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Managing Director, Lingel India & Germany

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Cover Feature

Mario Schmidt, Managing Director, Lingel India and Germany, is today the face of the Lingel brand for leading developers, interior designers, and architects across India. This feature highlights the lesser-known facts about his professional journey, his business acumen, and his strong customer-centric approach.
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Can Architecture Exist in a World of Reduced Growth?

With population movement and tourism affected by the global pandemic, growth in the architecture and building sectors has slowed to match. Is now the time for architects to steer towards a more sustainable approach to the built environment? Caillin Howard, Managing Director, Hames Sharley, explores what needs to be done from a built-form perspective to build confidence back in retail and public spaces.

It’s not much of an exaggeration to say that Covid-19 has changed everything - from the way we interact with each other socially to the way business can be conducted locally and internationally. Australia – with its small number of community transmitted cases – may have avoided the cataclysm experienced by many other countries, but there have still been consequences to the economy and, by extension, the architecture profession.

In its recent release, Measuring the Impact of the Pandemic, the Australian Institute of Architects highlighted “a substantial slowdown in projects and measurable shifts in employment,” based on data supplied by 430 members of the Institute. In fact, 64.87 percent of respondents to the AIA’s survey said they have had projects stalled as a result of the coronavirus, and about the same number reported a loss of earnings. The concern, writes Institute CEO Julia Gambage, is that “the pandemic will continue to have a significant negative impact on jobs beyond the short-term pain currently being felt.”

In the document, the Institute proposes a number of different ways to stimulate activity in the sector and rebuild confidence, including provision of incentives to encourage people to make their homes more energy efficient, and stimulus packages from the government to build more social housing. But could it be that the issues facing the architecture community require more than just sourcing new projects?

“This energy is fantastic, this process is exciting but we’re putting it in the wrong direction,” says Caillin Howard, Managing Director of Hames Sharley. “The fundamental idea is that the building industry is going to be busy, so architects are going to be busy. Fixing existing residences up to be more environmentally neutral is terrific, but that requires minimal architecture. And it’s really valid to talk about a higher percentage of affordable housing and dealing with those crises, but again it’s not going to drive an economy or a development.”

“Working in the public sector – education, defence – that’s going to be the easy way to keep alive if you’re an architect, because you’re pivoting to where the activity will come from,” he explains. “It’s not going to be from the private sector, it’s going to be from the federal and state governments, or areas of the private sector that are stimulated by government. There’s a massive chunk of residential subsidies, which means the residential market is currently amplified – especially Perth, where it’s doubled due to the state matching the government stimulus. So, there’s this momentary expansion that at some point, will need to return to a non-stimulus market.”
In a negative market, the skills to reinterpret and create new value out of something that's existing are as honourable and as beautiful as creating something afresh. And much harder. Economies that have gone backwards need design leadership. It's not just about the beauty of repurpose, it's about the use on the inside and the activation, and I think, in the future, architecture needs to be far more encompassing in not just creating the space, but also the mechanism of activating it.

**Caillin Howard**

Although the subsidies and support are appreciated and much needed, Caillin believes it is a great time to consider the bigger picture without stimulus or being in a negative market.

"As a profession, we should be talking at a higher level and contributing to the government in regard to white papers and policies about how you manage without population movement or growth. Our development and economy rely on growth and we may not have that to the same level which we've become accustomed to. The pandemic has affected international and interstate migration and tourism – if you don't have moving people, you don't have moving needs."

Every 50,000 people we get, we need another couple of schools, we need another shopping centre, we need another hospital. The Sydney market has relied on north of 100,000 people population growth per annum, year on year. The boom in Perth, ten or fifteen years ago, was based on 40,000 to 50,000 people a year.

"That's what actually drives us. And that's frightening, because we're talking about overpopulation – at some point the planet has to have too many people on it. We are working on an economy which is all about growth predicated by more people, and that will eventually not be as sustainable."

"Right now, we need to climb out of this little nightmare. But the minute we've climbed out of it, we need to start questioning an economy that actually values something different."

For architects to stay busy and relevant without growth, therefore, would require a reappraisal of the purpose of architecture and those who create it.

"Our role is we study human behaviour," Caillin says. "It's what we actually do. So, let's get together and think about the drivers of change; find opportunity out of the new set of behaviours that increased technology and the pandemic have forced on us. What does working remotely for eight months do to the Melbourne workplace market? What does it do to the largest food and beverage foundation in the country on the other side of it? What are we prepared to lose? What are we prepared to fight for? What role does architecture have in that? Let's get our heads around what we need to do from a built-form perspective to build confidence back in retail and public spaces."

Key to this process, he says, will be proving the naysayers and the economists wrong. "They say we'll never mix together again, we'll never go back into an office again. And that's nonsense. We all get a little bit of rest in the cave by ourselves, but most of us, after a short space of time, start to go crazy. We're tribal people, we get value from bouncing in and working with one other. Fundamentally, the human condition relies on a degree of social interaction."

"At the moment, no one can define the needs of a future building or a future place off the back of this pandemic. So that's what we should be talking about and that's what we should be investing time in. From that, we can give clearer instruction and clearer vision to governments, to banks, and to all the things that are going to hold back investment or confidence to make the change."

For this to succeed, it would require a change of perspective and the development of a new approach, Caillin believes – a skill set for creating opportunity in a recessive economy.

"Look at places like Detroit that have had negative population growth and have had to reinvent and rebuild themselves. Adelaide, too, has been working off negative or very small population growth for quite some time, and yet it's still got an economy, it's still got a healthy building market, it's still got healthy design and architecture. It's about repurposing, reusing, rethinking, as opposed to expanding and growing."

"In a negative market, the skills to reinterpret and create new value out of something that's existing are as honourable and as beautiful as creating something afresh. And much harder. Economies that have gone backwards need design leadership. It's not just about the beauty of repurpose, it's about the use on the inside and the activation, and I think, in the future, architecture needs to be far more encompassing in not just creating the space, but also the mechanism of activating it. That starts to cross over into events, into who to work with to actually create the activity to test that space and how it works."

"When you're building in a negative market, it really is the re-creation of value where value has been lost. Things that have become representative of neglect or negativity need to be refaced or repositioned to create hope and prosperity. And I think that is up to us."
Reinventing Elements of Islamic Architecture

Ar. Abhishek Bij, Design Plus Architects and Ar. Sushant Verma, rat[LAB] Studio talk about their collaboration on the Crescent Mosque at Dubai Creek Harbour by blending Mathematics, Religious Principles and Technology to create a new interpretation of an iconic mosque; and how their background in computational design enhanced their approach to a religious and cultural architecture in an urban setting. They also give an insight on how such collaborations can lead to innovative workflows in the field of design and architecture.

How did your studios decide to collaborate on this project?

