

million sq ft shopping space. It covers the pyramid of leisure options available in shopping havens abroad, like a 6-screen DT Cinema multiplex, DT Diner, a 15,000 sq ft food court and a host of retailers like Adidas, Planet M, Lee Cooper, Nike and so on.

The next strategy to grab the all-important footfalls is to add entertainment parks as part of the mall complex to pamper visitors. Robin Hall, *Vice President, Vertex Productions – the California-based themed design company* – credited with creating the most enjoyable urban ride experience within a natural setting at Camp Snoopy located under the **Mall of America** roof, sees no problem in managing required footfalls at the upcoming mega malls in India. He is pretty sure retail entertainment complexes can do the trick. Acres of atmosphere-controlled expanses obtainable in mega malls could do away with the exhaustion people experience currently in even the best amusement parks of India. Elaborating further, he asserts: "India is replete with story themes and Mall-Parks can afford to import the safest and most modern rides. When these are appropriately integrated, footfalls should be no problem for any size of mall."

Munish K Baldev, Head-Retail, Unitech is busy overseeing the creation of **Great India Place** at NOIDA. The 7-1/2 lakh sq ft mall will claim the record of being the largest retail space in India when completed. Its model: 240 vanilla stores surrounded by 11 anchor stores – Pantaloon, Shoppers' Stop, Lifestyle, included – at the corners and a multi-level, automated parking capacity for 8,400. Beside the mall is **World of Wonders**, a world-class amusement park for the shoppers, tired of stuffing carts, to have a break and get unwound. An upscale **Gardens Galleria** brand mall, with a five-star hotel on the top floor, will be coming up within the complex. Unitech can handle 80,000 visitors a day from six entry points and has already registered 68,000 footfalls on a single day.

To be up before the Commonwealth Games, 2010 is the Rs 2,000 crore

Mall of India project of DLF, touted to be the country's largest, to eventually spread over 5-6 million sq ft. Jerde Partnership Inc of Los Angeles – the firm has **Mall of America** at Minneapolis and the **Edmonton Mall** in portfolio – has been roped in to design the 33-acre complex at Gurgaon. It has received environmental approval and is coming up fast. Details have not yet been released, but it can reasonably be expected that Mall of India will have indoor amusement parks of the class of **Galaxyland** and 200,000 sq ft **World Waterpark** or the **Camp Snoopy** of MOA. These mega mall activities planned by Indian giants are dwarfed by the big daddy of malls, taking shape at Wuxi, in Jiangsu Province of neighbouring China. The Chinese government is fully supporting development of a 13.5 million sq ft **MegaMall**, whose construction will be completed by end-2007. Occupying the space equivalent of 40 commercial centres, it will be the biggest apparel and textile centre in the world, with 20,000-30,000 vanilla tenants. It aims to secure record number of footfalls anywhere in the world through several attractions. ©

"DON'T GET THEM TIRED BEFORE THEY ARE DONE WITH THEIR SHOPPING!"

CJI spoke to Robin Hall, Vice President, Vertex Productions – the California-based themed design company – on what made the indoor Camp Snoopy at the Mall of America tremendously successful. Excerpts:



"User comfort is paramount in any design and that is especially important in large malls. We did a lot of research and came away with three key areas, on which to focus our efforts in this direction.

- We discovered that most people left the mall not because they were done with shopping. They packed up because their feet were tired. So, we sloped our paving up and down, undulating the floor to relieve ankles from repetitive motion over a hard surface. We added some softer surfaces in various areas to give a more cushioned walk. Lastly, we installed lots of benches. These increase the lengths of stay as visitors indulged in what everyone loves to do – people-watching!
- Mothers, who are the biggest shoppers, are pulled away from shopping as malls often aren't designed to entertain children. "Get the kids to do something," defined as a key objective, led to creation of Camp Snoopy entertainment and Ride Park. Rides, shows and play areas allow mothers to relax a bit while the kids are kept occupied. In fact, mothers were using Camp Snoopy to reward good behavior of children while they went ahead with their shopping.
- Noise control is an important aspect of user comfort. We selected quiet rides or added sound mitigation to our rides to eliminate fatiguing black noise from the environs. We planted lots of trees to block the path of sound waves. To make the sound of happy screams from the roller coasters pleasurable, we installed waterfalls to add white noise to the environs. That gives a boost to the shoppers' mood, which is good for business!"

"Enhanced comfort levels are bound to increase visitor's length of stay and make the treasury chaps happy because it eventually reflects in higher volumes at the billing counters."

(For more info about Vertex Productions please visit <http://www.vertexproductions.com>)