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"There is no news like bad news", "Negativity Flows faster than positivity".

India today has become a fulcrum of negative business talk. In trains, at drawing halls and dining tables, Business conferences and networking seminars, At coffee houses and Chai ki dukan, we are taking the economy funeral through words of expertise on how bad economy is.

As entrepreneurs, what should we do. Just recently, owner of a huge shoe brand gave a great speech to his employees and teams on what can be done in these trying times. The video went viral and must have motivated millions in India.

He has shown the way. A way that is commensurate with war promotion. Years back small armies defeated huge battalions on basis of strong motivation and a leader who had the right vision and capability to communicate it effectively. Such incidences find many footprints in Indian history and mythology.

Can we as true Indians fall back on the back to basics and make sure the negative surge of talk is well countered with positive news and talks by successful entrepreneurs.

We at Build Avenue believe that every entrepreneur has faced some sort of challenge big and small whether economy has been positive or not. This basic ingredient of entrepreneurship can be bought forward in words and presentations such that people, employees, suppliers, customers all get that positive sentiment back.

We would like to challenge each and every entrepreneur reading this to form a good presentation, preferably a video that can find viewers across their own people as well as others. This would be a true enterprising work by entrepreneurs.

Let us have a link of your video so we can put it in come social media channels of our own.

Upendra Nagar

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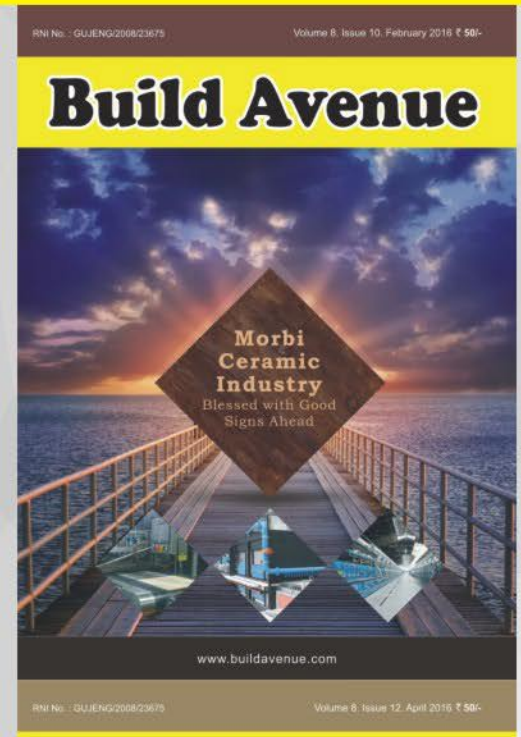

