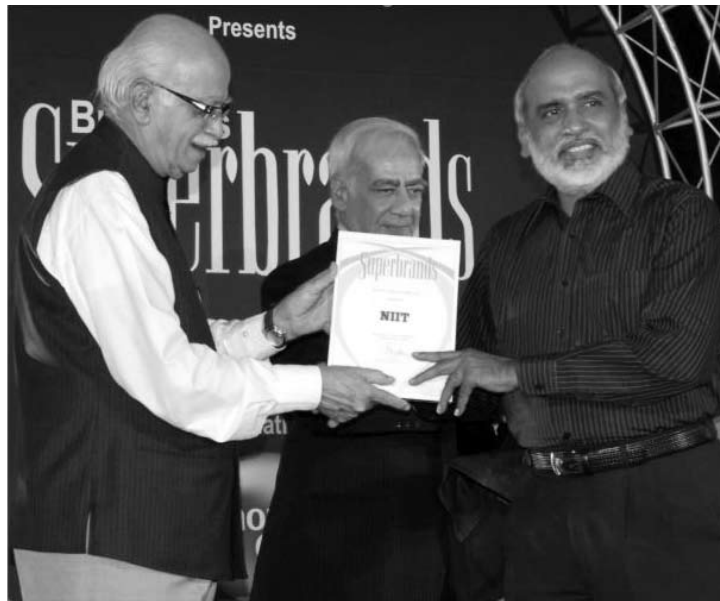# NIIT

NIIT in the News

August 2008

NIIT is a "Superbrand" once again

Presents

NIIT has once again been conferred the prestigious "Business Superbrand 2008" award by the Superbrands Council.

Mr P Rajendran, Chief Operating Officer, NIIT received the award from Shri L K Advani, at a glittering ceremony held in New Delhi on August 20, 2008.

The Economic Times
New Delhi
August 22, 2008

The Times of India
Jaipur
August 27, 2008

दिल्ली में आयोजित की गई 'सुपरब्रांड्स ट्रिब्यूट नाइट'

नई दिल्ली: इंडियाटाइम्सडॉटकॉम, बीम ग्लोबल के संयुक्त कार्यक्रम 'दि सुपरब्रांड्स ट्रिब्यूट नाइट' का आयोजन दिल्ली में किया गया। ऑटो, फाइनेंशियल सर्विसेज और रीटेल सहित सभी सेक्टर के 74 अग्रणी ब्रांडों को सम्मानित किया गया। जिन प्रमुख ब्रांड्स को सम्मानित किया गया, इनमें एनआईआईटी, इंफोसिस, मारुति सुजुकी, पीवीआर, बिग बाजार, यूटीआई म्यूच्यूल फंड और लक्जर शामिल है। इस कार्यक्रम के सह प्रायोजक इंडियाटाइम्सडॉटकॉम तीन साल पहले 60 इंडियन बिजनेस सुपरब्रांड्स में सबसे युवा सुपरब्रांड से सम्मानित किया जा चुका है। सुपरब्रांड्स 15 वर्ष पुरानी ब्रिटिश कंपनी है और यह ब्रांड विश्लेषण की वैश्विक स्तर की स्वतंत्र कंपनी है।

NIIT accorded Superbrand status again: For the second time, NIIT, the Global Talent Development Corporation has been accorded Superbrand status. At a recently concluded award ceremony held in the Capital, NIIT has been adjudged as a Business Superbrand 2008, commanding consumer respect, loyalty and trust by the Superbrands Council. The prestigious Superbrand status is internationally known as the 'Oscars in the world of branding'. TNN

(2)

IT companies score on brand management

KIRTIKA SUNEJA
New Delhi, 26 August

Indian IT firms are now making their mark as Superbrands. Of the 74 Indian Business Superbrands selected by Superbrands — an independent arbiter on brand management — seven are IT companies. Among a total of 980 brands invited to be judged and listed in Business Superbrands, around 12 technology companies had participated

Business Superbrands are those which deal with businesses such as infrastructure and engineering companies. Internationally known as the 'Oscars in the world of branding', the superbrand status is accorded to brands that offer consumers significant emotional and physical advantages over competitors by offering brand development and brand management practices.