SV: The proposed Iconic Mosque at Dubai Creek Harbour was an Open International Design Competition by Emaar Dubai. The brief of the competition project was intriguing but complex. Both the studios have collaborated in the past owing to a shared design vision and technical capabilities. This was a moment in professional time-space to test our collective skillset on an iconic project. Additionally, since both the studios have interests in computational design, this was an opportunity to bring forth an innovative design idea that could be a landmark space in future, while borrowing deep rooted principles from the past.
What do such collaborations bring about in the process of design?

**AB:** We believe that every studio has a specific interest and modus operandi. Collaborations through design competitions provide a platform for design firms to learn from one another. As a 40-year-old practice, Design Plus Architects has the expertise on large scale public space design, which was very much required for a project of this scale and functional complexity. ratLAB has been one of the emerging and impactful global studios that has developed its expertise in computational design and collaborative projects. When extremely varied skill sets combine, amazing project outputs can be expected; something that this collaboration surely brought forward.

**Are industry collaborations the future of architectural workflows?**

**SV:** Architecture has always been a collaborative process, wherein different organizations and people with their respective strengths, creative and technical, come together to make things work. I see industry collaborations serving a big role to the architecture community. These bonds will eventually upgrade design quality owing to more intense brainstorming sessions, exchange of ideas, increase in solutions to the issues faced during the design process of a project. As technology has made such collaborations much easier, exchange of design cultures will result in functional, sustainable, and smart design solutions.

**How does one envision a sacred and holy place in the middle of an urban setting?**

**AB:** The enticing site, neighbouring Santiago Calatrava’s Dubai Creek Tower, with its strong mathematical and geometric structure inspired the Mosque design to follow the contextual guidelines. We re-envisioned contemporary mosque architecture using an advanced computational approach strengthened by strong research on religious aspects. The mosque borrows its design from clues that are hidden at various scales. At the largest scale, the inclination towards Mecca is the obvious driver for internal circulation and orientations. The Mecca axis is observed in the prayer hall. The structural system aligns itself to this axis by completing a visual reference to an archway. This visual expanse culminates at the Zenith of the Grand Roof.

This is complemented by an extremely strong urban context, at the helm of which is the iconic tower designed by Santiago Calatrava. It further accentuates the strong geometry that exists in the master plan of Emaar’s Dubai Creek Harbour. A large urban scale dome is positioned at the locus of Dubai Creek Tower Plaza as a representation of Qubba. This projects its segmental geometry onto the Grand Roof of Crescent.

A thoroughfare pedestrian access through the Mosque is provided to retain the notion of an Urban Axis and also to accentuate views within the mosque towards Dubai Creek Tower.

A set of 5 semi-arch columns with differentiated proportions form the Grand Archway Entrance to Crescent – The Iconic Mosque. The Archway is aligned perpendicular to the Urban Axis that originates from Dubai Creek Tower and acts as a natural extension of its plaza.

**What makes The Crescent Mosque iconic?**

**SV:** The Crescent is a symbol of humility; it is an acknowledgement of religion; celebration of culture; re-discovery of ancient knowledge.
The principles of mathematics bind the design together, calculating patterns, proportions, geometry and even experience. The Grand Roof, for example, indexes towards the infinite and hence the heavens. These are essentially to bind the past, present and eternity. The structure system is developed based on the numerically dominant number 19. There are 114 columns (19x6), equivalent to as many Surahs within the Quran, which are articulated as 114 column elements that are aligned to form archways in an infinity perspective. One needs to look for arches to find God.

The roof is geometrically developed as a peeled surface from the build space of the mosque. The fourth vertex of the roof is lifted up to a height of 57 meters, a factor of 19 (19X3=57), which has a strong mathematical significance in The Holy Book. This vertex is the highest point in Crescent and signifies the orientation towards infinity as a gesture from any point in the mosque. The roof rises up with a logarithmic rise to ensure a walk-able gentle slope on 50% of the roof surface, while the other 50% steeply rises to give a drastic effect of a Crescent.

What are the key elements that contribute to the iconicity of the Crescent Mosque as well as the elements of a traditional mosque?

AB: Let me start with the Urban Axis – the prominent urban axis originating from Dubai Creek Tower has a visual strength that is retained within The Iconic Mosque by creating a physical and visual articulation by aligning of Main Entrance into the Front Courtyard and puncturing of the roof through a thin screen made of geometric Islamic pattern. A thoroughfare pedestrian access through the Mosque is provided to retain pedestrian circulation on the Urban Axis and also to accentuate views within the mosque towards Dubai Creek Tower.

The Minarets rise up from the roof structure pattern made by crossbeams creating triangular cells, two of which rise up to form vertical circulation elements. One triangular profile rises
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up to form a minaret that shares the highest point in Crescent with the Zenith towards Mecca.

Another very interesting feature of Islamic Architecture is the Zenith. We tried to design the zenith of the roof in such a way that it indicates a visual orientation for the thousands of worshippers to look towards Mecca as a heavenly direction towards infinity.

**How does one approach religious architecture in contemporary times?**

**SV:** At an architectural scale, we admired and critiqued the components of Islamic Architecture like the Dome, Arch, Column and presented our interpretations for the same. The tranquility of the ambient environment is enhanced by the geometric jaali and flooring patterns, filtering diffused light indoors.

We studied a broad range of conventional arch-systems and two significant arch systems are used to derive the morphology of the element. Parabolic Curve and Semi-circular curve are placed in an inverted and standard configuration, respectively, to form the geometric profile of a single column element. Shifting of alternate column grids allows an appearance of a series of arches in perspective from visual arches.

The Semi-Arch Column is a novel articulation of traditional Islamic elements of space and forms a key aspect of the Mosque. Human proportions are utilized as a factor of dimensional differentiation of the element that spreads across the Mosque to create a variety of arches with 114 distinct elements.

**What essence of a traditional mosque did you seek to retain in your design?**

**AB:** We looked into the planning of a traditional mosque and understood its significance. The gateways, waterbody, courtyard, minarets are all articulated to fit into our contemporary design. The Qibla is interpreted as a fragmented wall towards the direction of Mecca and can be seen from all parts of the Prayer Hall. The Minbar of The Qibla Wall is located in the central colonnade axis for a maximized visibility for worshipers.

A set of clues were also borrowed from the religious belief system, that operates closely with design intentions and metaphors. The structure system is developed based on the numerically dominant number 19.

Why 19? Number 19 as is mentioned in the Quran in Surah 74 verse 30. The student of the scriptures will find enough evidence that the mathematical code, based on number 19, was used for the previous scripture as well. The number 19 possesses unique mathematical properties, for example: It is a prime number, only divides by itself and one. It encompasses the first numeral (1) and the last numeral (9), as if to proclaim God’s attribute in 57:3 as the “Alpha and the Omega”.

Number 19 is the numerical value of the word “ONE” in all the scriptural languages, Aramaic, Hebrew, and Arabic. The number 19, therefore proclaims the First commandment in all the scriptures: that there is only ONE GOD. The word “ONE” “Wahid” in reference to God, in the Quran, is used 19 times. Is it a coincidence?

