



The Indian Express
Chennai, November 25, 2008

Vishy wows school kids

ARTS

Grandmaster Viswanathan Anand, who inaugurated the CII NIIT Digi-Art Festival-iPaint 08, was accorded a grand welcome generally reserved for movie stars



If you think movie stars are the only ones being mobbed by the media, you are wrong. World Chess Champions get mobbed even more in Chennai, especially when they're making their first public appearances after having won the title third time in a row, first from Boom, Germany in 2005, then from Russia in 2006 and 2007 at the Convention Centre, Chennai Trade Centre, at the CII-NIIT Digi-Art Festival, iPaint 08 - to be presided over by Grandmaster Viswanathan Anand - wouldn't be giving it any more publicity. The students all holding placards that shouted, "Welcome Vishy King of Kings", clung to the Chess Champion as he stepped out of the car - and the deluge was far from over as the crowd of enthusiastic children and ever-eager parents spilled over to the guest of honour every few seconds, asking autographs while the NIIT volunteers had a tough time relining the car.

This year, iPaint 08, an annual digital painting competition organised across schools on a national level, received a record 80,000 entries from across schools in Assam, Meghalaya, Himachal Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh - made possible by the



a firms and 'crowned' right prizes. "I'm really glad of the reception to this contest - I think it will help children discover the technology and use it better," he said, adding that he congratulated the children who later, at a press conference, Anand commented on everything from the current status of Indian sports to how he balanced sports and studies as a child. "I'd love to see Chess included in the school curriculum as a possibility. To the question of why chess is identified much more as an urban game rather than a rural one, he replied that steps were already being taken to change that balance in places like Assam, Chattisgarh, places in the

North, North East," he explained. Now that he'd paying playing continuously for 3 years, would he consider a small break? "My next tournament is in February," he said. "So December is a good time for a short break, yes."

As student journalists from Chandanama asked him about the pranks he'd played - there would be none as it was considered risky business - Anand answered patiently in a little more than an hour.

The deluge of questions might have come to an end - but the quest for autographs still came thick and fast. Vishy was more than ever, in the hours of the King of Kings.

-Parvitha Srinivasan
www.thehindu.com



Indian Express
Chennai, November 24, 2008

ANAND MAKES IT MEMORABLE SUNDAY FOR CHILDREN

Express News Service
Chennai, November 23

SACHIN Tendulkar and Mahendra Singh Dhoni take a break! You have a competitor! The one and only Viswanathan Anand, when children were asked if they wished to be like Anand one day almost all of them lifted their hands in unison at the CII NIIT Digi Art Festival awards function where the world champion was the chief guest. "It was a great honour to be here where Anand's remarkable feats and the World crown dippings were shown.

His duo's with the two big Ks (Anatoly Karpov and Garry Kasparov) were also on display. The children watched the visual in rapt attention. The glint in their eyes showed that they too wanted to grow up like Anand one day and bring laurels to the country. Thirteen-year-old Sai Kumar from Andhra Pradesh who won the digital painting in the senior category could not believe his luck that he got his prize from the legend. "It was a great honour to be here where Anand's remarkable feats and the World chess as a hobby. Haryana's Pallavi Nagpal, who plays



Anand is crowned by children at the CII NIIT Digi Art Festival awards function in Chennai on Sunday. PH:ANANDHARAN

who won the award in the series, a loss of words to describe the first meeting with Anand. "This is my second competition in digital painting. I have heard a lot about Anand. To get the prize from him is special and I think I am fortunate to win against Vladimir Kramnik convincingly," said Anand.

Anand spent some time with the media and couple of youngsters who quizzed him on his initiation into the game and bagging the world crown. Anand was thrilled to have won the triple crown and stated there was not much difference between the three formats which he won. "It was important for me to

win at Boom. First of all even though I have been winning the world title, I have not won the country. He believes that with kids dominating various age-group tournaments, it was only a matter of time before they made their mark at the international level.

When queried who will be the next challenger to Anand's title in the future, "There are six to seven players who can have a go at the title. Although there is not much difference (points) between the players one has to keep playing consistently well," said Anand.

