



# **Cooperative Education Report**

**Marketing and Operational Strategy of Carpenters Stop Pvt. Ltd.  
during COVID-19**

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**This Report Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for**

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**Project Title** : Marketing and operating strategy of Carpenters stop Pvt. Ltd.  
during COVID-19

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## **Abstract**

This Cooperative report entitled “Marketing and Operation Strategy of Carpenters Stop Pvt. Ltd. During COVID-19” incorporates detail on social media marketing and the operation strategies for Carpenters Stop Pvt. Ltd. (CS) during COVID-19. CS is one of the leading surface solution provider in Nepal.

The major objectives of this report are: (1) To understand the procedure of introducing new product to the customers. (2) To study Customer Retention activities. (3) To study Customer Engagement activities during the COVID-19. During my internship, I gained a thorough understanding of how the firm functions at all levels, particularly in the sales and marketing departments. My primary role was to support the graphic designer with product information and images. He prepares posts for social media and I wrote content for the posts with an aim to ultimately enhance company's brand image.

After the internship, it was clear that the firm has a great relationship with its interior designers and architects. So, releasing a new product would be well received by them, as they are completely supportive to the firm's activities. However, if the corporation can continue to push for brand building efforts for mass customers who buy the goods at the end of the day, the brand might reach new heights.

## Acknowledgment

Getting an opportunity to learn in an international platform and implement the learning practically would have been impossible without the assistance and cooperation of a legion of individuals on the professional side. I want to recognize and thank instructors, professors, and friends who uplifted me throughout my academic period. Their creative ideas and insights were constructive to widen my horizon and prepare this report. I am grateful for their encouragement and professional assistance.

I would like to convey my deepest gratitude to Siam University for teaching-learning beyond the classroom in the academic curriculum. I am also very grateful to my academic supervisors at Siam University; Aj. Tenzin Rabgyal and academic supervisor at KCM; Ms. Laling Lama for their constant supervision and advice, which helped me reflect well on my internship experience.

I want to acknowledge Carpenters Stop Pvt. Ltd. for giving me the opportunity to complete my Internship in such a reputed organization. The Internship has provided me with an opportunity to test my abilities and attitudes toward career possibilities for the future. This exposure has helped me bridge the gap between learning in the classroom and application in the work environment.

I am very grateful to my supervisor, Mr. Krishna Ram Suwal (Head of Department – Carpenters Stop Pvt. Ltd.) who taught me the company's key concepts and overall functionality. I am thankful for his constant guidance and counseling during the entire internship program.

Finally, I would also like to thank Mrs. Anita Rajak, whom I would always look up to, for her persistent guidance and support as senior acquaintances at Carpenters Stop Pvt. Ltd.

Yours Sincerely,

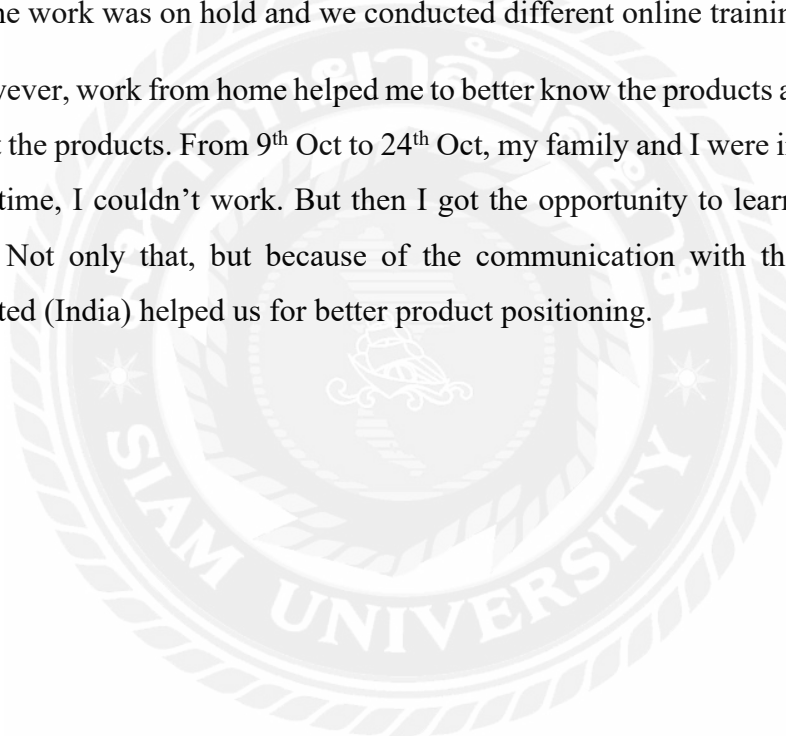
Rupesh Prajapati

## **Effect of the Global Pandemic: COVID-19**

Corona Virus Disease (COVID-19) is an infectious disease caused by a novel coronavirus found in Wuhan, China. Due to its highly contagious nature was declared a Global Pandemic on March 2020 by WHO (World Health Organization, 2020).

Nepal reported its first case of 10<sup>th</sup> Feb 2020. By Early Feb, the government had declared lockdown which cause a crisis for the lower-wage workers and impacting the lives of all the people. During this time, most people slowly started to adapt to the work-from-home job. Although the 1<sup>st</sup> lockdown didn't affect the work, the 2<sup>nd</sup> did. As it was around middle of the internship, so the work was on hold and we conducted different online training session.

However, work from home helped me to better know the products and develop ideas to better market the products. From 9<sup>th</sup> Oct to 24<sup>th</sup> Oct, my family and I were in home isolation. So during that time, I couldn't work. But then I got the opportunity to learn more about the product range. Not only that, but because of the communication with the head office of Greenlam Limited (India) helped us for better product positioning.