NIIT, NIIT Technologies, Infosys, Moser Baer, Microsoft, Symantec and Sun Microsystems were judged by marketing professionals and business readers as their preferred Superbrands and the scores were added to the Council's score that marked them on the basis of brand resilience, reliability and trust. P Rajendran, COO of NIIT, which was accorded this status in 2005, says: "Customer feedback is a very important criterion for a company to be listed in the Superbrands."

Anmol Dar, managing di-

Of the 74 Indian business superbrands selected by Superbrands, an independent arbiter on brand management, seven are IT companies

rector, Superbrands India, said, "Superbrands has helped companies and brands create a marketable differentiator. Indeed, across eight countries, where research was conducted, it was conclusively shown that 71 per cent of all respondents were more likely to buy a product that carried the Superbrands logo."

Superbrands gives 9.09 per cent weightage to consumer response and this aspect has only been introduced in India. The arbiter does not focus on numbers but ranks companies on a scale of ten on brand reliability, recall value among others and those getting 6.6 or above, get qualifies for becoming Superbrands.

Arvind Thakur, CEO, NIIT Technologies is of the opinion that perceptions are as important as real facts and that such acknowledgements en-

hance the ability to aquire new businesses. "Good connect with the corporate customers is another factor that determines the brand's recall value. We have gone out of our core space of IT training and redefined the global talent development", opines Rajendran.

Dar says that in 2010, more catagories will be added to categorise the IT companies apart from the existing ones of peripherals, operating sysytems, computer education among others.

Analysts say that the IT industry is competing against other industries to maintain its status of driver of the economy and compared to the last time, IT firms are flattening.

Companies also believe they need to work on certain dimensions to improve the quality of their work.

NIIT accorded Superbrand status

New Delhi, Aug 25

NIIT, the talent development corporation, on Monday said it has been accorded Superbrand status by the Superbrands Council. NIIT has been adjudged as a Business Superbrand 2008, commanding consumer respect, loyalty and trust from amongst consumer brands across categories, a company release said. The award was received by Mr P. Rajendran, Chief Operating Officer, NIIT. —Our Bureau

DQ Top 20 Training

Increasing Reach

Focus shifted away from the metros to the Indian hinterland, crossing home shores to reach Africa and Asia

The Indian training market seems to be on a song, quite literally. Showing a growth rate of 31%, the training market was worth Rs 2,804 crore in FY '07, up from Rs 2,135 crore in the previous fiscal. And, once again, it was the performance of the two major players—NIIT and Aptech—that played a prominent role in this growth. Incidentally, the performance of the training market has surpassed even the heydays of FY '01 when the market had touched Rs 2,594 crore.

Dim-sums and the Dark Continent

With Indian software services players struggling in rough waters, hit by dollar-rupee fluctuation and the slowdown in the US market, exports revenue definitely took a beating. However, the picture in the training sector was not so bleak. Sample this— the export training market was worth Rs 1,499 crore in FY '08, up from Rs 1,270 crore a year before. Both the major players continued to expand operations overseas. And expansion happened mainly in Asia and Africa thereby insulating the sector from the US downturn.

The story of FY '08 is the journey to the Dark Continent of Africa. Even though NIIT ventured in to Africa about a decade ago, by setting up its first IT education center in Botswana in 1997, the company is now teaching around 20,000 students every year through its thirty-six learning centers in eight African countries, namely, Nigeria, Ghana, Senegal, Libya, Sudan, Botswana, South Africa, and

Total IT Education Market (FY '08)
(in Rs crore)

589
e-Learning

2,804
Training

3,393
IT Education

Total Revenue Rs 3,393 crore

The total IT education market grew by 29% up from Rs 2,626 crore in FY '07

Training: Top Players

Company	Revenue (in Rs crore)		Growth (%)
	FY '08	**FY '07**	
NIIT	****907**	715	27
Aptech*	**234**	190	23
Jetking	129	87	48
Educomp	**93**	28	232
Siemens	59	44	34
CMC	**47**	42	12
New Horizon	**24**	16	50

*Aptech's revenue is consolidated and is estimated by *Dataquest* based on the actual revenues of the first six months. In DQ Top 20 Vol I, only the stand-alone revenue figures of Aptech were used while ranking
**NIIT's total revenue is Rs 1,007 crore. The remaining Rs 100 crore has been considered in e-Learning

Zimbabwe.

