

Engineering trends

The interior design industry has witnessed a great shift and evolution in the past few years when it comes to contract products and materials, says Aida Karimi, Senior Designer, Di Leonardo Di studio



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Aida Karimi, Senior Designer, Di Leonardo Di studio, (a leading interior architectural design firm), believes design is a collaborative process where every team member makes a contribution facilitated by effective communication.

Aida leads the creative process by proactively engaging in all aspects of the design and ensuring the quality and consistency to express the values and standards carried out in all of Di Leonardo's global offices. Talking to *Emirates Business*, Aida shares her experience in the UAE design industry.

UAE has some of the most exquisite and astonishing architectures. How do you see the UAE market growing?

Many of the region's finest iconic architecture can be found in UAE — ranging from contemporary to modern and off course the finest cutting edge minimalistic buildings that out-strip hotspots like New York and Hong Kong.

Having had the world's tallest man-made structure not only makes the UAE one of the most progressive design markets in the built environment in the world, but also challenges UAE's future developments to push the design envelope in creating landmarks and architectural wonders. Such as the recently unveiled Needle tower combining traditional Islamic and modern architecture to once again make UAE one of the most innovative and revolutionary artistic countries in making.

What are the exclusive products you have in store for this year?

This year we will be in a different light by showcasing various exclusive products and bespoke pieces from lighting elements to various furniture pieces, artisan accessories, textiles and the most elegant, yet innovative finishes that are handpicked to complement the design industry to the fullest.

As events and exhibitions are part of the corporate culture in the UAE, does participation at these exhibitions help in business growth?

Participation in events as such creates the perfect platform for manufacturers to not only showcase their products, but also gives them the opportunity to interact and engage directly with designers. It also grants them the opportunity to get the recognition and exposure required to

keep connected to the industry.

What kind of feedback you receive at such events?

More clients are supporting to minimise the value engineering process that has been the highlight of the past year. This itself is indicative of a more conscious approach and appreciation for art and design which is quite admirable.

Can you share which markets you cater to?

Di Leonardo is one of the leading interior architectural design firms focussed in hospitality and residential around the globe. We have had the privilege of working with the top leading operators in the hotel industry in the Middle East for over 25 years.

What is your trademark product?

I rarely limit myself to a certain product, but I have to say some products like Stellar Works, Gilles Miller, Lee Broom, Minotti, both Lasvit and Preciosa and of course Baker Furniture are my personal favorites.

What are the challenges that the industry is facing in the region?

Creation of beautiful and artistic spaces is a crucial aspect of our jobs. But also maintaining the design concept and materials that make it iconic and gives it an identity has been a challenge with current value engineering trend going on in the region.

What potential do you see in



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Senior Designer, Di
Leonardo Di studio

the sector?

The interior design industry has witnessed a great shift and evolution in the past few years when it comes to contract products and materials.

However, I still believe there is more room for growth and development of contract products that are priced economically and are high in quality to maintain the essence of the initial design concept.



Future projects

- The Address Spa in Dubai, UAE
- Taj Luxury Hotel in Dubai, UAE
- Hilton Al-Jubail Hotel in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia
- Radisson RED Hotel & Service Apartments in Dubai Silicon Oasis, UAE
- Al Messila Hotel & Spa in Doha, Qatar
- Silicon Park Public Area in Dubai, UAE

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