

## SURFACING SOLUTIONS

GREEN ON THE  
HORIZON

Anil Kumar became a licensee of Fieldturf Tarkett and grew his own field of gold with artificial grass solutions.

By Sumana Guha Ray

first year of its operations, the company managed to do 14 installations; in the last financial year, they did 500. The company now has 12 distributors in India and one in Sri Lanka. Kumar now plans to add more distributors to the network, along with regional sales managers. ■

**WHERE THE GRASS IS GREENER:**  
Anil Kumar (l.) and his Fieldturf Tarkett India team.



When Anil Kumar decided to return to India in 2004 after a 7-year stint in the U.S., he felt it was about time he started a business of his own. He was on the lookout for something that would be eco-friendly and new to India, something that would enhance infrastructure and offer real-life business solutions. He found his answer in surfacing products, especially the artificial grass from the U.S.-headquartered Fieldturf Tarkett.

That year, in June, Kumar became an exclusive licensee of Fieldturf Tarkett in India. This meant that he would import the products, but was allowed to market and price them independently—provided he followed certain guidelines laid down by the parent company. Fieldturf Tarkett India, therefore, was an independent entity.

Kumar admits that although Fieldturf products are five to eight times more expensive to install than natural grass or turf, the costs even out in about five to six years. This is because Fieldturf products needs next to no maintenance and no water. In a world where water might soon become a luxury, the 600,000 square feet of Fieldturf installations that Kumar has done—mostly on rooftops and balconies—has already helped save 85 million liters of water. Of course, there is no need for fertilizers, either.

In addition, the product can help keep room temperatures low. With a two layer absorption system, this artificial grass can reduce room temperatures by 5 degrees centigrade. And the best part is that it weighs a lot less than actual turf, weighing a mere 2 kgs per square foot.

While most of Fieldturf's installations have been on rooftops, it has done 25 installations in cricket practice areas, too. Hyderabad's M.L. Jaisimha Cricket 365 Academy's indoor facility, for instance, now has a covering of lush, maintenance-free, artificial grass. Due to this, students and players can practice at the Academy round the clock, all year long, with minimal chances of injury.

Kumar started out by presenting these features of the product to architects, taking pains to educate them about the advantages of using this faux grass and the various applications it can have. Fieldturf products also became a regular feature at trade shows. Kumar's efforts eventually paid off. In the