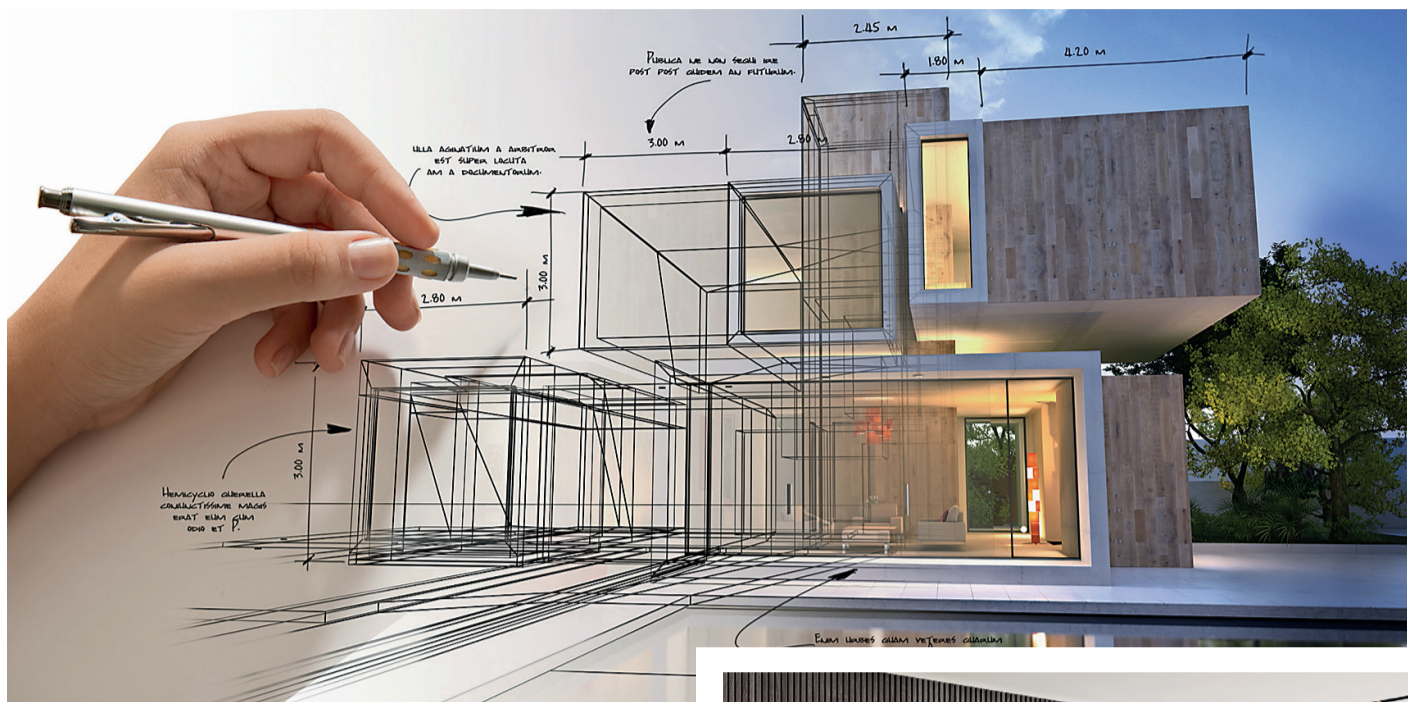


Archi-Tech aiding homeowners

With increased construction of homes, architecture-technology is aiding homeowners to build their dream abodes



RAKESH.MALIK2
@timesgroup.com

With an increased demand of independent homes and plots, many are getting their homes constructed as per their needs. Experts are of the view that post pandemic, there has been a sudden surge in new home construction and home improvement. However, over a period, they noticed the missing elements and necessities of their homes, which usually went unnoticed at the time of construction. This has given rise to tech-savvy architects and interior designers. They could easily detect any defects if any in the process of construction. "There are a lot of problems that one faces while getting a home constructed. We witnessed those problems and started looking for solutions that would ease these problems. Our aim is to use our custom technology platform to drive transparency and overcome inefficiencies in the entire process of constructing and designing a house. We have made significant progress in research about designing and building better homes. We have developed objective parameters to

decide how good a home design is, and these are put to test again and again every day for continuous improvement. The customers too are able to evasions what they want and are able to derive the benefits of the tech intervention. More standardisation and yet having the feasibility to have customised options is making all stakeholders better," emphasises Gopi Krishnan, co-founder and CEO, BuildNext.

In addition to this, people found that real estate could be an efficient and long-term investment idea and help connect buyers and realtors. Industry players feel that the archi-tech is helping even the architects who continue to be a preferred choice for most when it comes to getting homes. But there are times when the design on paper and actual product have functionality issues and this adds to the problem or the cost if the problem needs to be fixed at that stage. This led to people valuing their own health, as well as the environment they live in.

