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Publisher & Chief Editor
Anju Arora

Office
C-35, Sector-62, Noida - 201 307
Ph: 0120-4021200
Fax: 0120-4021280
Web: www.adi-media.com

Editorial
editorial@adi-media.com
Ph: 0120-4021229/232

Advertising
advertising@adi-media.com
Ph: 9871018686/0120-4021205

Circulation
circulation@adi-media.com
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Dealers Speak

The 2010 edition of *Buyers Guide* takes a look at the wide range of products offered by the consumer electronics and home appliances industry. Additionally, our team has worked with a wide spectrum of dealers across the country to present a dealer viewpoint on market realities and prospects.

Dealers report that there has been an upward trend in the prices of white goods and home appliances, which is attributed by them to the increasing costs of raw material and higher excise duty. Some dealers point out that manufacturers appear to have absorbed the cost increase at the higher end of the price spectrum and passed cost increases on to consumers for relatively lower priced products.

This summer is seeing record breaking sales of air conditioners with splits doing exceptionally well. There is also a growing awareness about energy efficient products with an increasing share in sales of 5-star rated air conditioners even though these are higher priced.

A common issue that dealers highlight is poor after sales service in the peak season. In many cases, after sales service does not meet the stipulated turn around time (TAT) in the peak season. Against a TAT of 24–48 hours, the service engineer can quite often show up with a delay of 48–72 hours. This seems to be a problem across brands, which is an inconvenience to the dealer who is the public face of the manufacturer.

Yet another issue facing dealers is the competition and price conflict with modern retail. Interestingly, in this issue we have a dealer from Karnal referring to competition from a modern retail store in that small city, and he does not appear to be losing too much sleep!

Consumer response to LED and 3D televisions appears to be lukewarm because of high prices. Similarly, dealers are struggling to sell the more expensive innovative inverter air conditioners. LCD televisions continue to do well even though the strong correlation between LCD sales and sporting events is diminishing. Overall, dealers appear upbeat about the market prospects for this year.

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