**HAUD (Ritual Ablution pool) plays a vital role in Islamic traditions. How have you incorporated that in this modern design?**

**AB:** Three water-bodies are strategically placed in the Open Courtyard oriented in the column-grid that is aligned towards Mecca direction. The water body is enclosed by a seating on three sides which merge into the ground as a gesture of bowing down towards Mecca direction. Each water body has 5 column-elements that form sets of semi-circular arches with their reflections in perspective, and also control the micro-climate in the open courtyard.
How were interiors designed with the mathematical aspect and traditional culture of Islamic Architecture?

SV: Interiors is also a spellbinding part of the iconic mosque. I would like to first talk about the peripheral jaali that we designed. A large peripheral screen bounds The Iconic Mosque on all four sides with an intricate Islamic pattern Jaali that changes in porosity to control the visual connect and light filtering. The 10 m. high boundary wall comprises of 7 m. high metal Jaali that visually blocks view at human eye level by the concentration of geometry vertically. The pattern is mathematically configured to allow visibility and porosity with 30% open and 70% closed to give a visually free boundary around the Mosque.

White marble flooring with an inlay of Gold forms the ground texture of the entire Iconic Mosque as a continuous pattern to keep a monotone spiritual quality. The gold inlay represents the richness of material and is articulated as an intricate geometric pattern that is a derivative of a typical Islamic pattern controlled by a mathematical scaling down towards the column-elements.

Even the edges of triangular coffer cells of the grand roof are made in linear gold ornamentations that reflect light to accentuate the pattern. The roof eventually converges towards the zenith of the roof.

What are some of the common elements that are found in the traditional mosque and how differently have they been articulated in this complex design?

AB: Mecca Axis is the strongest axis for a mosque and is clearly formed in Crescent by aligning towards the perspective of semi-arch columns that combine visually to form a colonnade of arches. The Mecca axis is observed in prayer hall interior space as everything is aligned towards Mecca through visual arches and from outside by looking at Zenith of the Grand Roof.

A lower-most yet prominent point in the site which is directly below zenith acts as a focal point of Crescent – The Iconic Mosque when seen from West direction – Creek. Peripheral Jaali of South and West boundary walls meet at this point at Ground Zero to accentuate the peeled off roof surface that rises up till 57m.

Minbar of The Qibla Wall set as a platform for the preacher of the Mosque for proceedings, is located in the central colonnade axis for a maximized visibility for worshipers.

The Mihrab of Crescent is designed as an element of grandeur in the interior space made by joining of two semi-arch columns to form a set of pointed arches that repeat as linear forces to demonstrate grandeur and a symbol of heavenly abode. A niche is created within Mihrab that is clad with rich gold finish to symbolize prosperity.

How does your background in computational design aid in the design of religious architecture?

SV: Computational Design allowed us to investigate geometrical and structural explorations with freedom and precision.

The structural pattern of the roof is a reflection of segmented Qubba (Dome) that is formed on the zenith that intersects with a large circular Boolean originating from the Plaza of Dubai Creek Tower. The imaginary Qubba is radially subdivided into triangular facets that are projected onto the stretched roof surface and structural cross-beams emerge to form walk-able pathways. The edges of triangular coffers of roof are made in linear gold ornamentations that reflect light to accentuate the pattern that converges towards the zenith of the roof.

According to you, how does technology affect culture and religion?

SV: Computational design gave us the flexibility to test new methods in design that has a strong influence of Islamic architecture in it. A plethora of geometries were analysed keeping in mind the master number 19. For instance, Mecca Axis is the strongest axis for a mosque and is clearly formed in Crescent by aligning towards the perspective of semi-arch columns that combine visually to form a colonnade of arches. The Mecca axis is observed in prayer hall interior space as everything is aligned towards Mecca through visual arches and from outside by looking at Zenith of the Grand Roof.

Application of these design tools in the real-world scenario has made people feel more approachable to God.

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Lingel: Modernizing India’s Fenestration Industry

Mario Schmidt, Managing Director, Lingel India and Germany, is considered a pioneer, technical expert, and marketing whiz, having steered the success of the Lingel brand across India in a span of about 14 years. He is today the face of the company for leading developers, interior designers, and architects. His passion and dedication towards growing his company and his focus on bringing the latest technological advancements in his products have brought about a marked modernisation of the fenestration system. This feature highlights the lesser-known facts about his professional journey, his business acumen, and his strong customer-centric approach that has won him accolades in his field of work and many friends too in the fenestration fraternity.

Growing the Lingel brand in India

My journey was not an easy one. In 2006, when I came to India, the market was just emerging for UPVC. Since very few companies were aware of UPVC as a fenestration material, I had the Herculean task of creating awareness for the product, and later on, with a meagre workforce I established a factory in Bhiwadi, Rajasthan.

It has been over 14 years in India. We have been one of the pioneers of UPVC in India, when there were very few players in the market. Since then we have created a niche and have a well-defined customer base. We are well known in the industry for our technical expertise. Since I have been with the company since its start, I have built a strong market for Lingel products and a long-lasting connect with our customers.

Challenges I encountered in the Indian market

When I came to India, I did not even know English, but I learnt it and also adapted myself to the country’s traditions and culture. And now I am adept at travelling around the country and I have created a customer base pan India.

Leading by example

Mario Schmidt has been leading the Lingel brand for uPVC and Alu windows and doors since 2006. He is passionate about his field of work, forward looking, well-aware of technological advancements, and totally unassuming. A stickler for time, he leads by example, and his team follows suit.

Over the years he has built a strong core team that manages end-to-end solutions for customers from generating leads to installation. He believes in imbibing and sharing knowledge and inspiring his team to explore new fenestration technologies. He holds a dealer meet (online) every Saturday where he discusses the products and the technologies in detail - for the learning experience of his team and the dealers.

Academic achievements

My academic portfolio includes a Bachelor’s with a German certification for ‘Master Craftsman for Windows and Furniture Design’ and an MBA in Business Economist from Handwerkskammer Chemnitz Germany. After completing Mechanical Science in the year 1944 I realised I had an inclination for fenestration, so I pursued it. I was also the youngest GM at the German state Saxony, when I joined the fenestration industry in 1994. In 2016, I also completed a Global Management course at the University of California, Berkeley.

His specialties include management, corporate development, product development, business operations, strategy, and developing customer relations. His company works closely with Indian government bodies BIS, BEE, MSDE as well as German government bodies GIZ and DEG.
Making an indelible mark on India’s fenestration industry

Someone with little or no knowledge of the English language, the Indian market, and the culture and traditions of the country, when he first came to India in 2006, his achievements in growing the Lingel brand across the country in a span of a little over 14 years is indeed commendable.

Today, Lingel ranks amongst the top ten companies in the industry. It is hardly surprising then that Mario has been honoured with several prestigious awards like India’s Top Mind 2020 by The Brand Story; ACETECH’s Design Wall Gold Winner Award in 2014 and again in 2016, the Franchise India’s Magpie Estate Awards, Realty Fact, ZAK Award 2017 and 2018, and more.