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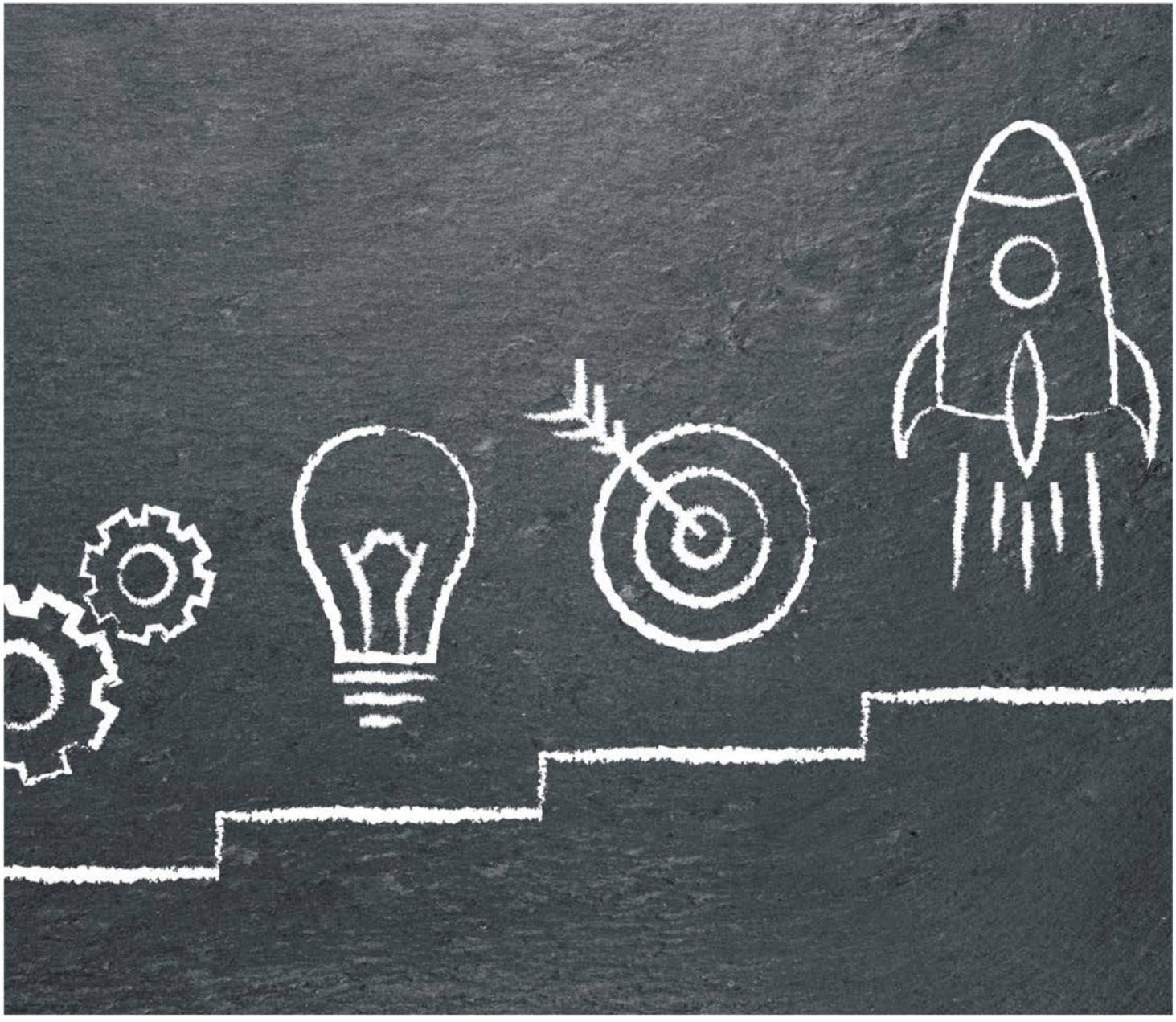
Recession or Slowdown: Strategies to counter it.



Every economy however big or small goes through cycles. There are times of rapid expansion followed by slowdown and depression and severe recession.

This is not a new phenomenon. While putting the political rhetoric aside, business houses need to see this period of slowdown objectively rather than emotionally.

The Ceramic Sector

The ceramic sector witnessed an unprecedented and unbelievable growth in the past 15 years. The growth led tour sector and region

becoming one of the biggest clusters of tile manufacture in the world. 15 years of rapid undisturbed hurdle free growth. There had been patches of slowdown in demand, but the sector as a whole did very well.

Past few years have seen Indian ceramic brands making way to international destinations. There is a clear and evident growth with sustainable technological and commercial development to sustain the volumes if there is demand.

The profits have been very lucrative and investments in the business of ceramics have made many a millionaire in India. More profits have led to more investments and the cycles of this profit to investment have generated huge employment, direct and indirect.

We as ceramic people have to be happy and proud of it. Happy because we have been lucky and proud because we have grabbed our opportunities and made huge industries rise and shine into recognized dependable brands.

