

KESHUB MAHINDRA: A TRIBUTE

# BW BUSINESSWORLD

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## MOST VALUABLE CEOs

**BUSINESS LEADERS WHO GENERATED VALUE FOR THEIR COMPANIES AND SHAREHOLDERS IN A CHALLENGING ECONOMIC ENVIRONMENT**

(L-R) Top row: **Ravi Chawla**, Gulf Oil Lubricants India; **Vibha Padalkar**, HDFC Life; **Rakesh Khanna**, Orient Electric. Second row: **Siddharth Mittal**, Biocon; **Pradip Kumar Todi**, Lux Industries; **Shrikant M. Vaidya**, IOC. Third row: **Hitesh Oberoi**, Info Edge; **Sanjiv Lal**, Rallis India; **Thierry Delaporte**, Wipro; **Sunil D'Souza**, Tata Consumer Products. Fourth row: **T.V. Narendran**, TSLP; **Murali K. Divi**, Divi's Laboratories; **Mohit Malhotra**, Dabur India. Fifth row: **Amitava Mukherjee**, NMDC; **Balfour Manuel**, Blue Dart; **C.K. Venkataraman**, Titan Company; **D.K. Khara**, SBI. Bottom row: **M.R. Jyothy**, Jyothy Labs; **Chacko Purackal Thomas**, Tata Coffee; **Mithun Chittilappilly**, V-Guard Industries; **Suresh Narayanan**, Nestle India

Rs 150



## 92 Future of Design

A round-up of the Future of Design event organised recently by BW Businessworld and the key questions it sought to discuss such as whether design should be aesthetically pleasing, functional or sustainable, what is good design, where it is headed, etc.



Photograph by McLittle/Canva

## MOST VALUABLE CEOs

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Photograph by Himanshu Kumar

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# WHAT IS THE FUTURE OF DESIGN?



Should it be aesthetically pleasing, functional or sustainable? Should it be all of the above? How do we define good design? And, where is design headed?

**D**esign is central to the success of any product or service today. The chief design officer and the head of design have a seat at the top table across organisations. In fact, smart leaders often consult with the head of design before launching a product or a service. We are all aware of Dieter Rams' principles of good design - innovative, aesthetic, useful, honest, understandable, unobtrusive, long-lasting, and environment friendly. Over the years we have seen that good design responds to each of these.

Another interesting fact is that during times of scarcity, design becomes innovative. Take for example, how Modernism gathered steam during the Great Depression in the United States. It was an effort to make good design accessible to a larger audience. Another example is the Vespa scooter, born in post war Italy, designed by Corradino d'Asciano in 1946. This was an efficient mode of transport that was inexpensive and streamlined. The cutaway profile of the seat gave it a graceful look.

The fourth edition of the BW Businessworld Future of Design (FOD) Summit and Awards took place in Mumbai on April 6. The aim through the FOD has always been to gather top design thinkers under one roof to talk about principles of good design, innovation and what design will be able to accomplish in the next few years. This year the theme was regenerative design. Thought leaders are emphasising the regeneration of our economies and societies. Regenerative design implies restoration. It impacts ecology, health, and society positively.

Photography by McLittle/Canva

**AJAY JAIN,**  
Head of Global Design Strategy,  
Tata Motors

Jain said that the increase in global population is directly affecting the earth's pollution levels. He stressed that sustainability is the need of the hour and the window to save our planet is closing with each passing day. "The moment we switch to electric cars, we reduce pollution. We reduce the number of moving parts by 10 times. Hence, automatically the solution becomes sustainable," he added. Describing Avinya, Tata's electric vehicle, he said keeping sustainability at the core of design they used locally sourced material. "We try to use recycled material in such a manner that it feels as if it's brand new. There is no compromise on that level. It is a layer of regenerative design," he added.



**DARSHAN GANDHI,**  
Head, Global Design, Godrej  
Consumer Products

For Darshan Gandhi, good design "begins with space and an environment that you create around design and creativity". This requires what Gandhi termed "Champions of Design", who are in leadership positions and understand the importance of embedding design thinking into the organisation's values.

Godrej Consumer Products is present across more than 90 countries with a turnover of Rs 14,000 crore across the globe. One of their most successful designs includes the Godrej Aer – air freshener range, which was one of their fastest-growing products in India, reportedly turning over Rs 100 crore in just one year. She spoke of how the use of design across company structure, product design, and even consumer engagement helped take them to the position they are at.

"We are proud when people copy us. It is a sign of success. It also shows that good design can cut down the time needed for a company to progress from 10 to two years," she added.

# WHO SAID WHAT?

**SHARAD AGARWAL,**  
Head, Lamborghini India

The automotive space is going through a huge shift with four key pillars, autonomous driving, connectivity and digitisation, safety and sustainability, which are driving the future of mobility, said Agarwal.

