



After working with prominent architects including Hafeez Contractor and Nozer Wadia for over six years and serving as an architect for DID Consultants, Manish Dikshit launched his firm – Aum Architects. Besides designing

residential and commercial spaces, he is also a guest lecturer at Rachna Sansad Institute of Interior Design.

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A photograph of a modern office interior. The space features cubicles with light-colored wooden desks and partitions. Above the cubicles, there are long, light-colored wooden cabinets with silver handles. The ceiling is white with recessed lighting fixtures. In the foreground, a computer monitor is visible on a desk, displaying a Windows 7 desktop. The overall design is clean and functional.

SMALL YET SPACIOUS, ARCHITECT MANISH DIKSHIT HAS GIVEN A COMPLETE NEW LOOK TO DAWN INDIA PVT. LTD. OFFICE.



Crack of Dawn!

Everyone has heard the famous saying *What's there in a name?* But architect Manish Dikshit has followed a different philosophy while designing the head office of Dawn India Pvt Ltd. He first designed the new logo and taking inspiration from it emerged the colour, design and concept.

Located in down town Mumbai, Dawn India Pvt. Ltd. is a clearing and forwarding agent with branch offices in Ahmedabad and Nhava Sheva port. With such a location, one hurdle was the shortage of light coming inside the office. In order to provide natural light, the walls were opened up to the maximum. This has resulted in access to the picturesque view of Taj Mahal Hotel to the Bombay port. Isn't it something worth having outside your window on a daily basis!

"The whole idea was to streamline and give a more organized look to the office," says Manish about the project. Spread across a mere 600 sq. ft., the office is segregated into different departments. The entrance lobby has been created in one corner. So to highlight the lobby leading to the office, glass brick punctures were created, also to enable natural light to come in. At night it works in the reverse as the office looks good from outside. Coming to the staff area, in order to provide a better working environment 19mm thick toughened glass as tabletop was given for each employee.

Apart from regular departments, the most important space was the executive cabin. "The client wanted it to reflect

his status without compromising on the available space. So we created a concept called the *corner table concept* where the workstation faces the wall and a separate visitor's lounge area within the cabin is placed towards the window corner. This helped us to make the cabin look large," said Manish.

Plenty of light colours, especially white, are used to enhance the size of each area. As a contrast, the laminates and flooring are kept darker, though in some areas lighter vitrified tiles are used to give a cooler mood. Another important feature is the orange lighting, which is also the secondary colour in the logo. Without making it look too loud, subtle elements in this shade were used for corners. The use of indirect lights gives off a soothing reflection and lights up the entire office.

In every office one of the most important needs is storage space. Manish explains, "Around two to three storage areas were created end-to-end that merge either with the wall or with the panelling around the wall. We did not want





the storage to stand out but appear a part of the wall panelling, hence we kept it subtle.”

“Creating avenues for natural light to come in is a primary criterion for us in all our projects. With openness being the USP here, we developed a surprise look for this office,” concluded Manish ■

TEXT: SHWETA IYER ■ PHOTOGRAPHS: COURTESY THE ARCHITECT

