

PHOTO WATCH



■ Tristar Group CEO Eugene Mayne inaugurated the Tristar Video and Interactive screens on the third floor of the India Pavilion at Expo 2020 Dubai. It has been designated by FICCI for Indian-owned conglomerates to showcase their products, services and community projects.



■ Union Coop, the largest consumer cooperative in the UAE, celebrated Commemoration Day as an expression of pride in the eternal sacrifices of the UAE's martyrs for the sake of the nation, who sacrificed themselves in order to maintain stability and peace throughout the region.

Driving recovery with an industry doyen

Kalandoor thinks it's high time UAE businesses push themselves forward

DUBAI
BY IONA STANLEY
Special to Gulf News

The pandemic heavily dented the profitability of enterprises around the world, and many are still looking for ways to recover — before they can resume some semblance of growth. And yet, there are those who have navigated the multimillion dollar disaster with ease, and emerged almost unscathed.

Founder and chairman of an eponymous empire headquartered in Dubai, Kalandoor thinks it is high time UAE businesses pull themselves up and push themselves forward. “It would be remiss of me to claim that the pandemic did not affect aspects of our operations,” he admits.

“It did, just as it affected business across the country and the world. The weeks of the lockdown saw business come to a grinding halt for everyone except essential services, and yet, that was the most productive time for reviewing, planning and future-proofing.”

According to the industry veteran, multiple factors can make or break a business during a crisis, and it takes the right measure of forethought and fortitude to pull through. “However daunting the circumstances, it is a mistake to operate on survival mode,” he explains. “If a business is built on stability and sustainability, there will be no need to hit the panic button. Instead, the focus must be on reviewing and resetting goals, and rolling out both strategic and structured changes.”

Resetting the business will



■ Kalandoor urges struggling businesses to focus on existing customers, while trying to attract new ones and identify new revenue streams.

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Kalandoor | Founder and chairman of Kalandoor Group

help build resilience, he says. “When you weed out weaknesses in your operating models, you will be better positioned to weather the next disruption.” Kalandoor advocates external help to understand the scope and magnitude of problems if they are overwhelming, and professional assistance in overcoming them.

“In the first four months of the pandemic, we initiated a group-wide restructuring programme, and it is now underway.” Long hailed as a front-runner in design-build and interior contracting services in the UAE and GCC, the Kalandoor Group is making steady inroads into new regional



markets, new businesses like customised furniture, and new audiences like mega yachts and uber luxury villas.

New metric framework

“After the necessary reviews, reinvent your revenue functions, with short- and long-term goals,” he advises. “Establishing a new metric framework is an important aspect of reinvention.”

He also urges struggling businesses to focus on existing customers, while trying to attract new ones and identify new revenue streams. “Customer attrition is one of the big pitfalls of post-pandemic recovery, but on

average, it costs about five times more to obtain new customers.”

Start with understanding changes in customer behaviour, and then find ways to reinforce their loyalty. Give them what they want: extra attention, greater personalisation, bigger rewards, whatever it takes, he explains, alluding to his own roll-call of satisfied clients, many of whom have stayed with them through the course of the last 20 years, and of course, through the pandemic.

Although the year has not ended, Kalandoor has fast-forwarded his operations to 2022, with ambitious plans. “The destruction in global business environments is unlike anything any one of us has seen before. Here in the UAE though, we don’t have any real reason to delay recovery and focus fully on growth.”

“Thanks to exemplary leadership, and the government’s many wise and prudent initiatives, we are not only safer and more stable compared to the rest of the world, but we also stand ahead.”

“The future should not be about surviving but about thriving,” he says.

Glaze appointed sole distributor of Coante

Company prides on having latest robotic technology to make veined marble designs

DUBAI
Staff Report

Glaze Granite & Marble, the UAE’s largest marble importer has been appointed as the sole distributor of Coante Quartz. The company Coante Quartz Surfaces is one of the latest and most advanced Bretonstone — Italian technology plants, located in Turkey. Coante prides on having state of art robotic technology to make veined marble designs in quartz slabs for countertops, with a warranty of 20 years.

Bretonstone — Italy was the first to develop the groundbreaking technology to manufacture engineered quartz stone plants in Italy and they remain the world leaders in engineered stone technology. Their trademarked plants produce the most durable and technically perfect quartz surfaces, guaranteed to give life to your kitchen countertop of 20 years or longer.

