

GRASIM, L&T BURY HATCHET

MAGAZINE  
OF THE NEW  
ECONOMY

TCS ON THE VISA IMBROGLIO

30 JUNE 2009, No. 1

# Businessworld

## The Best of Indian Designs



BEST  
INDIAN  
DESIGNER:  
SATISH  
GOKHALE,  
Design  
Directions



The  
BW-NID  
Awards  
for Design  
Excellence  
in  
Corporate  
India





# Best Indian

Gokhale's work in the area of capital equipment design

GINA SINGH

**F**OR the last year or so, Satish Gokhale's been obsessed with recycled paper. His studio in Pune's quiet Shivaji Nagar locality is strewn with prototypes made from that — ashtrays, paper-weights, planners, files, folders, even chairs and tables. Gokhale explains his fascination for recycled paper: "I can use it to create any form: it is strong and malleable — it can be moulded into any shape — and it's environment-friendly." Gokhale's been doing all this on the side while running Design Directions, his 15-member-strong design house. Those who know the 42-year-old aren't surprised at his latest obsession. Gokhale's fascination for new material and his yearning to continually do something innovative is legendary. That kind of describes the Best Designer for 2003.

Designers are perceived to be flamboyant creatures, their creativity stamped not only on their work but also in what they wear, how they talk and so on. Gokhale busts that stereotype; he is excruciatingly unassuming. Start with his specialisation in industrial design, designing capital equipment, perhaps the least sexy field in the discipline. Gokhale developed a love for this while at school and was hooked for life. The lack of glamour doesn't bother Gokhale. "Design is a passion," he says. "Sometimes I think, my God, it has been 17 years since I started; but then I feel there is still so much to do." But glamorous or not, Gokhale's been at the forefront of Indian industrial design. In 1985, he started the design department at Bajaj Auto, the one that's churning out motorcycles with regularity these days. And since 1988, his start-up has provided complete design solutions to help many small Indian firms

## ▼ ECOCUT - CNC Wirecut Machine EDM

Client: Electra Machine Tools, Pune, India

Used for wire cutting in tool- and die-making. Designed to be compact, easy to use and maintain. Critical areas, like the spools with the wires, have a transparent cover. Cost: Rs 10 lakh; units sold: 100 (Exports: 50)



## ▲ XL 600 - Automated Random Access Clinical Chemistry Analyzer

Client: Transasia Bio-Medicals, Mumbai

Used in modern chemical labs to analyse blood samples. Designed to fit in small labs; has a user-friendly graphical user interface. Appeals to women, who form the majority of the staff in labs. Cost: \$25,000; units sold: 97 (Exports: 60)



## ▲ Eddy Current-based Non-destructive Testing System

Client: Technofour, Pune

The world's fastest machine to identify defects in seamless steel tubes. Great looks for its size; easy to maintain. Cost: Rs 60 lakh; units sold: 6

# Designer

has helped small Indian firms become globally competitive

## ▼ Pack to Pack 7000 - Offset Printing Machine for continuous stationary

Client: Autoprint Machinery Manufacturers, Coimbatore

Offset printing machine. Easy to maintain due to lightweight panels. No exposed projections, so safe. Looks like office automation equipment. Cost: Rs 6 lakh; units sold: 105



## ▼ EtCO<sub>2</sub> - Capnography Module

Client: Larsen & Toubro (Medical Division), Mysore

Used to measure carbon dioxide levels in a patient's breath. Design matches price tag, protects sensitive cartridges. Easy to maintain. Cost: Rs 1.5 lakh, units sold: 100



Winner: **Satish Gokhale, Design Directions, Pune**

**Profile:** Specialist in capital equipment design. Trained at the National Institute of Design, Ahmedabad. First job was at Bajaj Auto. Owns Design Directions, whose clients include Premier Automobiles and Camlin, besides other Indian and foreign companies. Won the Designers Guild's Good Industrial Design Award in 1994