With a renewed focus to expand operations in Africa, NIIT launched its training campus in Botswana that can accommodate 7,000 students, for training in various IT streams by 2010. The Government of Botswana has also awarded accreditation of Tertiary Education Council (TEC) to NIIT's training programs. The company joined hands with CII to "help develop ICT capacity in the African continent". Its Hole in the Wall project has already been implemented in sub-Saharan countries like Rwanda, Namibia, South Africa, Botswana, and Mozambique.

Aptech too has been operational in the African continent for the last 6-7 years now including operations in countries like Ghana, Nigeria, South Africa, Sudan, Tanzania, and Uganda. Not just the NIITs and Aptechs, smaller players like Karrox Technologies also plan to tap into Africa and China by 2010-11. Karrox already has Kenya, Ghana, and Tanzania on its roadmap and has announced its third IT empowerment scholarship in Nigeria.

Even as the Dark Continent beckoned these training companies, the dim sums did not lose their flavor. Between the two, Aptech and NIIT held close to 40% of the Chinese IT training market, with Aptech's JV, Aptech Beida leading.

NIIT, however, expanded aggressively last year. Celebrating completion of a decade in China. NIIT ramped up its China operations, as the total number of centers in China stood at 171 across twenty-five provinces this fiscal. The student enrollment too recorded a 35% increase y-o-y. The highlight of the year was the MoU with the Wuxi government to set up an IT training center in the city. In order to introduce IT training programs in universities and colleges, NIIT the partnered with ChongQing Information Industry Bureau.

Aptech, whose JV has led the market for more than half a decade, trained over 1,70,000 students during the fiscal. It is restructuring its China operations. This year's results of its China operations are awaited, the reason that led to Aptech being ranked only on its standalone India revenue in DQTop20 Vol-I.

Meanwhile, under the aegis of the Ministry of External Affairs, NIIT established centers in El Salvador, Nicaragua, Honduras, and Cuba. The CoE in Havana, Cuba has been set-up with the objective to offer Indian expertize for fostering skilled ICT manpower. Under this initiative, the company is presently training nearly 800 students in Cuba.

The rollout of the company's tie up with UK Open University to offer the University's BSc (Hons) in Computing and its practice at the NIIT centers in six countries continued as per plans, and admissions have commenced in all selected countries, ie, Botswana, Ghana, Indonesia, Nigeria, Sri Lanka, and Vietnam.

With most outsourcing companies increasingly looking to set up base

in Vietnam due to low cost of labor and an English speaking population, it is logical that the Indian training players too en-cash the opportunity. Starting with two centers under the Aptech Computer Education (ACE) brand in 1999, Aptech has scaled up its Vietnam operations to thirty-three centers. What's more, it is planning to open seven centers this fiscal. NIIT too has been scaling up presence in the country.

NIIT, meanwhile, extended its offerings in Malaysia, where it partnered with the Ministry of Human Resources for implementing the 'NIIT Inside' model in industrial training institutes. And, as part of the program, the company embedded its programs in Arumugam Pillai Industrial Training Institute in the pilot phase.

Aptech wound up its Bangladesh subsidiary operations and is now controlling the Bangladesh operations through its Indian office.

Individual Training Goes Proletariat

Even though dollar depreciation resulted in slowing down the hiring plans of most IT biggies like Infosys, Satyam, and HCL Technologies, the individual training market clocked Rs 1,178 crore in FY '08.

