

## Kiranas 2.0 Get A Tech Update

Mom-and-pop stores now take to special offers, loyalty point alerts to counter big rivals

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**New Delhi:** Special discounts on festivals, loyalty point alerts and weekly offers are no longer restricted to modern trade and ecommerce players; mid-sized convenience stores and even neighbourhood kiranas are increasingly adopting modern technology and business strategies to keep up with bigger rivals.

And they have the backing of top consumer product makers and a new breed of technology service providers.

“Neighbourhood retail stores are fast evolving with the adoption of technology to serve the changing shopper aspirations and needs,” a spokesperson of Hindustan Unilever said. The country’s largest fast moving consumer goods (FMCG) company is experimenting with different business models in collaboration with different retail partners to help them serve shoppers and consumers better, the person told ET in an email revert.

Kirana stores constitute more than 90% of FMCG grocery sales and, according



to a study by PricewaterhouseCoopers, there are about 12 million convenience or mom-and-pop stores.

Retail technology firms such as Ratan Tata-backed Snapbizz, ShopKirana and Storeking now offer digitised customer engagement and supply chain solutions to small groceriers. “There is a strong tailwind to adopt technology and an attitudinal change in the retailer,” said Prem Kumar, chief executive at Snapbizz. Neighbourhood retailers increasingly

An increasing number of neighbourhood retailers are seeking his firm’s help to provide itemised bills that show

discounts offered on total bills, customised SMS alerts on promos and greetings, and even app-based home delivery.

Increasing penetration of smartphones, goods and services tax (GST) implementation, and demonetisation are leading to the key emerging trends on the retail landscape, Kumar said.

Varun Berry, MD at biscuit maker Britannia, said, “Technology adoption is the need of the hour as neighbourhood retailers are competing with e-tailers.”

Dabur chief executive Sunil Duggal said many kiranas are aggregating with other retailers. “We are keeping a close watch on how the neighbourhood grocery space is evolving, since it directly and very significantly impacts our business.”

Snapbizz said its internal data across 600 stores nationally showed that retailers largely use push notifications service to drive promotional offers (53%) and product information (27%), which will eventually impact their monthly business. Mumbai and Delhi were among the fast movers using SMS services to drive customer engagement, it said.