



ROOM FOR IMAGINATION

INTERVIEW WITH
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CEO RAK CERAMICS GROUP

RAK Ceramics has 25 years of experience in the ceramics industry. What were the main stages along the way?

From a single factory in Ras Al Khaimah, we have grown to become one of the largest ceramics brands in the world with 17 plants including 10 tile, two sanitary ware, one tableware and one faucet sites in the UAE, and one plant in India, Bangladesh and Iran respectively. We now serve clients in more than 150 countries through our network of operational hubs in Europe, Middle East and North Africa, Asia, North and South America and Australia.

You launched your new brand at the most recent edition of Cersaie. This forms part of a broader corporate reorganization and renewal strategy. What are your goals?

RAK Ceramics was established in 1989 and since our formation the business has grown to become one of the largest ceramics brands in the world, but our research showed us that our brand identity did not reflect our achievements. Our new brand identity does this and better reflects who we are and where we are headed.

In the Middle East - especially in the UAE - RAK Ceramics is a cutting-edge enterprise at the forefront not only of innovation and research, but also environmental responsibility. Do you think you are a model for other manufacturers in the Arab world?

We work hard to set an example for other manufacturers. Currently we are working on an exciting new range of thermal tile products called Klima. These include warmth generating ceramic floor tiles for indoor use, cooling ceramic products for outdoor use that are resistant to heat from the sun and help to keep outdoor spaces comfortable, and a range of energy saving ceramic façades.

"Room for imagination". This slogan represents your corporate vision.

One of the real benefits of ceramics is that it opens up many creative possibilities. It can reproduce the look of other materials, making them its own. How much importance do you place on esthetics, and how much on the technical properties and performance of ceramics?

Technical performance is important but we also have a strong focus on design and are developing more tools for interior designers and architects to use to bring their ideas to life. We want to empower our customers and offer them true customization in every sense of the word. At RAK Ceramics we want our products to inspire and enable designers to create without limitations. We want to give our customers room for imagination.

Do you feel there are still new frontiers to explore in the ceramic world? What room for development does technology create? What is the next challenge for companies in your industry?

The emerging trend of 3D tiles will continue to develop. With the technology we now have available, it is possible to produce 3D tiles with more textured patterns using digital printing technology which can be totally customized to suit a client's needs. Ridges, whirls, bumps, and shifts in grain are all possible, enabling us to create both unique visual experiences and more tactile surfaces.

What perception did you take home after Cersaie? How "healthy" do you feel the ceramic industry is?

According to the organizers, attendance and participation numbers at Cersaie this year were really strong. The number of companies participating, particularly international companies, is increasing and the number of visitors from Italy has grown for the first time in the last few years. All of this is very positive for the industry and demonstrates that our market is a global one.

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