This year too the story was no different with a major percentage of the individual training revenues coming from NIIT. On an overall basis, enrollments registered a 25%

Total Training Market

58% Corporate 1,626 cr

42% Individual 1,178 cr

Total IT revenue: Rs 2,804 crore

Source: IDC India 2008

Notwithstanding the rupee-dollar fluctuation resulting in slowing down of hiring plans of most IT majors, the individual training market managed to clock Rs 1,178 crore in FY '08, up from Rs 768 in the previous fiscal

growth to cross 389,000, with an increase in seat capacity by 15% y-o-y. The Individual Learning business contributed Rs 32 crore, clocking a growth of 31%.

In sync with its transition to becoming a global talent development corporation, NIIT launched several new training programs in partnership with key IT companies: Adobe for offering Web, mobile and interactive multimedia; Cisco for networking and infrastructure management; EMC for storage management; Microsoft for embedding Microsoft certification in the GNIIT curriculum; and Sun Microsystems for embedding Sun certification in the GNIIT curriculum.

Sensing that the next level of growth will come from semi-urban India, NIIT launched its

District Learning Centers (DLC) in association with corporates like Cisco, TCS, Wipro, IBM, Intel, and Infosys, etc. The industry funded intensive training program in IT and soft skills was delivered to over 200 students in Chhindwara. Moving ahead, the company has also set up another DLC at Barkuhi. Hardware training major Jetking too plans to expand operations in tier-2 and -3 cities this fiscal.

Aptech's flagship product, ACCP, enrolled 1,30,000 students during the fiscal. Meanwhile, the Mumbai-based company also launched certification programs for engineers, MCAs, and MSC, who are looking for vendor certified courses and entry in the software industry.

Smaller players like New Horizon too have their eyes set on the retail training segment. With retail training market beginning to mature, people are not satisfied with vanilla offerings and are on the lookout for more advanced diploma courses. To cater to those willing to look beyond the traditional IT training courses, New Horizon is planning to launch several unique courses including software engineering, networking, Web development and database management.

With the growing Indian economy and increased PC penetration in all sectors, there is increasing demand for hardware and networking professionals across the country. Perhaps this could explain the entry

of the two dominant players NIIT and Aptech into the hardware and networking segment last year.
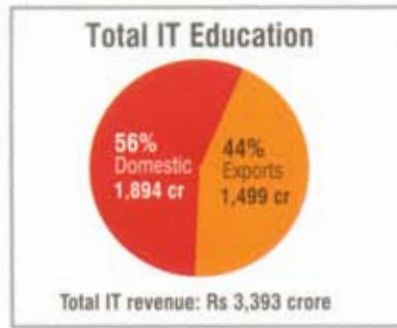
Aptech announced its arrival in the market with the launch of its 'N Power' brand that includes both short- and long-term hardware and networking certification courses. The company opened 'N Power' center in Vietnam as well. Aptech already has thirty centers across the country and plans to open fifty more next year.

NIIT expanded its portfolio with the launch of GlobalNet+, a specialized training program for those looking to build their career in networking and infrastructure management. The program has an option of pursuing globally mapped certification programs such as A+, Network+, MCDST, CCNA, etc, and to specialize further in diverse fields of networking and information security. Other courses launched include Web Design and Multimedia (for training in Web 2.0, Flash, Dreamweaver, Cold Fusion, and Flex) and Operating System (training in Solaris 10, Windows Vista).

As one of the oldest players in this segment, Jetking Infotrain added twenty-five new centers across India in tier-2 and -3 cities including Bharatpur, Indore, Vijaywada, and Vishakhapatnam taking the total to 115 centers.

Unperturbed by the new competition, Jetking plans to add forty more centers this fiscal with a special focus on the southern part of the country, by opening a center each in Kerala, Tamil Nadu, and five in Andhra Pradesh. Looking to grab a larger share of the hardware training market, Jetking is planning to diversify for training the vernacular population.

Software education firm, Karrox Technologies partnered IT majors like IBM, Oracle and CompTIA for developing talent pool in infrastructure management and software services. The company intends to open 125

Total IT Education

56% Domestic 1,894 cr

44% Exports 1,499 cr

Total IT revenue: Rs 3,393 crore

Source: IDC India 2008

Both NIIT and Aptech continued overseas expansion particularly in Africa and China thereby insulated from the slowdown in the US market

training centers and be present in fourteen countries by 2010.

