

INTERIOR MOTIVES

NANDINI RAGHAVENDRA

Jimmy Mistry gives your office that great new ergonomic look

JIMMY Mistry is proud of all the work Della Tecnica (DT) has done in the short span of five years. But he is a little prouder of the Star project. After all, it got him an award from the Indian Institute of Interior Designers (IIID), saved his client a lot of money, and, he managed to finish the design of the 13,000 sq ft Star TV office in record time. A win-win situation for all concerned.

workspace as that used for their staff so as not to differentiate. It is all aimed at bringing them closer to their staff." For example, Chak insisted on the same laminated table as the rest of the staff.

The image each corporate wants to portray however differs. Apollo Tyres, for its corporate office in Gurgaon, wanted designs that speak of a modern organisational culture and hence every piece of furniture from the reception counters

to their training rooms and board-rooms was designed to make a statement. Steel and glass were used to lend that modern look rather than veneer and wood.

Simplicity is Mukerjea's tone too. "It is a very user-friendly working space. It is relatively uncluttered and no frills. It is very basic. I enjoy the bright, nearly white interiors which continue to look fresh. I don't think I would have managed very long hours in a wood-panelled board-

room-kind-of-look office," says the CEO of Star-India.

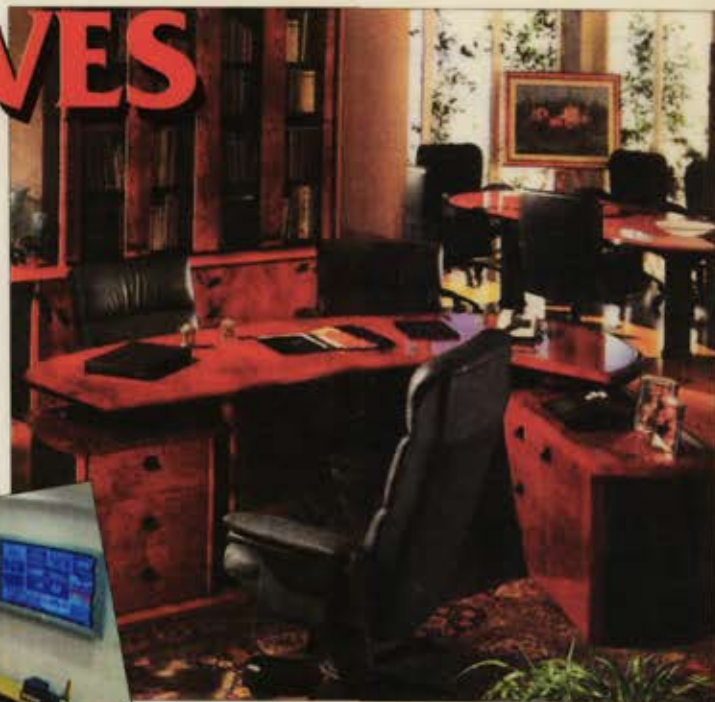
The Star brief was in keeping with its corporate philosophy of being eco-friendly. So recycle and reuse was Mistry's brief, as was a strong emphasis on cost saving. Mistry had an advantage that Della Tecnica had done the entire interior project five years ago using a modular framework. "Modular furniture

has the ease of reconfiguration, keeps in mind ergonomics, and has the advantage of standardisation. Besides, it uses environmentally friendly raw materials like MDF (medium density fibreboard) which come from sustainable forests," says Mistry.

Corporates in Delhi and Mumbai are now becoming more aware of factors such as employee safety and ergonomics. Take the Yahoo office in Mumbai, for which Mistry carried out a modular furniture and wire management contract. "Having lived in the US for a decade, both my clients were very particular about the finish and ergonomics. No sharp angles, smooth finishes — which was very encouraging as India has no standard norms or parameters for any furniture or ergonomics, or norms about placing computers at a particular height," says Mistry.


When Mistry founded Della Tecnica, he began with importing Italian furniture. Import restrictions and duties led him to venture into setting up his own manufacturing base for making modular furniture, in Daman. Five years ago, the market was small, as his first year turnover of Rs 16 lakh shows. Today, DT has under its belt a ISO 9001 Quality Systems certified company with showrooms, design studios and offices all over India.

Della Tecnica has today grown into an interior turnkey solutions provider offering interior designing, project and facility maintenance services. At a turnover of Rs35 crore, with an equal share coming from furniture and interior projects, Mistry foresees a 100 per cent



(Clockwise from top): UAE finance minister, Yahoo and Peter Mukerjea's offices



energy from his Feng Shui-directed door and his curiously laid-out desk are strong. Mistry says DT is looking at sustaining growth by bringing in international architects and consultants. 

Mistry is optimistic despite the downturn. His faith in the positive

WORKSPACE

"I'm kind of proud of Peter Mukerjea's office particularly. It is minimalist and very simple in its design. The four-foot Plasma TV with 12 channels is also a favourite which gives a much better look than the nine sets of televisions that Peter used to have in his office. And we had just three days in which to finish it!" says Mistry, reminiscing how his team virtually lived there to complete it by the time Mukerjea returned from London.

For Mistry, who specialises in corporate work, the STAR offices are not his only success. The client list is pretty impressive: Bombay Mercantile Bank and SchoolNet India Ltd., to HDFC, IL&FS, Oracle, ANZ Grindlays, Emirates (Chairman's office in Dubai); Apollo Tyres in Gurgaon and UAE Finance Minister Shaikh Hamdan's Abu Dhabi office, to name a few.

Mistry believes that workplaces everywhere are changing. The new focus is on simplicity and ergonomics — the adaptation of general conditions to help the individual work at efficiently. "Today, a workplace has to offer maximum productivity enhancement factors. Which brings in ergonomics, as well as playing around with colours to portray the ethos and ethics of the firm."

Ergonomics is still a low awareness issue with many corporates and often Mistry has to elucidate. "Often I have to explain and elaborate showing them the difference between an ergonomically designed piece of furniture and one which is not," says Mistry, adding that every piece of furniture at DT is ergonomically designed.

There is also an equally strong emphasis on egalitarianism which is emerging. "Executives today prefer using the same materials for their



Mistry: Doing it just right