On his future plans, Anand had this to say: "As for the future I see no reason to stop or anything like that. I will take the next three months and then start preparing in any format if chess is included in the Olympics

The Hindu

Chennai, November 24, 2008

Anand launches II phase of 'iPaint08'

Special Correspondent

CHENNAI: World Chess Champion Viswanathan Anand on Sunday launched the second phase of 'iPaint08' organised as part of 'Kidex 2008' and felicitated the winners of first phase in three categories.

Organised by NIIT and the Confederation of Indian Industry, the first phase of 'iPaint08' received 80,000 entries from schools located in Assam, Meghalaya, Himachal Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Punjab, Madhya Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, Kerala, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, New

- It is now open for all schools across the country
- Results will be announced on December 28

Delhi and Haryana. L. Balasubramanian, president, NIIT School Learning Solutions said, "The competition is now open for all schools across the country. The winners of the phase II of the event will be felicitated during Hyderabad chapter of Kidex 2008. December 15 is the last date for uploading paintings on to a specially created site www.niit.com/ipaint and the results

will be announced on December 28."

In his address, Mr. Anand urged the young students to make use of technology to express their creativity better. P. Rajendran, NIIT Chief Operating Officer said that the digital painting competition became a huge success due to the Green Initiative, in which paintings were uploaded on to a website and no printouts

were taken. Pradipta K. Mohapatra, Kidex Chairman said CII had been focusing on competitiveness and inclusive growth as thrust areas for rapid socio-economic development. CII-Young Indians (Yi) and the Group for Nature Preservation and Education (GNAPE) also organised a Nature Quiz coinciding with Kidex 2008. The 'GNAPE-Yi Nature Quiz-2008' tested the students on their knowledge of nature, wildlife and environment.

The winners of the competition were awarded trophies on Saturday.

Hindustan Times

Mumbai, November 26, 2008

NIIT introduces six new programmes

NIIT, a talent development corporation trainer, has introduced six new programmes for graduates and final year students seeking a career in Java, net developers, web 2.0., creative publishing, systems and networking, business intelligence and data warehousing. New post-graduate diploma programmes are designed to make students job-ready. The duration will vary from 99 days to up to 200 days.

THE ECONOMIC TIMES
New Delhi, November 19, 2008

08 Feature

Sport Russian and Indian Alexandra Kosteniuk and Visvanathan Anand, this autumn won World Chess Champion titles

The global chess stalwarts

Woman of substance

Every morning, she jogs five kilometres. It helps her win, she says. Indeed: under-10 girls world champion, youngest female Grand Master, Russian champion, world vice-champion, winner of the 2008 women's chess championship in Polchik, the list is endless!

SVETLANA BRITANINA/RSA MOSCOW

"All that I am and all that I have are thanks to my father," says Sasha, her pet name, and she is not exaggerating. Konstantin Kosteniuk is one of those parents who is ready to sacrifice almost anything to help their child develop their talents. By the time she was nine, Sasha could play chess for four hours at a time, beating her peers and older partners. Konstantin quit his teaching post and became his daughter's personal coach and manager.

"We didn't have much money," Alexandra recalls. "We certainly could not afford the services of Grand Masters. I learnt on the street."

The government didn't provide any assistance. It was the mid-1990s and government-sponsored sports programmes were cancelled, and state agencies that pro-

vided assistance to young athletes ceased to exist. In some cases, Alexandra succeeded by pure luck. Once she had to go to a big tournament, but the family didn't have the money. So her father took what they had and went to a casino where he won \$1,500, the amount needed.

At 11, Alexandra began making her own money with chess. She won a tournament in Paris, and decided to stay there with her father for a few days, but they ran out of cash.

"We arrived at the Place de l'Etoile one in the morning to catch the last bus to Charles de Gaulle airport. We had no money to pay for the ride, or for another night at the hotel. So I sat on a bench underneath a street lamp, took out my chessboard and chess-clock, and began waiting for someone willing to play with me for stakes."