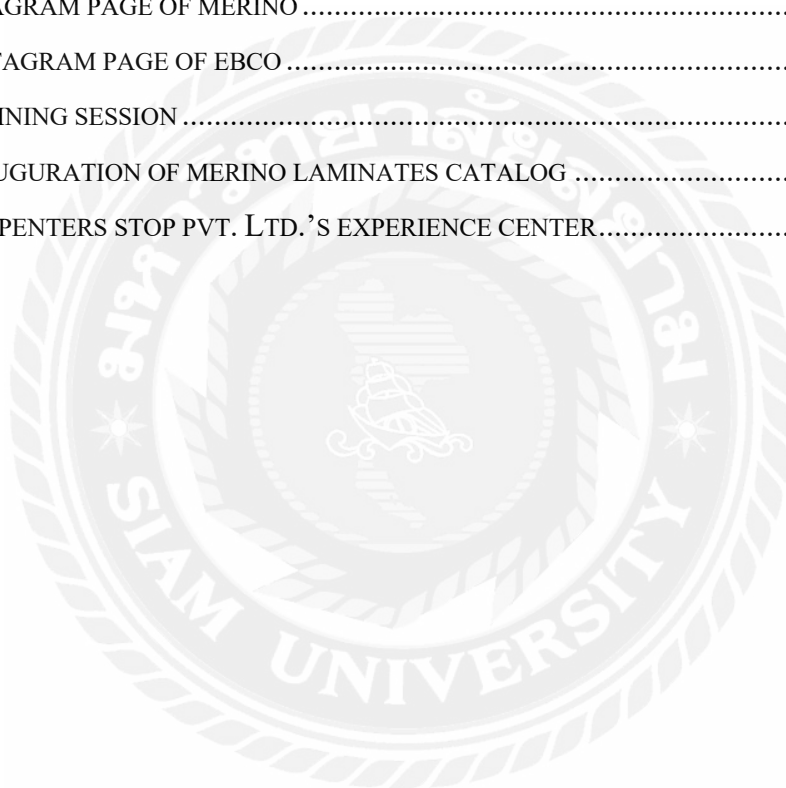


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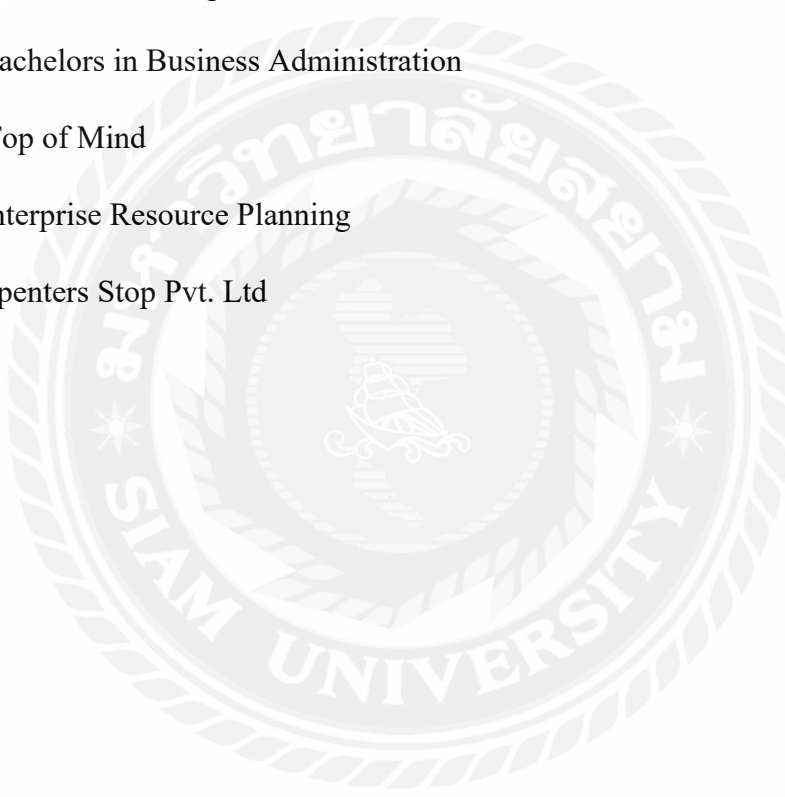
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## List of Abbreviations

1. COVID-19 : Corona Virus Disease 2019
2. WIP: Work in Progress
3. HOD: Head of Department
4. IG : Instagram
5. FB : Facebook
6. WHO: World Health Organization
7. BBA: Bachelors in Business Administration
8. TOM: Top of Mind
9. ERP: Enterprise Resource Planning
10. CS: Carpenters Stop Pvt. Ltd





## **Chapter 1: Introduction**

Chapter 1 is all about the company's introduction, organizational structure, statement of report, etc. which was observed during the 16-week internship program.

### **1.1 Company Profile**

Carpenters Stop Pvt. Ltd. is a sister concern of The Carpenter Hardware Center, established in 2018 (Nepal). It is a versatile marketer of interior solutions with wide range of products for home, office and commercial space. Its specialty is to continuously introduce new interior products which are aligned with international trend and market demand. The company's vision statement is "We solve problems of our customers through quality products, reliable services and convenience to make our store the first choice for interior solution industry." Similarly, its mission statement is "Prosperity through trade and industry with a commitment to quality and ethics." It is the fastest growing surface solution provider in Nepal, associating with many multi-national companies like Merino Industries Limited, Greenlam Industries, Green Ply, Action Tesa, Century, Fevicol, and other small business. It holds the only Experience center for laminates in Nepal for Merino Industries and Greenlam (WIP). Due to COVID-19, the grand opening has been delayed. To maintain a uniform standard among the employees the company's values are as follows and define them as followed:

#### **1. Passion for Progress**

Here at Carpenter, we are committed to use every challenge and obstacle as a learning experience and opportunity to change for the better. We are committed to develop our people, products, services and systems continuously so we are able to give our clients a great experience every time we interact. We believe in failing forward because without failure there is no innovation and learning.

#### **2. Integrity**

We are committed to being honest, transparent and doing the right things for our employees and clients, even when it goes against what is convenient or more financially viable because without you there is no company.