According to a recent Nasscom-sponsored Animation India Study 2007, India will need over 3,00,000 professionals in content development and animation segment by 2008, to cope with the growing demand. Maya Academy of Advanced Cinematics (MAAC) opened operations in Delhi and Thiruvananthapuram, Jabalpur, and Coimbatore. The highlight of the company, however, was its tie-up with Toon Club, responsible for pioneering children's animation education. For bringing animation to students across India, MAAC would leverage its wide presence in India, the Middle East and Nepal for spreading Toon Club's curriculum all over India.

Aptech's multimedia arm, Arena too is expanding presence across India and had close to 40,000 student enrollments during the year. The company also launched the Golden Cursor Animation award, which was

Even though dollar depreciation resulted in slowing down the hiring plans of most IT biggies the individual training market clocked Rs 1,178 crore in FY '08

received well by the industry.

World Beyond IT

The progression of the Indian economy has consequently resulted in creation of substantial job opportunities in high growth sectors. Sensing the gap between demand and supply for skilled non-IT professionals, both NIIT and Aptech forayed into the non-IT training sectors about two years ago.

NIIT's IFBI and Imperia programs (both launched in the previous fiscal) gained momentum during FY '08. Its foray into training requirements for BFSI professionals gained further ground with new programs for insurance and financial planning. During the year, over 3,000 students graduated from IFBI and were placed while another 1,200 are completing training in early FY '09.

These programs managed to get wide acceptance with a number of banks and financial institutions, including ICICI Prudential Life Insurance, ICICI Lombard, ICICI Securities, HDFC Bank, Kotak Mahindra Bank, and Yes Bank tying up with IFBI for trained professionals. IFBI also tied up with Infosys to provide training on its Finacle Banking Software platform.

The Imperia program meanwhile announced new tie-ups with IMT Ghaziabad, Indian Institute of Foreign Trade, and IIM-Lucknow, enhancing the product offerings. In the previous fiscal, NIIT had tied up with Indian Institutes of Management (I.M) Ahmedabad, Kolkata, and Indore. In FY '08, the total number of centers offering the IFBI and Imperia courses increased from six to twenty-two, and the total students trained crossed 10,000.

Aptech too entered the high-growth aviation training sector with Avalon Aviation academy and tied up with the Karnataka State Open University to offer a diploma in Airport Management and Customer

Care. The academy has over fifty centers across India and has strategic alliances with thirty-eight airlines.

Back to Basics

The Indian government is encouraging IT education in schools. Public-private partnerships in education has gained wider acceptance. Moreover, the enhanced allocation of funds by the Planning Commission, and the central and state governments has led to considerable activity in this space, leading to a rise in the number of states tendering for IT and IT-enabled education in schools

Gurgaon-based Educomp, a leading provider of IT-driven solutions for schools, secured contracts from as many as 395 schools from Rajasthan and Jharkhand governments. With two new contracts, the company has tied up with a total of 6,399 schools in eleven states already. The company is also working in close collaboration with the Intel Classmate PC team and launched the 'Whole School One-on-computing' program at PSBB Millennium School, Chennai.

During the year, NIIT entered into a strategic alliance with US-based NComputing, the leading provider of virtual PC solutions, to enable thousands of schools across India to bring affordable computer education to its students. The alliance would help reduce cost of computing in schools by 50%. The company also launched its eGuru school solution offering and consolidated its program offerings in non-IT related subjects in line with NCERT's National Curriculum framework.

The Corporate Angle

With the market abuzz with talks of the corporate training market slowing down owing to spending becoming a little subdued looking at the current market conditions, industry players are vehemently denying such a scenario. The corporate training market was worth Rs 1,626 crore in

e-Learning Players

Company	Revenue (in Rs crore)
Tata Interactive	163
NIIT	80
Others*	346
Total	589

*Others include Gurukulonline, Hurix, Lionbridge, QAI, and Brainvisa

The entry of global players and saturation in the foreign e-learning market are some of the reasons driving growth of the e-learning market in India

FY '08 with a market share of 58%.

