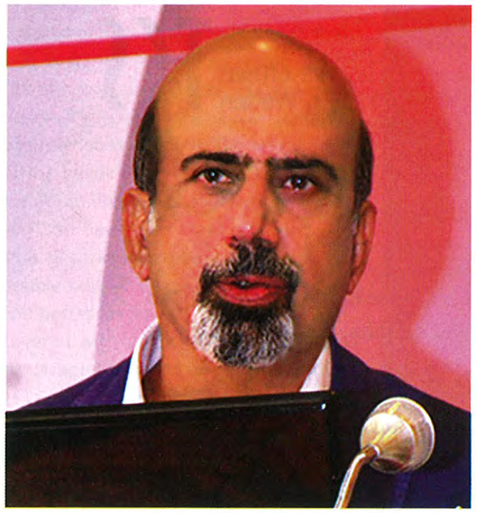


In sync with **times**

"Hey Sanjay, there is a big advertisement in the newspaper today by DDA for Design Ideas Competition open to all architects for housing design. Let us try and participate in that" This phone call from Beena Idnani in the October of 1984 defined the life – both professional & personal of architect **Sanjay Wadhwa,** the **founder director** of New Delhi based **SWBI Architects,** a name synonymous with corporate architecture & interiors.

Not only did the duo, Sanjay and Beena participated in the said design competition, they won the top honours - with one of the Jurors commenting that no other entry came anywhere close to the benchmark setup by the said design submission. This was a precursor of many a design competition which the partnership of Sanjay Wadhwa and Beena Idnani participated in, winning most of them and culminating in winning the first prize in the design competition for Vittal Mallaya Convention Centre at Bangalore wherein about 250 firms from across the country participated.

Another landmark project bagged in the earlier days of the firm was MP Urja Vikas Nigam, also secured through a national level design competition in 1987. This was an award winning office building using non-conventional energy systems, as a curtain raiser to the work which MPUVN was doing. The architects acting on the advice of Waseem Akhtar, the PM at EPCO, took on board firms like MRC (Mahendra Raj Consultants) for structures, Spectral (M&E) and Deolalikar Consultants (PHE) who were already doing Vidhan Sabha with Charles Correa in Bhopal.

"In the eighties and early nineties, the government followed a closed door economic policy. There were only a handful of large Indian corporates and no multinational companies in India, thereby making the Government of India, by default the biggest builder and chief patron of architectural and design fraternity, "explained Sanjay. "From the mid to late nineties, when the country opened up its doors to foreign investments in India one witnessed a steady influx of large number of MNC making a beeline