Chess players don't make nearly as much as football or tennis players. Yet chess is quite popular in Russia, even if not as much as in Soviet times, when nearly the entire country followed the historic match between Karpov and Kasparov.

Some time ago, journalist dubbed Sasha the "Chess Kurnikova", referring to the tennis star. It was a dubious compliment. Kurnikova hadn't won a single important tournament in her career. But just like Kurnikova, Sasha was on the cover of every glossy magazine.

It was amazing that a beautiful girl could also play chess. When asked about it, she said: "All chess players complain of declining interest in the sport, and sluggish development. But it is important to understand the reasons for that and to see what we can do to change it. People like to learn about other people. In chess, there are many unusual and unique personalities. I see the interview as an integral part of my profession."

Alexandra also wrote a book, *How I became Grand Master*, at 14. The kids' chess school, Alexandra, in Moscow, accepts young children of three and up. Instruction is based on the unique Kosteniuk methodology - Alexandra's younger sister is also a brilliant player.

Here, chess is seen as a component of comprehensive child development. It is used to foster their attention, memory, concentration and



Alexandra in traditional Kabardinian dress for her award ceremony

5 facts about Sasha

1. Kosteniuk was 10 when she first became a world champion, of girls aged 12 or under
2. At 14, the youngest female international Grand Master. At 17, she's world vice-champion
3. At 20, she became an international Grand Master among men only (only the tenth woman in the history of chess to be awarded this title)
4. Prior to the Polchik Championship this year, 11 Russian female chess players won the world champion title
5. Married Swiss-born Diego Garcia. A daughter, Francesca Maria, is born on April 22, 2007

sense of purpose. Children who play chess are more successful at school and more easily adapt in later life. Not all of them will devote their lives to chess, let alone become champions. But playing chess will certainly help them along. Alexandra is determined to be involved in teaching children chess later. "I love teaching young children to play chess. I also want to help young talent develop. I want to create an encouraging environment for them, something I didn't have," she says. When asked about her favourite chess piece, Sasha always says the pawn. Although small and insignificant at the beginning of the game, it can rise to be the queen towards the end. It sometimes happens in life,

Vishy, India's pride and glory

Visvanathan Anand is well known for seldom losing his temper. However, even that is possible. On at least one occasion, recently, he nearly blew his top. That was when he was referred to as 'the Madras Tiger', not for the first time, by the way.

VADIMIR BARSKY MOSCOW

"Russian journalists thought up the nickname, presumably because they don't know any other Indian animals," he fumed.

Vishy has been a resident of a small neighborhood in Spain's capital for many years, so 'the Madrid tiger' would be a more appropriate nickname. Well, maybe not a tiger, but he certainly has sharp claws, as Russia's Vladimir Kramnik found out to his cost when he lost the battle for the crown of the chess world this October by 4.5 points to 6.5.

In Garry Kasparov's opinion, Anand was at his very best in this match. "With the exception of loss of concentration in Game 10, he played consistently in his vintage style. His choice of 1.d4 for his first move was very smart. It gave Anand an upper hand and made Kramnik work hard over the board. Vishy was totally in control in this debut. A brilliant result for Anand and for chess. Vishy deserved his victory and I am glad for him. It will be difficult for the younger generation to overtake him," the 12th world champion is quoted as saying by the Chessinjan.com site.

Visvanathan Anand endeared himself to Russian chess fans a long time ago by his brilliant and uncompromising play, and also his openness, modesty and charm. Anand likes going to Russia, a country he has visited many times. His first visit was in 1992 or thereabouts, when he shared first place in the Alekhine Super-Tournament. It is not by chance that Anand has won five chess 'Oscars', Player-of-the-Year prizes (1997, 1998,



Vishy playing chess

5 facts about Vishy

1. Started playing chess at 6. At 14, he is the youngest Indian to win the International Master Title.
2. At 13, he became India's Sub-Junior Chess Champion and at 16 - the National Champion. At 18, he became India's first Grandmaster.
3. In 2007, Vishy became the undisputed World Champion and retained his title against Vladimir Kramnik in 2008.
4. He will next defend his title against the winner of the Vesselin Topalov and Gata Kamsky in 2009.
5. Married Aruna in 1996 and lives in Colloredo Mediano in Spain.

