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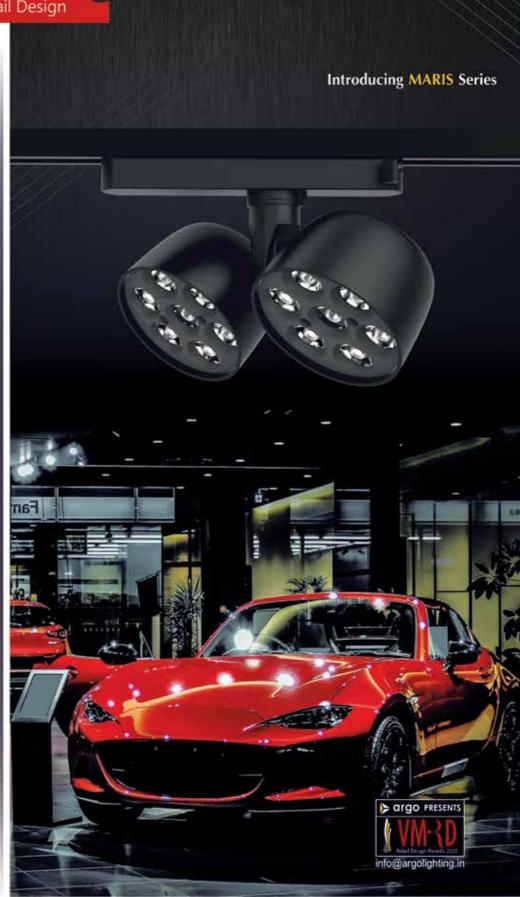Visual Merchandising & Retail Design

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Biz continuity @ retail

As India gingerly gets ready to kickstart its economy back into action with partial lifting of restrictions, the concept of business continuity gains increased relevance. The concept has always existed, but perhaps more in the realm where technology and business converge. Today however it means taking unprecedented measures to face unprecedented situation. So where does the retail solutions industry stand as far as business continuity is concerned? Here's a look.

What is business continuity?

Technically it is the ability of a business to bounce back after a disaster or any sort of crisis. The Covid-19 situation has thrown up a situation that has no precedent. For businesses across industries, it has necessitated a re-look at their very business models. For retail and its aligned segments , namely the retail solutions industry specifically, business continuity has attained significance like never before.

Here's a look at some perspectives that a few retail designers/solution providers shared on what business continuity means to them and how they are making it a part of their system.

'Biz continuity and sustainability go hand in hand'

Puja Mathur, Interior Designer, Arcadia Design

What it means to us

Architects, designer studios and practices exist in a complex, unpredictable and inherently financially risky environment. To survive and bounce back, firms small or big need to draw upon their foresight, strategic planning, and creativity to prepare, react and quickly adapt to a wide range of disruptive business altering events. We've ensured that in the midst of such uncertainty, our client communication remains unaffected, with clear and tangible discussions with regard to the project planning and execution. We've also ensured that our team is prepared for every eventuality during and after the pandemic so that we can hit the ground running without any hiccups. We've also made our employees an active member in our strategies, helping them understand the dependency of community functions and risk mitigation strategies. We've also invested our time in developing a marketing strategy while being mindful of the national economy's status.

The question of sustainability

The pandemic has helped us realize that business continuity and sustainability go hand-in-hand and that we have been toying with our limited and ever-depleting natural resources. In light of the recession that has arrived due to the Covid-19 crisis, it is important to implement adaptive reuse and introduce reclaimed construction materials to our designs. We have already implemented the circular design methods and techniques, which are all the core of environmentally responsible designs. It was also our prime focus to design for sustainable, waste preventing resources which were recyclable and efficient in their usage. The environmental context of a building and its internal spaces influence our designing processes with an eye on the consequences of potential repetitive remodelling processes.

'Will see creation of new platforms for designing and collaboration'

Rakhee Bedi, Founding Principal, Rakhee Shobhit Design Associates

What it means to us

The pandemic has led us to focus harder on ensuring that our companies aren't compromised and to start preparing for a sustainable and collaborative model.

Use of technology

With the advancements in technology today, it has become easy for us to collaborate with our clientele and other allied industries through a myriad of apps and tools. We've ensured that in this time, we continue to keep our lines of communication while also ensuring that our work is taken digital .One of the few things that is certain to happen once the pandemic is over, is the digitization of several design and allied services. We will be seeing the creation of new platforms for designing and collaboration, building upon what we already have today. This will also influence our functions and methods, as it is essential to adopt new technology to have a sustainable and agile organization.

The question of sustainability

The focus on sustainability is essential and inevitable, not just from an industry-level perspective but also from a local environment. We have finite resources on our hands and we're heading towards a phase of de-globalization where countries will focus on creating a self-sustaining economy. Hence it will be essential to create a business environment which pushes for indigenous manufacturing and trade as well as pushing for more independent, localized entrepreneurial ventures.

Business continuity and people

It is important to ensure business continuity by identifying the key functions and creating drilling scenarios which force the employees to deploy risk and mitigation strategies. It's also essential to ensure that the employees get a say in creating strategies which help the organization function even in the most dire circumstances and ensures that the livelihoods of the employees and other attached individuals aren't compromised.