#### **3. Customer First**

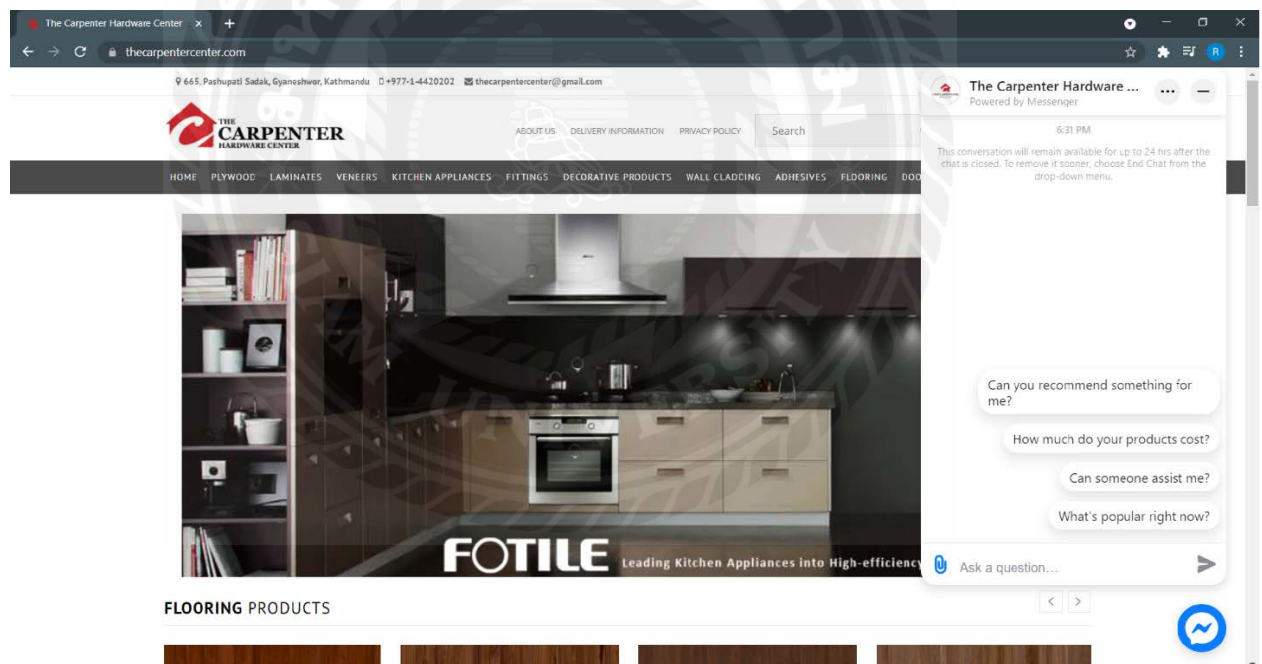
At Carpenter, we are committed to excel at creating customer satisfaction through quality products, reliable services and convenience. We create strong ties with our customers putting them at the center of the company.

#### 4. Teamwork

We believe that productivity results from collaboration and safety. To make great strides we must also take significant risks, which are better managed by teams through higher levels of learning, creativity, security and synergy.

#### 5. Healthy Working Environment

We are committed to instilling cultural practices in all our members and system that makes our office and its people friendly, comfortable and fun. We go above and beyond to ensure that our team members receive the support and services they need to feel and work at their best.



*Figure 1: Company's website*

### 1.2 Organizational Structure

Carpenters Stop Pvt. Ltd, (CS) is led by its Founders to provide versatile interior surface solution to home owners, who wants to have an aesthetical home. Under him are the head of different department such as administration, finance, sales and marketing, and human resources. All the departments work as a team to complete

daily task. The founders constantly encourage all the staff to participate in every decision making process as possible. This indicates that the organization values its people more than any other factors.

### 1.2.1 Organizational Structure



*Figure 2: Organizational Structure*

The Department Heads for Nepal are as follows:

- Company Heads: **Rajesh Prajapati** and **Rajan Prajapati**
- Human Resources Department: **Rubina Prajapati**
- Administrative Department: **Sarala Dyola**
- Finance Department: **Rojina Shrestha**
- Sales and Marketing Department: **Krishna Ram Suwal**

While working as an intern at Carpenters Stop, I worked under Mr. Krishna Ram Suwal; HOD of Sales and Marketing Department.

### 1.2.2 My Job Position

I worked as a social media handling intern under Sales and Marketing Department. Where at the beginning I was introduced to our entire team and the outsourced designers. As I got to know more about the products, I was assigned to creating content and monitoring those content's feedback. Slowly I was assigned with creating weekly content calendar, and eventually monthly event calendar. The idea for the post were to be communicated to the designer and the final version to all the sales personals. I also visited many Interior Designers as an event to inaugurate the catalog of Merino Laminates. This also help me to create some effective post which helped to create post which would influence the interior's design. With constant guidance of my supervisor, I was able to complete the task provided without many challenges. As the next generation of marketing is social media so working there helped me to connect few of the designing theory of 80/20 rule, which I study in branding class. Using theory in a practical world has huge difference, thus this internship helped me not to focus only on theory and also its practical implementation.

### 1.3 Statement of the report

This Internship is completed as per the requirement of the Business Administration undergraduate program at Siam University. It is a part of the curriculum to complete 14 weeks' Internship to understand better the concepts and overall functionality of corporate industry. This internship also provides the opportunity to develop professionalism among the students and gain experience working in actual market before completing the undergraduate degree. The experience gained by an intern during their internship period will create them as elegant professionals for their future job prospects.

This report gives an overall summary of 14 weeks of learning in the marketing and sales department in the organization. This report has helped me to relate academic courses with the organizational culture along with its functioning. The title of this report is '**Marketing and Operation Strategy of Carpenters Stop Pvt. Ltd During COVID-19**' highlighting how company markets and operates its business during the pandemic.

### 1.4 Objectives of the study

There are three main objectives of doing this internship. They are:

- 1. To understand the procedure of introducing new product to the customers.**

It comprises the activities done to communicate the new product's availability and promotional material to the social media and assistant manager and her subordinates.

## **2. To study Customer Retention activities**

It comprises the activities done to maintain a favorable customer retention rate to remain loyal to one brand specifically.

## **3. To study Customer Engagement activities during the COVID-19.**

It comprises customers' buying behavior during the pandemic and a comparison of the customer during festive season last year and this year during a pandemic.

### **1.5 Limitation of report**

While interning at Carpenters Stop Pvt. Ltd., I did face certain limitations. Although I pulled my best effort to overcome these limitation, and these were out of my control. These limitations were:

- COVID-19 had a huge impact.
- Organization Policies caused to limited the data accessibility.
- Working from home also limited the images and content of the products.

### **The Global Pandemic**

COVID-19 was the major limitation, as infected by the COVID-19. Me and my family were isolated for 15 days which some disrupt with the work. Due to this many planning were cancelled too.

**Organization Policies**

Not proper knowledge of the customers and products caused some misleading post, which were later improvised. Being an intern few crucial information's weren't allowed to be disclosed.

**Work from Home**

As COVID-19 cases were staggering Nepal Government imposed a nation-wide lockdown, this caused in disturbance of regular work.



## **Chapter 2: Internship Activities**

In this chapter, internship activities are explained in detail which were assigned during the 16-week internship program.

### **2.1 Job Description and responsibilities**

The following were the roles and responsibilities of the student:

- Image search and Quality check: I was responsible for high-quality images to be provided to the designer.
- Content Creation: The content idea was to be provided, and the supervisor must verify content.
- Posts TimeLine: timeline for the post were to be create, so the designers could get time to give the final designs.
- Coordinate with the department: Post circulation as well as information collection from the sales officers and the sales assistant to be conducted properly.

### **2.2 Contributions in details**

#### **1. Image search and Quality check**

For every post, my roll was to collect high quality images and, in case of no image was to photoshoot for the products. All the brands and their development needs to be correctly visible and artistically representable.

#### **2. Content creation**

Content idea and information were to be communicated to the designer. I was supposed to come up with feasible and artistic images representing the brand and its quality for every post.

