



HOUSING FOR INDIA'S FUTURE CONSUMERS

India's young homebuyers are influencing residential development, prompting developers to rethink space, technology and sustainability

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In the coming years, small-city housing will favour compact, community-led living, while metros see growth in upscale homes and villas.

A recent Grant Thornton report reveals that India's housing sales surged 77% between FY2019 and FY2025, signalling a high homebuyer confidence. While the sales numbers remain strong, a looming concern is quietly arising—is India's housing evolving fast enough to cater to the future consumer expectations?

The median age of India's first-time homebuyers has dipped from late 40s to early 30s. Gen Zs and Millennials have, of late, emerged as dominant forces in homebuying, and will collectively control 60% of new house purchases by 2030. Today's young real estate consumers are driving a generational transformation. They seek efficient, adaptive, and emotionally resonant living spaces that can support their hybrid work priorities, personal values, and family lives.

NEW INFLUENCERS

These cohorts belong to a digital-first world. While buying or choosing homes, Gen Zs seek technology integration, digitalisation, sustainability, top-tier amenities, services, and experiences with clarity and flexibility as non-negotiables. Even the Gen Alpha (born post-2010), although a few years away from buying homes, are already influencing their families' homebuying decisions.

While responding to changing consumer needs is crucial, we must note recent geographic shifts in housing demand, especially in affordable and mid-market segments. Tier-2 and tier-3 locations have emerged as aspirational markets for the middle-class. With better connectivity and decentralised work, professionals can live in small cities without missing out on opportunities. Mid-income homes are no longer about size alone. Buyers now prioritise smart layouts and daily convenience.

In the next few years, small city housing will largely reflect an intentional form of living—compact and efficient homes embedded within community networks will thrive, alongside a boom of luxurious, upscale, large homes and villas in metro cities. Moreover, mixed-use developments and integrated townships will also gain traction as

consumers seek to reduce commute times and urban congestion and attempt to blend the 'live-work-play-shop' lifestyle seamlessly.

STAYING FUTUREPROOF

Realising the urgent imperative to curate homes prioritising and incorporating the future consumers' lifestyle preferences, contemporary builders and developers are reimagining construction, design, delivery and marketing of homes in a variety of ways. Some of the promising strategies include:

- Enabling digitally driven property search and booking, including virtual tours and property walkthroughs, and introduction of interactive online software/platforms to ease consumer access and facilitate digital transactions.
- Designing smart homes that appeal to youngsters—equipped with latest security and predictive maintenance, technologies such as AI and IoT, voice control, biometrics, home automation systems, and immersive design and collaborative experiences.
- Adopting green building practices, including solar, EV charging, and efficient HVAC, to meet environmentally conscious buyers' expectations.
- Creating flexible living arrangements with open floor layouts, modular fittings and furnishings, and multi-functional spaces.
- Introducing creative models such rent-to-own, co-living/shared living, and pay-as-you-go EMI plans to make ownership seem more feasible for next-generation homebuyers

Designing homes for the future is necessitating developers to pivot from static product-led thinking to deep consumer insights-led planning, setting new benchmarks vis-à-vis quality and execution, and propelling growth. With the Indian realty market projected to touch \$1 trillion by 2030, the residential realty's success and resilience will be measured not only by how many homes are being sold but also by how thoughtfully they are built, with future-readiness at the core.