

Reliance to set footprint across India with global brands

Mukesh Ambani's Reliance Industries Ltd. (RIL) is set to make a mark in the footwear industry by retailing national and global brands across the country through a novel format christened Reliance Footprint.

As part of its \$6-billion (Rs.240 billion) retail foray to hard-sell a range of products and services through different formats, the \$27-billion group's Reliance Retail Ltd. (RRL) will set up 50 exclusive stores over the next 12-18 months.

It will showcase and market international brands such as Geox, Ecco, Josef Seibel, Rockpot, Florsheim, Lee Cooper, Levis, Piccadilly and Clarks for men, women, kids and sports buffs.

'We have made a beginning by setting up one retail format each in Hyderabad, [Bangalore](#) and Delhi over the last six months to offer a variety of product choice and unique shopping experience for differentiating from other players in the Rs.150-billion Indian footwear market and growing at 15 percent annually,' Reliance Footprint chief executive Gopalakrishnan Shankar told reporters here Wednesday.

'We plan to open 100 more such speciality stores across the country by 2010 for a 15 percent market share in the organised sector, which accounts for 35 percent (Rs.53 billion) of the total market. We are targeting Rs.30 billion sales by the end of the third operational year,' Shankar said.

In the next three-six months, the company has identified locations in Greater Noida (near Delhi), Thane in Mumbai, Ludhiana, Mangalore and [Ahmedabad](#) for spreading its footprints.

Besides footwear for the entire family of any class, the stores showcase handbags and other leather accessories.

Of the 40 footwear brands, about half are Indian, including Woodlands, Liberty and Gaitonde.

International brands that vie for attention include Hush Puppies, Azaleia and Dr Scholl. For kids Crocs and Disney are showcased.

The sports range - which is the fastest moving product in the country, growing at 15-20 percent per annum - showcases Nike, Adidas, Reebok, Puma and Kappa.

'Each store, spread over 10,000 sq ft, will promote about 2,000 styles for all customers, with a option to choose from a wide array of footwear in every category ranging from formals, casuals, ethnic, party wear and sport,' Shankar said.

Coinciding with its national rollout, the company has tied up with Pavers England Footprint to house the latter's products for the first time in India.

'Pavers is making a debut in India with offerings for men and women. The \$150-million British firm will also market footwear of Flyflot, an Italian fashion brand, in our stores for the fashion and value conscious customers. Their products will also be showcased in Reliance supermarkets and hypermarkets, being set up across the country,' Shankar noted.

Reliance will also sell its own private labels across the value range under brands such as Mancini, Tosca and Viviana.

While premium brands will be priced between Rs.3,000 and Rs.6,000, other brands, will cost Rs.300-2,000.

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