# Adobe campus, Sector 25A, Noida

**B**ack in 2001, when Adobe established its first office setup in India at Sector 25A in Noida, it became a landmark in the vicinity. As the company grew it was time to give this famed structure a makeover and Design Plus Associates Services, led by its principal architect Sonali Bhagwati, were entrusted with this enormous task. Now the revamped campus boasts of best in class, intelligent and modern office features, besides exhibiting the trademark contemporary and colourful vibe that is quintessential Adobe – a characteristic that is common in all their office spaces across the globe.

With over 200,000 sq-ft of workspace and seating capacity

> "To incorporate a sense of identity, each floor is treated with different colour schemes, which manifests across the complete interior fabric of the office."
> – Sonali Bhagwati

for over 1,800 employees, the refreshed facility is designed to deliver a great workplace experience for the company's client-facing functions including customer experience and other enabling functions.
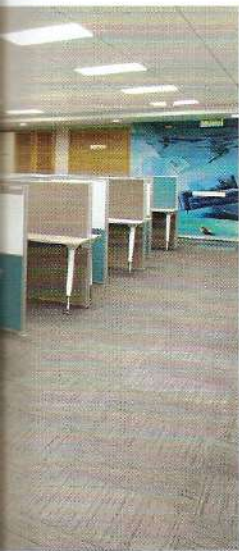
It all started with a succinct design brief – the office interiors had to be refurbished, the façade needed a makeover and the site landscape would undergo complete remodeling to enhance the overall ambience. The design team also had to be mindful of their material selection, which had to enable the targeted USGBC Gold rating for



## ⓤ PROJECT INFORMATION

- **Project:** Renovation of Adobe campus, Sector 25A, Noida
- **Architect:** Design Plus Associates Services Pvt Ltd.
- **Design Team:** Sonali Bhagwati, Ashish Gupta, Aniruddha Sengupta
- **Project Area:** 200,000 sq-ft
- **Civil contractors:** Cherry Hill Interiors
- **Carpentry contractor:** Cherry Hill Interiors
- **Initiation of project:** September 2015
- **Completion of project:** August 2016

## IN CONVERSATION WITH THE ARCHITECT

**Sonali Bhagwati, president, Design Plus Associates Services Pvt. Ltd**



**What was the design brief given by Adobe?**
The project required us to refurbish Adobe's first campus in India that was executed by us 15 years ago. With an aim to accommodate the growing business needs and the changing employee demography, the company wanted a new identity to the building. Given this, the seating capacity of the building was to be doubled and the engineering operations also had to be totally revamped to deliver zero downtime.

The original façade of the building – sweeping curvilinear walls rendered in primary colours juxtaposed against a charcoal monochromatic and rigidly rectangular building block – had a strong design language, which also defined NCR's urban landscape. The façade had to be changed while maintaining the ethos of the structure. In addition to this, the interiors, too, were in for a complete makeover.

**What were the fundamental elements implemented in the design of the building?**
The design is based on the concepts of collaboration, employee wellness and sustainability. Some of the key highlights are:
* To give each floor its individual identify, different colours schemes were deployed, which manifests across the complete interior landscape of the office – in carpets, wall accents, fabrics, soft furnishing, etc.
* The new design discouraged closed work spaces, thereby, incorporating open work spaces closer to the façade, to bring in more natural light.
* Collaborative zones – such as spacious meeting areas, informal huddle spaces and breakout zones – were introduced to encourage ideation and team building activities.
* To encourage employee health and wellness, recreational zones for bocce ball, croquet, rock climbing, volley ball, tennis, basketball, etc., was made an integral part of the campus.

**What were the challenges?**
One of the biggest challenge was to accommodate the escalating workforce by over 100 per cent. The engineering operations also had to be reworked, to align with this increased head count. We worked with the Adobe team and the project managers to overcome this by judiciously choosing the right technologies and configurations, which would fit into the limited space.

Another major challenge was the façade renovation – as the original building facade had a strong design language, it needed a fresh approach without destroying the ethos. After much iteration, the design team decided to use the colour pixel as the design element.

the building. Besides sustainability, the design was driven to facilitate collaboration and wellness among the users of the space. This culminated into a vibrant new look for the Adobe campus that is now equipped with infrastructure and facility that enables 24x7 productivity, and also fosters Adobe's core values of creativity and innovation.

There was a departure from traditional hierarchical corner office setup with fewer private offices, promoting greater transparency and collaboration within the workforce. Abundant video conferencing rooms, video booths and breakout areas are provided so as to encourage teamwork and collaboration. The campus optimises its energy consumption by employing sophisticated building management system that controls and monitors ventilation, lighting, power systems, fire systems and security.

When it comes to the campus' wellness factor, the design accommodated various indoor as well as outdoor sports and health facilities along with an outdoor café which offers ample amount of rejuvenation space and can also double up as an informal workspace for creative brainstorming.

## ⋃ IN CONVERSATION WITH THE ARCHITECT

Sanjay Wadhwa, principal architect, SWBI Architects Pvt Ltd.



