



Anant Sharma is CEO of his agency Matter of Form
PICTURE: Holly Cant

Putting the focus on **INNOVATION**

When Matter Of Form CEO Anant Sharma founded his digital design agency at 24, the virtual world was a very different place.

Anant said: "A decade ago, most people didn't even have a smartphone and coding was still seen as really geeky."

"I studied journalism but have always loved my gadgets and was interested in the application of tech in real life."

"Matter Of Form started as the coming together of these elements - how to present information in a digestible and interactive format online, with the role of technology making everyday life easier."

The agency specialises in making heritage brands relevant in the digital age through a mixture of branding, innovations strategy and e-commerce.

Its roster of clients includes Aman Resorts, The Maybourne Hotel Group, Mikimoto and The Rug Company.

"There's been an extraordinary change in the luxury digital sector over the last five years," said Hackney resident Anant.

"Traditionally, luxury has been

A man who has always loved his gadgets puts technology at the forefront of his business to make everyday life easier for his clients - **OLIVIA PALAMOUNTAIN** reports



about human interaction and personalised service but the first touch point with most of these brands is now on mobile.

"The minute you start giving people the tools to serve themselves online, that perception of luxury is undermined."

"Today people want to be empowered to purchase anything online, from a car to a £30,000 rug."

"We're exploring new tech such as augmented reality to give people a sense of what things will look like in their homes."

"We've also been working with the Affordable Art Fair to discuss the future of art selection."

"Is it using machine learning to create a Tinder for art, with preferences built around what people relate to and serve them back more personalised

recommendations?"

From a company of three in "a rickety shambles in Soho with no running water", the company now employs 40 people at a warehouse in Leonard Street.

"I love being in east London," said Anant. "There's a surprise around every corner."

As an agency that is hired to disrupt the status quo and create change, Matter Of Form isn't a firm to stand still.

"We're a family culture that works smart with an ego-free, flat structure and some really wonderful traditions," said Anant,

"The kitchen is the heart of the company and every Friday two people will cook for the entire office."

There are massages too, as well as guided meditations and pub quizzes that allude to the values.

Anant even writes a rap for the Christmas party that incorporates every individual and every client.

"It's very tongue in cheek but a fun way of describing everyone's nuances and achievements during the year," he said.

Will it be possible to maintain this sense of intimacy if the company expands?

"I used to see success as headcount," said Anant. "Now the big goal is to turn away 80% of the business that comes through the door."

"We're ruthlessly focused on fewer, high quality projects where we can work with clients to build long-term innovation strategies."

"Your business is as good as everything you say no to."

Go to matterofform.com for more information.

Seven Days

What to do in your area



GIG | E15 Jazz Sessions

Stratford Circus, Stratford

A mix of established international musicians and bright new talent at Stratford's regular jazz night.

Dec 15, 8pm, £10



MUSIC | The Rise

Stratford Circus

E3 Entertainment presents a showcase of up and coming talent with unique styles and abilities.

Dec 16, 8pm, from £8



SHOW | Give Something Back

Theatre Royal Stratford East

Comedian Quincy brings a fresh take on *The Generation Game* and *Play Your Cards Right* to Stratford.

Dec 17, 8pm, £15



LAST DATES | Cinderella

Hackney Empire

Glass slippers, pumpkins etc. Books soon and readers can go to the ball or put up with misery.

Until Dec 31, various times, from £10