



Glassifying Interiors

Vikram Khanna, COO, CMO, CIO, Asahi India Glass Ltd. (AIS)

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Glass, as a material, was typically used on doors and windows for over several decades in the past. In today's world, glass means much more than any other building material. In interior designing, glass is noticeably replacing the usual interior materials such as wood and stone. This trend is made possible by the constantly evolving technologies in the manufacturing of glass and hence, broadening the entire scope of glass in architecture. While glass has been a preferred material for façades for a long time, the trend of usage of glass in interior designing is catching up rapidly now.

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One of the most important requirements

for any commercial space is display. How products are showcased can make or mar a store's success. High quality glass that offers precision flatness, perfect clarity, and undistorted view, while letting maximum light pass through, ensures that products are seen at their best.

The ambience, or the look and feel, of a store is a critical factor that determines the number of footfalls in any store or a commercial space. Glass, today, is available in a great variety of colours, patterns, textures, and styles that can make retail spaces look attractive. Counters, tabletops, shelves, cabinets, and partitions made of glass look unique and stylish. AIS Décor, a back painted glass range, is the perfect choice in this regard. AIS, an integrated glass manufacturer has one of the smartest back painted glass range under this brand. It is largely used in commercial and residential spaces. Some of the applications of back painted glass are –

Commercial spaces – surface cladding, wall panelling, lift lobbies

Kitchens – wall paneling, kitchen cabinets,

kitchen counters, kitchen cupboards, kitchen splashbacks

Furniture – Glass tops for dining tables, coffee tables, bar countertops, cupboards, sliding doors, doorways for home and commercial spaces

Washrooms – wall cladding, partitions

Writing boards in offices, conference rooms, educational institutions, children's rooms

Privacy of customers is a special issue in the public space. Opaque materials tend to be seen as better options than glass — for obvious reasons! However, frosted or translucent glass enables privacy and selective viewing of products while retaining or even enhancing aesthetic appeal when used for partitions, doors, and screens. The latest trend is ‘smart glass’ that turns translucent from transparent at the touch of a button! It is an excellent replacement for curtains and blinds at stores, pubs, bars, clubs, hospitals, salons, spas, business centres, and conference rooms.

Glass is seen as fragile and easily breakable,



compared to metal, stone, wood, or brick. In fact, high grade tempered glass is several times stronger than ordinary glass, and can be freely used for tabletops, counters, railings, and other frequently used areas by customers or staff. It is highly durable and impact-resistant.

A topmost priority in commercial spaces is the safety and security of valuables. Again, not many know that laminated glass with specialised PVB interlayers provides a high level of protection from burglar attacks. So, one need not use grills and shutters which restrict vision and reduce visual appeal.

With increased fire outbreaks in India, it is important to protect one's space, valuables,

and employees. Glass can be very effective in fighting the effects of fire and saving lives. Fire Resistant Glass is specially engineered to withstand extreme levels of heat, reduce heat transfer, and prevent the passage of smoke and flames.

Reducing unwanted noise from the outside makes commercial spaces more customer-friendly. Acoustic glass is made with a specialised PVB interlayer to provide noise insulation for quiet and peaceful interiors.

Thus, it can be said that the use of glass in interiors does not only enhance the beauty and aesthetic appeal of any space, but also maintains the functionality and keeps it safe. ▲

Vikram Khanna, COO – Consumer Glass, COO – Architectural Institutional Business, CMO, CIO, Asahi India Glass Ltd. (AIS),

He is a man of many facets. In his time at AIS, he has made an admirable use of his considerable acumen to enhance and further embellish the company's profile and standing in the market.

Having served in the Indian army for 8 years, Khanna made his foray into the corporate world. He had previously worked with the ITC Group of Hotels, right after graduating from college and that experience served him in good stead. Armed with an MBA, he joined the Purchase department of AIS in the capacity of Material Head, in 1996 and held that position till 2003. During that time he also worked as the Project Manager for the ERP implementation

Khanna occupied the position of Sales & Marketing Head for three years, during 2003-06, and then moved on to become Commercial Head for the Auto Division of AIS. The next year, in 2010-11, he was anointed as the COO – Auto Services, and the year after that he was appointed to the post of COO – Consumer Glass. During this period, in 2009, he was also given the additional responsibility of functioning as the CIO. Recently, in November 2012, he was given additional charge of the Corporate Marketing function with a view to drive business strategy.