### Converging elements

The design was conceptualised to bring together various spaces and volumes within the campus. This led to the ideation of a central spine that runs through the entire campus, overlooking the water bodies and landscape while connecting both the phases through landscaped courts and streets. Thereby, creating a micro-climate that acts as a visual and physical buffer to the main building. This also helps blur boundaries between inside and outside. The central communication stair, design with breakout and collaborative spaces, crafts an active and throbbing social hub. This also encourages people to use the stairs, thereby, encouraging a healthy life-style and saves energy too.

### The challenges

Scale was the biggest challenge – and hence an extensive research and analysis of Adobe's current, newly commissioned facilities was undertaken by the design team, before arriving at the final design solution. Amongst the rut of typical workplaces and rapidly developing work culture coming up in India, the office campus sets out to achieve new benchmarks by trying to achieve a healthy and vibrating work environment.

### Link between the structure and its people

The building is designed as an efficient, expressive, and sustainable design solution that provides a unique identity to this state-of-the-art R&D facility. The spatial distribution is planned to enable and promote the company's work ethos. The neighborhood-based planning warrants fraternisation and communication with a distributed framework model, to create a combination of private and groups meetings.
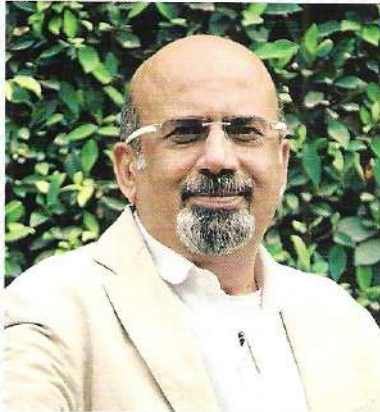
# Adobe campus, Sector 132, Noida

**W**hen you are creating a campus for a multinational computer software giant like Adobe – there is much you want to embody in the design. Professional, yet artistically appealing, and functionally driven with ample avenues for individual expression and creativity, the Adobe campus at Sector 132, Noida Expressway, had to live up to big expectations and SWBI Architects were up for that task. Under the aegis of Sanjay Wadhwa and Beena Idnani, the design firm focuses on shaping and empowering environments "through smart, sustainable, responsive and efficient designs" – just the kind of expertise Adobe needed for their 7-acre site, now transformed into a world-class campus for over 2,000 IT professionals

An extensive research and study of Adobe's current, newly commissioned facilities was undertaken by the team before arriving at the final design solution. It was decided that the campus would be built in two phases, with each phase housing
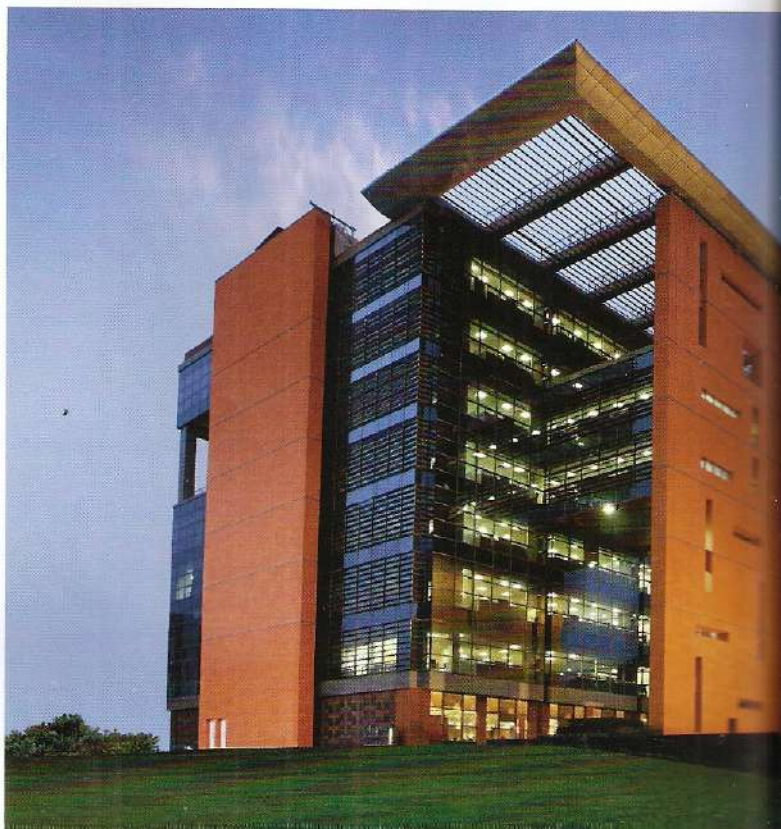
a large data centre, labs, meeting and collaboration spaces, security and ancillary support functions. To tie this brief into a cohesive design language, the team didn't have to look far away for inspiration. "'Adobe' – a Spanish word for sun dried clay bricks – defined the back-to-basics design philosophy that was adopted by merging this basic building material with the company's background in design, media and other geometric software. In line with the concept, terracotta was deployed as the primary material expressed in a modern contemporary style using geometric designs and compositions," explains Sanjay Wadhwa, principal architect, SWBI Architects.