#### **3. Post TimeLine**

Before the weekly post timeline was being given to the designers, I started to provide all the whole month's post and its idea. The work was more productive, and the designer's time was reduced. Before this, they couldn't complete their post weekly and as constantly requested to improve the position. It has caused delays in the post from the past experience, so to reduce that, I started the whole month's content and brand placement.

#### **4. Coordinate with the departments**

I was responsible for handling queries on the official Facebook(FB) and Instagram(IG) page. Accordingly, I was also responsible for distributing those content to sales officers and the sales assistant. They were required to forward them to the respective clients via WhatsApp and Viber. Initially, it wasn't being used for personalized marketing, after few months in my internship all the sales officers and assistant brought their regular client's number and this was possible. And I was responsible to forward them the product picture, content and pricing. This helped consumer to introduce new products.

#### **5. Field Visit**

To know the product more appropriately, I was responsible for having a field visit in different construction sites interior designers and architects. It helped me to picture the influencers and how to make a post that attracts them.

#### **6. Coordinate various campaigns**

I coordinate with the country head of Merino Laminates (Mr. Shyam Krishna Yadav) and his assistant for the launch of the Merino Laminates catalog. Where we visited the interior designers and inaugurate the catalog. It was a company's' imitation, and it helped me develop creative campaigns in the industry.

Having the biggest two festivals of Nepal during COVID-19 has caused a problem. As customers weren't willing to physically visit store for the discount, we did an engagement post where customers were to participate. Although there weren't many participant as expected. But as it was the first time, so it's a success.

During my last days, I also visit other shops where the same products were sold. As the other sister's concern was doing its campaign. I helped them in that and made few new contact.

**Major events were cancelled due to the COVID-19 Coronavirus Pandemic Outbreak like:**

1. Grand opening of the showroom (i.e. Merino Experience Center and Greenlam Experience Studio) which caused in delay in construction due to COVID-19



- a. New product launch of Decowood veneer's (a Greenlam Industry product) special collection.
2. Announcement for the official partnership for Greenlam's laminates brand.



## Chapter 3: Identification of Problems Encountering during the Internship

This chapter clarifies the problem faced during internship and how it was solved.

### 3.1 Indicate how you successfully solved the problems

- **Announcing winners on social media:** As the lucky winners were announced via separate social media posts, their Facebook profiles were mentioned in the comments section. There were five winners of the contest whom we plan to give indoor plant. Two winners visited the store and received their prize, but the three didn't agree to come. Thus we requested those winners to visit our store for their prizes.

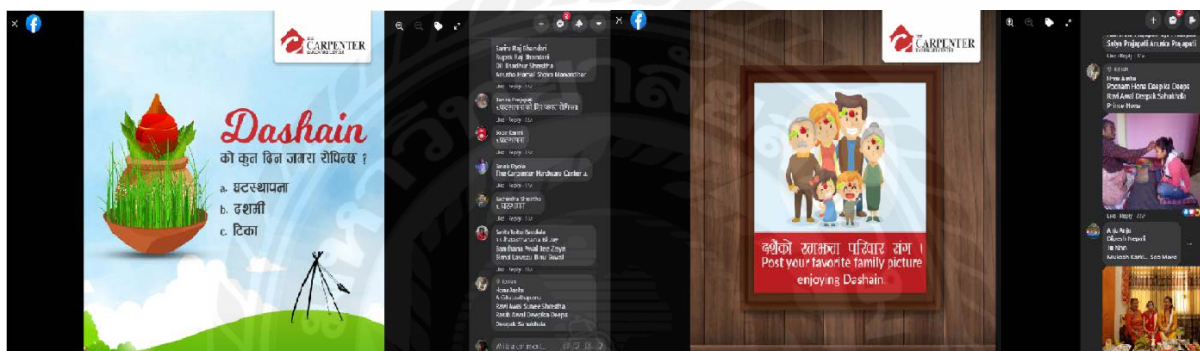


Figure 3: Dashain Campaign

- **Company policy:** Due to the company policy, I didn't get complete access to various information and critical data. To know more about the operational data, I heavily relied upon talking with the staff and indirectly interviewed them. As having social media handling in this field was new in Nepal, I was instructed to refer to other international social media handling (i.e. decowood\_veneers, mikasafloors, fotilemalaysia, greenlam\_laminates, greenlam\_asia\_pacific, merinoindia, ebcosolution, hettich\_official, etc.)