Coante countertops consist of 93-95 per cent of natural quartz minerals, quartz in nature is one of the hardest minerals besides diamond and such a high percentage of quartz content in Coante countertops make them resistant to scratch and impact. The non-porous structure of Coante countertops do not allow for bacterial, fungal & mould formation, therefore they are hygienic. The non-absorbent character of Coante keeps them stain-resistant & easy to care for and maintain.

Aesthetic solution

Coante offers aesthetic solutions for both modern and classical decorations. The jumbo-sized slabs make it possible for maximised use with minimum seam-



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ABOUT GLAZE MARBLE

For over two decades, Glaze Granite & Marble has remained the strongest brand in the Middle East’s Natural Stone Industry and has become a symbol of quality, and customer satisfaction. Glaze is a pioneer in introducing exotic stones to the UAE market. Today, Glaze offers more than 400 varieties of marble, granite, and natural stones through its exotic collections. Glaze offers a world-class experience to its customers with its state-of-the-art gallery space where clients can explore the collections and design options.

ing. Commenting on the development, Umesh Punia, [CEO, Glaze] said: “In last two decades Glaze has become a synonym for quality stones in UAE. We have been providing the world’s best stone brands to our customers and helping them in creating their beautiful abode. This partnership with Coante is yet another step towards providing the best brands to our clients and ensuring their satisfaction. Bretonstone technology quartz has its own marketplace and when it comes to veined marble design in quartz surfaces, Coante is one of the top brands in the world”

Mr. Kenan Erdem, General Manager at Coante says “When we launched Coante, we started looking for partners around the world. When it came to the UAE, the first name that came up was Glaze, and the way Glaze keeps the brand value of every product is remarkable. In fact, they elevate the brand to another level, from training the sales team to fabricators, contractors & overall marketing of any product at Glaze is rare to find elsewhere.”

Recent lifting of restrictions bring back long-haul travel

Airbus CEO Faury keeps hopes up of aviation industry getting into full recovery mode soon

DUBAI
BY JOHN BENNY
Staff Reporter

The challenge for the aviation industry is clear — win back the two years of lost passenger growth grounded by Covid-19 and its variants. The CEO of Airbus there is enough happening now in the skies to lead a recovery, even a strong one.

“We’ve seen some good acceleration recently on long-distance flights with the reopening of the US for vaccinated

people — it was a very important decision from the Biden administration,” said Guillaume Faury, who also heads the French aerospace industry body GIFAS.

“In spite of all these unexpected situations and the relapse of the pandemic, the general trend is recovery,” said Faury. “We think there is a path to normality, but it is probably going to be a different normality.”

Airbus, which expects passenger numbers to return to pre-Covid levels between 2023 and 2025, said recent lifting of restrictions was bringing back long-haul travel — which is the all too important requirement for airlines’ longer term recover.

The aviation industry chief said that some sectors within aviation

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Guillaume Faury | CEO, Airbus

and aerospace were resilient to the pandemic. “The business jet crisis has not been as deep as for commercial aviation — there have been some long-term benefits for business aviation with Covid disrupting global air connectivity,” said Faury. “Defence and space have by far been less impacted by Covid and the disruptions were mainly on the supply side more than on the demand.”

Several companies in the aircraft supply chain, however, were yet to shake off the pandemic. “With long lead times and orders placed for the long term, we are less directly impacted,” said Faury. “But, we see all suppliers and the supply chain in general facing the same kind of challenges. So, we are helping them — we organise (and) to try to resolve prob-

lems before they become shortages and disruptions.

“We see that the transport by sea is also more challenging — the time it takes to carry goods from one place to another one is longer and also less predictable.”

Middle East skies

According to Airbus, airlines operating in the Middle East region will require 3,020 new

passenger and freight aircraft deliveries by 2040. This will bring the total fleet to 3,210 from a 2019 fleet baseline of 1,300 aircraft.

During this period, the fleet in the region will transition to new generation types such as the A220, A320neo family, A330neo and A350 bringing significant efficiency improvement and a corresponding reduction in carbon emissions per passenger, said Airbus.

Airbus expects air traffic in the region to achieve full recovery between late 2022 and mid-2024. Globally, cargo is already operating today at 9 per cent above pre-crisis levels, and in the Middle East at 18 per cent.

