

LEADING WHEN IT COMES TO TRENDS

GREENLAM INDUSTRIES
DIRECTOR PARUL MITTAL
TELLS US WHAT MAKES
THEM A GLOBAL LEADER

BY: **BW HOTELIER**

BW HOTELIER got an opportunity to speak with Parul Mittal, Director, Greenlam Industries, about how the company develop their products and what sets them apart from the competition. Mittal has been working with her company for many years and heads the team which develops and then sends out the products that you see across the face of many top hospitality brands. So, how does an Indian company very much based here become a global leader when it comes to laminates and veneers. Here is an excerpt from the chat.

BW Hotelier: When you look at Indian hospitality, how far is Indian hospitality compared to what you see abroad?

Parul Mittal: It is quite behind. In metro I'm still seeing that trend, I think we are catching up but we are very slow. The workmanship takes a beating. We are trying to follow those trends and make it very minimal and very contemporary, but



Photograph by Ritesh Sharma



somewhere our use of materials in my opinion is quite bad.

BWH: How are your product superior to what is available in the market globally?

PM: Our designs are superior. We also have some extra ordinary finishes which others cannot match. Quite a bit of work goes into each individual designs. We are now designing for products which will make it to the market only after one and a half years. We usually aim for the Interzum fare, where suppliers bring in their new design which is shared with us and we also introduce new patterns which we have developed. It takes a while. Our offices in UK works on their design and procurement, the office in Singapore works separately on researching about what their region want. Everything comes back here, and then we go back to the suppliers.

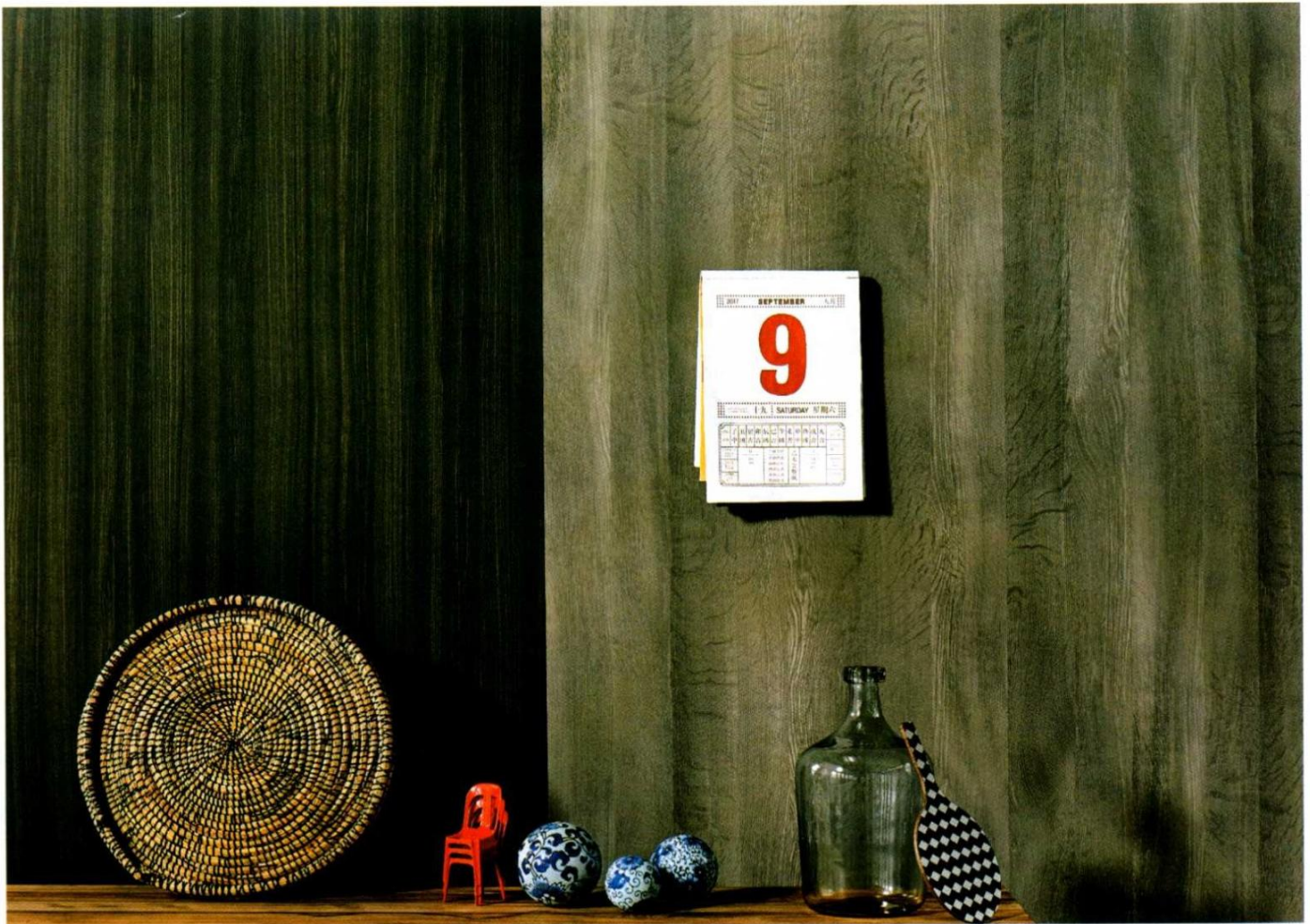
We also keep following trends like in Milan fairs,