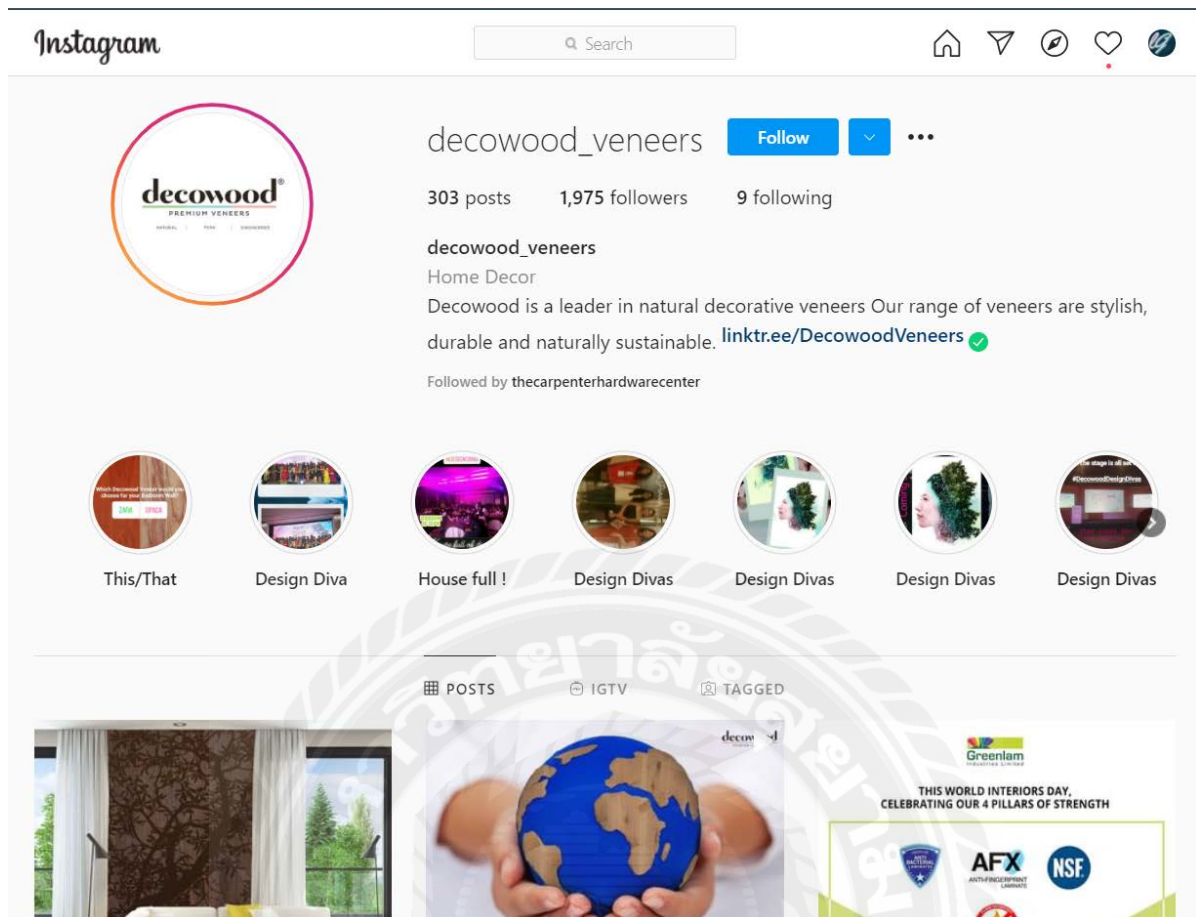


Figure 4: Instagram page of Decowood

- **Cultural Fit:** I had to attend some of the events where I couldn't understand the term they were constantly using. While visiting the interior designers, I didn't have any concept they were mentioning. After few weeks, I adapt to the environment.

## Chapter 4: Learning Process

This chapter clarifies the learning process which means problem faced, how they were solved and what I learn during the internship.

### 4.1 What are the things you have learned during the internship?

- Communication
- Project Management
- Content Strategy & Management
- Consistency in Social Media

### 4.2 Details of the related learning process

Here all the detail description about the topic what I learn during the internship is explained.

#### **Project Management**

This is the first time I have experienced handling projects on behalf of a company. Although I couldn't experience projects from their ground-level planning stage, I could only work in the implementation process in two projects. I learn that the task need to be both beneficial for the company and the customers or the consumers. From the beginning to end, there are a lot of things to consider while managing a project.

#### **Communication**

In any organization, working means with people, and in doing so, the important thing is communicating. Communication with different departments is vital to collect information about the product and forward the post to them.

#### **Consistency in Social media**

While working I understood the important of being consistent with the brand image of the company. Since there are many brand in the company which made a difficult in posting constantly for a particular brand. While working it was difficult

maintaining all the brands in social media. So there were to make frequent changes in the layout.

#### **4.3. How have you applied your theoretical knowledge to the real working environment**

During the internship I attended few sessions where I received many product knowledge. This helped me to further elaborate the strengths of the products. I also visited many clients during the inauguration of Merino Laminates catalog. This help me to understand the target market and segment them accordingly. Here I had to use my theoretical knowledge of marketing management to better perform my task. Another use of the theoretical knowledge was during the post development period, where choosing a color was crucial for brand representation. As we had learned in Brand Management, color is the direct representation of the brand. So the background color was a crucial element in every posts.



## Chapter 5: Conclusion

This chapter clarifies self-assessment, findings and some recommendation for the company from the internship.

### 5.1 Self-assessment as a professional

The 14 weeks long internship is the partial fulfillment of IBBA in SIAM University and the difference in the knowledge gaining on a practical and theoretical basis. This journey with the company helped me to grow in my practical understanding of the field.

I was able to understand the basis for the product selection for projects by architects and interior designers. As Nepal is graduating from an underdeveloped to developing country, the living standard of its citizens is also gradually improving. So this has positive impact on the market. The main problem faced by the industry is lack of quality product. And Carpenters Stop is committed to provide quality product to the market. This gives the company an edge in competitive Nepali market.

Beyond the class, living in the business sector has shown me a synergistic way of working and the value of collaboration, where the amount is often more significant than the portion. Each team was led by a Head of Department, and my Head of Department felt that each team member should optimize their talents and do the absolute best for each team member.

Working during COVID-19 was hard, and due to strict government regulation, working time was also different. While working, I realize that footfall weren't high, and the work was also slow. The whole department even operated from home to maintain the government regulation. During this time, I was able to gain firsthand knowledge about the product from the company in India. These times were more informative and challenging as well. Lack of face-to-face communication caused in lack of understanding the content and miss translation. But with constant contact helped me to engage with all the information I need correctly. Working in a company is stressful, and one needs to work in a team to have work done more comparatively.

This helped me with the new product launch in the market. Although it wasn't a big of an event as planned, we posted on social media for our customers to gain more knowledge about the product. I realize during this period that communicating online were a difficult task to do. But while launching a new product, it was even more difficult one.

Although difficult I was able to meet many people and grow my contact network. Holding positive relationships with them will support me in the future. Finally, I have learned how to prioritize and administer time in accordance with my assignments. This internship allowed me to learn that I have to be more prepared so that I can guarantee that the opportunities are maximized and that they can be stopped.

## **5.2 Findings and Discussions**

As per the three objectives stated in Section 2.1, discussions follow under each objective.

### **1. To understand the procedure of introducing new product to the market**

It involves the analysis of the customer's need and their requirements for their dream home or work place. While working there, I wasn't able to be a part for this process, but I could take part in another product. Although we analysis our customer needs but we couldn't conduct any field research during this time. I worked for planning process in the introduction of being officially partner with Greenlam industries for their laminates. Our study conclusion that the major of the product were sold for the projects throughout Nepal. So it was decided and ordered for project basis in large quantity.

We researched many of the competition in this field to introduce the product in the Nepal market. While researching the competition, we were only able to use secondary data through the database of the company. This helped us to know about the competition and the trend of the customer preference. Although there were many competitions in the market, only a few were the major competitions in the market. This helped us to know the market gap, which were the lack of the proper services, display unit and quality of the product. Thus bringing the quality product with additional services were the key objective of the company.

During the introduction phase, we roll out the posts in social media and the sales assistant and officers, sending them to their regular clients. The plan was to introduce the products to the customers in their workplace physically, but we could not because of COVID-19. We were visiting the interior and architects' workplace for them to inaugurate the product launch. We work for the launch of Decowood's special and recon collection in Nepal but couldn't tackle it effectively. We were only able to throw it in our social media, which wasn't as effective as expected.

