected to reach ₹3,375 crore by 2026. The fund is projected to boost capital accessibility, help creators enhance production quality, and expand their reach internationally.

But the move has evoked mixed responses. Some experts see it as a game-changer, while others worry about fund transparency, government control, and favoritism toward top influencers. Concerns about self-censorship and regulatory oversight also

linger, especially in light of recent discussions on content freedom and digital rights.

However, this initiative could create new opportunities for aspiring creators, helping them improve skills, access resources, and expand their impact. It also has the potential to create new jobs, encourage innovation, and push India forward in the global creative industry. With improved content quality, brands can also benefit from more engaging, authentic storytelling, making digital advertising more effective.

If implemented with clear standards and equal access, this fund has the potential to establish India as a global leader in the digital creator arena, increase employment in content-driven industries, and strengthen India's global soft power. Yet, addressing issues about transparency and inclusivity will be crucial to its long-term viability.



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INDUSTRIAL TREND

**INDIA SCRAPS \$23 BILLION MANUFACTURING
INCENTIVE SCHEME AS FIRMS MISS TARGETS, SUBSIDY DELAYS MOUNT**



The Indian government has decided not to extend its \$23 billion Production-Linked Incentive (PLI) scheme, aimed at boosting domestic manufacturing and attracting firms shifting away from China. Despite participation from major companies like Foxconn and Reliance Industries, the program underperformed only 37% of the production target was met, and subsidy disbursements were slow. Manufacturing's share of India's GDP even declined from 15.4% to 14.3% during the scheme. Some firms failed to start production, while others faced delays in receiving payouts. The government has now chosen to let the program expire without expansion.

This situation relates to the effectiveness of government incentives in shaping industrial growth and foreign investment. The PLI scheme was a pull marketing strategy designed to attract global manufacturers by offering financial incentives. However, its failure highlights challenges in policy execution, subsidy transparency, and long-term business confidence—key factors in industrial marketing and public-private partnerships.

The PLI scheme was a large-scale marketing effort by the government to position India as a manufacturing hub, competing with China. However, poor implementation, delayed payouts, and unmet targets weakened trust among businesses, similar to a failed promotional campaign where promised benefits don't materialize. This mirrors the marketing principle where overpromising and underdelivering damages a brand's credibility (in this case, India's appeal as an investment destination). The scheme's discontinuation suggests a need for better-structured incentives and reliable policy frameworks to sustain industrial growth, much like how businesses must align promises with execution in marketing strategies.

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Brand in Talk

REDEFINING INDIAN LUXURY FASHION WITH TRADITION AND SUSTAINABILITY

India's luxury fashion industry is witnessing a transformation with the rise of homegrown brands like Boito. Founded in 2023 by Richa Maheshwari, Boito seamlessly blends Odisha's traditional handwoven textiles with contemporary designs. With a strong focus on sustainability and cultural preservation, the brand has quickly carved out a niche in the luxury segment, attracting consumers who seek exclusivity while valuing heritage and ethical fashion.

This shift aligns with the marketing concept of brand positioning, where companies create a unique space in the minds of their target audience. By differentiating itself through craftsmanship, sustainability, and cultural storytelling, Boito positions itself as a premium brand that stands apart from mass-market competitors.

Boito's success highlights how effective brand positioning can influence consumer behavior. The increasing preference for luxury with a purpose, one that embraces tradition while being modern and sustainable, demonstrates how strategic differentiation can create lasting brand loyalty. In a market where conscious consumerism is on the rise, Boito's approach makes it a brand to watch.