Demand for an extra room for individual space inside homes, an outer area like a garden or balcony to exercise or simply enjoy a little

bit of gardening space. In fact, the entire real estate sector is going through remodelling with the incorporation of home automation, IoT, or AI devices in our homes. In the era of new IoTs and smart home technologies, people seek innovations. Taking about the same Mustafa Johar, CEO and co-founder, MakeMyHouse, says, "Technology has altered practically every aspect of how individuals exist and operate in society. Technology has now taken a front position in the process of designing and construction for architects, home builders, and designers. Technology has an impact on all stages of the design process, including how clients interact with architects and how structures are created. Technology has the potential to improve constructability and longevity while also easing the process for architects to represent building designs more accurately. Tech and architecture industry are bound to co-exist as the rising demand for independent



path for standardisation and scalability. Take the example of the rapidly growing use of BIM (Building Information Modelling) software supported by a diverse set of tools and technologies. It assists the planning, designing and execution stages of a building and amalgamates the technical and communication-related activities, resulting in ease of execution."

There are many unique things in the design industry today, such as providing experiences through

Augmented Reality (AR) and Virtual Reality (VR). There are a lot of people who are working on such sorts of projects, creating different spatial experiences. "The design industry is growing because of technology as it has become easier for architects and designers to plan and design better. Technology is continually improving, enabling us to improve our design. Many consumers can now experience space through VR before moving to a new space in a different city. Therefore, people get an idea beforehand about the final product without being physically present. Combining technology and design makes it better and easier for the mass. Hence, the growth and role of such platforms are definitely a much-needed part of the industry," shares Aryaman Jain, CEO, Innovative Lighting Designs Limited (ILDL).

Taking a step further, Akanksha Gupta, partner, Vijay Gupta Architects, adds, "It is definitely promising, but it cannot replace traditional practice where an architect decodes the brief with a well-aware and invested client. Residences, particularly independent homes, are highly customised and demand exclusivity. Architectural-tech platforms and start-ups cannot by themselves address the market demands, but they



DID YOU KNOW? Tech-based portals are a new up-and-coming solution in the digital architectural realm. So far, they have been quite effective in the interior and renovation sectors

can be integrated with conventional practice to make the process faster." Tech-based portals are a new up-and-coming solution in the digital architectural realm. So far, they have been quite effective in the interior and renovation sectors. When it comes to tackling smaller zones or making minor additions to one's home, these apps have been able to deliver quality solutions feel experts. "Typically, when people work with a tight budget, they get their job done through carpenters and vendors instead of consulting designers. Unfortunately, this takes away ideation and quality control from the process, compromising the overall finish of the product. The rise of tech-based start-ups has bridged the gap between the different stake holders, and the architect. These apps have successfully introduced standardisation for quality control concerning small-scale projects. Getting credible professionals on board can be key to their scalability and success," avers Anoj Tevatia, founding partner, Design Forum International.

The primary aim of new technologies is to address the aspects of cost, time and quality. Solutions focusing on reducing cost and time while enhancing quality can scale up successfully.

OFFICE SPACES: UP FOR GREEN MAKEOVERS

Eco-friendly commercial buildings and offices are now catching attention. Experts spill beans on new workplace designs

JADAV.KAKOTI
@timesgroup.com

The spectre of pandemic is on its way out and normalcy is limping back. Offices are also opening again. As employees return to work, changes in workplace design have been at the forefront of the conversation. Designing user-friendly workspaces with more intelligent spatial planning contribute to employee well-being, which is the need of the hour. In a modern-day workspace, ergonomics is crucial; organisations are replac-

balance between sustainability and creation. The pandemic has further renewed the focus on the need for optimising air circulation and cross-ventilation and designing hygienic, dust-free spaces. The adoption of flexible workspaces with hybrid work models taking more precedence will also reduce carbon emissions and commute time."

Similarly, Aditya Mehta, CEO and co-founder, Akasa Co-Working, avers, "There is no denying that things would be exponentially different as employees join offices in the post-pandemic

who are returning to work after a hiatus. Businesses can also reduce energy requirements considerably by changing their lighting choices. Lighting solutions with sensors are extremely energy efficient and reduce operational costs.

Minimalism is another basic step that can transform contemporary workspaces. New offices don't have as many printers anymore, and cubicles and cabinets can be designed to share resources. Workspaces can be shared between companies, which can cut rental



Designing an eco-friendly office space demands a vision and often involves smaller leaps

ing traditional tightly packed cubicles with open-plan and flexible arrangements, comfortable furnishings, and custom colour schemes with plenty of natural light.

RIGHT BALANCE

Elaborating further Arnav Singh Gusain, head of product, Real Estate and Procurement at WeWork India, says, "Workspace design and architecture is steadily moving towards the path of innovation, and it demands the right

era. Creating eco-friendly office spaces amidst the shift could seem like an enormous challenge, but this much-needed break from office monotony allows companies to reshape employee attitudes. Designing an eco-friendly office space demands a vision and often involves smaller leaps. One key and practical idea would be to switch to renewable energy resources when possible."

