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At Home with Parx

Parx reimagines its brand personality to reflect the pulse of the new generation to relate to its attitude and vibrancy. This has been achieved through its new eclectic store design strategy that differentiates the brand experience with a 'Parx House' concept, blending western attitude with Indian culture.

Launched in 1999, Parx is a premium casual lifestyle brand for 'beyond work' requirements and has a reputation for continuous innovations and international trends and styling. To update its brand image to reflect the pulse of the new generation, Parx set out to reimagine its brand experience through store design and presentation in a manner that it stands apart in the market and is relevant today and tomorrow. "Parx reflects the persona of the energetic 22-30 year old who is aggressive, outgoing, dynamic, and lives life to the fullest. It reflects the pulse of the new generation which looks at clothing as a reflection of their attitude and vibrancy," says Shreyas Joshi, President Raymond Apparels and Gopal Sharma, Head-Projects, Raymond Apparels.

The image makeover was piloted at a new site in the Phoenix Market City Mall, Pune and was conceptualized by JGA, a Detroit based retail design company, working in association with FRDC, Bangalore. The design approach was to create a concept of 'Parx House', which was derived from new emerging India's aspiring

youth who are fashion discerning and yet have roots in India's cultural richness. The store design blends western attitude with Indian cultural aspirations in a differentiating store experience. "Parx house has a timeless identity. It is designed to look old and used. The underlying motive behind the dull look is to somehow bring forth the fact that while the design is new, and so is the merchandise, the brand is not," says Sanjay Agarwal, Managing Director, FRDC. The 'Leaping Stag' mnemonic of Parx's new logo drives the retail identity of the new stores and is given very prominent visibility on the store front signage with a full height back lit signage.

The 'Parx House' design approach divides the retail space as clear as a house into distinct rooms each of which has a distinctive experience. "To bring Parx to life with a new store experience that supports business objective, the retail space was divided in four parts and each part was strategically thought out through use of specific color, materials and fixtures to best support the merchandising impact of the product category," says Chele Mckee, the visual and creative consultant, Chele Mckee Design.



Partially closed back windows feature a window display of fashion supported with fashion imagery and also allow a clear view of the fashion features in-store



The Den, designed to resemble a private space, featuring a wide assortment of shirts and t-shirts presented in a hanging format

Each 'room', accessed through prominent wooden archways, houses a different category of merchandise in a complementing environment



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Each 'room', accessed through prominent wooden archways, houses a different category of merchandise in a complementing environment. The entrance foyer focuses on featuring the latest trends in new arrival collections, while the living room showcases the Party Line. Past that is the Den, designed to resemble a private space, featuring a wide assortment of shirts and t-shirts presented in a hanging format, followed by the Lounge presenting an impressive denim range.

The interior design has an eclectic approach that combines western and Indian inspirations. Unlike the western inspired design concept of the retail spaces, the trial rooms area has an Indian touch with ethnic patterns, mirror frames and furniture. The area between the trial rooms has a unique combination of mirrors angled on the wall and the ceiling to enable different views from the sides and the top. One of these mirrors is special and is called the 'Tweet Mirror' which works as an online touchscreen that allows customers to instantly share images, of themselves in the clothes they try, with their friends on Facebook and Twitter. "We have taken this technology from a European company called Nedap," says Sanjay. The trial rooms are themed like regal wedding bedrooms with red leather padded walls, custom chandeliers and typical wedding sofa like seating.

To integrate the store design with the branding, the 'Leaping Stag' has been used in the cash counter backdrop and also in the merchandise presentation with 'antler' shaped fixtures on feature display walls.