Interzum and others. We draw inspiration from everything be it fashion or furniture. Whether its apparel or jewellery. There are two aspects to the product. One is a design part, the other is speaking about the application of the same. Recently we introduced something called an anti-fingerprint laminate which is an innovation for high traffic areas where you would want to have hygiene. There is another research team which works parallel to cater to the niche segments.

It's not just designs and patterns, its also the product that is introduced and used in the market.

BWH: How do you differ from the competition when it comes to our products and the trends you set?

PM: One key difference between us and the competition in the way we approach a design is that we take almost two year to put up a new colour pallet, vis-a-vis the approach that we have



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IT TAKES NEARLY TWO
YEARS FOR US TO
DEVELOP A PRODUCT FOR
THE MARKET

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noticed in our competition is that they come up with the new range once every six months or maximum once a year. The difference completely on the approach. While we are present in so many countries and get so much research inputs, the basis of which is a brief which is sent to the print manufacturers to develop our own designs, rather than just waiting and taking whatever is available.

Personally, we have been working on how to build Greenlam as a global brand. We based it on not following others. We would rather be always the leaders and trend setters. We created our own trends. We made our own designs and patterns based on what was in fashion and what we thought we could predict would enter the Indian market. We introduced patterns on the research, NOT on what competition was selling more. In fact, that is what others are doing. Our patterns are unique. Also, as a company, our presentation and marketing team works hand in hand with the design team so that we know that the market for our upcoming products and



designs and primed to accept them. It's a very intense process.

BWH: How much of what you are doing is influenced by clients feedback?

PM: Quite a bit actually. How we do our selection is by first gathered all our initial designs and then we shortlist the patterns. If we are planning to introduce 60 patterns, the shortlist would be anywhere between 100 and 120 patterns. Then we have our team visiting architects, traders, dealers. We have different communities and ask them to rate the shortlist, whether they are wood patterns, or fancy patterns or textures. Based on their feedback we rate each and every patterns. Then they are largely selected on the basis of that. We need to know what is going to move in a market before we introduce the product. We have to be commercially viable it can't just be about cutting edge or the design team's fancy. It's not just introducing something in India because it works in Europe.

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WITH 30 BRANCH OFFICES
SERVING 300 CITIES
REACH IS NOT REALLY A
PROBLEM FOR US

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BWH: For hospitality clients, how much of your products are customised?

PM: When it comes to veneers, we can say it is 100 percent customisable. As for laminates, it depends upon what kind of customisation we want. If it is a certain pattern in a certain texture we can do. We do the laminates with their logos or graphics coming in. For example Park, Hyatt's and Marriott. In today's world 100 percent customization is not a problem. People have started moving to us as they want customised flooring based on their colour and themes. It saves their lead time of investing in the products. Most importantly we have the pattern on record in case something needs to be replaced, which is a very important part of the business. Patterns used in hospitality never really goes out of fashion, they are not discontinued. When we say we change the decor range we are adding to the range.

BWH: Finally is the business still metro-centric or are you moving out to other parts of the country now?

PM: We are not very metro centric. We are getting quite a few projects from the smaller towns and surprisingly the amount and the way they use laminate is very different. We are present all across the country, having our own RDC (regional distribution centres) which are totally company owned. I guess this also sets us apart from the competition. We have a total of 12 RDC which serve their particular market. After that we have 30 branch offices which serve around 300 cities in the country. So the reachability and availability is never a challenge for us. We don't only introduce a category; we try to do the entire portfolio within the category.