2003, 2004 and 2007). Voting is organised by the Russian chess journal '64'. Although experts from all over the world take part, nearly half of the respondents are chess players and journalists from Russia.

Anand is a wise Oriental man who eschews conflicts. Kasparov is a rebel who strives to change the whole; he was constantly dueling with individual chess players and the International Chess Federation (FIDE) before switching to politics. Anand is far more preoccupied with developing and improving himself while taking a philosophical approach to the problems he comes across. The Indian grand master has a solid margin of strength in the person of his charming wife Aruna, who is his manager, a kind angel who accompanies him to all the tournaments. When the chess gets tough for her husband, she nestles in the corner of the room with a book in her lap.

him to keep calm and confident.

Vishy Anand is a man in his prime, he will be 39 on December 11. There is a big crop of young chess talent brought up on computer chess, but Anand is in no mood to surrender. According to experts, he has never been so strong (as Kramnik would surely confirm). In his native India, the birthplace of chess, Vishy's success has brought about a veritable chess boom. Suffice it to say that the world under 20s champions, Harika Dronavalli and Vishal Sareen, are both from India. In the children's world championships for the 8 to 18 age groups, Anand's heirs won the largest number of gold medals, 4 out of 12 (for the sake of comparison, the Russians won just one gold medal).

Vladimir Barsky is an International Chess Master

Watch International and visit us

The Times of India
New Delhi, November 10, 2008

The Hindu Business Line
New Delhi, November 28, 2008

Rajasthan to get NIIT university

BY K. S. ANANDAN

CHENNAI

Nov 9: NIIT, a global talent development company and Asia's largest IT training provider with presence in 40 countries, will set up a university in Rajasthan with an investment of Rs 300 crore- Rs 400 crore.

"NIIT University is under construction at Neemrana, near Alwar in Rajasthan and will likely be open for admissions by 2009-10 academic year," said Mr Vijay K. Thadani, chief executive officer.

NIIT, which offers training and knowledge solutions to over 5 million students across the globe, has kicked off the university with an initial capital of Rs 80 crore. When it is fully developed in the next two-three years the company will be spending Rs 300 crore - Rs 400 crore for the university. Eminent educationist Prof. M.P. Kapoor is the project director of the university.

The university, coming up on 75 acres of land, will offer courses in four streams -- information technology, biotechnology, education technology and management.

"We want to make a big difference in the higher education space. The university will be highly

research-oriented. We have picked emerging areas where the university can make a big difference. We have leadership position in information technology and IT education comes to us naturally. We believe that biotechnology is another area India has enormous potential in," he said.

"Unfortunately, education technology is not a subject a lot of investment goes in. The courses in education technology will teach how to deliver education more efficiently. Fourthly, we will have management courses in all streams," Mr Thadani added.

The university will be research-based.

Its Master's programmes will commence before the Bachelor's programmes.

The company is trying to speed up the construction work. The first set of buildings and other infrastructure will be ready before the next academic year.

He said the company would add 10 per cent capacity every year for the next five years in its overseas training centres in 39 countries, with focus on China, Vietnam, and Nigeria. NIIT has 175 centres in China, 19 in Vietnam and 31 centres in Nigeria.



Vijay K. Thadani, CEO, NIIT.

NIIT, Adobe tie-up to offer multimedia course

Our Bureau

New Delhi, Nov. 27

IT training company NIIT together with Adobe on Thursday announced the launch of its e-GURU Web and multimedia curriculum for school students.

The curriculum would cover the Adobe Creative Suite Master Collection, which would include - Photoshop, Illustrator, Flash, Premiere, Encore, Soundbooth, AfterEffects, Fireworks and Dreamweaver.

The curriculum is aimed at standard 6th to 12th, and would be optional for students. It is targeted at offering students - who aspire for a career in domains such as Web site designing, video editing and sound editing - an early access to professional creative tools.