Adobe (Phase I) Exterior 1

Adobe Interior 1

Cairn Entrance

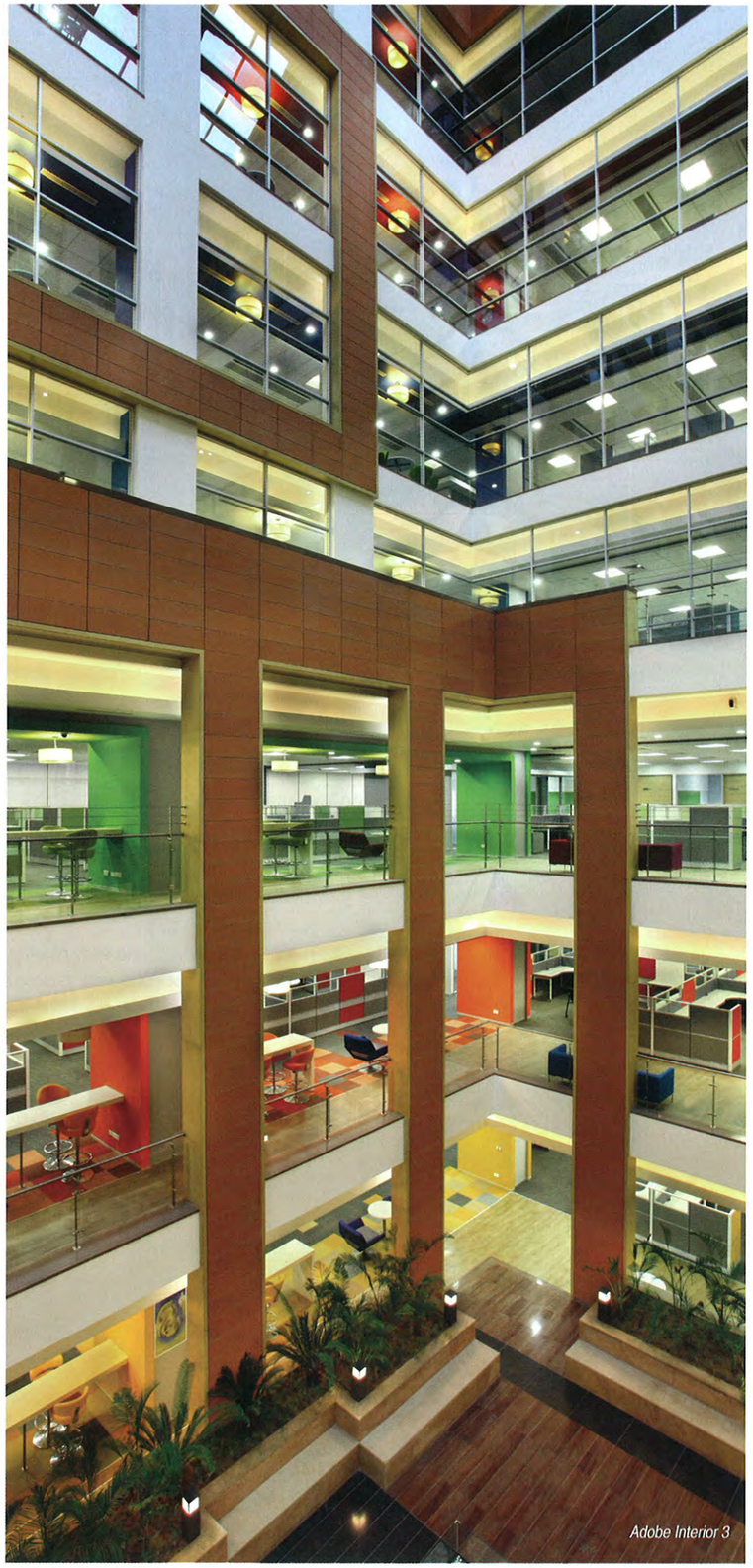
to enter India and set up shop here. Design profession thereby saw a clear tectonic shift, whereby a number of firms got drawn towards this relatively new design vertical in India of doing corporate fit-outs, now evolved and re-christened as Workplace Design." he added.

The new design vertical

Indeed, the systematic, process oriented and quick conclusion of corporate fit-out projects was something that attracted a number of mid-sized design firms including SWBI. Today, SWBI is one of the market leaders in the Corporate Interiors domain having successfully designed and delivered 25 million square feet of space for a variety of user clients – corporate offices, back officer, IT & ITES facilities, R&D centres etc. The scale of the projects varies from a small 10,000sqft to as large as one million square feet. "An interesting project was that of an interior fit-out wherein the single floor plate itself was larger than half a million square feet of leased area. This was similar to planning a township with its streets, crossings, plazas & central hubs." recounted Sanjay. According to the architect, the past decade in particular has witnessed a fairly brisk activity in the real estate space and more specifically in corporate real estate space. "With demand for office space booming both in terms of volume of real estate to be fitted out, there are plenty of opportunities for designers to partake in this growth story." Sanjay commented.

Design Credence

'Simple' in concept & execution, 'Striking' in form & appearance and 'Sustainable' in the long term usage, is what sums up the work ethos and design direction of Sanjay Wadhwa. "Deep rooted is the belief that the design solution should reflect the client's vision and brand and not necessarily designer's trade mark signature, unless specifically



Adobe Interior 3

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Cairn Collaborative Hub

"We feel our best will come when we have a complete control over the built space – both the exteriors as well as the interiors along with the services. This will enable end to end holistic solutions for complex design problems."

– Sanjay Wadhwa

requested. The endeavor always has been to create designs which are efficient, effective and expressive, since the quality of space and surroundings has a direct influence on the quality of life of its users - whether in offices, workplace, at home or any other public space," he elucidates.