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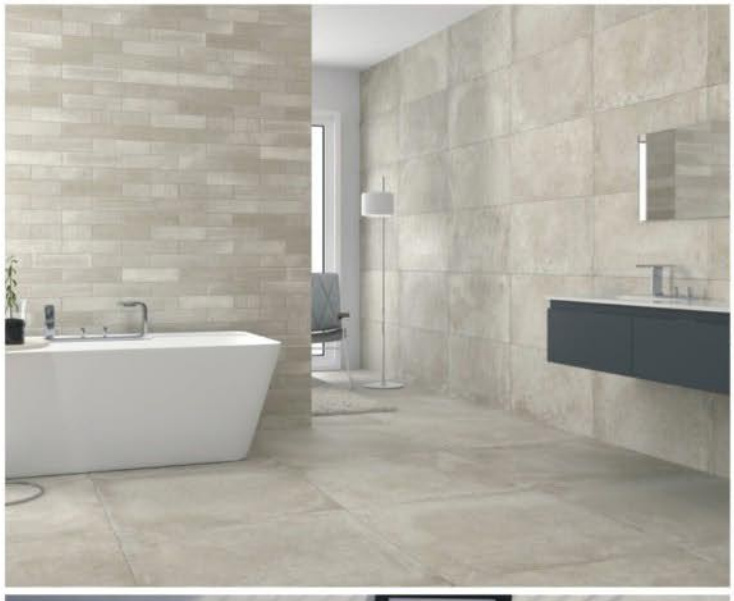

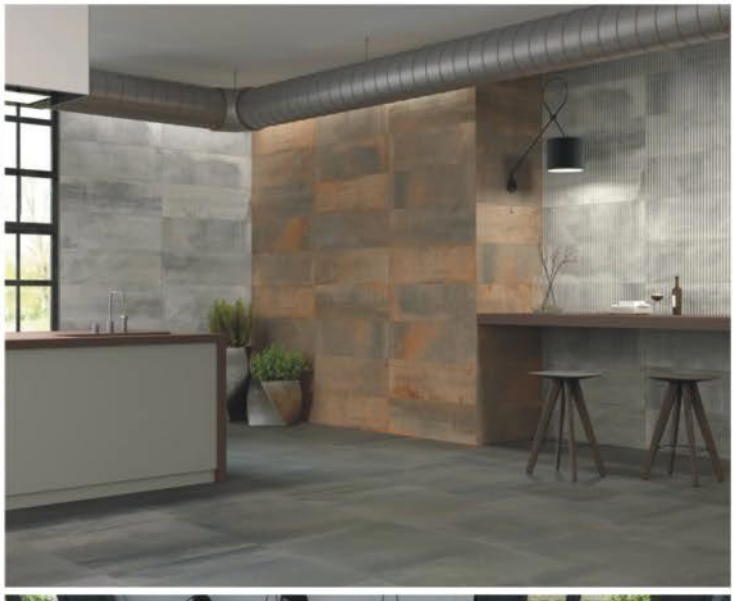

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Economic Cycles and Ceramic Sector

Economic cycles are a common phenomenon. There will be ups and downs in economy as a whole. These cycles normally have 6-7 years of upswing and 3-5 years of slowdown. Every two decades there is a severe depression which sends very depressing sentiments across businesses and people.

However, the global ecosystem now is becoming more interdependent and complicated. When slow down hits one part, it always impacts another part of the world. With international trade becoming huge and countries now becoming specialists in some sectors, a slowdown in one continent can impact some countries but not all.

Domestic consumers in countries like India still can sustain industrial output. But this is not true for all countries.

As far as ceramic sector is considered, when there was sunshine more players came into production. As manufacturers increased, supply increased and relative demand (not absolute demand) reduced, leading to pressures on profits. Investments in the sector were rampant till 2017, which meant, supply growth was not going to go down anytime soon.

This has led to oversupply and lack of demand. With construction industry in India also taking a beating it was only fair that slowdown would come to the sector albeit after a couple of months.

The solutions

We have talked to a number of entrepreneurs as to how to counter attack slowdowns. We are summarizing some common and useful feedbacks so you can setup strategies to fight slowdown effectively.

"Industry needs to ask itself if it has done enough to become globally competitive." Rajiv Bajaj. Economic Times, 6 Sept 2019.

MG Hectors and KIA Seltos being overbooked while other automobile manufacturers are finding month on month dip in sales. This is a classic example of consumers demanding more and ready to spend more on innovative products.

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Lesson:

Do we need to do the same in ceramic sector?

Are we good enough for the world?

Does Indian industry need more?

Are we ahead in technology, design product life style etc?

These questions though painful need to be asked. Entrepreneurs need to be true and frank about accepting the flaws of their products and brands.