During FY '08, the focus of NIIT was to provide combined offerings of NIIT and Element K to the customers. The integration of Element K continued on track. NIIT acquired controlling stake in Evolv Services, a leading provider of English language and communication training. This acquisition along with NIIT's strategic alliance with Educational Testing Service USA (ETS), the world's leading educational measurement and research organization, would allow NIIT to address the need for English and professional skills for corporate and individuals in India.

Even though Aptech forayed into the segment only a few years back, it has been fairly successful and focused on the telecom, retail, banking, automobiles, and IT/BPO verticals, with a lot of its business coming from repeat orders. The company trained 36,000 students last year. What's more, global corporations too have been sending their personnel to be trained under Aptech's India Window program. Aptech's Malaysia operation too has been fairly successful.

e-Learning: The Way to Go

A slew of e-learning initiatives announced in last matter of 2-3 years. Even though Internet penetration is abysmally low in India even now, the underlying reason is the size of the Indian population.

Thanks to factors like rising cost, wastage of time in travel coupled with wastage of manpower days, most corporate houses are now increasingly turning towards e-learning when it comes to employee training. Verticals like BFSI and IT/BPO have been major consumers of e-learning. With more MNCs entering India and the saturation in foreign markets, e-learning will see traction in the next few years.

Info Edge (India), parent company of Naukri.com has launched Shiksha.com, an education portal. The company plans to invest $5-10 mn in the portal over the next three years, while publishing house MBD recently launched MBD Alchemie, an e-learning and tutorial project in the country for school students.

With CAT projected to go online from the next year, much of this would move to computer-based or e-learning. Even professional bodies like ICSI (Institute of Company Secretaries of India)[a] have started offering online programs. Online training has proved to be quite useful in areas like pre-recruitment training for insurance agents, certified financial planners, MBA programs, among others.

Gurukul Online has partnered with Amity Business School for offering eMBA courses (degree and diploma). The company is now focused on offering e-learning solutions for the B2B sector, especially in tier-2 cities, which will ensure growth and demand for the next three years. The company has also tied-up with the Government of Rajasthan to provide various skill development programs like spoken English and employment readiness skills.

E-learning seems to be the way ahead for a country that lacks basic infrastructure as far as schools and colleges are concerned.

—**Stuti Das**
stutid@cybermedia.co.in

CHINA'S BEST-KEPT SECRET: INDIA

Indian software training is changing lives, and the way the Asian giant views us

A SILENT revolution that began over a decade ago is changing lives across China. More than 7.5 lakh students — the number's rising by 1.8 lakh year — have acquired software skills from Indian companies.

These students are also opening a window for ordinary Chinese into the often-frosty relationship between the two Asian rivals.

Liu Mei (27), a former kindergarten teacher who studied at Indian training major NIIT's Shanghai centre, is set to get a job as a software engineer. "Taking care of children was nice, but software design is a bigger challenge," Liu told the *Hindustan Times* through an interpreter. "I am also discovering India. Earlier, all I knew about India was garlic and spicy food."

Aptech's China joint venture is the market leader in IT training, with 260 centres across the country. Company officials said it has over 3.3 lakh present and former students. NIIT is present in 180 locations in 65 cities, including 132 universities.

Universities embed NIIT curriculum in courses, bringing together Indian software lessons with Mao's theory. The training institute gets over 50,000 students every year.

The story began in 1997, when NIIT tiptoed into Shanghai — the first Indian software foray into China — facing competition from leading US companies.

"We knew that, as far as software is concerned, China could become another India," said Prakash Menon, NIIT's Shanghai-based China president, as he ordered lunch in Mandarin at a Beijing restaurant. "At a time when education by a foreign company was a no-no, our public-private partnership got the go-ahead."

The push is part of China's 'ten-hundred-thousand programme' — promoting 10 cities as outsourcing bases, attracting 100 multinationals and assisting the development of at least 1,000 enterprises that will help double service exports by 2010. China is also setting up a fund to provide software training for up to 4 lakh university students over the next four years.