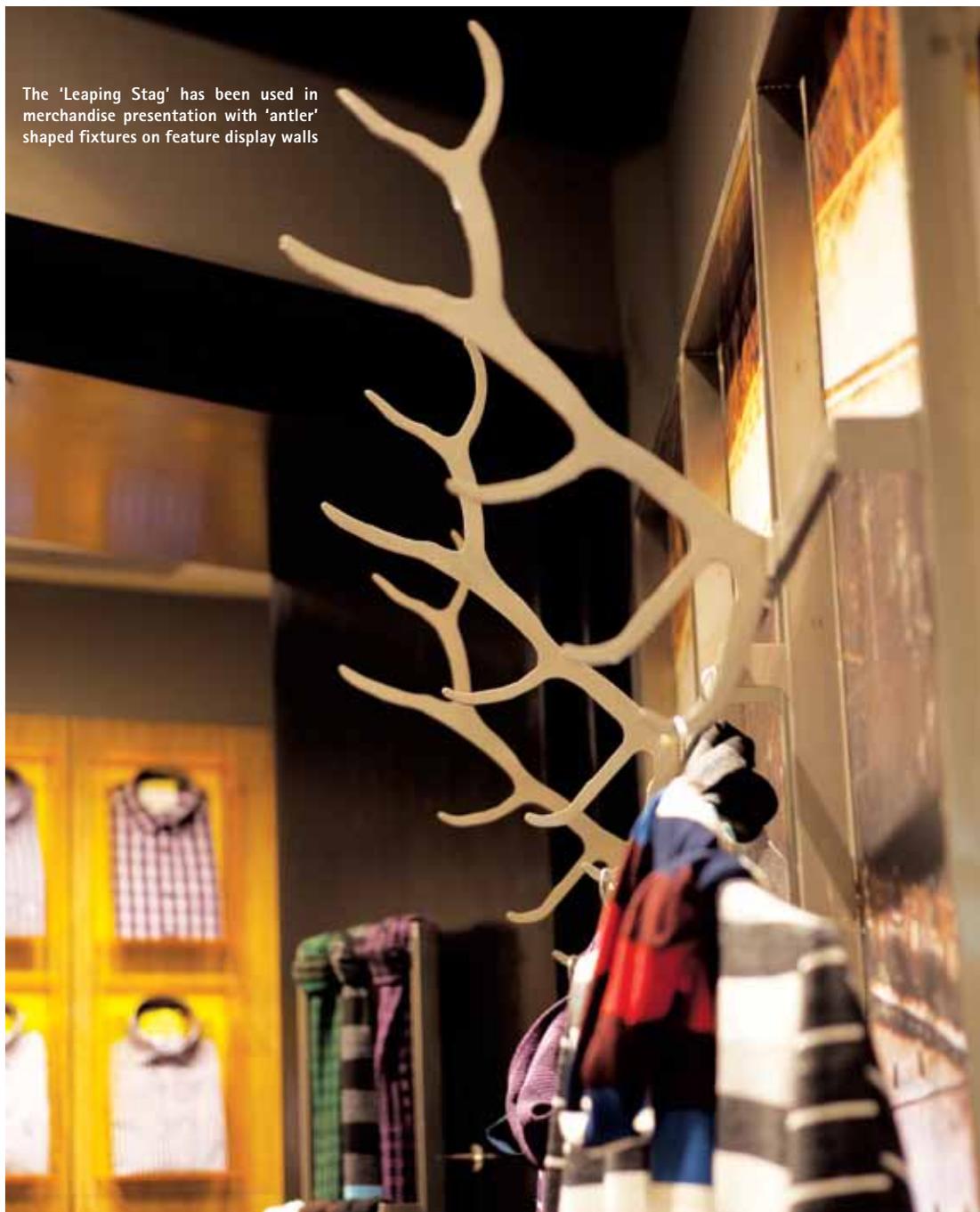
The display strategy in the store is planned to reinforce the casual 'live easy' positioning of the brand. This is interpreted across the store through distinctive, coordinated and colorized fashion statement presentations supported with props like a guitar, pulleys, cotton twill strappings, etc. across the store. Headless mannequins in casual poses supported with fashion imagery help create fashion highlights in the partially back closed windows and in-store focal points.

Boutique type accent lighting helps create a dramatic ambience and draw attention to the store offerings and design features of the store environment.

Conscious use of 'worked' on and 'used' effect of materials and finishes like industrial looking steel, unfinished metals, raw wood units, used paint finish, mango wood doors etc. help create an authentic setting. This material palette is adapted in the interiors, fixtures, furniture and the display props in the store environment.

Overall, a unique eclectic combination of international design language and Indian culture brought together in the store environment has resulted in the creation of a differentiated brand experience for Parx. This new brand image of Parx will be carried across major towns of India in the next few months ●

Shinjini Ganguli



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