The two phases are planned perpendicular to each other and linked with a walking street; punctuated with landscaped courts, water features and greenery – "creating an inviting micro-climate," the team notes. Inside Phase-I, two atriums with an adjacent staircase connect the different workspaces spread throughout the seven-storeyed building. "Neighbourhood-based planning was adopted to provide teams, that are clustered around the central hub and communication stairs, with a distributed privacy framework
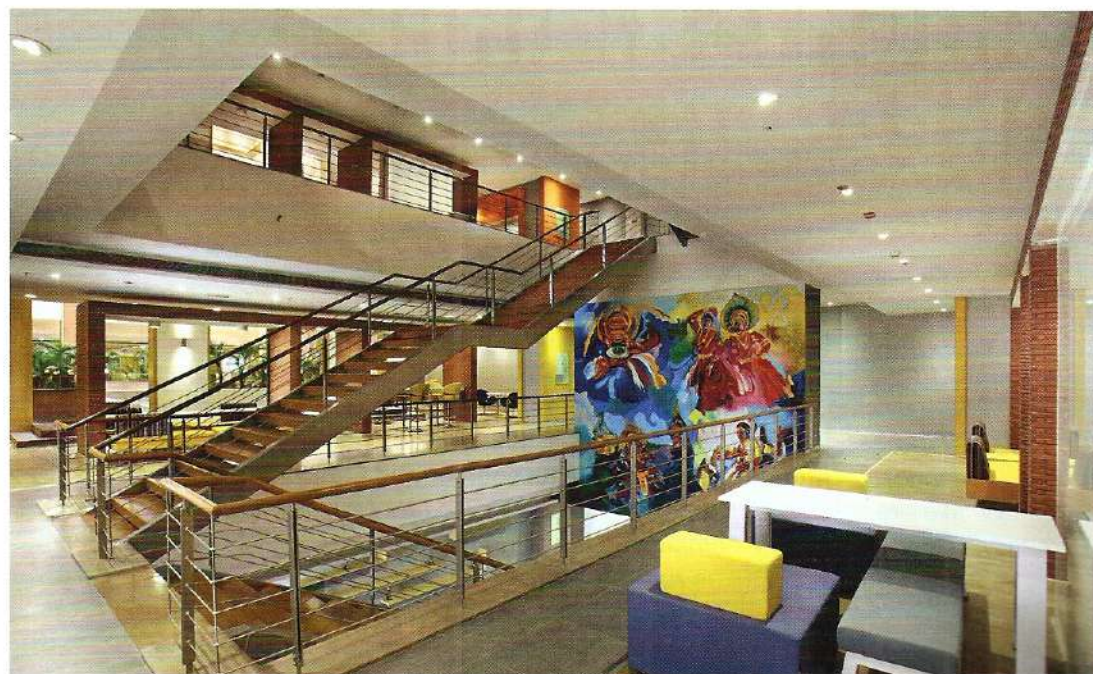
model that is adopted to create a combination of 'Me' and 'We' spaces," describes Wadhwa. The atrium is provided with skylight for enhanced permeation of daylight in workspaces to create an energetic atmosphere. The compositions of terracotta wall panels with bright colours like sunshine yellow, green and indigo, reflect the youthful nature of the space.

Conceptualised with a focus on energy and ecological conservation and LEED Platinum rating (originally intended for Gold), the built structure utilises both passive and technologically advanced *green* features. The RCC-framed structure uses AAC (Autoclaved aerated concrete) blocks with terracotta ventilated façade and high-performance, shaded curtain wall with heat reflective Albino paint on the roof – all directed to reduce heat gain. The terrace garden and green roof are optimised to cut down the heat island effect while the solar shielding on the south façade protects the interiors from the high, midday sun. The north zone remains shaded throughout the day and has outdoor activities such as an amphitheater and sports facilities. "Wind flowing through picks up the mist from the spray-based water bodies

combined with soft landscaping and bio-walls, significantly improving the microclimate of the space. The bio-wall traps air pollutants and aids in lowering the surrounding air-temperatures and reducing cooling loads," adds Wadhwa.

At the start, Adobe, along with SWBI, set out to achieve new benchmarks for workspaces in

what appears to be a rapidly developing work culture. The result is a work environment that many young professionals will use positively to nurture new ideas and thoughts. With its balanced emphasis on work and recreation, the Noida-based Adobe Campus could well become the birthplace of the next-big software wave.

## ◡ PROJECT INFORMATION

- **Project:** R&D facility for Adobe Systems Pvt. Ltd
- **Principal architect:** SWBI Architects
- **Design team:** Sanjay Wadhwa
- **Site area:** 28,322 sq-m
- **Built-up area:** 67354.7 sq-m
- **Initiation of project:** 2012
- **Completion of project:** June 2015
- **Photographer:** Kapil Kamra