"The NIIT e-GURU Web & Multimedia curriculum for school children, based on Adobe Creative Suite of Products, will offer a blend of multimedia applications, Web technology, communication technology and also soft skills for students who are aspiring to be multimedia professionals," Mr L Balasubramanian, President, School Learning Solutions, NIIT said at a conference. He said the company would reach out to schools in a phased manner starting with 50-100 schools in the first year.

NIIT had entered into a global alliance with Adobe in October 2007 to create talent pool for design, Web, mobile and interactive media, for professionals.

The Times of India
 New Delhi, December 1, 2008

Multimedia in curriculum

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

TWO students from Scindia School, Gwalior, were absorbed by a radio station immediately after their class XII exams. The students were selected for their 'sound-editing' skills that they acquired in school itself.

This programme is part of the school's pilot project that is six years old, and has now been formally launched in schools across the country. Class VI onwards, a perfect blend of multimedia applications, web technology, communication technology and also

soft skills would be provided to students who are aspiring to be world class multimedia professionals.

This web and multi-media curriculum in India is an NIIT and Adobe initiative. The 'vocational curriculum' covers Adobe Creative Suite Master Collection, which includes Photoshop, Illustrator, Flash, Premiere, Encore, Soundbooth, AfterEffects, Fireworks, and Dreamweaver to mention a few.

Says Gautham More, the technology head with NIIT and co-ordinator, Scindia School, "The feedback has been great. Most students readily opted

for this 'additional' programme. This programme is likely to be especially beneficial for students who want to start their own ventures right after school."

L Balasubramanian, president, School Learning Solutions, NIIT, says, "To begin with, we are targeting 3,000 schools across India. The cost of pursuing this additional curriculum will be Rs 60 per month per student."

As to the kind of skills that need to be imparted today, Sandeep Mehrotra, director-sales, Adobe India, says, "We are focussing on technology literacy, and trying to nurture creative thinkers along with effective communicators and critical thinkers."

The Financial Express
 Mumbai, November 18, 2008



Left to right: Ashok Leyland managing director R Seshasayee, Manpower chairman and CEO Jeffrey Joerres, minister of commerce and industry Kamal Nath, CII president KV Kamath and NIIT group chairman Rajendra S Pawar at the India Economic Summit, 2008 in New Delhi on Monday

PTI

Pioneer

Lucknow, November 26, 2008

NIIT launches infrastructure mgmt course

Lucknow: The NIIT has launched a new course coined 'Global Net Plus' to cater to a large number of career avenues in the field of infrastructure management. According to NIIT national product head Ajay Alva, the Global Net Plus course module is based on the industry guidelines and the students would be trained in WAN, operating system deployment beside Microsoft and CISCO certified courses. Admissions to the course will be made on the basis of entrance test and the minimum qualification required for appearing in it is 10+2 in any stream. The course duration will be of 550 hours and would cost around Rs 65,000. Regional Manager (North) of NIIT, Sanjay Srivastava said, "Infrastructure management had become a requirement for every company."

The Times of India

New Delhi, November 17, 2008

SERVICE ENDORSED

NIIT recently announced the endorsement of the Test of English for International Communication (TOEIC) test by leading corporations throughout India. Through NIIT's first nationwide TOEIC test administration, 24/7 Customer, Genpact, Inventurus and Wipro participated in a benchmarking exercise of their employees' communication skills. This benchmarking exercise was also envisaged to help corporations set acceptance standards while recruiting and aid in monitoring improvement of communication skills of employees as they undergo training. Offered in 90 countries around the world, the TOEIC test is used by more than 9,000 corporations, educational institutions and government agencies.

Hindustan Times
Jaipur, November 12, 2008

CAREER FORUM

Test time

Take TOEIC if applying for jobs in BPOs and multinationals worldwide

Cara Gupta Sarkar

Developed by Educational Testing Services (ETS), Test of English for International Communication (TOEIC) has been set as a standard for evaluating reading, writing and speaking skills in English. While ETS also authorises and conducts TOEIC, it is also known for administering tests like the TOEFL, GRE and SAT. However, unlike TOEFL, which is required to get into foreign universities, TOEIC adds to your credibility while applying for jobs in BPOs and multinational companies worldwide.