## 2. To study customer retention activities

It involves the exercises done to keep up an excellent client degree of consistency to stay faithful to one brand explicitly. In case of Carpenter Stop, it has customer relationship managers that all the employees' level has. This helps them to reduce the dissatisfaction between the customer and the company. All the sales assistant also has their customer list that they take their order from and communicate them. In case of the customer dissatisfaction, they were to deal with the supervisor if the respective officers could not handle the problem. This helped to increase small sales during the country-wide lockdown. This system was already in the place, so the customers only need to communicate and receive the information from their clients. The ability to provide the service during pandemic were a plus point for the company.

## 3. To study Customer Engagement activities during COVID-19

It contains the exercises done to keep the clients occupied and engaged with the company. During this situation, many customers weren't able to physically visit the store, so we forward post to them, which helped generate the sales. Although there aren't regular campaigns in the company, I was able to participate in different campaigns. Having customer engagement during such critical situation is very important because it would help the company to have the company in top of the mind(TOM). However, they have the website, but it is still not utilized effectively. During this situation, it would have much better if they could work on making their website better. This would have given them a competitive edge in the whole Nepal market as there aren't any companies in this field which display their product online.

## 5.3 Applying theoretical knowledge

From the 16-week internship program, I happened to come up with an internal analysis (SWOT Analysis) for CS which is shown below:

Strengths	Weakness
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Experience Center</li> <li>• Inventory Management</li> <li>• Company as a Brand</li> <li>• Variety</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Digital Marketing</li> <li>• PR Networking</li> <li>• No system for follow up</li> </ul>



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Location</li> <li>• Services</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fast moving product running out of stock</li> <li>• Lack of marketing material</li> </ul>
<b>Opportunities</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More focus on client retention</li> <li>• Growth in digital media</li> </ul>	<b>Threats</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase in competition</li> <li>• Economic Downturn</li> </ul>

*Figure 5: SWOT Analysis of CS*

- **Strengths:** CS being an Interior surface solution provider, they need to satisfy its customer's. So having an experience center plays a crucial role. It's also crucial to have variety of products. As different customers have different opinion, thus giving the importance of variety of products. So to manage those varieties, we need to have proper inventory management. They are using an online platform called canvas application for the inventory management.

Located in the central part of the city, gives access to many potential customers. As they give quality services in terms of honesty, politeness, delivery, and so have created them as a brand in the market, in such a short period.

- **Weakness:** CS currently lacks the digital presence in the market, as they recently started to have a digital presence. Digital platform has a huge impact in the mind of the consumers, so having a better presence in digital platform will help the brand to get recognize. As of now they also lack the marketing material for the company, having better marketing material will help the customer to choose the better product for them.

The lack of networking system and follow up system is also required to address their customers properly; they lack constant visit to their 20% of clients who are the main source of their income. They also lack the follow up system, they are only catering their 20% of the customers. But if they could cater 100% of their customer, then they have more potential for rapid growth. They also need an advance inventory management system which could reduce their inventory burden.

- **Opportunity:** As Nepal is gradually shifting from under-developed to developing country, this have given a huge opportunity for construction of home, office and commercial. So the company need to have a better retention strategy, as retention of a customer is cheaper than that of creating a customer.

As digital platform has been a greater influence for the customers, so creating a better presence in digital platform have a huge impact. As there are very few numbers of potential competition in the digital field. So having a strong presence in online platform will help the organization.

- **Threats:** As COVID-19 cause many companies to shut down during the peak time of the session. And lack of proper government support and guidance have impacted the whole economy. As the nation's economy is in danger, so home owners are not willing to spend more in their interiors. This could have an impact in the profit of the business as a whole.

Currently brick and motor shops are more in number, thus increasing competition. As there are many products selling similar product, this creates cut throat price competition in the market. Thus, it could suffer a huge loss if not retaining its customers properly.

#### **5.4 Recommendation for the company**

My experience during the internship was amazing and had learn a lot throughout my time there. I believe I had a better understanding of the market than before. As I worked there I realize that I have only touched the tip of the ice berg. Despite working for 16 weeks only, I believe the company should work in enterprise resource planning (ERP), this would help in sales. Having physical sales and recording it in computer are time consuming, so to reduce time consumption it's better to use as ERP software. Not only this having an electronic data would help in better response to the customers, and reduce the time for inventory check. Solving this issue would definitely help to better record of the sales, customers, transaction, etc. this might help the organization to grow further in the future.



