

# From the Editor

Remember when mall meant a tree-shaded promenade in Shimla or one of those picturesque cantonment towns, and plastic was when your grandmother graduated from tin buckets in the bathroom? Now the Oxford dictionary lists “mall: the action of passing time at a shopping mall”, and tykes, tots, teens and tweens wash through our malls in wave after spending wave, many of them waving plastic bestowed by doting parents. India is on a spending binge never witnessed in history. Did somebody say we are a nation of prudent savers? The numbers are *awesome* — which is what a four-year-old calls his Ben 10 wristwatch and what advertisers on the Cartoon Network croon when their targeted commercials hit home at the KGOYs — kids growing older younger.

OMG! Nielsen's 3rd Quarter 2010 global survey of consumer confidence shows Indians are the most optimistic among 53 countries. We look virtually unstoppable, and we are spending like there is no tomorrow. Actually there is — because tomorrow we will want to throw away our dull flat-screen TV and buy a 42-inch LCD model. Money's burning a hole in our pockets, and kids who know exactly what they want — and what they want their parents to want — are powering this shopathon. As consumer guru Rama Bijapurkar notes in a column on page 94, it's a happy *jugalbandhi* of wishes and wallets.

At *Business Today* we love watching trends as much as we love reporting them, and this one is rearing up — Woof! — on its hind legs begging to be noticed. This time it's not just about rich city kids. Look at what small-town materialists covet in Theni and Tumkur on page 84. Be swept along in a riot of colours, gadgets, toys, clothes, food, games, and THINGS in our photo essay starting on page 96 that will take your breath away. Why are there nothing but smiles among the shareholders in Disney, Nickelodeon's parent Viacom, and Mothercare, not to speak of those folks who make autos, televisions, phones, clothes, toys, games, and not forgetting Apple and its gazillion apps? Because India's economy is going like a bazooka, stooooooooooooooooopid!

So Esh Kumar Sharma led the charge of the baby-tracking brigade. He and a few colleagues also found time to attend the World Economic Forum in Delhi where hundreds of serious adults debated *Implementing India*. Little do they know that all you have to do is open the mall doors at the crack of dawn every day. Don't let this exuberance prevent you from reading our special WEF coverage starting on page 51.

The urge to do business and make money is coursing through all our veins and nearly nothing can stop us — not even stone-pelters, curfews, bullets and non-existent roads. It's enough to make the hardest business-man weep, but what Puja Mehra found in the Kashmir Valley was a number of indomitable entrepreneurs whose stories make for a hope-inspiring contrast to the mayhem all around. Makes you want to raise a tankard in salute — bubbling with froth from a microbrewery. Go to page 142 to learn how to make your own beer — and don't miss the tiny asterisked footnote at the very end.



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