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AccessoRising career

With the soaring demand of accessories in the high glam industry of fashion, a host of opportunities have evolved for professional accessories designers

BY AMI GANDHI

FASHION as an industry has been growing very fast in recent times. With this growth, has increased the demand for accessories and their designers.

"It's an ever growing demand. There are the affordable accessories available on streets and the ones, which are specially crafted and priced very high; and both kinds find a buyer. The need is the eye for innovative design and honest utility of the product," says Suhani Pittie, who owns her own line of branded accessories, 'Suhani Pittie'. Increase in demand for accessories has led to the growth of the related categories in India. The rising requirement for various accessories has also encouraged the aspirant designers to choose this field.

who give the final touch to complete a fashion image by adding the bits and pieces of flavor and color to the apparel. An accessory designer can stylize everything from jewellery, to handbags, footwear, belts, ties, hats, sunglasses et al. Their job is to create, locate and develop concepts of any accessories that may go along with clothing. The sky is the limit for their creativity in designing. "Accessory design, in a nutshell, is creating articles that work to compliment or as we like to call it 'accessorize' a garment. It's not enough to merely be able to sketch a bag or shoe. With all the competition, it is important to be technically trained as well," explains Shalini Gupta who owns the range of accessories under the brand name of 'Whats Pink'.

for orders from fashion houses or for wholesalers. Retail outlets also hire designers. S/he can focus in a particular area like designing of handbags, jewellery, shoes or can manage their own line of products.

Skill required:

- ▶ An accessory designer must possess:
 - ▶ An eye for details
 - ▶ Patience and determination
 - ▶ Ability to take stress and meet deadlines
 - ▶ Knowledge about finance and budget
 - ▶ Marketing and advertising skills
 - ▶ Leadership qualities
 - ▶ Communication skills

Accessory designers must be updated with latest fashion trends so it is advisable for an aspirant to read fashion maga-

CAREERS



CAREER CHOICES:

- ❑ Assistant designer assists a lead designer in conceptualization of designs.
- ❑ Freelance designer works with various retailers and designers for short period.
- ❑ Product designer monitors the shape, size, and material content of accessories.
- ❑ Stylist is hired by a person, to choose the right look for them and help them find the best accessories.
- ❑ Visual merchandiser creates window and in-store displays in shops and department stores, taking responsibility for 'the look' of the store, with the aim of promoting accessories.

The glitz and glamour in this business is generating job opportunities with growth in terms of potential profit and projected income. "Sensibility is the core factor in designing accessories; a designer has to uphold the buyers' perspective. In India, it has to be a fusion of western and Indian sensibility to create a product that will sell. Accessories with an individualistic touch make it stand apart from the rest," says Sonali Dalwani, owner of an accessories brand 'Crimzon'.
The Accessories designers are the ones

Job prospects:

Just like any other forms of arts, an accessory designing is an expression of oneself through creativity. "Firstly, to be an accessory designer it has to come from within, and then a formal education in the subject is always a plus point. Internship and hands on training is a must, nothing works like experience in all aspects from design to the finished product," says Dalwani. One can work under large firms who employ staff designers and commission freelancers. In small workshops and firms, one can work

zines, attend fashion shows and keep a track of fashion industry. "The only skill one needs to imbibe within them is awareness to observe lifestyles around them and take a cue as to how they as designers can fit into everyday life. I feel one doesn't need any specialized skill but there must be will and patience to innovate every day," says Pittie.