He was a founding member of the uPVC window and door manufacturer association UWDMA in 2008; technical head between 2008 till 2016 and has been its President since 2016. Given his deep knowledge of products and of various industries, and his oratory skills, he is invited to numerous discussions and conferences as a panellist. The modernization of India’s fenestration industry can be duly attributed to him.

The fenestration market of India was very disorganised and there were many players selling UPVC. I was one of the pioneer members of UWDMA (a non-governmental organization formed by industry leaders to promote and propagate uPVC windows and doors and its benefits to the Indian construction industry and the public at large). Since the inception of UWDMA in 2008 the unorganized market size has reduced significantly, and the market share of UPVC window and door manufacturers has increased. Over the years, the Association has become stronger with more members keen to follow the guidelines to create quality products.

Currently, the Indian market for windows and doors is around Rs. 14,000-15,000 crore. For the past few years, the market for aluminium windows and doors is also gaining popularity. As per our research, the marked size for UPVC profiles and UPVC windows together in India is around Rs. 2000 crore.

I am of the belief that growth can only come through innovation

The opportunities are endless, and one has to be farsighted to achieve a greater result. During the past 14 years I have contributed by knowledge and expertise in the field of fenestration to the industry, and have innovated with systems like Lingel alu 6.0, Smart Li (wi-fi operated windows) to the latest in glazing and hardware. The Lingel Security DAYS 2020 is the latest product that I have introduced as due to Covid-19 customers became more concerned about protecting their homes from potential negative external forces, including pollution. These security windows make our customers feel
The customer always expects new products, and we have to ensure that we can offer the best solutions. I have often told my team and even my customers: “Easy projects anyone can do but if you have something challenging and difficult then come to me.” I enjoy challenges and finding solutions to them!

more secure at their homes and keep their loved ones safe too. We have achieved this from the right combination of glazing, hardware and locking system in the windows. For security glazing systems we offer options like LPG 14 Lingel Panzer Glazing 14mm multilayer security glass; LPG 18 Lingel Panzer Glazing 18 mm superior performance glass; Lingel Safety box 2 (LBS 2), which is Lingel’s highest point of locking security. The introduction of the mortise locking system is an additional feature that can be provided.

I can proudly say that 50 percent of our orders are repeat orders

I want to see Lingel become a company that is known for its quality and expertise. Every Lingel family member has to rise to the challenge of keeping the customers happy and selling not just windows but building a relationship with them – a relationship of trust. Today, I can proudly say 50 percent of our orders are repeat orders.

But here again I would like to position our company with all our high-end individual designs differently. Our in-house R&D and our designers working on their computer systems with the best available software are the backbone of the signature projects which we are working on.

What India means to me

I love this place and for 14 years now this is my home. I have been fortunate to have come across so many people because of my work and the friends I have made are going for be there for the rest of my life.

Lingel’s country-wide presence has made me visit almost all the places across the country. From the Himalayas to Tamil Nadu, from the north east till Gujarat, each region has its uniqueness. I have invited many of my German friends to discover with me the beauty of India.

What I like about India: The warm welcome and the respect given. With an open heart I have been welcomed at so many places and since I am always positive and usually very funny I found many friends in the industry as well as my customers.

Why I will continue to stay and work in India: I consider Lingel India as my own child, since its inception till date. It’s now at the age of being a wild teenager and still needs a lot of attention and guidance. In short, I think I found my destiny when I came to this country and along with Lingel India there is a long, long way for me to go.

Most of my time is dedicated to the company and I am passionate about its growth and advancement. And when I am not working or travelling for work I surely love to listen to some music. I used to be in a music band in my college days and I enjoy strumming the guitar off and on. I speak both German and English fluently and I enjoy pastas, burgers, and iced tea.
Indian homes have shed stereotypes. No doubt that they reflect Indian-ness, but, they have beautifully adopted the hues and shades of their global peers. Astonishingly, interior decoration is no longer a takeaway only for the upper-class. Increasing purchasing power, backed by the zeal for visual appeal, continues to encourage even the middle-class to make a beeline for it.

Two dreamers took a cue from this new normal and came up with a home interiors outlet in the heart of Jaipur. Launched this August, Virasat Gallery is the brainchild of Akbar Khan and Salman Danish Khan, who portray their showroom as an exponent of legacy. No wonder they christened it ‘Virasat’.

What’s on display is an idyllic and chic setting dotted with unorthodox vases, artistic lamps, vintage lanterns, ceiling lights, bespoken wall-décor, off-beat figurines, artificial plants, and wooden furniture. If gifts are what you seek, then the options range from blue pottery and metallic cutlery, to fragrances and handy artefacts. Peppered all over are beams of incandescent light that make you sink into the visual appeal.
"It's all a manifestation of your creative streak. Aesthetics are intrinsic and should be brought to the fore - time and again. There's no better way than to adorn homes or any liveable area for that matter," says Co-Founder Akbar Khan, an old-hand at home-improvement. "Home-décor is not merely decorating your house; it's a reflection of your persona."

When asked about what's in vogue with the Pink City's interior lovers, Akbar informs: "Well, the concept of home décor is fast changing. People don't just want a decorated house: what they seek is the right decorative item for a particular place. In my opinion, architects and interior designers have played a vital role in helping the clients to go for most visually appealing and befitting interiors."

"Wall-art, for example, is no longer clichéd. Recently, one of Jaipur's most renowned hoteliers shared with us the proposition of decorating the hotel lobby with metallic dragonflies. And we churned out exactly what he was looking for. Rustic wall-mirrors, antiquated platters, treelike wall-hangings, and murals are our specialties as well."

Talking about a residential apartment, which he recently decorated at Sirsi Road, Akbar says: "The client wanted a creative but off-beat wall hanging. So, we customised a Buddha mural that was made with MDF panels."

"Lamps," he adds, "are a sensation. From prisms and cuboids, to monuments and animal themes, they now come in innovative shapes." He shows a horse lamp where a stallion with uplifted front hooves is shadowed by a white shade. Next to it is a golden dolphin lamp crested with a black cover. A pair of miniature Eiffel Towers rises from the backdrop. Akbar advises: "From an aesthetic point of view, two lamps are better than one; so I tell my clients to go for a pair."

This trend is visible in lanterns too. "At Virasat, we design both indoor and outdoor lanterns with vintage as the unwavering theme. While antiquated lanterns continue to enjoy popularity, bird-nests and cocoons are making their presence felt too," he says.

As the probing gaze wanders across the gallery, an optical illusion of sorts catches the attention. It's accompanied by uncanny swirls, curls, and kinks. "That's what we call modern figurines. Steel is their basic component, as it can be moulded without much fuss. And it's immune to rust and weathering. At times, even we are astonished by the quirky patterns that can be given to figurines."

Hanging from the ceiling are bunches of conical and spherical lights. Crafted with cast metal, their diverse colour themes and focused illumination is befitting for cafés, parlours, and restaurants. "We have designed conical lights for a nearby café in C-Scheme, Jaipur's most plush locality," informs Akbar.

