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*Downtown lowdown

Dubai's Manhattan

NEWS

Fast track

Yas Island
motors towards
its F1 deadline

Last bid

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best option for
buyers and sellers?

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AGAIN BEFORE THE
CAVALRY ARRIVES."**

PETER COOPER property commentator



Distinctive chill

Explore the icy interiors of HTL Aircon's
Mumbai office. »p41



Cool it

* What's so chilled out about the office of HTL Aircon in Mumbai? **fw** finds out.
words: Binesh Panicker

The HTL Aircon office in Mumbai was designed to express the air-conditioning firm's brand identity of "quality, economy and innovation".

The design firm behind the project, Planet3 Studios, was given the task of creating a space that was user friendly and would respond to the nature of the business while evoking the concept of 'cool'.

As you enter the office, a faceted feature wall composed of precision-joined panels guides you in. "Painted white, the effect of this wall is reminiscent of carved snow banks. It descends into the floor revealing a frosted glass partition with transparent slits that carry the graphic quality of the conjoined wall," says Prashanta Ghosh, the project architect.

"The iced glass partition conceals two cabins, each with a distinct design identity. An exuberant seamless tabletop rendered



Design elements throughout the office promote the theme of 'cool'



in tones of blue flows right into ground, much like a melting glacier... with the rest of the space staying neutral in deference. Translucent ceiling panels offer diffused light into the space."

In the main office area, a dramatic staircase leads to the first floor. "Fabricated in steel, glass and wood, this object is the centerpiece around which the whole space is oriented. Deprived of a skin, a skeletal form similar to the nearby faceted wall envelops the steel staircase rising with it to the upper level. For

a fragile looking construct, this framework of wooden members lends some solidity," explains Prashanta.

Tabletops in the office space are made of glass supported by a specially fabricated frame that is anchored to the legs below. The

reception table, meeting room partition and entrance door are rendered in frosted glass.

"Quirky features like a meeting room table with a printed thermostat dial communicate the theme," says Prashanta.

The top floor features design elements that provide an entirely different feel from the 'coolness' of the rest of the ground floor.

"On the upper level the atmosphere gets warmer," says Prashanta. "We have incorporated elements like wood tones, warm colours and a richer and more varied palette."

Here, there's a bold and colourful games room which is bordered on one side by a caricature wall, and on the other by a screen filled with plastic balls. The pantry is playful, with an unusual blue serving counter spilling on to the floor. Elsewhere, a warped and twisted open bookcase makes a statement. In the conference room, a shattered mirror sits below a glasstop, forming a table.

2007
is the year HTL
Aircor office
was completed.



Quirky details like a meeting room table with a printed thermostat dial communicate the theme.

PRASHANTA GHOSH
project architect

Dried twigs are used as window and wall treatments to filter light and provide privacy.

Completed in August 2007, the office's cool vibe matches the company's chilled identity and function. [fw](#)



A skeletal staircase leads up to the upper floor

words: Binesh Panicker/sub-editor: images: supplied