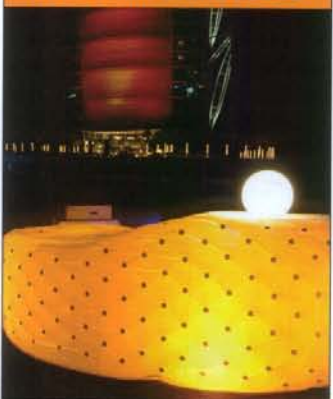




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# High-art now high-tech

The next luxury technology trend mixes fine art with new technology to create 'high definition artworks' for guests' viewing pleasure

The hotel industry is desperately trying to embrace technological advances in order to deal with the increasing demands of a new generation of customers, and the popularity of HDTV (High Definition TV) in the hospitality industry is beginning to spawn a whole host of offshoot products, according to suppliers.

California-based art consultancy LUX Art & Design (LUXART) creative director Rob Wilson said he believes his firm has created a unique product that will enable hotels to compete in this tough environment.

"Luxury hoteliers are under tremendous pressure to ensure that high-paying guests are not disappointed — they expect as good or better technology and décor as they have at home," he explained.

With guests demanding newer technology, it is the search for the next big thing that Wilson believes is the challenge for anybody working in the luxury hospitality sector.

"That's the key to gaining a competitive edge, especially in technology," he added.

"The primary trend driving the LUX-HDA market is the extraordinary boom in HDTV installations in the hospitality industry.

"The demand for this technology is, in the luxury sector, almost absolute. The demand for art is more difficult to quantify, but falls into the realm of competitive edge."

The creation of the product was a reaction to the lack of original artwork being included in luxury and boutique hotel rooms and the dominance of HDTV, Wilson said.

"Most of the time, these expensive screens sit there as ugly, black rectangles in otherwise intricately-choreographed interior designs," he explained.

"So we saw an opportunity — a niche — a way to get fine art back into hospitality, by bringing it into the HD space."

Wilson cited a survey by Unity Marketing — a regular survey capturing the habits of the baby boomer generation — which shows that their new product is providing exactly what people want.



Wilson: many guests expect décor in their hotel room to be as good or better than what they have at home.

"Unity found that 23% of respondents purchased art and antiques. Those with a household income of US \$100,000 and more purchased art and antiques at a rate of 27%," Wilson said.

LUXART's new product, the LUX-HDA Mirage, combines advanced technology with art and design to create what Wilson believes is a new art medium, which will appeal directly to this market.

"[It] is an integrated system for displaying this new art form on glass, water or fabric — in a way that adds a magical, mesmerizing component to a space such as a suite, lobby, spa, lounge or nightclub," he explained.

The Electrosonic HD FrEND plus server, the INNCOM Guestroom Digital Assistant touchpad, an HD projector and a projection surface such as the Polyvision LCD glass from Polytronix can all be installed in a day, and the artwork easily uploaded via Ethernet. Then the system is ready to use.

"Once the server is online, the system can function automatically — new artwork can be loaded remotely via the Internet and programmed without hotel staff having to touch anything," Wilson added. "This appliance is user-friendly, reliable, versatile, and flexible."

And once the appliance is working, users will benefit from LUXART's knowledge of the art industry and commitment to providing a bespoke product, with each installa-

tion unique to its venue and the surrounding area.

"We think that is a core part of what defines luxury: rarity, authenticity, and attention to detail," Wilson said. "We try to source the art from regional artists, and give the collection a site-specific quality. We listen to the client, absorb their tastes and style and discern the special qualities that define the experience they seek to provide for their guests."

With this commitment to luxury and fine art, Wilson dismissed any suggestion that the LUX-HDA is not 'real' art, arguing that it is created from original pieces and is not in competition with traditional forms, but designed to complement them instead.

"Wherever possible, we encourage the client to purchase the original pieces from which the LUX-HDA installation is derived; when displayed together, they create a fascinating continuity of colors, textures and composition from one medium to another," he said.

Wilson's belief in his new product has just been bolstered by LUXART's selection, following a global survey of all new innovative technologies, for Guestroom 2010.

"The Middle East hospitality market is perfect for LUX-HDA, with its culture and architecture that date back to ancient times, mixed with its very forward thinking world of commerce and luxury tourism," he concluded.

Details: [www.luxart.us](http://www.luxart.us)