



The month that was...	VPC Sectors
<p><b>COUNTRY, FINANCE, MACROECONOMY, POLICY AND POLITICS</b></p>	<p><b>LIFESTYLE – FASHION – BEAUTY &amp; PERSONAL CARE - RETAIL</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Italian denim brand Replay has entered the Indian market through a strategic distribution partnership with Reliance Brands by opening its first store in the National Capital Region. The brand plans to take its store count to 10 by 2021.</li> <li>The Italian sportswear brand Paul &amp; Shark has re-launched its store in DLF Emporio’s mall in New Delhi with a new, modern interior.</li> <li>Benetton will open 50 stores across India this year, expanding its existing 400 exclusive brand outlets in the country.</li> <li>Lotto has launched its Breeze collection in India, designed with a range of cooling features to combat high temperatures.</li> <li>Premium shirt maker Van Heusen has opened its largest store spread over an area of 2,200 Sq. Ft. in the city of Mumbai.</li> <li>Luxuberance, the multi-brand handbags and luxury accessories store, is planning to expand its retail presence to 40 stores within the next three years via company-owned and franchise outlets in leading metros and tier 1 cities.</li> <li>Reliance Brands acquired British toymaker Hamley’s for 68 Million British Pounds. This elevates Reliance Brands to the global retail sphere. At the time of the acquisition Hamley’s had 167 stores across 18 countries, of which 88 are in India across 29 cities.</li> <li>Fashion brand Karl Lagerfeld will launch a special-edition collection of women’s ready-to-wear and accessories in partnership with Future Group which will be sold at select Cover Story stores across the country. Cover Story has a total of 28 exclusive stores.</li> <li>E-commerce platform Shopclues is planning to expand its offline presence by opening around 100 franchise stores across the country in the fiscal year 2019-20.</li> <li>Under Armour and Myntra are in advanced talks to see the latter manage Under Armour’s brick-and-mortar stores in India.</li> <li>Fashion e-commerce firm Myntra has partnered with Fossil Group for the exclusive launch of BMW watches on its platform.</li> <li>H&amp;M’s India sales crossed ₹148.2 million in 2018. H&amp;M currently has 42 brick-and-mortar stores, with plans to reach 50 by 2020.</li> <li>UK-based maternity wear brand Séraphine has opened its first India store in New Delhi.</li> <li>Steve Madden, which has 31 EBOs and more than 100 SISs in India, has partnered with Tata Cliq Luxury to sell its products online.</li> <li>The UK-based footwear retailer Pavers England has opened its 40th store in DLF Mall of India, Noida.</li> <li>Indian eyewear retailer Lenskart strengthened its retail network with the opening of its 500th store at Bengaluru.</li> <li>Hummel has entered the physical retail space with the opening of 5 stores in the country.</li> <li>The global professional makeup brand Kryolan opened its first flagship store in Ambience Mall with over 12,000 products for sale.</li> <li>Swiss luxury watchmaker Parmigiani Fleurier has entered the market by partnering with the leading third party retailer Ethos.</li> <li>On the back of strong growth in the Indian market, Korean lifestyle brand Ximi Vogue is planning to open 180 retail outlets.</li> <li>Reliance Retail, which operates 10,415 stores in more than 6,600 cities, with 500 million annual footfalls, is set to enter the online retail market and cause massive disruption in the space.</li> </ul> <p><b>FOOD &amp; BEVERAGES</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reliance Industries’ plan to digitise India’s kirana stores could see its store base increased from 15,000 to five million by 2023.</li> <li>Spencer’s has approved the acquisition for 100 per cent stake in Nature’s Basket Ltd, for a consideration of ~ Euro 38 Million.</li> <li>Flipkart has launched its online grocery store in Mumbai, offering ~ 10,000 products to 91 pin codes; covering ~ 85-90% of the city.</li> </ul> <p><b>FOOD SERVICE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Connaught Plaza Restaurants Private Ltd (CRPL), now wholly-owned by food service retailer McDonald’s, has re-opened 13 of its restaurants in Delhi.</li> <li>Mexican chain Taco Bell, a part of Yum Brands Inc, announced Burman Hospitality as its master franchise partner in India, with plans to open 600 outlets by 2029.</li> <li>London Bubble Co, the eclectic bubble waffle franchise brand, achieved a milestone as it unveiled its 50th store in Mumbai.</li> <li>New York Burrito Company celebrated the opening of its fifth outlet at Malad’s Inorbit Mall in Mumbai.</li> </ul>
<p>The ruling Government led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s Bharatiya Janata Party sweeps the general elections with an overwhelming show of confidence provided by the Indian Exceeding most expectations and predictions, the BJP took 303, surpassing its already impressive results in the previous elections. This enabled the Party to control on its own the 545 MPs strong lower house of Parliament, the Lok Sabha. Indian stock markets cheered the results in a show of appreciation for the expected continuity in economic policy going forward.</p>	
<p>Growth in merchandise exports increased to a five-month high of 11.0% in March 2019 from 2.4% in February 2019. Merchandise imports growth turned positive at 1.4% in March 2019 from -5.4% in February 2019.</p>	
<p>The RBI lowered the repo rate by 25 basis points to 6.0%, in its first bi-monthly policy review of 2019-20.</p>	