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ECONOMICS DECLASSIFIED

GEN Z'S EMPLOYMENT CRISIS NEEDS AN
IMMEDIATE ACTION

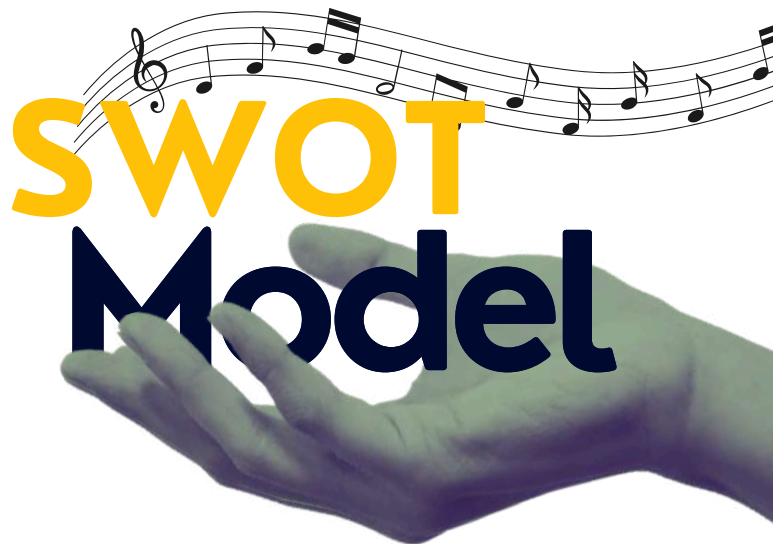
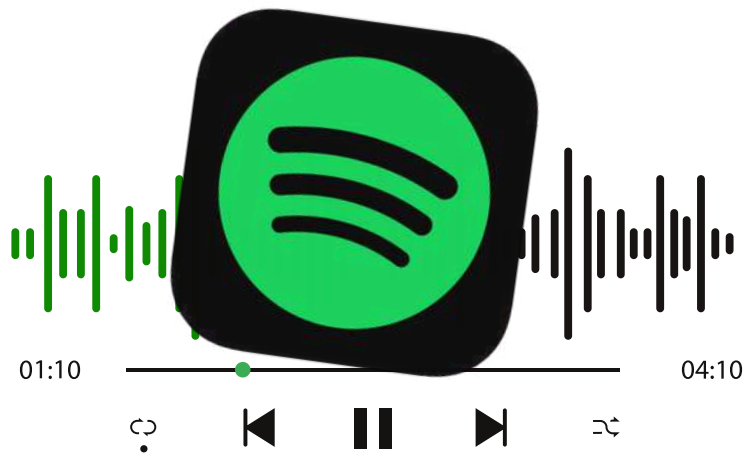


As the oldest members of Gen Z navigate the workforce post-pandemic, they are encountering significant challenges, namely, a job market that seems to be stuck in a recessionary limbo.

Not only did many begin their careers amid a global crisis, but now they face a landscape with stagnant hiring rates. For instance, the unemployment rate for the 20-24 age group has climbed to 8.3%, a stark contrast to the more stable job conditions experienced by older generations. This economic environment looks more like a recession to these young workers, with implications that threaten their long-term financial stability and career growth. The arrival and potential impacts of artificial intelligence further compound these concerns, risking many entry-level positions. This precarious situation fosters a 'live-for-today' mindset among young people who find traditional wealth-building pathways, such as homeownership, increasingly unattainable due to rising costs.

To avert long-term economic consequences, there is a pressing need for policies that stimulate growth and hiring, particularly for the younger workforce. Without these interventions, the current labor market trend is poised to leave lasting scars on a whole generation's economic potential.





STRENGTH

- **Large Music Library:** Spotify has an extensive music library with over 50 million tracks. This is a major strength, as it provides users with a wide range of music options.
- **Strong Brand Recognition:** Spotify is a well-known and trusted brand, with a strong reputation for delivering high-quality music streaming services. This helps to attract new users and retain existing ones.
- **Cross-Platform Compatibility:** Spotify is available on a wide range of devices, including smartphones, tablets, smart TVs, gaming consoles, home audio systems, and wearable devices.

WEAKNESSES

- **Dependence on Music Licenses:** Spotify relies on music licenses from record labels and publishers, which can be expensive and difficult to negotiate.
- **High Competition:** The music streaming market is highly competitive, with rivals like Apple Music, Amazon Music, and Google Play Music.
- **Limited Profitability:** Spotify has struggled to achieve profitability, despite its large user base and revenue growth. The company's high operating costs and dependence on music licenses can limit its profitability.

OPPORTUNITIES

- **Growing Demand for Music Streaming:** The demand for music streaming services is growing rapidly, driven by increasing smartphone penetration and improving internet connectivity.
- **Expansion into New Markets:** Spotify can expand into new markets, particularly in emerging economies where music streaming services are still in their infancy.
- **Partnerships and Collaborations:** Spotify can partner with other companies to offer bundled services, improve its content offerings, and expand its user base.