Open, airy offices are more likely to appeal to employees

expenses and help minimise the environmental impact of business operations.

Making room for recycling is another step that businesses can adopt now. Many offices have minimised their consumption of disposable products, and it can be a smart step to collaborate with other companies and local businesses to recycle plastic bottles, cans, and everything else possible.

Creating a sustainable and eco-friendly office space could be a potential attraction for employees to see the workplace as a positive environment for better performance.

Commercial realty gaining traction

New trends in the commercial real estate segment garner attention. Read more...

JADAV.KAKOTI
@timesgroup.com

The post pandemic months have seen remarkable changes in the way commercial real estate dealings are executed. Multiple reports have shown that the segment is back on track. Thus, according to a Knight Frank report, the office market saw robust activities during H1 2022 on the back of the waning pandemic and sustained economic recovery despite geo-political pressures. A total of 25.3 mnsq ft of office space was transacted during H1 2022 compared to 12.3 mnsq ft in H1 2021, growing by 107 per cent Y-O-Y. The share of the co-working sector in total transactions increased to 17 per cent in H1 2022 from 10 per cent in H1 2021 recording the maximum increase across all sectors.

Front runner garnering

According to another report from Savills India, commercial office assets continued to claim the lion's share of the PE investment during Q2 2022. Arvind Nandan, managing director, Research and Consulting, Savills India, says, "Similar to Q1 2022, commercial office assets remain the front runner garnering a major share of the investment pie. PE investment in the life sciences research and development real estate has picked up momentum since 2021 and we expect this sector to continue to grow aided by government policies, competitive costs, and growing talent pool among other factors."

Spelling out further, Shishir Bajjal, chairman and managing director, Knight Frank India, avers, "The robust performance delivered by the office market during H1 2022 has set the tone for 2022. Physical occupancy levels are rising as more companies want their employees to return to office. Hiring has picked up as India's economic growth continues." The focus amongst occupiers for this year will remain on flexibility, in leasing terms to allow real time expansion and contractions indicating towards a strong year for managed office spaces.

Echoing similar views, Heena



The pandemic created new avenues of interest and increased prospects of real estate investment. Resorts and vacation-oriented hotels have seem to become much better investment options

Sehrawat, founder & CEO, The Heena Realty Makers, says, "The current state of the real estate market is highly driven by the Covid-19 pandemic that has changed the scenario to a great extent. The pandemic caused most offices and companies to move to the work-from-home model and reduced the demand for commercial real estate for offices. The pandemic, however, boosted e-commerce and the utility for storage units. It escalated the demand for more warehouses and logistics parks. Data centres have also started being considered a better form of investment due to the increasing focus on the use of Information Technology."

Salil Kumar, director, Assotech Realty, avers, "The pandemic impacted the commercial real estate sector in many ways. For instance, delayed project completion timelines, reduced demand, and softened rentals. However, the sector was quick to recover with opening of the economy. In the case of real estate, the geography of the asset plays a decisive role in influencing factors such as its worth, rental val-

people live, work and invest. "Offices reopened, and vacations and tours widely increased. Resorts and vacation-oriented hotels seemed to become much better investment options. Commercial real estate is an attractive investment venture for all investors and investment enthusiasts. It will continue to be so no matter the external changes," Sehrawat adds.

No doubt, the pandemic created new avenues of interest and increased prospects of real estate investment. It is reordering how

people live, work and invest. "Offices reopened, and vacations and tours widely increased. Resorts and vacation-oriented hotels seemed to become much better investment options. Commercial real estate is an attractive investment venture for all investors and investment enthusiasts. It will continue to be so no matter the external changes," Sehrawat adds.

Salil Kumar, director, Assotech Realty, avers, "The pandemic impacted the commercial real estate sector in many ways. For instance, delayed project completion timelines, reduced demand, and softened rentals. However, the sector was quick to recover with opening of the economy. In the case of real estate, the geography of the asset plays a decisive role in influencing factors such as its worth, rental val-

ue, capital appreciation rate, among others. While commercial real estate is considered a safe investment choice and remains an attractive investment avenue, it comes with certain risks. Therefore, it is advisable and a lot of investors now investing only in Grade A office campuses as now the focus of big corporates shift to creating an experience for employees with safety, and wellness in mind." Due to very good infrastructural facilities and connectivity with metro rail connecting suburban areas with metro cities, investment in Grade A campuses becoming more attractive. Rishabh Siroya, founder of Legend Siroya and president-elect Naredco NextGen, says, "Business priorities have changed, and commercial real estate is a dynamic subject which impacts the magnitude of individual and business outcomes. Demand for offices has grown since its essential to building a culture of connection, well-being, and high employee engagement. Today the employers need to give employees the power to personalise their workspace. The office is here to stay with growing demand post pandemic era."