

“There are no more trends, people want to be unique”

Design is serious business at laminate major Greenlam Industries Ltd, reveals its director for design & marketing Parul Mittal. While speaking to *Kitchen Review*, she explained what leads to emergence of trends and how the company stays ahead of the curve while responding to changing preferences of customers shares perspectives on how Indian retailers can win in today's world of connected customers

Gyanendra kumar Kashyap



“**I** SEE A MASSIVE transformation in design, and it goes hand in hand with the other changes in society. Design is changing because people are travelling and they want products that are available anywhere in the world. This is affecting the design trends,” remarks Mittal. She states that earlier people opted for light wood and dark wood together,

but no more; now it's solid colours, stone patterns and wood patterns. “Solid colours, stone patterns, textile patterns, natural warm coloured woods, these are the really strong trends. When introducing new schemes we keep these trends in consideration.”

As one who frequently visits global design events, Mittal feels that prevailing design trends are moving towards consolidation. So for instance consumers

are showing a preference for bright colours, pastels and blues with grey. “Currently the colour direction globally is towards natural looking warm wood colours, allied with stone patterns in solid colours.” She states that this trend is visible in India as well.

“Now grey is the colour that people have been waiting for. If you look at the marketplace right now, you would see grey being used for various purposes. Grey

goes very easily with anything you put," she avers. In fact Greenlam is helping its customers make a more confident choice by using images in its catalogues, to show how these colour combinations would look. "It helps people take better decisions."

However, she also remarks that the time is gone when huge, definite trends dominate. "We can't say there is one trend anymore. People like to be unique."

New product development at Greenlam is led by close scrutiny of trends, and it is an imperative to stay on top when it comes to understanding people's preferences and lifestyles. "We introduce new products and designs almost every eighteen months or so," adding that old designs are taken off from the catalogue following analysis of sales data. "We try to delve into the reasons why a particular design is doing better than

the other; it helps us predict performance and confirm our anticipation about what people want. An eye on sale trends also helps us understand what we are lacking in terms of product range."

Explaining how Greenlam builds up its range of laminates, Mittal says, "We don't select for the next six months, but at least for a few years." The first thing that Mittal's team focuses on is practicality of the design. "I don't like to use white products in laminates as it doesn't show up to its best." Speaking on the design front, she shared, "As a designer I would like to introduce designs that people can be happy with at least for a few years."

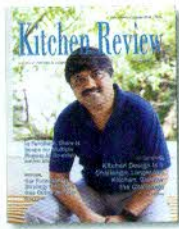
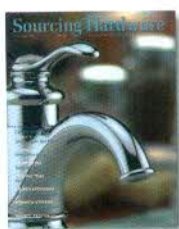
Kitchens and cabinetry applications are high on Mittal's agenda, and Greenlam aims to address it through a comprehensive range of gloss, VRB series and HD gloss

products. "Greenlam HD Gloss laminate has been developed with the most advanced technology to create the best in class gloss. It is resistant to MAR, scratches, scuff and abrasion; the premium laminate is sturdy and highly durable when compared to other laminates," she asserts, adding that it can be used for shutters, carcasses, etc. On VRB, she stresses the fact that Greenlam is the only company to have this texture. "As for VRB, there is no limitation that is associated with veneer; since it is a laminate, it's a zero maintenance product."

New developments include compact laminates that can be used for kitchen carcasses and shutters, and a countertop laminate range. "All the products for kitchens and cabinetry are anti-bacterial in nature and come with a 10 year guarantee."

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