

TARGETED MARKETING

HUL aims to predict the way you shop, using artificial intelligence

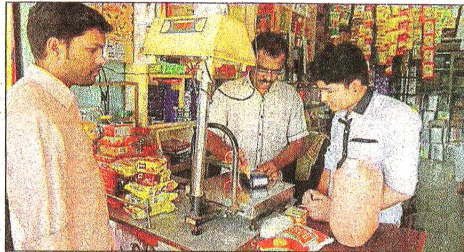
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MUMBAI: The next time you visit your neighbourhood grocery store or call the corner shop for a home delivery, don't be surprised if the store keeper remembers what you ordered the last time and even proactively reminds you to restock on your Kissan Jam or your detergent and toiletries supply as they are running out and he has an offer. All this and more will soon be possible as the country's largest consumer packaged goods company, Hindustan Unilever Ltd (HUL) is *reimagining* the way we shop at neighbourhood shops.

Spread across 600,000 villages and 10 million outlets, general trade will continue to remain big in the next 10 years, HUL said in a presentation on its website on 6 June where it outlined Project Maxima, which is focused on precision marketing at scale.

The reimagining of its supply chain and cornershop strategy is part of the company's bigger initiative undertaken over the last four years for its entire business with initiatives like Winning



■ HUL plans to extract shopping preferences through the use of predictive analytics software Jarvis

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in Many Indias (WiMi) which divides the country into 14 zones. Also management is decentralized with the formation of Cluster Category Business Teams (CCBTs) which are mini-boards for brand building and marketing.

Under Project Maxima, HUL is able to do targeted marketing within 100 meters of a corner shop, which it will geofence for distributed marketing and offering. The company plans to extract details such as who visited the store over last three months, what they bought and when they are likely to buy next time, it said.

The Indian arm of Unilever Plc will achieve this through

the use of predictive analytics, cloud technology, Internet of Things, and artificial intelligence. "HUL's data strategy would be—how do we acquire, how do we store, how do we use this data and how do we manage it. In this VUCA (Volatility, uncertainty, complexity and ambiguity) world, HUL will prefer to disrupt than be disrupted," the company said in its presentation.

The company is using predictive analytics, Jarvis—a software which uses several artificial intelligence techniques—to gauge demand, volume, sales and profit scenarios under different simulated scenarios.