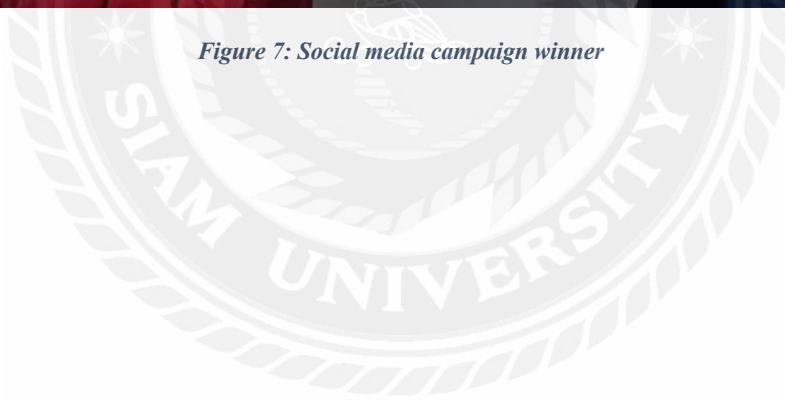
## Annex



*Figure 6: Social media campaign winner*



*Figure 7: Social media campaign winner*





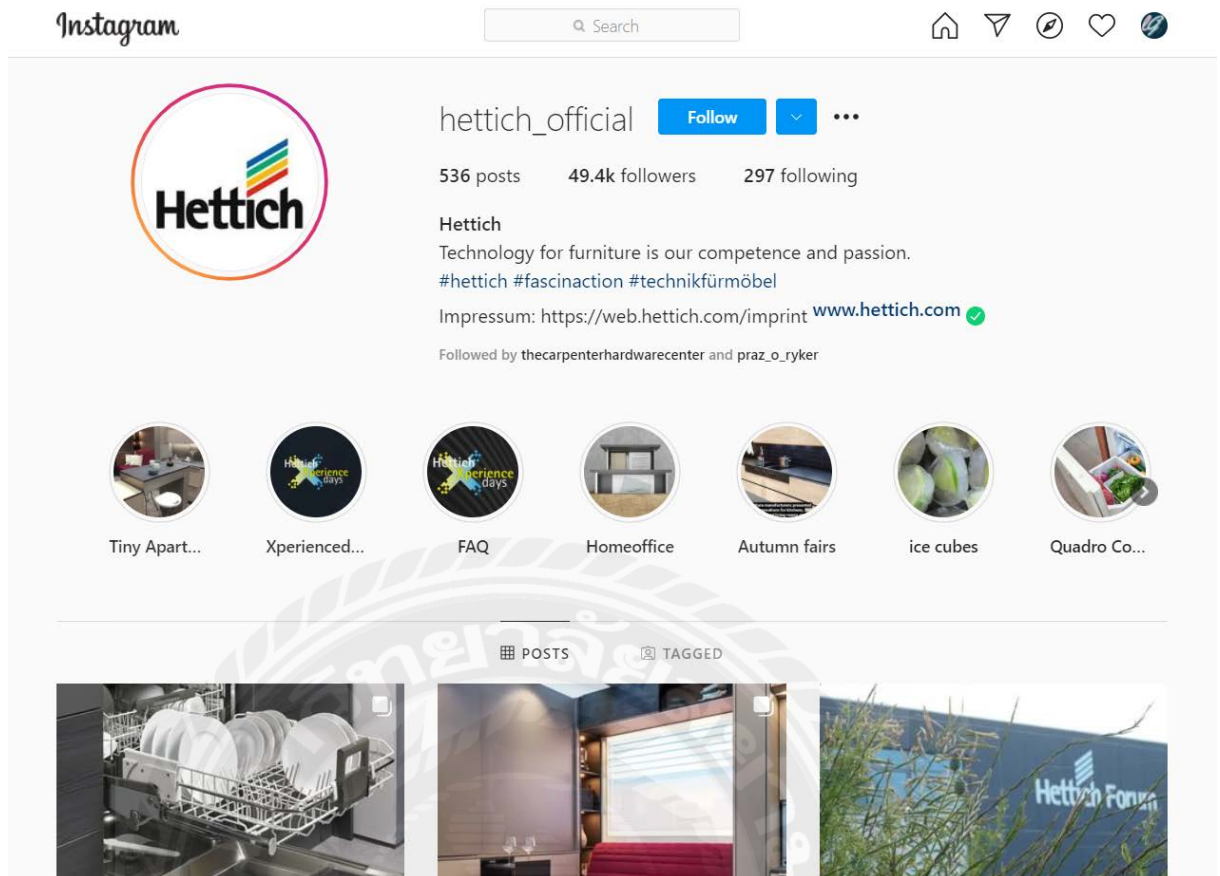


Figure 8: Instagram page of Hettich

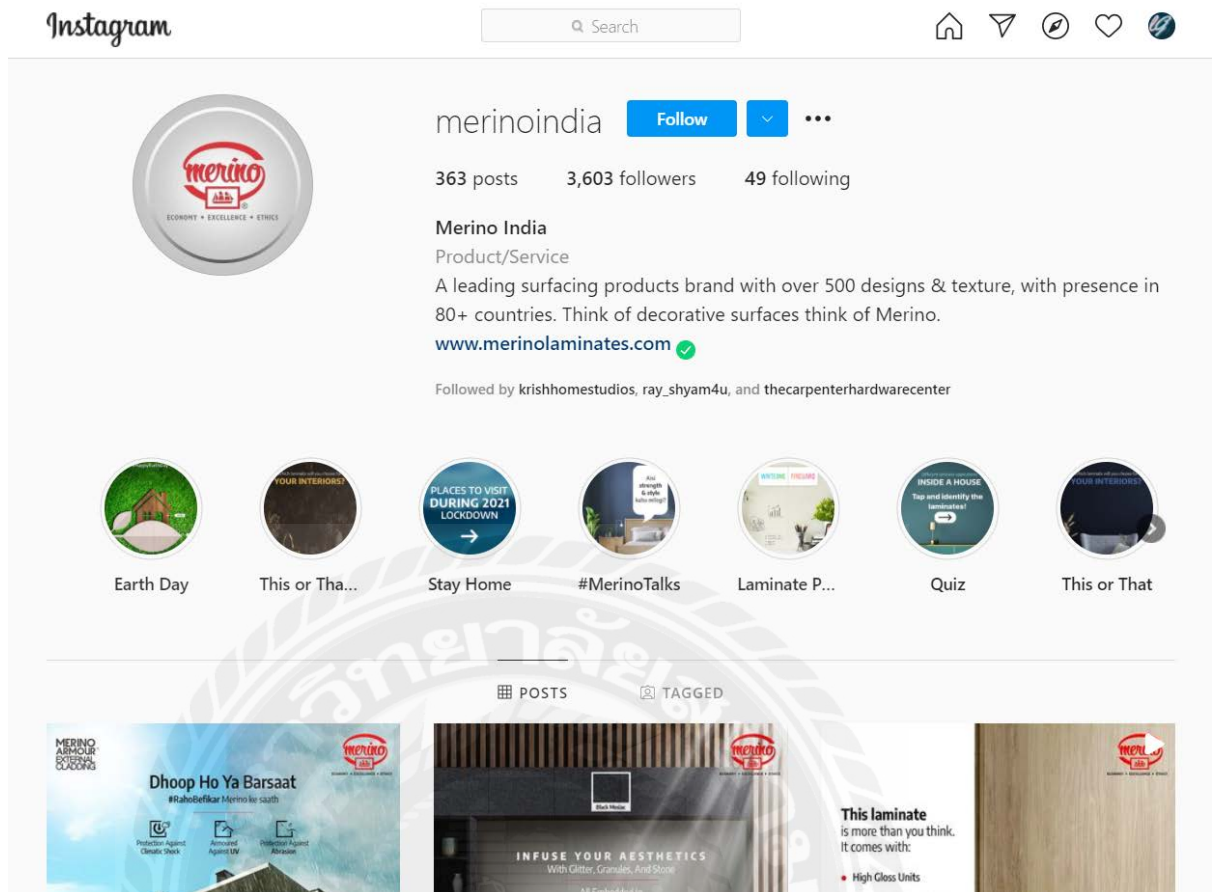


Figure 9: Instagram page of Merino