In an attempt to introduce the



test in India, so that a standard could be set for English in the rapidly growing outsourcing sector, ETS has tied up with NIIT for conducting the test exclusively. The test will be conducted once a month and results will be available within a week after the test date. The total cost of the test is estimated at around Rs. 2495. "Results will be accompanied with a certificate that will be accepted in more than 9,000 companies across the globe including the United States, Europe, China, Korea and Japan," says Ashish Basu, President, New Business Incubation, NIIT.

The test, divided into two categories, includes listening, reading, writing and speaking. It is a 990 marks test and any score above 600 is considered good. ■

Financial Chronicle

Hydrabad, November 11, 2008

NIIT plans to extend school learning applications

S SHYAMALA
Chennai

IT TRAINING major NIIT plans to extend its school learning applications to education boards other than CBSE. The School Learning Solutions division is growing at the rate of 40 per cent year-on-year and the company expects to pull in revenue of Rs 150-crore.

Vijay K Thadi, chief operating officer of NIIT said: "The CBSE Board has man-

dated schools to adopt additional training tools such as NIIT's Math Guru. This has created a huge opportunity for us. Other boards are also in the process of mandating such training applications. Schools buy point solutions such as the Math Guru and that is the starting point of automation. We expect most of them to start adopting our comprehensive school management solution."

NIIT has tied up with software product company

Infospectrum to offer end-to-end solutions for schools. The QuickSchool ERP (Educational Resource Planning) package includes all functions including fees, staff payroll, examination and attendance.

"NIIT is now a completely integrated solutions provider for schools," said L Balasubramanian, president of the company's School Learning Solutions division. "We believe the school segment is product-driven and we want to

make ERP its engine for growth," he added.

The solution is targeted at all those who have a stake in education — teachers, students, parents and school administrations. It consists of a teacher development programme, class solution for subjects, infrastructure consultancy, school ERP and collaboration.

"We have won at least five orders since the tie-up in July. All the projects will go live from January before

the next academic year. The Learning Solution Division's current order book size is about Rs 300 crore," Balasubramanian added.

The basic version of the ERP product will cost about Rs one lakh, which will cover in-school functions alone. Medium and higher versions can be customised to include hostels and other non-core school departments.

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The Times of India

Chandigarh, November 3, 2008

IN BRIEF

TOP COACH

NIIT, has once again been conferred the 'Top Training Company Award

2008' by Cybermedia, an ICT (information and communication technology) media publishing group. NIIT has received this award for its talent development initiatives across the world, in the year 2007-08. As per an annual IT industry survey conducted by an IT magazine, NIIT has consolidated its leadership position in the Indian IT training industry and is now almost double the size of combined revenues of the next four players put together. Vijay K Thadani, chief operating officer, NIIT received the trophy at an award function organised by the Cybermedia group, in the capital recently.

Dataquest

National, November 30, 2008



IT's a Habit: Vijay Thadani of NIIT accepts the best IT trainer award, again, from Pradeep Gupta

■ **Top Training Company Award: NIIT**
NIIT has been the training leader from the beginning, retaining 35% share of a rather fragmented market—with training revenues of over Rs 900 crore, growing at 27%. It also completed a decade in China, where it is growing consistently.

The Hitavda
Nagpur, November 25, 2008

NIIT striving for skill devpt: Pawar

■ Business Bureau

RAJENDRA Singh Pawar, Chairman and Co-Founder, NIIT Ltd., while addressing a gathering of professionals at Hotel Tuli International, said NIIT has taken up some challenges thrown at them by the Government to propel the growth of the country, focused mainly on skills development of its workforce. He said that in the year 1998, Atal Behari Vajpayee, as Prime Minister then, had set a stretch target of achieving 50 billion dollars worth of software and IT services exports and 50 billion dollars worth IT related services in the domestic market. The figures achieved by the country this year are 40 billion dollars worth export and 10 billion in the domestic market. He said NIIT Global has trained 5 million students in over 40 countries so far.