In fact, sustainability is the centre point around which all project related design decisions are taken at SWBI. Almost all the projects follow the LEED program and project stakeholders are actively encouraged to pursue and follow the sustainability agenda. As Sanjay states, "The interesting development in the Corporate Workplace Design besides the scale and volume of business, is the increase in aspirations and expectations which most user clients have today from their workplace. User experience is now at the center of all decision making process in corporate workplace design as thet are very aware and conscious of what their workplace should do for them. Hence, it is fun and exciting times for designers who are creating these workplaces catering to a large office population. Besides work areas great emphasis is being given today on planning of 3rd Space i.e. Social Hubs, Breakout Spaces, Quiet & Snooze Corners, Meeting & Collaborative hubs and flexible Learning Spaces. The corner stone for planning is to create holistic design solutions addressing the need of efficiency and productivity, wellbeing, fun and flexibility along with green architecture features."

Cairn Meeting hub

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* Patent applied

Specifications

Type	Tile Dimension	Solar Reflective Index (SRI)	IS Standard
Ceramic	300mm X 300mm	104 (ASTM E 1980)	As per IS 15622:2006
Tile Thickness	**Emittance**	**Reflectance**	**Water Permeability**
10mm (+/- 1 mm)	0.862 (ASTM E 1371)	0.8298 (ASTM E 903)	Impervious to Water

Materials Used	Appearance	Method of Fixing
Infrared Resistive Composition (Non-degradable)	White Glossy Grains & Marble Grains	Just like any other ceramaic tile

Manufacturers:
ISHAAN INDUSTRIES, Bilimora, Gujarat
Tel: 02634 284416 Mob: 094261 17277

Liaison Provider for Southern India
AC Ravi Rangaswami, Chennai
Email: thermatek@gmail.com
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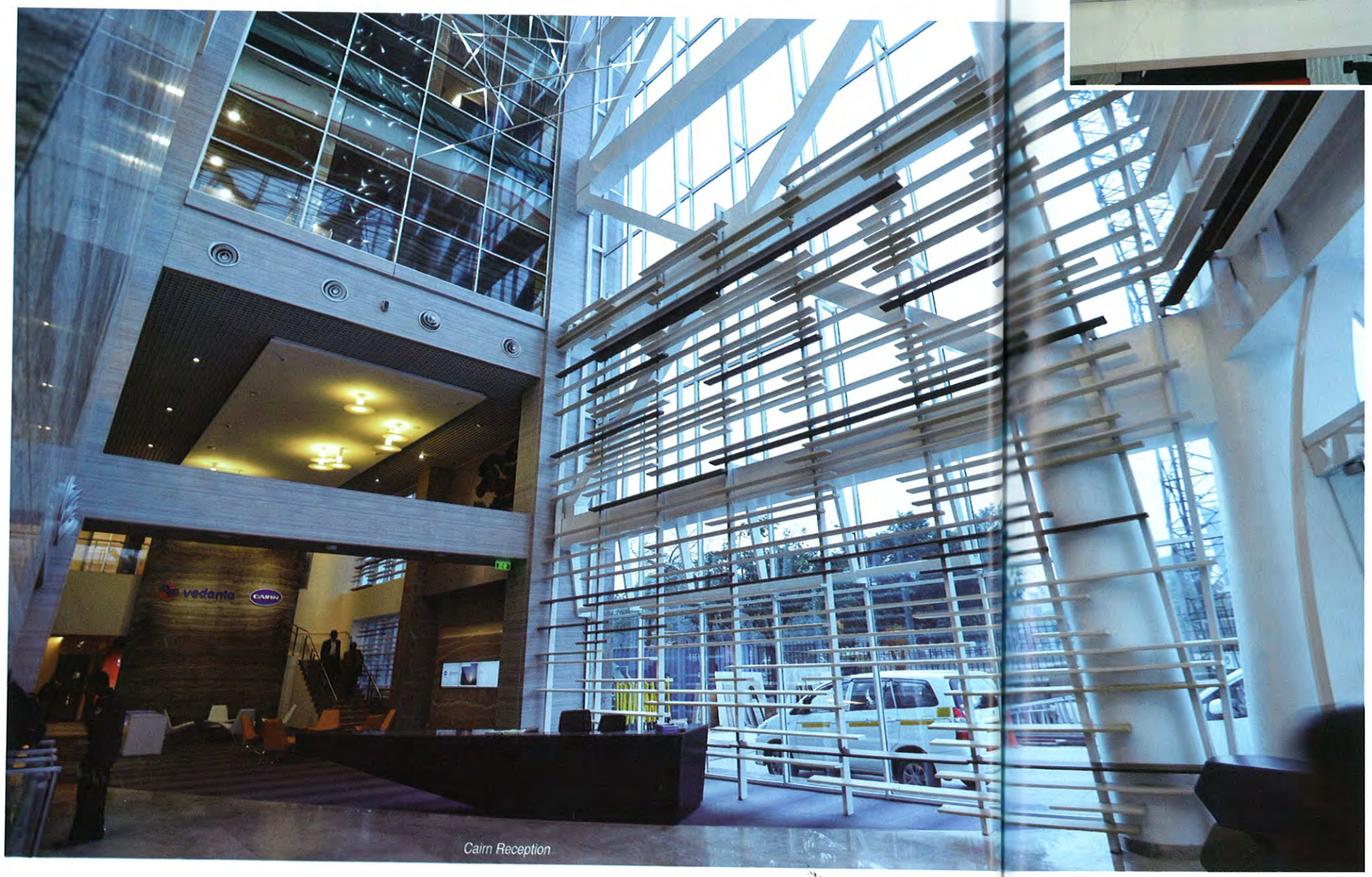
TheWorks