Innovations

When the demand is good, operations eat up most of your time. So there is almost no time to innovate or think.

When there is slowdown, there is lot of time. There are fewer inquiries, there is lesser work, and the team is also getting bored.

This becomes the best time to start innovating. Product, Process and system innovation can be softly implemented. Teams can be trained to realign to new goals. They can be taught to see new vision of the company.

Product innovation is one of the sectors where most of Indian companies lack. Industry stalwarts have already talked about being blind to creating new products, designs and styles.

Research and Development of new products, technology and market study would be the best investment in these trying times. While exploring and studying new markets is already an activity that is carried out, the depth of market and quality needs are rarely understood and delivered by our players.

It is imperative that entrepreneurs think like real entrepreneurs and not traders who want to just sell.

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Think Luxury Products, Think High value

A basic phenomenon of economics as regards demand and supply is that luxury goods tend to have greater demand with larger prices. This is a well tested and approved phenomenon in economics.

While we are promoting innovation in many aspects of business products are where we lack abundantly.

We strongly suggest manufacturers and designers to think much beyond what is existing.

We urge them to study how rich and famous people buy.

What are their tastes?

What styles and buying behaviors do the rich and famous display?

What are they willing to spend and what are their channels of influence.

Developing a rich product is more about market study than technology. It is more about relationships and brand creation than pushy marketing. It is about generating pull.

Think Mercedez Benz, Porsche and Ferrari. Can you match the market prominence of these brands with your brands, products and relationships?

If you can get your brand and product into the luxury segment, you can be sure to have great demand even in a recessionary condition, leave alone slowdown.

Build Relations

When the ship is about to sink, the mouse run to jump out first. Similarly, when slowdown comes, best of companies leave alone their relationships they have built for years for short term gains/losses.

This is where brands and companies die faster than expected. The arrogance and ignorance combined give a high ego to the entrepreneur that he can treat customers, dealers and distributors like useless entities. This will impact when there will be turnaround.

Entrepreneurs in ceramic sector have earned well in past decade. It is now time to share some of that wealth to build relationships. Give time to distributors, educate them. Help them overcome their own weaknesses.

Break the bread together. Eat Travel with your channel partners. This all leads to strong relationships that will last the test of time. This is actually a preparation for the next upswing when the same network will help you grow exponentially.

We at Build Avenue strongly feel that it is time for entrepreneurs to find their MOJO and punch above their weight to see of these testing times. ■

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Reader's Review

I would like to read more on new technologies. How are they cheap and good for marketing.

Pankaj Arora,
Hissar

We trade in ceramic goods. We want to know about new brands. We want to have more photos of good design and article on distribution.

Vishesh Tiwari,
Lucknow

Your writing is good but can improve. More point wise presentation can help us instead of long sentences. Also, you should have a Question Answer section.

Viren Singh,
Rajasthan

We are, merchant exporter and distributor of tiles. We are looking for better options and better offers. Can you have a Tendering facility in your web site?

Mr. Bhalla,
Bhopal

Bangalore has a huge potential for Ceramic Goods. Your magazine is a great informant of new products and new companies in Morbi region.

Mr. J. Shetty,
Bangalore

Ceramic Goods include ceramic Toys and decorative. Why are these sections never included in your magazine.

Mrs. Nair,
Thirunavelli

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Priceless Quotes

Bill Gates
Microsoft Founder
Country: USA

- My success, part of it certainly, is that I have focused in on a few things.

Warren Buffet
Stock Market Guru
Country: USA

- I always knew. I was going to be rich. I don't think. I ever doubted it for a minute.

Carlos Slim Helu
Communications Businessman
Country: Mexico

- When you live for other's opinions, you are dead. I don't want to live thinking about how I'll be remembered.

Lakshmi Mittal
Steel Baron
Country: India

- Everyone experience tough times, it is a measure of your determination and dedication how you deal with them and how you can come through them.

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Date: 17 March 2020 - 30 March 2020

Venue: Kiev (Ukraine)

Baku Build

Date: 22 Oct 2019 – 25 Oct 2019

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Asean Ceramics 19

Date: 28 Aug 2019 – 30 Aug 2019

Venue: Bangkok (Thailand)

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