Pawar said "Despite the country having the advantage of having half the population under 25 years of age unlike countries like USA, Europe, China and Japan, the country has not tapped its potential. These developed countries have a crunch of 50 million skilled manpower, whereas India has a surplus of even number which could be used to the countries advantage but the required skills are not there in our country". He added, the wages in India have shot up recently making the country uncompetitive in most of the areas.

Pawar said NIIT has taken some



Rajendra Singh Pawar, Chairman and Co-Founder of NIIT addressing gathering while Director Rina Sinha looks on.

initiatives towards 'Inclusive Growth' such as Bahvishya Jyoti Scholarship in Nigeria in the year 1991 where-in 20 thousand scholarships were granted. Similarly in 1999 remote villages in Tamil Nadu, which were inaccessible were connected with computers with the help of NIIT. Such villages had not seen power and telephones before. This initiative was scaled up to 8 million children in 10 thousand schools with 62, 000 computer terminals. Similarly NIIT has initiated a non profit Society to set up a training facility, in Chhindwada with multiple stake holders like Cisco, Dell, Intel to aid local Government in imparting computer related knowledge and BPO services, to the local

youth and securing employment for them. The success of this initiative has led NIIT to transfer the learning's to 20 villages in Tuglakabad near Delhi, identified for developing the skills in the retail sector, with the help of Abhas, an NGO.

Other initiatives include 'Kiosk in School' for which 1500 schools in Chhindwara have been identified. 'Hole in the wall' is an out of the box experiment implemented by NIIT, outside its R&D centre in Delhi, where a computer with a hidden camera captures the learnings of rural children. Earlier Pawar was welcomed by Rina Sinha, Director, Orangecity Education and Training Services P Ltd., a licensee of NIIT.

Express Computer
National, November 10, 2008

COVER

Are the trained employable?

Vinita Gupta reports on the challenges faced by the software training industry and the training modules that are currently in demand



With the current slowdown in the global economy, the Indian IT industry is feeling the effects of recessionary trends and it has put the brakes on fresh recruitment. Today the top 15% of engineering graduates are employable. The next 25% can remedy their skills with sharp, focused inputs delivered by industry professionals. However,

the bottom 60% of graduates are going to find it tough going, especially in the current situation.

The IT training industry has grown at the rate of 31% and the training market was worth Rs 2,804 crores in FY 07, up from Rs 2,135 crores in the previous fiscal. With the slowdown, starting salaries are likely to drop to around Rs 15,000-20,000

per month. This will make it comparable with other industries.

Retail vs. corporate training

A fresh graduate is not ready for employment but the training provided by the industry makes them job ready. Not everybody gets a job easily and preparation is important. Apart from formal engineering education, people now look at skill and professional training.

Corporate training is widespread from basic IT literacy to higher-level IT skills for a particular employee or organization. For instance, a government organization wants to train its employees on Microsoft Office. Hence, there is a huge difference between retail and corporate training.

Although both instructor-led training and e-Learning are used depending on the subject and individual capability instructor-led training is preferred in the retail training industry. For corporate training, the mode depends on the organization.

G Raghavan, President, Individual Learning Solutions, NIIT, said, "We also provide professional life skills training to the students as a part of our program. Today the students want to prepare themselves so that companies will absorb them. Companies do not want to spend money on training their employees, if they are already getting trained people. We have a division which provides enterprise training solutions to organizations, and have many clients in India and overseas."

The lack of employable talent is a major malaise of the IT industry. Madhu Murty, CEO, Primora mentioned that the industry is spending more than \$1 billion on internal training, mostly on training freshers. "Engineers in the western world are deployed after two weeks. There is a comfortable supply, but the quality is lacking. Primora is addressing the industry talent gap problem in the software testing area," added Murty.