The provinces are so excited with Indian software training that their demands are becoming ambitious. Communist Party secretary of Jiang Su province— the state's most powerful man—invited Menon to meet him three years ago, saying he wanted 2 lakh students trained in five years, in English.

The city of Wuxi offered Menon a building - and dormitory —to set up a facility. Within 30 days of the first meeting, classes had begun. Chongqing, a southern city of 31 million, invited NIIT this year with a similar offer. Others have followed.

"We have the red carpet rolled out in every province," Menon said. Many of his students end up getting jobs in the company's centres.

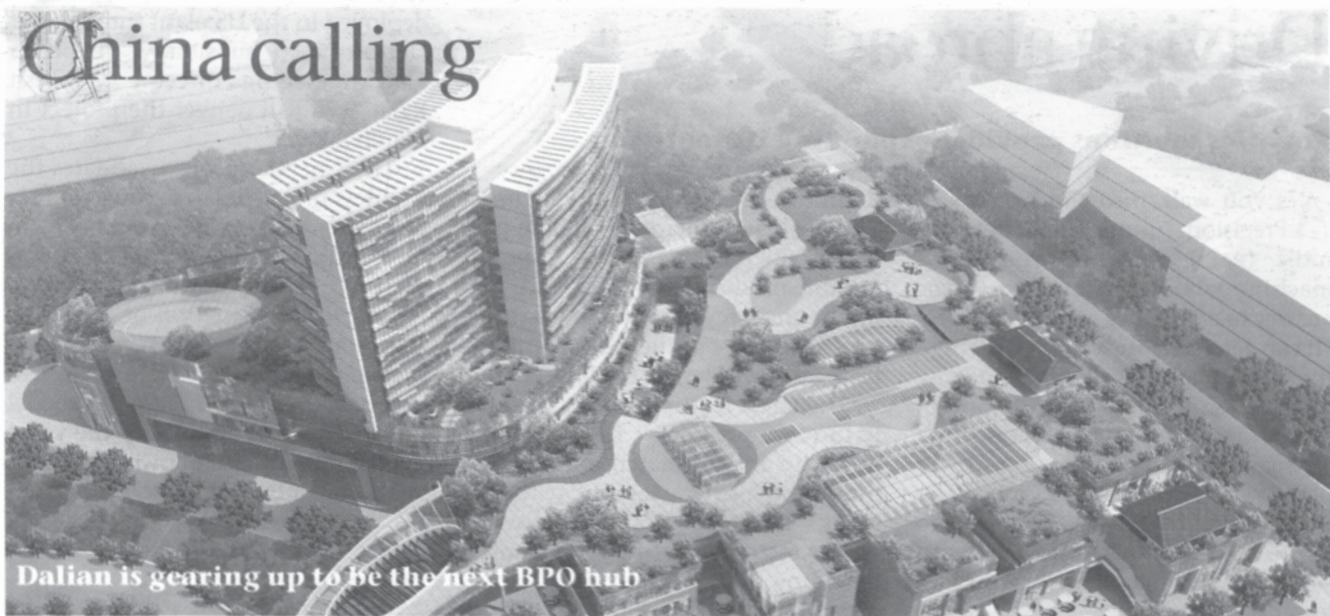The software push is changing the way Chinese youth look at India.

"Young engineers find value in working with Indian companies," said Raghvendra Tripathi, China head of leading IT company Satyam. "They probably did not look up to India earlier, but they respect us now." Students agree. "In the Chinese mind, Indians have the best software in the world,"said Shen Feng Wei, a 20-year-old NIIT student. "Indians are famous here."

Off the WALL

Neelesh Misra
Senior Roving Editor,
in Beijing

7.5 LAKH
Students have acquired software skills from Indian firms.

1.8 LAKH
More are enrolling for such courses every year.

3.3 LAKH
Students trained/in training at Aptech, China's market leader in IT education. It has 260 centres across the country. NIIT is present in 180 locations in 65 cities, including 132 universities.