Corporate approach architect Sanjay as a Workplace Consultant to help them prepare a long term workplace strategy (WPS) and implement the same in fit-out assignments over a period of time. As Sanjay puts it, this is a necessity today, as employers are looking at innovative ways to reduce the real estate space (hence cost) without compromising on standards of space per person and other EHS norms. "The objective is to have a high level of employee engagement by creating a workplace were the employees are productive and kept engaged with the company's goals. WPS thereby looks beyond simplistic brick and mortar solutions by involving interdisciplinary experts from sociology, planning, ergonomics, acoustics, lighting, AV and IT besides interior design."

A few of the recently completed projects illustrate the approach which SWBI takes on comprising responsible, responsive & sustainable architecture. Built to suit campus projects for clients like Adobe, STMicro, Times of India, Freescale, HCL, Shriram Group and hotels like Crowne Plaza, Hyatt Andaz, Marriot are some of the architectural projects which the firm has done.

Adobe Campus was planned on a seven-acre site with two phases envisaged in the master planning. Phase-I was a 4.5 lacs square feet superstructure with approx. 2.5 lacs square feet in substructure, while the total planned area is more than a million square feet. A LEED Gold Certified project, it was planned on the principles of environment sensitive architecture, featuring lowest energy consumption compared to any other similar campus projects in India. With almost the entire workplace, spread over six floors located around a central north-lit landscaped atrium, the users enjoy both exterior and interior views and daylight virtually in every part of the facility. Generous use of glass towards the landscape greens in the front interspersed with the hanging terrace garden helps establish the much needed connect with the exteriors. At the same time, heat gain has been mitigated by an extensive overhang in form of a louvered pergola, on the front façade which faces South.



Cairn Reception

Cairn Workspace

Central communication stations with extended collaboration and discussion corners around the atrium forms the social & interactive hub and helps people have casual meetings and chance collisions. The office space is a combination of private offices and cubes, wherein planning has been done on a neighborhood concept allowing every user to feel connected – both with each other within the building as well as with exteriors. The project has several innovative concepts in M&E domain like energy saving radiant cooling using active chilled beams, enthalpy recovery from exhaust air, demand controlled ventilation, sensor based lighting, waterless urinals & dual pumping, rooftop rainwater harvesting & solar hot water, to name a few.

Another project, entirely of interior fit-outs for corporate office of Cairn India, was designed a LEED Platinum building with 2,00,000sqft area spread over five floors in a standalone building. The project involved a major change management exercise and workplace consulting. The ground floor housed all common amenities with three typical work floors, while the top floor was reserved for management officials. Terra, was the chosen theme for the project, as developed by elephant design to be in line with nature of work client is into. The various floors depict sub-surface, surface and on-surface thematic expression through colours, textures & visuals.

SWBI Architects, led by Sanjay Wadhwa, is a 25-year-old award winning multi-disciplinary design firm, constantly evolving & adapting in order to remain in sync with the changing times – both in terms of technology & materiality as well as prevalent business norms & protocols. Apart from the main stay of the firm in Corporate Design – both architecture & interiors, other projects are in the segment of hospitality, institutions, master planning and commercial buildings. SWBI pan India offices are in Bangalore, Chennai, Gurgaon and Hyderabad.