Describing the current challenge that the company faces, Agarwal said, "On one side, we are facing limitations from regulations because the cars need to be sustainable. On the other side, we had a challenge of customer expectations because, as a brand, we make a dream car; we don't make cars for daily commutes. So, the challenge is how do we find a fair balance between the two?"

"For this, we are hybridising our entire model range with an investment of 1.8 billion euros. Furthermore, by 2028, we will bring the first fully electric car model," Agarwal said on the company's future commitments.



**SONALI RASTOGI,**  
Co-founder,  
Morphogenesis

On the sustainability of buildings, Co-founder of Morphogenesis, Sonali Rastogi counts four principles which make the SOUL of a building: Sustainability, which means achieving 50 per cent less energy consumption than the best green standards, Optimisation means how to get the best out of the resource you use, and two other elements of SOUL are Uniqueness and Livable.

**PEARL UPPAL,**  
Creative Head and Founder, Talking Threads

Uppal spoke of how the manufacture and consumption of textiles frequently leaves a worldwide footprint of waste and pollution, despite the fact that they are an essential component of daily life and the global economy.

The environment is negatively impacted by current linear fashion processes, which follow a straight path from design to disposal, resulting in 2.1 billion tonnes of carbon emissions annually and 92 million tonnes of textile trash.

Uppal said that the circular economy for textiles can reduce waste in the sector, which is crucial for developing nations' economies. She also said that companies must be aware of what is happening in the supply chain and share this information internally and internationally.



**PERNIA QURESHI,**  
Creative Director, Saritoria

A recent report by the Business of Fashion revealed that the second-hand designer industry is worth \$130 billion worldwide. Qureshi said, "The fashion industry has some drawbacks, one among those is that it is the second most polluting industry in the world. 35 per cent of microplastic in the ocean is from the fashion industry. 85 per cent of clothes made end up in landfills or are burnt." To decrease these numbers, it is necessary for everyone to reuse their clothes as much as they can.

Qureshi said, her aim through Saritoria is to make fashion democratic by making the pieces available to people who might not be able to afford designer pieces. She stressed on the importance of bringing back fashion trends so that nothing goes to waste and fashion can be passed on to generations. To keep fashion in a circular economy people should start selling their clothing and earn money from it. "This business model is sustainable in nature, and it also encourages people to be entrepreneurs from home."



**PALLAVI UTAGI,**  
CEO, SuperBottoms

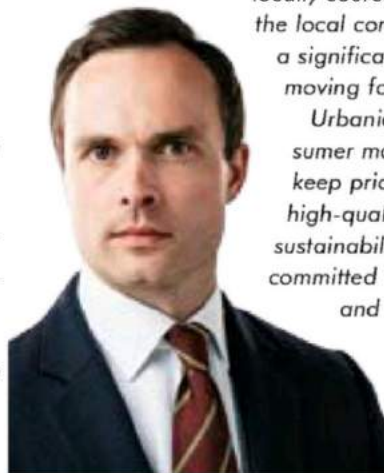
On her journey to finding suitable alternatives to disposable diapers for children, Utagi said they have now prevented six to seven crore diapers from being added to the growing waste in landfills. With 25 lakh families using up to five diapers every day for at least three years, the number of disposable diapers finding their way into landfills adds up to roughly 11,25,000,000.

"Diapers sit for 500 years in a landfill. Poop inside diapers is never disposed of, which seeps into the ground and causes a huge groundwater contamination problem," said Utagi. Telling new parents to not use disposable diapers is not a realistic option as they will choose "convenience over sustainability," she added. SuperBottoms is designed to combine "the convenience of disposable but is sustainable".

**JAMES WELLWOOD,**  
CEO and Founding Partner,  
Urbanic

Urbanic is a brand that focuses on creativity and sustainability through advanced technology, said Wellwood. "Our main goal as a brand is to provide sustainable and creative fashion using advanced technology. We utilise proprietary technology and AI to ensure all aspects of our business, including community and sustainability, are managed efficiently. This is at the core of our business," he said.

He also said that the company is focusing on localisation elements. "Our focus this year in India is to incorporate more localisation elements into our business. This involves our local



merchandising and design teams actively seeking out local manufacturers who can work with locally sourced materials, thereby empowering the local community. This localisation aspect is a significant theme and a key focus for us moving forward," he said.

Urbanic operates using a direct-to-consumer model, creating huge efficiencies to keep prices competitive while maintaining high-quality standards. While talking about sustainability Wellwood said that the brand is committed to being a sustainable business and they have initiated many sustainability projects, such as partnering with the clothes box foundation to upcycle deadstock and repurpose them for local communities in need.