

Abhishek Somany, Managing Director

Abhishek is a third generation entrepreneur and a true leader with remarkable experiences, currently spearheading the entire gamut of operations at Somany Ceramics.



SOMANY CERAMICS

THE MOST SOUGHT-AFTER BRAND IN THE CERAMICS INDUSTRY

The current tiles, sanitaryware and bathware market in India is forecasted to reach a value of \$10,480 million by 2023 at a CAGR of around 10 percent during 2018-23. This high value of the market can be attributed to a plethora of factors such as improving standards of living, rising urbanization especially in Tier-2 & 3 cities, and many others. Besides, the Indian Government's initiatives like Swachh Bharat, affordable housing (Housing for all by 2022), and others have given the right impetus to escalate this market's demand curves. Poised in this vast, high-valued market is Somany Ceramics that is surpassing its competitors as a thought leader and trendsetter with a product strategy led by innovation and design. With multiple options available for each customer, the firm is one-stop-shop offering a wide spectrum of products & services at all price points. Most importantly, its biggest virtues of strong brand

reputation since many decades, and its excellence in distribution have collectively made Somany Ceramics a formidable brand to reckon with.

Abhishek Somany (Managing Director, Somany Ceramics) holds diverse professional experiences and expertise acquired from across India as well as abroad. He has exclusively shared multiple aspects about Somany's fortes, portfolio, future plans, and many others with CEO Insights. Here are the excerpts!

? How has Somany Ceramics' journey been so far?

! Today, we are proud to stand tall as one of the most sought-after brand for tile products in India while evolving as the force to reckon with in the sanitaryware and bathware brackets. Somany has a legacy of 48 years and keeps itself abreast of latest international trends and is evolved with a strong leadership in design and innovation. Currently, our product portfolio includes full range of tiles - Ceramic Wall & Floor Tiles, Polished Vitriified Tiles, Glazed Vitriified Tiles (GVT), and Outdoor Tiles, besides diverse products under sanitaryware and bathware. In a nutshell, Somany Ceramics is a complete décor solution provider with majority of its designs from Italy and Spain.

? Walk us through some of the best products in your portfolio.

! Our best selling products are Patented VC Shield Tiles and GVT, including Duragres Max (large tiles), Precious Series, and the Limited-Edition Decorative Tiles. We are the only company in India to own a patent namely VC Shield Hard Coat technology which infuses abrasion resistance and long life to our tiles, thus promising beautiful and flawless floors to our consumers. In fact, our technology has outperformed the PEI Grade V tiles, a worldwide benchmark for high abrasion. We incorporate digital print-

ing technology to create a majority of our tiles which are a 100 percent replica of natural materials like marble, granite, wood and others, and come without any upkeep issues. Duragres Tesoro, Duragres Slim 8mm, Precious, and Goodwood, to name a few come under this category. Altogether, our tiles are priced from Rs.40 - Rs.140 per sq.ft.

Under the bathware bracket, we have recently unveiled premium French Collection faucets and showers to augment our consumer base. We also have a wide range of products ranging from aesthetically driven master pieces to technology driven products like Smart toilets and sensor faucets. In the premium segment, we also have a range of products which are Red-dot and IF awarded in Bath fittings (Odette and Jazz).

Lastly, in the sanitaryware range, we have come-up with Bastile which is made from tempered glass with a protective film and has an ultra slim cistern for wall-hung toilets. Our premium toilet fittings encompass smart toilet, ensembles along with double symphonic flushing products, and artist collection basins.

? Apart from manufacturing, what are your company's greatest fortes?

! We are emerging way beyond just manufacturing primarily because of our mutually beneficial relationships with our suppliers in the marketplace. Our main suppliers are raw material suppliers, and vendors supplying finished goods, wherein each one of them has their own importance in our business. On the other hand, we hold long associations with our trade partners by presenting ourselves as a fair, transparent and trustworthy company. In fact, our legacy is a testimony to the fact that our trade partners have been with us since the time of our company's establishment.

We attribute our magnificence in the ceramics industry to our vast distribution network entailing 2000+ dealers (350 exclusive dealers) and 20 state-of-the-art COCO experience centers. Besides, we have 15,000+ touch points in India, including 350 franchisee managed showrooms - Somany Grande, Somany Studios, and Somany Exclusive Stores. Our goals for the future are to expand our retail touch points across various formats, and unveil 100+ franchisee showrooms and experience centers in FY 2019-20. We might even start online avenues to merchandize our products, if need be.

We also have a dedicated marketing team for carrying-out 360 degree campaigns to reach-out to the consumers as well as the B2B segment which includes our trade partners, architects, builders and others.

? Tell us about your company's upcoming marketing initiatives.

! In the past few years, there has been a drastic shift in the Indian tile industry from being a purely manufacturing led sector to being driven by brand conscious consumers, who are increasingly making tiles an integral part of their home decor. As part of our brand building initiative, we have recently associated with Salman Khan as our Brand Ambassador for our tiles, bathware and sanitaryware range.

This year, we will be incorporating a complete 360 degree approach for the new marketing campaign with Salman Khan. Along with airing the ad on TV, we have plans to engage in Cinema Ads, outdoor campaigns and Print Ads with leading trade magazines as well as home & decor magazines, and mainline newspapers to maximize the campaign's reach among our trade partners and consumers alike. On the digital front, we will be amplifying our association with Salman Khan via engagement campaigns on social media channels.



QUICK FACTS

Offices: Noida (Head Office), Kolkata, Ahmedabad, New Delhi, Chandigarh, Jaipur, Patna, Mumbai, Chennai, Bangalore & many others

Offerings:

- Tiles
- Bathware
- Sanitaryware

? Brief us about your company's excellence in R&D and future plans.

! Our company's R&D department is the first-of-its-kind to be recognized by Indian Government in 1996 while we have been investing volumes in it over the past few years. One of our chief goals is to enhance the longevity and quality to make our products eco-friendly and efficient across our ISO 14001 & OHSAS 18001 certified manufacturing units.

Having acquired revenue of about Rs.1800 crore, we are expecting to reach Rs.2500 crore by the end of 2021-22 by expanding our GVT portfolio by 30 percent, and retail footprint by five percent. We are also planning to expand into Tier-2 & 3 cities very soon. [GO](#)