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## Birla Century targets growth in brands and exports businesses focusing on sustainable product range.

Offering a wide range of products in both the apparel and home furnishing segments since 1897, Birla Century now aims to focus on its brands and exports business with sustainable products. "We offer products in both apparel and home furnishing segments. Our products in the apparel division include yarn dyed and piece dyed fabrics used in shirting and bottom wear segments. Yarn dyed shirting fabrics span 25 per cent of our entire production while piece dyed fabrics span the remaining 75 per cent. Our yarn dyed fabric ranges from premium superfine counts in double ply viz 2/120's, 2/140's upto 2/200's along with regular formal and casual wear with 50's & 60's with premium Indian cotton along with Giza, Pima, Supima cotton" says Ashish Mehrishi, Chief Marketing Officer of the company.

Birla Century offers a wide range of products in its fabric retail channels viz OTC & RTS business, yarn dyed shirting and suiting fabrics along with a premium range of whites & dyed fabrics and also dhotis. "Dhoti is our trademark business. We plan to post growth of more than 25% in our fabric retail business during the upcoming year by introducing wider product range and aggressive marketing."

## Aggressive growth plans

Birla Century aims to shift more than 50 percent of its business to Exports and Brands in the next two years. "For this, the focus is on sustainable products, recycled products along with innovative functional finishes, etc. The state of art production unit located at Bharuch, Gujarat is equipped with latest technology and leading technicians where most of the latest certifications are available to stand tall in international market. Our aim is to increase our brand

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- We are developing right mindset and proactive approach within the teams at all the levels and hopes to be well placed in both these segments.
- The company also aims to venture into printing business with a tie up with some professional manufacturer soon.
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image in international market as a leader in sustainable products and in Indian retail market as a quality product supplier; by focusing growth in both these channels of business.” adds Mehrishi.

As timing, quality and pricing are crucial in both businesses, Birla Century is developing the right mindset and proactive approach within the teams at all the levels and hopes to be well placed in both these segments.

The company also aims to venture into the printing business with a tie up with some professional manufacturer soon. “As this was the only product missing in our apparel division, we felt the need to add it and are planning to set up this business shortly,” Mehrishi informs.

### Issues plaguing the Industry

The apparel market is currently affected by various factors such as weak market demand, fierce competition and trade war. Money crunch is still there in the market and there is overall pressure on maintaining the working capital. “However, we are working on these issues and hope to have minimal impact from them.” Brands are suffering due to cut-throat competition and changes in consumer demands. They are asking for maximum designs in minimum quantities. “Their ‘End of Season’ sale and kind of mandatory condition of offering discounts for “online sales” is resulting into a major shift in buying patterns.”

This has also affected the vendors / garment manufacturers for their payment cycles and fulfilling capacities. Last year, 2-3 cotton

textile mills in India went into financial crisis and on the other hand a few mills are expanding their capacities and offering sharp prices. Overall business is tough and there is pressure on profit margins. However, we are not affected much, as we handle diverse product mix in diverse market segments like retail, trade, brands and exports business. In future, Birla Century has plans to expand fabric retail business (OTC and RTS) to Tier II, III and IV cities and other remote areas focusing on brand recall and aggressive marketing to reach out to our consumers to maintain / improve legacy of Century products.”



**Ashish Mehrishi**  
Chief Marketing Officer,  
Birla Century

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