

NIIT to Morph Into Skill, Talent Development Co

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New Delhi: NIIT is reinventing itself to turn from just an information technology training company into a skills and talent development firm that will focus on sectors including banking, retail, telecom, healthcare, e-commerce and startups along with IT.

As part of a major restructuring, the company has also relocated about 60 skills and career centres that it had in South Africa and Mexico to India and China, the two focus markets that it has identified for its skills and careers programmes.

“Our skills and careers business is essentially now focused only on India and China. We had around 60 centres in countries where we decided to discontinue our operations so that we can redirect all the resources to focus on India and China,” said Rahul Keshav Patwardhan, chief executive of NIIT Ltd. Patwardhan recently replaced Vijay K Thadani as the CEO.

In China, where NIIT established its presence in 1997, the company is operating 139 colleges across 66 cities. “We are constantly exploring larger engagement opportunities with government and educational institutes to develop trained IT professionals,” said Patwardhan. According to NIIT, it has trained more than 150,000 students in China, where the company said the focus is now on Big Data and data analytics.

Patwardhan’s main task at the helm of affairs at NIIT is to turn the company profitable once again. “The new strategies at NIIT are based on turning the business profitable,” he said.

In the coming days, the company plans to focus especially on startups and retraining mid-tier IT professionals.

“Every person joining an IT company

needs to have a specific skill set that directly fits into the company. The whole middle layer is under pressure and this is a sweet spot because the need and ROI (return on investment) are very concrete for mid-level software professionals,” Patwardhan said.

NIIT is looking at launching new short and intense programmes around SMAC (Social, Mobile, Analytic and Cloud). “Growth within the startup community is the largest and we have started to reorient all our programmes towards this sector,” he said.

The company has opened its cloud campus for all. Earlier it was restricted to the registered NIIT students. The company is also adding 300 multiskilling centres in SEC C and D cities to double the total count to 600. “All the centres will offer our entire curriculum and not just IT training,” said Patwardhan. The company is looking at partnering with schools and colleges for infrastructure.

NIIT also intends to extend its tie-up with National Skill Development Corporation to offer training in new domains. It is currently operating in five sectors including IT, ITeS, banking, retail and telecom.

The company has programmes under its advanced learning centre NIIT Imperia that have been specially created to provide quality management education to working professionals in general management, sales and marketing, digital marketing, finance, etc. These programmes are completely focused on upskilling and reskilling. NIIT Imperia has tie-ups with IIM Calcutta and XLRI, among others.



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