A pair of teakwood chairs in dark brown and quaint seat covers dominate the furniture contingent that comprises couches, poufs, nesting tables, chestnut drawers, bedside tables, and centre-tables. Akbar informs: "We are going to add bars soon to this segment. Be it readymade or customised, Teakwood furniture is in vogue these days."

Since interior décor is an inexhaustible category, change is the only constant. So, what can we expect in the near future? "Well, you can expect innovation, novelty, and a fusion of contemporary with the quaint. We will keep diversifying our offerings in tune with the clients' requirements," he concludes.
A Contemporary Vision of a Next-Gen Store

**MVRDV** has renovated a 19th century Haussmann building by removing internal barriers and adding a glass floor to allow light to fill the interiors in the new flagship store in Paris for French lingerie brand Etam.

In the design, respect for the historic building and commitment to preservation is combined with a unique shopping experience. MVRDV’s design takes advantage of the building’s wedge-shaped floor plan by stripping back the exterior as much as possible – highlighting the building’s clean classical appearance, allowing plenty of light to enter the Etam store from both sides, and creating large windows for display. In the interiors, the design reveals the original stone structure in an elegantly simple way – removing a part of the entresol floor above and most of the interior walls.
The most striking alteration is a glass floor at ground level, which allows light to penetrate to the basement level and makes a captivating experience as visitors see products and people on the level above or below. This floor is treated with a special film that makes it transparent when viewed at an angle, but clouded when viewed from directly above or below, providing privacy and preventing vertigo for those standing on the glass floor. The revealing – but directional – glassification of the store allows for a delicate balance between transparency and privacy. The result is a spectacular play of transparency, a mix of beautiful raw materials, and technical feats.

The basement is accessed by a grand central staircase. These stairs, as well as the flooring of the basement level and the back of the ground level, are finished with a light-coloured wood laid on its end, inspired by the cobbled streets that were widely used in Paris in the 19th century. The pattern created by this flooring was also developed into the non-slip pattern applied to the glass floor, unifying the two flooring types into a single whole.

Images: © Ossip van Duivenbode
Year 2020. The year of challenges and acing them. Beautifully.

Opportunities are bigger than challenges.

While the world is crumbling for work-from-home, there is a new gateway of opportunity open for the furniture industry. The need for readymade furniture and high density MDF products by furniture exporters and OEMs is growing by the day, and as a result, there is a new spike in demand of wood panels that are suitable for readymade furniture. Greenpanel is India’s largest wood panel products manufacturer, and is accepting the new challenge as an opportunity. Its state-of-the-art manufacturing unit is not just making MDF for India, but also for the world.

Acing the product solutions.

Since it is home-office furniture that we’re talking, people want it to also add to the aesthetic value of their homes and it should also be health-friendly. Greenpanel offers them solutions that fit their requirements to the T. With a wide range of wood panels that includes MDF, Plywood, Veneers, Doors and Flooring, users can easily experiment with furniture and interiors to make what they want, and the way they want it.

We stand stronger than the problem.

Be it the working class or business class, people have had the experience of staying at home and have also experienced the monotony of furniture that they’ve been using for years. So, they want to change. For this, Greenpanel Club Grade HMR MR provides an interesting solution - a great combination of high water resistance property, resistance to termite, fungus and boron proof, high density, smooth surface for ease of paint and many more.

So, not just home-office furniture, the houses, the villas can imagine and design exactly what they have in mind, and not be afraid of its longevity.

Blessed by nature.

Greenpanel is committed to providing high performance wood panel products that adhere to the Indian and international standards. That’s not all, our manufacturing plants operate on zero wastage systems. Be it wood scraps being used for fuel or water treatment plant that helps in having clean water. The production process also doesn’t harm the environment, Savings are given to the farmers to encourage agroforestry and generate a source of livelihood for them. Thus, making ‘sustainability’ as one of the key drivers for the brand.

Greenpanel. Limitless Possibilities. The pride of India. India’s Largest Wood Panel Manufacturer

MGS - Modern Green Structure & Architecture
December 2020

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Taking cognizance of the desert climate of its location with temperatures exceeding 35°C for most of the year, each of the classrooms is north oriented to derive indirect sunlight. The auditorium, primary school, and administration areas occupy the southern side of the plot, opening into a large sheltered open area towards the north, beyond which the secondary school classrooms, library and cafeteria are located.

The semi-sheltered courtyard has multiple angular pathways, connecting the two parts of the school with landscaped play spaces that foster engagement. Traversed by a series of linear trapezoidal frames and sun-breakers, this focal area has a constantly changing shadow pattern, depending on the sun’s direction throughout the day. The layout is intentionally fragmented, allowing open landscaped spaces to be interspersed with the school’s learning spaces.

Imbibing the organic character of Indian villages and old cities, the Rajasthan School designed by Sanjay Puri Architects is a low rise three-level building with open, enclosed, and semi-enclosed spaces of various volumes.

The organic layout creates a different character to each part of the school orienting each space with different views and different perceptions. The informal layout, interspersed open and enclosed volumes, are designed in response to the hot climate, creating a school that is exploratory in multiple ways.

Sanjay Puri, Principal Architect

The entire school opens towards a multipurpose playground and athletics track on the northern side. The entire circulation is through naturally ventilated corridors traversing and skirting the focal semi-sheltered landscaped court in the center. Angled vertical walls act as sun breakers to reduce heat gain from the east, west and south sides, generating cooler internal spaces. The complete electrical power requirement is generated by the residual energy of a cement plant nearby. In addition, the entire water is recycled and reused. The building by its design is thus extremely energy efficient.
A kitchen lasts for about 20 years on an average, making it essential to think about user convenience in the long-term at the planning stage itself. By simulating practical situations – such as cooking, opening, and closing cabinets, tidying up – we gain important insights which can be incorporated in the development of new products. This ensures that kitchen buyers of all ages will enjoy using their new kitchens for many years to come.

Keeping innovation and practicality at its core, furniture fittings manufacturer Blum has introduced the AGE EXPLORER® suite in its newly launched 2500 sq. ft. showroom in Andheri East, Mumbai. The components of the suite simulate typical physical limitations that can occur in old age.

Blum makes everyday furniture easier to use; its innovative lift, cabinet door and drawer systems open with a smooth glide and close with a smooth soft action. The showroom presents hinges, pull-outs and lift systems inside a real kitchen to give visitors a “live” experience. The company also offers drilling, insertion machines and assembly devices at its in-house training center.

To cater to the needs of the growing Indian market, the brand has introduced some of their award-winning products like AVENTOS HK top, SPACE STEP, Onyx Black Hinges, and more. The products have gained massive global recognition over the years with awards like Germany’s Red Dot Design Award and iF Gold Award, amongst others, for their minimalist design and practicality. Each product is crafted keeping in mind simplicity and dynamic space utilization. For example, AVENTOS HK top is an innovative lift mechanism that brings premium quality motion to wall cabinets with ease, blending discreetly into tall units and wall cabinets. SPACE STEP, offers extra storage space in plinths and allows easy access to top cabinets.
Adaptive Reuse

KCAP + Orange Architects in consortium with A.Len Architectural Bureau are working to transform a former railway yard on Ligovsky Prospekt into a new residential district with communal facilities, retail, and extensive greenery with linear parks and landscaped boulevards.

