



All images courtesy: @Voonik.com

Voonik has built a sophisticated stylist recommendation functionality and using their in-house AI platform; users discover the most relevant fashions that suit their bodies, lifestyles, personalities and budgets. Customers can shop using the Voonik Android App, iOS, website for saris, kurta, kurtis, dress materials, dresses, tops, jeans, jeggings, leggings, jewellery, lingerie and more. Voonik is India's first personal shopping app. The Bengaluru-based funded startup was started with a vision to be 'every woman's personal stylist'. Voonik has a highly differentiated proposition of offering a free online personal stylist in an app to its users. It also brings the convenience of multiple stores on one single cart.

The Ethnic Cart

Bindu Gopal Rao narrates the story of Voonik - a fashion marketplace with a focus on personalisation. Through an exclusive chat with Sujayath Ali, Co-Founder and CEO Voonik.com, she understands the parameters that set the brand apart from the rest.



With over 15,00,000 products from more than 4000 stores, including top online stores, and 3000 brands are made available to discerning users interested in shopping for fashion that makes them look good. Voonik offers the largest catalogue of women's fashion products.

Voonik is the leader in the unbranded fashion category with an annual GMV rate of over 120 Million USD. It has over 20 million registered users, with 17 million app downloads. Voonik has built best-in-class personalisation technology that made it the most engaging e-commerce app in India. On the supply side, it has over 15 lakh products from more than 22,000 sellers. Voonik has a highly scalable 'lean' marketplace business model where it operates without inventory and fulfillment centres. Sujayath Ali, Co-Founder and CEO of Voonik, has over a decade worth of experience in Product Management, E-commerce, Analytics, Cloud Computing,

Mobile Commerce and go-to Market strategy, amongst others. He has demonstrated technical and leadership skills to spearhead the top consumer app, Voonik. An MBA in Technology and Finance from the Indian School of Business, he also holds a Bachelor's Degree in Computer Science Engineering from Mepco Schlenk Engineering College. He works with Navaneetha Krishnan, CTO, Voonik.com, who spearheads the IT department of the company right from its inception. In this exclusive conversation, Sujayath Ali tells us more.

TELL US ABOUT VOONIK.COM AND WHAT MAKES IT DIFFERENT?

Voonik is India's first only for women, personalised shopping platform. We believe in democratising fashion, helping women find trends suited for them and shop for trendy clothes without hurting their budget. Our high-tech personalisation platform which takes 3000 variables to run a personalisation logic, our highly curated merchandise and the best price best quality in the online challenge makes us a differentiated fashion platform. The e-commerce space is continually evolving.



WHAT ARE YOU DOING TO ENSURE YOU STAY CONNECTED WITH YOUR CUSTOMERS?

We are connecting customers with the clothing range they are interested in and through the media they prefer. Video content is the next big thing on e-commerce and that is why we launched our video commerce offering Voonik TV, to help our customers discover categories through some very interesting videos.

TELL US MORE ABOUT VOONIK TV

Voonik TV is India's first video commerce offering where customers can view interesting videos on their Voonik App and buy directly from those videos. Currently, all videos are either made by our stylists or our blogger community. But soon we'll open it up for posting videos for all sellers, boutique owners, and users. Anyone who has a fashion product to sell can create a video and put it on Voonik TV. They will get the commission on the Voonik products sold through their videos.

WHAT ARE THE KINDS OF CLOTHING LINES THAT ARE DOING WELL?

Sari is our key category; we are seeing a huge demand surge for silk and embellished saris. At the same time, a lot of customers are asking for

ethnic wear with a modern take such as crop tops with saris and such. In the collections for men, sports shoes and casual shoes are our best performing categories and contribute to 50 per cent plus to the Voonik GMV. Some new categories such as plus sizes and junk jewellery are also generating a lot of customer interest.

WHICH MARKETS ARE DRIVING THE BUSINESS?

About 75 per cent of our orders come from non-metros and smaller cities. Orders from State capitals such as Patna, Ranchi, and Bhubaneswar are surging, and so is the demand from the Northeastern states.

HOW DO YOU HANDLE COMPETITION?

We handle competition by giving the best price and the best quality collections to our customers, which ensures that they are happy with the Voonik experience. Over the last three months, our NPS (Net Promoter Scores) have consistently stayed above 40 across touch points.

TELL US ABOUT YOUR LOYALTY PROGRAMME

Voonik Primo is designed for customers who want value for their money. By just paying



a nominal subscription fee, a customer gets exempted from shipping and Cash on delivery (COD) charges, plus gets a host of other benefits such as one-on-one chat with a personal stylist, priority customer care and such. Our customers love the programme; in just a couple of months of its launch, Primo has become a 35 per cent contributor to revenue, plus the subscribed base has crossed the 100,000 mark.

HOW IS BUSINESS FROM TIER II AND III CITIES?

75 per cent of our orders come from non-metros and Tier II and III cities. With the consistent 3G/4G penetration, app downloads, shopping from these cities have surged. However, the pin code coverage, high rates of order rejected at the delivery point, and such, remain the key challenges.

HOW IS THE MEN'S SEGMENT DOING VERSUS THE WOMEN'S?

Mr Voonik is outperforming Voonik; it is almost 50 per cent of our total business now. We are getting a consistently high number of orders in many categories such as sports shoes, sunglasses and fashion watches. Also, the conversion rates, marketing efficiency and discovery are much better for Mr Voonik.

TELL US ABOUT YOUR FOCUS ON HANDLOOMS?

We want to promote handloom across our platforms. We've tied up with head weavers in eight major handloom clusters (Kanchipuram, Uppada, Pochampalli, Gadwal, Sambalpur, Banaras, Arani, Chanderi) of India. As a result, we are the largest online sari sellers in the country. After the festival season, we will also bring out handloom products for men.

DO YOU HAVE YOUR OWN LABELS OR PLAN TO HAVE THEM IN FUTURE?

Our two acquisitions Picksilk and Zohraa are already established brands on our platforms. Picksilk, which is a brand of pure silk saris, offers India's largest collection on silk saris online. India's rich handloom heritage, expressed through a multitude of weaving and embroidery styles is available at prices much lower than the retail markets, through the Picksilk brand. Similarly, Zohraa is now a popular brand on Voonik for designer styles and the embroidered collection in suits and saris. Over the course of next three months, we will launch our private labels for saris, footwear, bags, t-shirts and men's formal wear.

DO YOU SEE ANY INTERESTING TRENDS AS FAR AS BUYING APPAREL ONLINE IS CONCERNED?

One of the most interesting trends we notice in the ethnic apparel buying trend is the searches for indo western styles. Kurtas with skirts, dhoti style bottom-wear with *kurtis*, crop tops with saris are some such popular searches. The trend clearly shows that Indian consumers are open to experimentation even in the core apparel categories such as saris and suits.

WHAT ARE YOUR FUTURE PLANS?

In the next 12-18 months, we will focus on our key goals. Scaling up Voonik TV, increasing Voonik Primo subscriber base, and launching our in-house brands in all core categories will remain our core projects. ■