Wallspan: Providing Sustainable Solutions

With over 30 years of experience in providing quality lifestyle, care and protection products, Rainco Group has ventured into several key businesses over the years. Building solutions and finishes are part of the group, who has witnessed constant growth within the last seven years as part of an ongoing expansion strategy. In 2013 Rainco Group ventured with its latest strategic business unit, Wallspan, which specialises in providing environmentally sustainable solutions to architectural and design projects focusing on exterior envelope of the building, mainly utilises energy efficient also façades and eco-friendly internal walls and screens. Ramzeen Rauff, Director Operations -Wallspan spoke of the potential and the many opportunities available in this industry.

By Udeshi Amarasinghe | Photography Mahesh Bandara

With Sri Lanka experiencing a rapid economic growth in the past few years where massive development in urban areas, tourist sector as well as infrastructure is seen, Rainco Group determined that it was the right time to venture into specialised architectural and design solutions. And as a result, Wallspan was established in 2013. “Many new investors have entered the market where international brand names such as Shangri-La, Grand Hyatt and Movenpick to name a few have already commenced building the necessary infrastructure to operate. Further, regional players are capitalising on the new developments in the country. TATA Housing is partnering with the Sri Lankan government to construct apartments and, the Pakistani group Lakhani is also engaged in property development ventures such as Destiny Mall and Residencies. Increasing demand for better quality buildings with good functional and aesthetic values is one of the primary reasons to start this new venture,” explained Ramzeen Rauf.

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With the entrance of these projects a greater need for a high standard in architecture and design was identified. Therefore, solutions were sought to address the challenges and requirements that arose from the increased demand. “With these projects, Sri Lankan and international architects, especially from London and Singapore have expected greater level of professionalism and standard from our construction industry,” he said. The construction industry being a major contributor to the GDP of the country, the local companies faces the challenge of foreign companies entering the market, states Ramzeen. As such the need to capitalise on international trends such as focusing on the green agenda was deemed important. “The global green agenda is becoming popular everyday. Regional players such as Singapore are taking the lead in this area. Currently they are looking to employ over 7,000 people by 2015, which is over a one billion US dollar market. Sri Lanka has the capacity and can increase the knowledge in this area and we have to look at ways in which we can capitalise on these opportunities. Local companies have to up

their game," he further elaborated.

The architectural community has the responsibility to ensure that new constructions cater to the present requirement. "Regardless of whether it is a supplier or manufacturer, everyone has to provide the right solutions to meet these multifaceted demands that include reducing the carbon footprint as well as keeping pace with international construction standards. Wallspan specialises in providing these energy efficient solutions with our internationally trained technical experts based here. For example if a client wants an energy efficient building or to reduce the carbon footprint, we will assist them to achieve their objectives by providing them the right solution using our expertise in building also façades as this is an important element of a building because it is a medium to express the character of the building, the designer and the inhabitants," he said.

Today, clients and architects are no longer looking for monotonous façades "They are looking for more functional values and aesthetics. Functional value is the need to make the building energy efficient; that is controlling the temperature, providing better comfort, reducing maintenance and energy bills, which are some key issue in our region. Then, the building needs to engage with the local history and good design, which is the aesthetic element of the construction. In summery, our products are designed to meet the above demand," explained Ramzeen. Wallspan has partnered with some of world's largest companies in Germany and Italy to achieve the objectives of their clientele in the best possible manner. "We have focused on providing innovative energy efficient façades, which will entail in the reduction in energy bills, maintenance costs while providing a comfortable work environment and a sustainable building. With rapid urbanisation the number of high rising buildings have increased. The architects as well as developers, contractors and owners are responsible in ensuring that the building connects with the environment. We need to provide solutions to make sure that sufficient sunlight comes into the building while cutting the heat." Other elements include providing a corporate identity to the building while ensuring its green objectives are achieved. "We assist the design community to provide an engineered solution, which is unique and also fulfils the corporate branding and functional requirements," he revealed.

Introducing innovative and new technologies is essential for the expanding Sri

Lankan construction industry and it is for this reason that Wallspan has partnered with international companies so that they are able to compete with regional and other foreign companies that are entering the market. “We are preparing ourselves to be a competitive force in this industry,” says Ramzeen.

“Sri Lanka Needs To Attract Global Players Because We Are Situated In A Strategically Important Location. Wallspan Is Looking To Play A Key Role In Terms Of Providing Sustainable Solutions To The Construction Industry.”
Further elaborating he said, “we can learn a lot from Singapore especially in terms of constructing green buildings. Singapore is taking the lead and is a good example if we want to be on the international construction map. If they are taking the lead, why not we take a share of it. That is why we need to have the required technology so that the major investors who have already established themselves in Singapore will also identify Sri Lanka as a good location to do business.”

Catering to a niche market, Wallspan is now an established company partnering with the design and architectural community to achieve their targets and objectives. “Within this short span of time we have already identified some key projects and we are working towards providing energy efficient solutions to our clientele,” explained Ramzeen. “At Wallspan we provide bespoke engineered solutions. We have the flexibility to provide the required solution. Our objective is to improve and then assist the community and provide a sustainable and quality living space for the people of this country as well as those who are looking to invest here. Sri Lanka needs to attract global players because we are situated in a strategically important location. Wallspan is looking to play a key role in terms of providing sustainable solutions to the construction industry,” concluded Ramzeen Rauf who brings with him an experience of over ten years in the construction sector in the UK where he worked with internationally renowned architects,
developers and contractors.