The carefully planned intervention is an adaptive re-use that promotes new urban life, based on a mix of historical and modern structures. The industrial morphology of the area, with the rails and loading platforms, creates a beautiful and well-organized pattern that becomes the basis of the design idea. The architects want to re-use the spatial organisation of the site, placing buildings varying between 6 and 15 floors height on the pre-existing platforms. For the typical Ligovsky building, bigger and smaller volumes are stacked with contrasting industrial facades recalling the heritage of the site. The base volumes located along the main boulevards provide a special plinth with a height of one or two floors, which will create an interface between the buildings and the streets or parks. The rail tracks are interpreted as linear parks.
The architects made a precise inventory of what could be reused and integrated in the public space: small buildings, blue cranes, tracks, poles, to give historical depth and atmosphere to the new neighbourhood. The long green corridors in the building fabric of Ligovsky City, running along the North-South direction, offer many opportunities for spending quality time outdoors, from walkways to quiet corners, and from running tracks to yoga fields.

In the north of the site, the buildings are combined into an urban ensemble, which creates a strong and recognizable entrance, opposite the new metro station “Borovaya”. The area will be the new urban center for Ligovsky and the point of attraction for St. Petersburg. To the South, the section narrows, and the buildings grow upwards, where three towers create a strong building edge. Ligovsky City is a project where the proposed industrial character of the urban solution and the architecture preserves the memory of a place and emphasizes its unique character and at the same time creates a modern, dynamic, and high-quality green residential area.

Visuals: © KCAP / © Orange/ © A.Len
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General V. K. Singh (Retd.),
Minister of State for Road transport and Highways, Government of India, New Delhi

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Designing New Ways of Working

The primary objective of the design of Colliers International India’s new workplace in Bengaluru is to bring together a diverse workforce representing respective service lines, and encourage collaboration for idea generation and business creation.

The 21000 sq.ft office is on the first floor of Sunningdale building located in Embassy Golf Links Business Parks - the heart of the town. Expansive glazing on three sides bring abundance natural light indoors and give splendid views of the landscape and waterbodies around.

The office also represents an amalgamation of cultures, after Colliers acquired controlling stake in Synergy last year. The primary concept embodies Colliers global workspace strategy known as PACE, which translates into Productive Active Collaborative & Enterprising workspaces. The floor plan represents spaces, categorized as Primary, Choice, Meeting and Social, creating a high energy, efficient, and inspiring workplace. The idea is to create a flexible and agile setting, popularly known as Activity Based Workspace, promoting cross team collaboration. A plethora of collaborative spaces include a Customer Experience Centre, an Amphitheatre, Quiet Zone (booths), Gym, Library lounge, Mother’s room, and social spaces.

The reception area has a warm wooden panel with live plants. A seamless micro concrete floor runs throughout the main circulation passages. Block prints of Indian motifs in blue bring the local flavour into the context. The hexagonal motif also decorates the glass panels of the meeting rooms. The Experience Centre is a large open space with a video wall for client presentations. A foldable glass wall separates it from the Boardroom which is equipped with audio video systems for large group presentations and conferences, and a mix of ergonomic chairs and lounge seats.
Colliers drew upon its strong Project Management capabilities to execute the state-of-the-art office. Increasing the spacing in the workplace, reconfiguring meeting rooms, optimized use of technology for touchless experience, and collaboration with distancing provide a safe, high performing environment.

Ashish Puri, Director, Interior Design Services

The primary workplaces are open, without any false ceiling. Planters improve the indoor air quality while also acting as acoustic screens, absorbing unwanted soundwaves. The social and collaboration spaces are defined using semi open screens and warm decorative lights. The flooring in blue colour carpet reflects the Colliers brand identity. The Meeting rooms have acoustic panelling and false ceiling, LED screens, and sit-to-stand worktables.
A lot of thought was given into the layout of the project to yield the maximum use of the existing natural vista. The arc-shaped layout comprises three types of villas in varying sizes, a clubhouse, and large landscaped areas, giving it a resort-like ambience. The inspiration behind the design and the project’s highlight is the long, unbroken stretch of water body. To keep the view of the dam undisturbed, the water body stretch has been laid with stepped landscaping.

Courtyards decorated with Buddha sculpture, plumeria and date palms are amongst the most used architectural elements by the architect. All the villas have a courtyard as the center of attraction, while sloping roofs, date palms, landscaping with date palms, plumeria etc., and a swimming pool are the other attractive features.

Flora Riverside

Situated on the riverside of Machhu river, the Flora Riverside designed by Ishwar Gehi Architects, reflects a context responsive design with a balance of hard and soft landscape elements.

Evening view of the clubhouse with the stepped gardens
Courtyards when inculcated in a design, not only add character to the space but also act as a climate responsive element

*Ar. Ishwar Gehi*
Ambience of the courtyard of the bungalow at dusk.

Fact File
Client: Florentina Reality
Location: Morbi
Site Area : 49955 sqm
Total Built-up Area : 17690 sqm
Number of Units: 84 villas
Cost: Rs 29 cr (approx.)
Architect, Interior Design & Landscaping: Ar. Ishwar Gehi
Structural Engineer: Ashvin Lodhiya

The garden and the waterbody lit by the ambient lighting.
Setting the Mood

Czech lighting giant Sans Souci has illuminated Nautilo Restaurant in Lübeck, Germany, with a dynamic lighting installation.

The Nautilo Restaurant features a whimsical marine ambiance. Located on the banks of the River Trave in the historic Old Town, the restaurant also houses Sans Souci’s awe-inspiring, underwater-themed light installation - reminiscent of an underwater world complete with giant jellyfish. Sans Souci collaborated with designer Ulrike Krages from UK2 Urban Architecture Studio to craft a special clump of giant jellyfish made of crystal pearls, perfectly balanced in different sizes of the hand-blown crystal bubbles.

Furthermore, this unique light installation sets the mood and enhances the entire atmosphere of the restaurant by offering up to 99 programs and colour combinations that can be simply changed through an app on a mobile device.

Sans Souci’s aim is to play with light and explore its form in different dimensions. It draws on the experiences of past generations of glass-makers, with the quality of work defined by the purely Czech origin of their products. The company is renowned for crafting bespoke decorative lighting fixtures, glass objects and architecture features for projects around the world. It is a master in creating original architectural features such as railings, stairways, tables, skylights, columns, and others.
Inspired by English Heraldic Architecture, the luxury villas exude a sense of aristocracy and royalty. Its colonial Georgian architecture showcases grand entrances and symmetrical windows with crown headers, Georgian window dormas, and manicured landscapes. The facade features Georgian style balconies with intricate detailing. The grand entrance opens to a double height foyer with a skylight above.