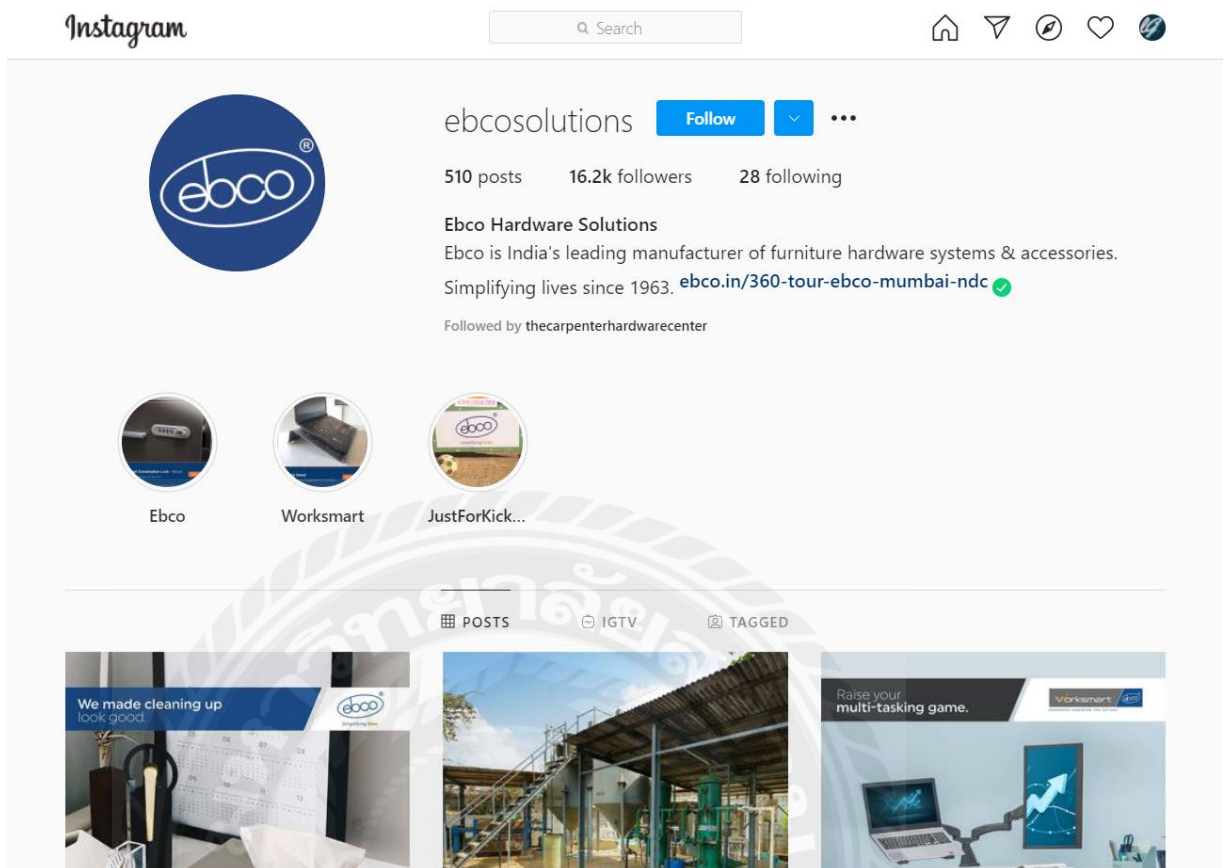


Figure 10: Instagram page of Ebco



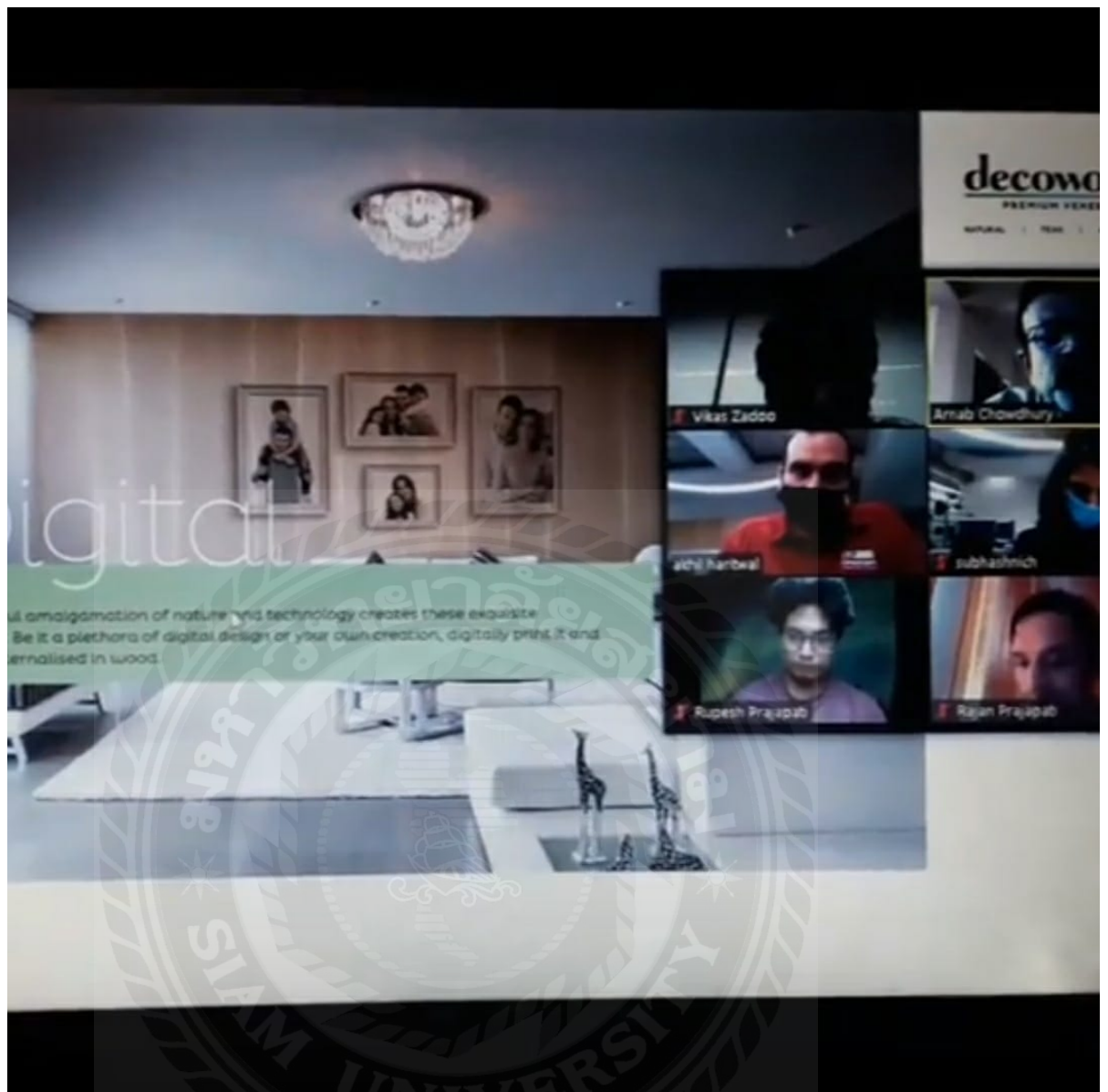


Figure 11: Training session



*Figure 12: Inauguration of Merino Laminates Catalog*



*Figure 13: Carpenters Stop Pvt. Ltd.'s Experience Center*

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