

People spending more time and money on their bathrooms today

Sanitaryware Biz Growing 18% Annually

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Mumbai: Bathrooms are all the rage with home owners. With urban consumers going beyond spas and gyms to de-stress and rejuvenate, bathrooms, which earlier didn't get the kind of attention they do today, are turning into experiential wellness zones. The time and money spent on bathroom interiors and accessories has risen substantially over the last five years, according to industry experts. With bathrooms becoming extensions of people's living spaces, shower enclosures, whirlpools and premium interiors are now garnering greater acceptance. As a result, the sanitaryware industry is growing at 17-18% annually.

Rajesh Mehra, director & promoter of Jaquar Group, told TOI, "When I started my career 40 years back, bathrooms used to come last on the list of people doing up their homes. Over the last decade, bathrooms have gone through a sea change. Consumers are willing to try out new products and concepts. Bathrooms, which used to be utility areas earlier, are now experiential zones. Even people

TRIGGERS BOOSTING 'WET WELLNESS'

- Higher disposable incomes & rising prosperity levels in urban India
- Customers see wellness products not just as lifestyle but living style products
- People are far more health conscious today—with hectic & stressed urban lifestyles, concept of wet wellness is gaining momentum
- Builders are now providing new concepts to differentiate from each other
- Weekend getaways to resorts and spas have made even upper middle class aware



with smaller houses are converting their bathrooms into wellness spaces."

The Rs 2,800-crore Jaquar group is witnessing double-digit growth from wellness spaces alone. Products like whirlpools are gaining momentum in tier I cities among the premium middle class, which was not the case five years ago. Glass shower enclosures are growing at the rate of 15-20% today.

According to K E Ranganathan, MD, Roca Bathroom Products, the average spend per bathroom today is Rs 30,000 for a mid-segment bathroom. Five years ago, it was around Rs 20,000. "At the top end (luxury segment), the spends have gone well past Rs 10 lakh per bathroom comprising electronic toilets, whirlpools and high-end tiles. Consumers are now purchasing

more premium and high-technology products for their bathrooms due to increase in spending power and affluent living standards," said Ranganathan.

Given the diversity of purchasing power among consumers, average household spends on bathrooms in the value segment, where the price range is Rs 5,000-8,000, is growing at around 12-15%. Premium (Rs 7,000-20,000) and luxury (Rs 65,000-2 lakh and more) are growing at 16-17% and over 20%, respectively.

With technology in living spaces becoming more common across the country, consumers are looking for ways to keep their homes "in-trend" by combining luxury with tech. From integrated toilets to digital faucets, the market has everything to spruce up the bathing space. "The market for

bathroom spaces combined with wellness is a new trend for this segment in India," said Ranganathan, while adding that features like thermostatic faucets, integrated high-low sprinklers and chromo therapy are among the several options the company offers to meet individual requirements.

In individual wellness products, people in socio-economic classifications (SEC) A1, A2 and B1 are the discerning consumers. Although early adopters are SEC A1 and A2 customers, the trend goes beyond the top metros to cities like Chandigarh, Pune and Ludhiana as well. Almost 30% requests for wellness spaces, according to Jaquar, comes from such cities. Mehra estimates that the overall wellness space concept in the near future will contribute around 20% in value terms to the general sanitaryware market.

Looking at the changing buying patterns, in addition to dealing with developers, sanitaryware companies have also increased their engagement with end consumers. Jaquar orientation centres, which display wellness concept—from product education to display ideas, both for end customers and professionals—attracts 60,000-70,000 premium customer footfalls in a year.