The project’s 8 luxury condominiums spread over 19,000 sqft are adorned with a select royal palette of willow trees, winterberry, seashell and other hues, with complementary furnishings, to create grand living rooms and distinguished spaces handsomely named Alexander Hall, Eaton Hall, William Hall etc - each name an ode to the legacy of the residents of the original Grosvenor House in London. A-la-carte services include a house butler, chauffeur-driven luxury cars, curated menus, and house guards. The Grosvenor House ‘Coat of Arms’ pays tribute to the village of Assagao a village in Bardez, Goa, popularly known as the Land of Flowers.

The condominiums have an open layout plan with the living, dining and kitchen spaces flowing into each other and overlooked by a private living space on the upper level, while the ground floor condominiums open out to their own private gardens. Each unit features a theme-based design and customization, high-end specifications, and detailing. Magnificent Victorian-style interiors offer the most modern comforts and are replete with chandeliers, Italian marble flooring, wall-art, marble-top dining tables and grandiose bedrooms. Use of premium materials, single stone Italian marble, top of the range sanitaryware, and contemporary furniture, add to the opulence.
This uber luxury project reflects international standards in high-end living and takes its design inspiration from the Renaissance era. It is expected to be delivered by December 2022 and the units are priced at Rs 2.4 crore onwards. The unique services and bespoke customizations add value to the price and stature of the project.

Lincoln Benet Rodrigues, Founder & Chairman, Bennet & Bernard Group

We believe that true luxury stems from exclusivity, hence, each home has its own story. These fully furnished signature residence homes by invitation are targeted at the upper-crust society, who look for exclusivity.

Lindsay Bernard Rodrigues, Co-Founder & Director, Bennet & Bernard Group

The Bennet & Bernard Group has quality as its core value; with every project marked by a unique theme. Like other projects of the Group, the Grosvenor House, once completed, will be a striking landmark with its arched gateways that lead to magnificent gardens.

Ar. Melville F. D’Souza, Designed Spaces
The design concept was curated by Lincoln Bennet Rodrigues, who informs that the architectural work is the combined effort of their in-house architects which include the ideation, drawings and planning, in consultation with architectural firm Designed Spaces, led by Ar. Melville D’Souza.

The project uses eco-friendly materials like fly ash blocks (a by-product produced after burning pulverized coal); autoclaved aerated concrete blocks (which being light in nature reduced the consumption of steel for structural loading); wood-plastic composites for certain exterior elements (which reduce maintenance and are made of recyclable plastic waste); solar power for exterior lighting and water heating; and exterior paving made of recyclable construction debris.
The Hermosa Wonder Factory is a state-of-the-art facility set to manufacture furniture and home decor pieces. Located 25 kms from Kota, Rajasthan, and covering an expanse of over 200k sq.ft, the factory not only brings to life technology and art with its futuristic appeal, but also ensures safety of all its staff employees. The concept was to create a modern-day philosophy of art converted into a natural form of architecture fitting into the bare landscape of the city.

The factory was designed in partnership with Schuler Consulting, a leading German technology and service company in the woodworking industry. Says Marc Pfetzing, Senior Manager, Schuler Consulting Asia, “Schuler together with Hermosa have set a new bar in production standards in India creating a world-class factory complementary to the Hermosa culture.”

In recent times, homebuyer tastes, especially in tier-II and Tier III cities, have evolved, along with a rise in demand for affordable housing, which has pushed for better growth prospects in the H&I market. Pranjal Agrawal, CEO, Hermosa Design Studio, who has a deep understanding of the concepts and styles of furniture design, has identified market gaps in these cities to craft home decor solutions with a premium aesthetic and functional appeal at an affordable price. Hermosa’s collection of eclectic high-design furniture ranges from home decor to office decor items including sofa sets, side tables, beds, TV units, cupboards, dressing tables, coffee tables, computer tables, chairs, storage cabinets, etc.
My vision for Hèrmosa as a hundred per cent ‘Made in India’ brand, has always been to give our customers in mini metros and towns premium designs with durability at affordable prices. Aligning with Industry 4.0 and mission Aatmanirbhar Bharat, this plant, designed with infrastructure investments of more than 30 crores, infuses the balance of art and technology into its structure and processes. Hèrmosa products come to life through the hands of skilled artisans, advanced technology, and mindfully sourced raw materials. The factory will help support our goal of 75-100 crore growth in the next three years from E-Comm, Exports and Co-living integration projects.

Pranjal Agrawal, CEO, Hèrmosa Design Studio
The brief was to renovate the 2,100 sqft Biodôme Shop to revive the user experience of the space, increase traffic, and stimulate sales. The proposed interior design communicates Espace pour la vie’s mission and contributes to visitors’ experience of the unique identity of the boutique while proposing a furniture arrangement that can adapt to the evolving needs of the client to ensure the sustainability of the installation.

Creating an Identity

Biomimicry is at the heart of the creative process of the boutique designed by ADHOC Architectes & MESSIER designers who are inspired by nature while respecting the surrounding architectural framework and spirit of the place.

The Biodôme is located in the old Vélodrome used for the Olympic Games of 1976. The building is characterized by its imposing concrete structure and a generous fenestration. Nestled inside the new towering white screens that weave through the framework of the building, the boutique is located at the end of the museum promenade. It must therefore communicate a coherency with the museum installations but also demarcate itself.
Exhaustive research on natural forms and cellular organization led the architects and designers to geometric explorations to determine which forms would be the most optimal and versatile. From the hexagon to the dodecahedron to the stucoid, the hexagonal frustum was finally chosen for this project’s particular needs. Several natural phenomena of different scales, like the creation of cells in a beehive, the erosion of rock formations, and the formation of basalt columns provided formal inspiration for the project. The design approach rests thus on the creation of simple elements (the cells) that can be spatially arranged and connected to construct complex modules. These modules, once combined, respond to the operational and functional need of showcasing products and defining space.

The furniture modules consist of three base elements to which accessories can be added. This concept allows for an almost infinite number of compositions and reconfigurations of the elements by moving, rotating, and assembling them in different ways. The configuration is thus able to adapt to the evolution of the boutique’s needs depending on changing sales and products. Each of the three base elements have a different size and are painted with a specific tint of white. Carefully chosen, the three tints of white break the uniformity of industrial production and express the natural variation of colors found in geological formations and in nature. The modular arrangement will allow the boutique manager to adapt their product line to respond to the variable number of visitors and to changing clientele preferences.

The main material used for the fabrication of the modules is laser-cut, folded, and welded steel covered with a heavy-duty baked-on polymer paint. Oak was favored for the wooden elements. These materials were chosen for their exceptional durability and minimal environmental footprint. The furniture can accommodate toys, plush toys, jewelry, sweets, books, and clothing. The space is minimalist in order to emphasize sustainable products and ensure smooth customer circulation.
The increasing preference towards energy-efficient electronics and rise in infrastructural activities is bringing growth in the LED segment. India’s goal to achieve ‘100% household electrification’ combined with the initiative for affordable housing will also provide a fillip to India’s lighting sector in the coming period. While future demand is ample, the LED producers need to nurture a strong and well-integrated supply chain to outperform their competitors and gain influence in the market.