Romit Dasgupta, Director, GlobSyn Group felt that the contours of the training industry has changed post the bursting of the Internet bubble in 2000-2001, when the industry

► peaked with revenues upwards of Rs 2,594 crores. With the dominance of IT majors such as Infosys, Satyam, Wipro TCS, etc., majority of technology training gets conducted in-house and the vendor-addressed market stands at 30% of the domestic training market. Large training players have diversified their training business and expansion has taken place primarily in Asia and Africa insulating the sector from the US downturn.

Training modules

It is crucial for the software training industry to ensure that the syllabus is in tune with the business requirements of IT enterprises so that they can provide training to their students in those particular technologies.

"In retail training we partner with leading technology companies and work closely with them to keep ourselves up-to-date with the latest technology. Also, whenever a new technology comes, we cannot just start providing training for it, we have to look at its relevance," said Raghavan. Currently infrastructure management, software engineering, BI and information systems are in demand. Infrastructure database management like storage and networking management are growing areas and it needs lot of capable people to manage huge infrastructure business, especially remote infrastructure management.

Murty revealed that there is a need for more than 30,000 testers over the next one year. Specialists in languages like Python, Ruby with experience in Open Source development are still finding jobs even in this tough market. Of course, Java and .Net are still in demand, but students need to be Sun or Microsoft certified if their resume has to be shortlisted. To learn about the latest technologies, Primora actively reviews the curriculum with their clients who do campus recruitment and invites industry professionals to deliver guest lectures.

Dasgupta added, "Dedicated training organizations have in-house Research and Development teams, who consistently keep in touch not only with the rapidly evolving technology landscape but also with corporate training clients to keep abreast with the latest technologies and project management

Topics in demand are infrastructure management, software engineering, Business Intelligence and information systems

Shortcomings the software training industry suffers from

- Lack of good faculty
- Content and delivery standardization, with dedicated measures on training efficacies
- The training industry is not in harmony with real practices in the IT industry



G Raghavan
PRESIDENT, INDIVIDUAL LEARNING SOLUTIONS, NIIT

Students today want to prepare themselves so that companies will absorb them, as organizations do not want to spend money on training employees



Romit Dasgupta
DIRECTOR, GLOBSYN GROUP

Emerging technology and certification-based technologies are predominantly in demand in the retail segment. In the corporate arena, the technologies that organizations have ongoing projects on dictate technology training

Top three software training needs

- Training in niche and emerging technologies
- Industry-ready and quality-based training for freshers
- Certification-based training

practices being used."

Emerging technology and certification-based technologies are predominantly in demand in the retail segment, including operating systems such as Red Hat Linux, RDBMS such as Oracle, Microsoft's .Net framework, Advanced Java, etc. In the corporate arena, the technologies that organizations have ongoing projects on dictate technology training.

Challenges faced

The growth of the Indian software industry is largely restricted to big cities such as Bangalore, Mumbai, Delhi and Noida. There is not much

happening in Tier 2 and Tier 3 cities.

Murty pointed out that the training industry is still at some distance from real practices in the industry. Most trainers in training institutes have never played a serious role in the IT industry. For example, training institutes do not teach test driven development, using version control tools and doing code reviews.

He said, "Students claim to have worked on projects, but most students that we interviewed had not done a hands-on project. Even today, when we ask a fresher how many lines of code he has written in four years, the answer is 300-400 lines of code. Programmers in industry write that much code in a week."

According to Dasgupta, there is also the need to create relevant professionals; this is the basis of Instructional Research and Design in the technology training industry today. He felt that over the last decade new centers of prominence have come up including Hyderabad, Chennai, Pune, and Kolkata, to add to the existing cities.

With market situations becoming grimmer for the IT industry, companies expect students to do a full-time program of 360 hours along with real projects during their training. Even Nasscom's education initiative is recommending a minimum of 360 hours of training to remediate entry-level engineers who did not get any job during campus placement. ■



Madhu Murty
CEO, PRIMORA

The training industry is still at some distance from real practices in the IT industry. For e.g., training institutes do not teach test driven development, using version control tools and doing code reviews

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