THREATS

- **Technological Advancements:** Rapid technological advancements can make Spotify's existing technology obsolete, requiring significant investments in research and development.
- **New Entrants in the Market:** New entrants, such as TikTok and ByteDance, may enter the music streaming market and compete with Spotify.
- **Changes in Music Licensing Agreements:** Changes in music licensing agreements can increase Spotify's costs and affect its profitability.

BLOG OF THE MONTH

BRANDS ARE ADDING THE K-FLAVOUR TO EVERYTHING - ARE YOU?



The Korean Wave (Hallyu) is no longer just a passing trend, it's a global movement influencing music, fashion, beauty, entertainment, and now, food. With the rise of K-dramas, K-pop, and Korean influencers, the demand for authentic Korean experiences is reshaping consumer expectations. What started as a niche interest has now become mainstream, influencing not just what people watch and listen to but also what they eat, wear, and buy.

Brands, especially in the Quick Service Restaurant (QSR) industry, have quickly caught on. McDonald's has introduced Korean McAloo Tikki burgers and McFlavor fries, while KFC is offering tangy Korean rolls. Domino's is experimenting with Korean paneer tikka and corn garlic bread. The numbers speak for themselves, while the QSR sector has seen only 7% revenue growth year-on-year, below expectations, the brands that innovate with new flavors are managing to capture consumer interest despite market slowdowns.

But the impact of the Korean wave isn't just limited to food; it has permeated various facets of global culture, including fashion, beauty, and entertainment. This cultural shift is a lesson for all brands, trends that tap into deep consumer passion don't just create buzz, they create long-term loyalty.

This isn't just about adding a trendy flavor to a product; it's about understanding why young consumers are so drawn to Korean culture. Gen Z and Millennials, the most influential consumer groups today, seek experiential and culturally immersive products. They are not just watching Korean content; they want to live it. This is why Korean fashion trends, K-Beauty products, and even Korean-inspired home decor are finding their way into global markets.


This presents an opportunity beyond food. Fashion brands can tap into K-style aesthetics, beauty brands into K-beauty trends, and even tech brands into minimalist, Korean-inspired UX. Streaming platforms are already investing in Korean originals, proving their widespread appeal.

The success of K-flavors in QSR menus highlights a key insight: Cultural influence drives consumer excitement. As consumer demand for global flavors and experiences continues to grow, the real winners will be those who move beyond trends and create lasting, culturally inspired innovations. So, the question is, how is your brand adding the K-factor?


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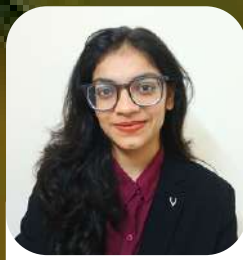


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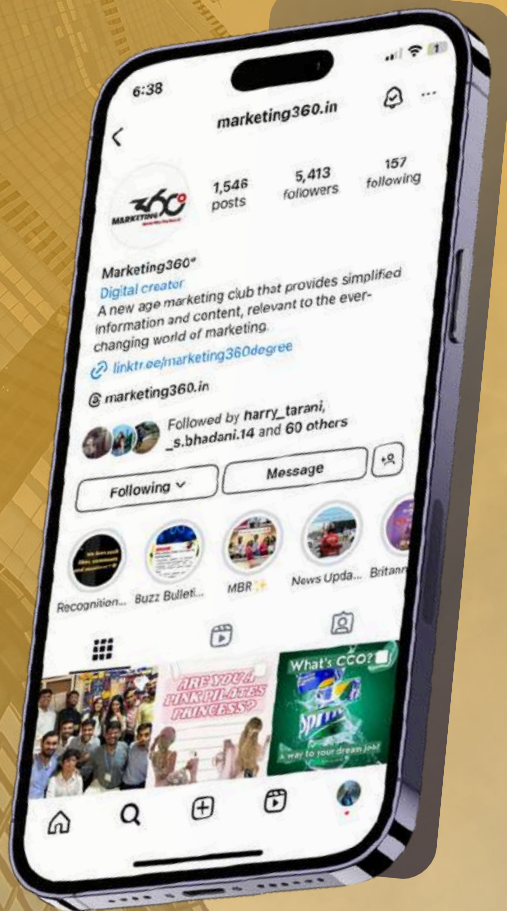
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