The previous LED Expo (2019) edition brought together 295 exhibitors and 10,221 business visitors from across India; 4,527 were from the state of Maharashtra alone. The platform enabled players to share knowledge, build new networks, and reconnect with the industry players. Around 90% visitors comprised key decision makers such as entrepreneurs, co-owners, personnel from the top-management, as well as those heading the central management. Exhibitors were able to generate key leads and build lucrative connections. The fair also enabled visitors to expand their industry connections, resulting in an integrated network of 12,18,393 second-degree connections — all of which speaks volumes about the influence of the platform.

As India’s well-known exhibition that covers the entire value chain of the LED industry, the LED Expo has played a crucial role in keeping the LED supply chain knit together. As per a survey conducted by organizer Messe Frankfurt India, it was found that 88% of decision makers rely on exhibitions to make purchase decisions and 92.6% buyers affirmed that touch and feel of products, along with face-to-face interactions influenced their decisions.

Reconnecting Business Networks

The return of LED Expo Mumbai edition from 20 – 22 May 2021 will once again be a hotspot for the LED sector, where businesses can securely explore new innovations and renew their business connections, while collectively strengthening the LED supply chain.
Opportunities for domestic LED and lighting manufacturers

With the Indian government pulling the plug on LED imports, domestic manufacturers have a massive opportunity in their hands to expand their footprint in the market. LED exporters offering products at cheaper price have hitherto dominated the Indian market outselling even local businesses.

According to a recent report from the Electric Lamp and Component Manufacturers Association (ELCOMA), the Indian lighting market is expected to de-grow by Rs 30 billion between the years 2020-21 since the industry has faced a slowdown due to the recent nation-wide lockdown, followed by a slow recovery rate. However, the association is also certain that the Indian lighting industry can make a strong comeback through localization.

Affirming the industry’s potential to make a positive return, Shyam Sujan, Secretary General, ELCOMA, shares: “Although the lighting industry is currently facing a slowdown due to the global supply chain disruption, the industry is expected to bounce back stronger by gaining 5% year-on-year growth in the next three years, with the LED market occupying 92% share of the total lighting value. As the economy resettles, the step to localize the supply chain will definitely strengthen the industry and eventually help us become one of the major players in the global lighting segment.”

Even though a majority of LED assembly plants operate in India, a huge chunk of LED lights, tubes and chips are still being imported internationally, depicting the segment’s major dependency on imports. During a webinar on ‘Impact of Covid-19 on lighting industry’ organized by Messe Frankfurt India, industry players discussed the need for increasing domestic capabilities. “The Covid crisis has been an eye-opener for the LED industry. It is crucial for the Indian LED segment to encourage local manufacturers to start in-house production of goods and materials in order to make our supply chain self-reliant,” commented Divyansh Gupta, Managing Director, Kundan Edifice.

Innovation is the key to growth in every segment including the lighting industry, and Messe Frankfurt India’s building technology portfolio, which includes the country’s leading lighting fairs, have played a key role in showcasing the transition from CFLs to LEDs, and now moving towards solar-LEDs, smart lighting, and UV lighting innovations.

“As intelligent systems gradually gain the attention of modern consumers and advancements such as wireless, sensor-based and solar-based smart lighting, as well as enhanced technologies like Light Fidelity (Li-Fi) now coming up, this is the right time for sector players to strengthen their supply chains to meet market demand,” says Raj Manek, Executive Director & Board Member, Messe Frankfurt Asia Holdings Ltd.

Even on a national scale, the rapid adoption of energy-efficient street lighting systems, development schemes and upcoming smart building projects initiated by the government offer inordinate opportunities to domestic manufacturers to produce complete LED products within India. The ‘Make in India’ initiative and the recent call for ‘Atmanirbhar Bharat’ by the PM has brought focus on local manufacturing potential in the country. Localizing LED supply chain will be a prominent step as it will not only eliminate import costs, but also help India transform into a major exporter of LED goods in the coming years.

Apart from conventional lighting applications, LED technology is crucial for many major sectors such as automotive, infrastructure, hospitality, and health care (due to increasing need for UV disinfection). “In the current scenario, localizing LED supply chain will not only meet demand but also kindle a new confidence among domestic manufacturers, urging them to capitalize on the momentum,” observes Manek.
Faraz Aqil is aluplast India’s New Business Head

aluplast India has announced that it has appointed Faraz Aqil as its new Business Head, and member of the board in India. Aqil has over 20 years of dynamic experience in sales, strategic development, and plan execution. Prior to this, he was MD of Low & Bonar / Mehler in India, for almost 15 years, where he oversaw the growth of the company and earned a reputation as a strategist and reliable partner.

Aqil takes over a thriving business in India and will work closely with a core management team at the company’s headquarters in Germany to drive the business forward in India and beyond. Commenting on his new role, Aqil said, “I am happy to be joining the aluplast family and excited to lead the Indian business through its next phase. I am looking forward to fulfilling our long-term business goals, getting to know our partners personally, and expanding upon the motto of aluplast “Better Together, Stronger Together.”

Patrick Seitz, co-owner at the aluplast group of companies, and member of the board at aluplast India stated, “On behalf of the management, I am delighted to welcome Faraz to the aluplast family. His calm confidence, broad vision, and interpersonal qualities will be essential to the development of our fast-growing business in India, and we are confident that he will fit into the dynamics of our business.”

aluplast CEO Eric Bobay added, “It was challenging to make such an appointment within the confines of Covid-19 but we are confident that in Faraz we have picked the person to spearhead our business in India into the next decade.”

aluplast is one of the leading system providers of uPVC windows, doors, roller shutters and controlled domestic ventilation systems. The family-owned company headquartered in Karlsruhe, Germany, is today a global player with sales offices and production plants in 40 countries. With its wide product portfolio and pioneering innovations, the brand offers almost any conceivable window construction and variation.

Blum India appoints Nadeem Patni as new Managing Director

Blum, one of the world’s leading manufacturers of furniture fittings from Austria, is pleased to announce the appointment of Nadeem Patni as Managing Director of Blum India. In his new role, Nadeem will be managing business operations for Blum across South Asia, including India, Nepal, Bhutan, Sri Lanka, and Bangladesh. He comes with over 16 years of professional experience; having joined Blum when it was a mere liaison office in India, and has seen the inception of Blum India as a wholly owned subsidiary in 2017. Nadeem is keenly customer-centric in his business approach and has built a strong connect with business clients. His experience in training and quality has helped him drive many educative dialogues with clients about the importance of top-quality fittings in furniture. This has increased the acceptance of quality products, enhancing awareness of the Blum brand among the Indian and South Asian markets. He observes, “India is a multi-faceted, complex country with challenging markets that present some interesting opportunities where our decades of experience come into play.”
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Lingel - Panzer - Glazing 18 mm
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**LPG-X**
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**Type**

**LSB 1**
LINGEL SAFE BOX hardware to upgrade your existing Lingel window
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