HiveMinds launches 4th edition of Ecommerce Playbook: "*The Great Digital Shift*" –
A practitioner's guide to building brands in a commerce-first world

Mumbai, 31st March, 2026: HiveMinds, a unit of the Madison World, unveiled the latest edition of its Ecommerce Playbook at the ***HiveMinds Ecommerce Conclave 2026,*** presenting a comprehensive view of the structural shifts reshaping digital commerce and brand building in India.

Developed over months of research, analysis and industry observation, the playbook brings together insights, frameworks and real-world learnings to help marketers navigate an increasingly complex and evolving ecosystem.

"*This year we are not talking about a small change… this year the change is big. That's why we called it the great digital shift,"* said ***Deepti Bhadauria, CEO, HiveMinds***.

From Performance to Brand Building: A Fundamental Shift: The 2026 playbook highlights a clear transition in how brands are being built in the digital-first economy. What began as a performance-driven ecosystem focused on clicks, attribution and optimization is now evolving into a more integrated model where storytelling, personalization and consumer experience play a central role.

"*We just wanted to assimilate the learnings from the full year… and put them together into a replicable, referable format,"* ***Deepti Bhadauria noted while introducing the playbook.***

The playbook positions this shift as not just a tactical evolution, but a **fundamental change in how marketers approach growth**.

Key Forces Shaping the Digital Ecosystem: The playbook identifies multiple forces driving this transformation:

- The rise of personalization at scale, where consumer experiences are increasingly tailored in real time
- The growing importance of data partnerships, enabling deeper consumer understanding
- The emergence of AI-driven campaign creation and automation, improving efficiency and relevance
- The shift of digital platforms from media channels to storytelling environments

"Every digital platform is now a storytelling medium," Deepti highlighted, emphasizing how brand narratives are becoming central to digital strategy.

Redefining Affluence, Discovery and Consumer Expectations: The playbook also explores how consumer behaviour is evolving across India. One of the key shifts identified is the redefinition of affluence, not just through income or demographics, but through consumer intent and willingness to pay for convenience.

"*There is a whole generation that is ready to pay for the luxury of time," she noted, highlighting how expectations around immediacy and convenience are shaping consumption patterns.*

This shift is influencing how brands approach discovery, product design, and communication.

AI, Personalization and the Future of Marketing: Looking ahead, the playbook outlines how AI and data will continue to reshape marketing practices. From automated campaign management to personalized creative outputs, the ecosystem is moving toward more adaptive and intelligent systems.

"*There will be even more usage of AI… and campaign management will become even more automated and efficient," Deepti Bhadauria said, pointing to the next phase of digital evolution*.

At the same time, the playbook emphasizes that technology alone will not drive success, brands will need to combine data with storytelling to remain relevant.

A Practical Framework for Marketers: Beyond insights, the HiveMinds Ecommerce Playbook is designed as a practical resource for marketers, offering frameworks that can be applied across industries and growth stages.

It brings together perspectives on:

- Full-funnel integration in a non-linear consumer journey
- The role of creators and content in driving trust
- The balance between performance and brand-building investments
- Strategies to unlock growth in emerging consumer segments

By structuring these insights into a usable format, the playbook aims to serve as a reference guide for marketers navigating the next phase of digital commerce.

A Defining moment for Digital Commerce

The unveiling of the playbook at the conclave reinforced a broader industry realization digital commerce in India is entering a new phase.

One where:

- Measurement alone is not enough
- Personalization is expected, not optional
- Content drives both discovery and conversion
- Brand building and performance are increasingly intertwined

As the ecosystem evolves, the HiveMinds Ecommerce Playbook 2026 positions itself as a guide to understanding and navigating this transformation.

A Track Record of Industry Impact

The HiveMinds Ecommerce Playbook has been published alongside each edition of the conclave since 2023. Past editions have been well received across the industry for the quality of thinking - grounded in real brand case studies, built around practical frameworks, and written for marketers who need to navigate the shifts in the industry, not just read about them.

The foreword for this edition was written by Sam Balsara, Chairman of Madison World, who noted that "HiveMinds has consistently stayed ahead of the market by embracing emerging practices and applying technology and data to real business challenges."

About HiveMinds

HiveMinds is a leading digital marketing and commerce solutions company, part of the Madison World Group, working with over 100 brands across media, marketplaces, and technology-led solutions. Through initiatives like the Ecommerce Conclave and its annual playbook, HiveMinds continues to enable marketers with insights and strategies to navigate the evolving digital ecosystem.