

**hindustantimes**

■ ■ Tuesday, November 13, 2012

**Bharati Chaturvedi, Hindustan Times**

New Delhi, October 07, 2012

✉ [Email to Author](#)

First Published: 22:50 IST(7/10/2012)

Last Updated: 22:52 IST(7/10/2012)

## Bright ideas to tap solar energy market

How easy is it for most people in India to step out and buy a solar torch? Or anything solar for the house? Virtually impossible! This, despite India's solar mission. Most of the success of solar energy here is in decentralized models. Yet, supply can't capture latent demand.

Essmart Global, a new technology start-up is trying to bridge the gap. They have identified a range of solar products that are likely to be in demand. To help get them out, they have made a catalogue which small kirana stores in Tamil Nadu house to show customers and solicit orders.

Of course, it is hard to think of small towns ordering via catalogues, but this model could tide over that. First, small kirana stores in smaller places are key points to market new products. Second, at these places people know each other, so sharing information is informal. Lastly, it expands the range of products-and income-of such tiny stores, making it a model that shares not competes.

### **Green the retailers**

A lament we hear frequently in India is how consumers won't change their behaviour if it takes too much effort. The stubborn addiction to plastic bags is a case in point.

Despite multiple bans, the bag rules. Shopkeepers in various states point out their customers demand a bag. Contrast this with what the BBC recently reported about Wales. Apart from explicitly charging for plastic bags, they believe consumers are willing to go that extra mile for the environment.

What is different? I believe it is the shopkeepers' attitude. Instead of cooperating with each other, they fear competition if a customer is denied a bag. We need a carrot and stick policy for all formal sector retail.

<http://www.hindustantimes.com/StoryPage/Print/941280.aspx>

© Copyright © 2012 HT Media Limited. All Rights Reserved.