Young engineers find value in working with Indian companies. They probably did not look up to India earlier, but they respect us now.
RAGHVENDRA TRIPATHI,
China head of Satyam

"In the Chinese mind, Indians have the best software in the world. Indians are famous here.
SHEN FENG WEI,
NIIT student

ILLUSTRATION: SEBASTIAN

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China calling

Dalian is gearing up to be the next BPO hub

Think BPO and one thinks India. China comes way down when it comes to BPO and not without reason: Dalian, which ranks first in terms of outsourcing capabilities and potential in China, ranks fifth among 35 cities in the Asia Pacific region. But plans are afoot to move up in the rankings.

Dalian is home to about 200 foreign-funded enterprises and more than 40 companies have outsourced their software and information services, among these HP, Dell, Citigroup, etc. HP set up a global call centre in Dalian in 2005, specialising in offering technology support for its customers, reaching out to places including Taiwan, South Korea and Japan. The remote support system is available in five languages: English, Mandarin, Cantonese, Japanese and Korean. Citi, on the other hand, is only two years old, but has a staff of 500, dedicated to software development and BPO services and 230 staff members offering consumer finance, legal back office services and a call centre to Japan.

An outsourcing company already established in Dalian is Genpact-China, which opened its doors in 2000. It services customers in the Asia Pacific region and provides support in Chinese, Japanese, Korean and English. In 2003-04, with the large-scale entry of GE into China, Genpact was ideally situated to provide it with BPO services. In 2005, Genpact moved on to offer support to external companies.

The rising success of Dalian's IT industry has inspired a 26.5 sq km Dalian Tiandi Software Hub (DTSH). Dalian mayor Xia Deren says the focus of the DTSH is not to compete with India, but to develop ties with the Asian market, especially Japan and Korea. It has already attracted $2 billion worth of investments and is all set to open its first office building by December 2009.

In recent years, Dalian has seen substantial growth of its software and outsourcing industry and Vincent Lo, chairman, Shui On, the company developing the DTSH land, sees it as northeast Asia's first IT township, "It is the goal of the Dalian municipality to transform the city into an electronic information and software industrial base. Shui On will take its role as an experienced large-scale project developer on building a world-class software hub, where IT businessmen and practitioners can find themselves perfect workplaces and cosy homes." And approximately 43.5 acres of the land is going to be devoted solely for the construction of education centres, especially focussing on IT training provided by Mumbai-based NIIT.

NIIT's foray

NIIT's main goal in China is to provide their students with the necessary education and training to consider IT as their career path. Thus far, 35 colleges and universities in Dalian have adopted NIIT's curriculum. And with Dalian's expansion of IT and software development, NIIT also plans to set up its own centre there, the first of which is planned for August this year in down town Dalian, followed by a second centre six months later in the DTSH itself; providing training in software engineering, networking and animation and extending into the BPO training space.

"The lack of adequate manpower in this area is China's biggest barrier to growth, and that is where we step in," says Vijay Thadani, CEO and president, NIIT, adding that, in the next three years, he sees Indian software companies as the largest employers of Chinese IT graduates. "We are looking at 1,500 IT graduates in our first year and upping that to 10,000 per year in three years. There is still a huge gap in demand and supply of manpower," he adds. Thadani stresses that while, in terms of telecom and broadband infrastructure, China is far ahead of India, it lags behind in human infrastructure. "Currently, the national level of attrition in China in IT is at 39 per cent, while in India it is much lower at 18 per cent," he points out.

No wonder then that China is looking at India, as great example to learn from.

♦ SHONALI SHIVDASANI

Think e-learning's hot stuff? Try m-learning

Mobile phones are transforming into classrooms on the move

Priyanka Golikeri. Mumbai

The mobile phone's no more about just making or receiving calls. So much we know. Even kids can tell how one can also send and receive messages, download music and video, buy movie tickets and make utility bill payments, among a host of other applications.

But, the mobile handset has also been turning into a quaint little learning ground - throwing up information on demand, whether as simple text, infographics or video.

The ease and utility afforded by the few square inches of screen space for sifting through lengthy documents remains debatable. But, there is no denying that the device can be handy in culling out specific information. And people are increasingly using this aspect to good effect.

The age of m-learning may be here at last. And how?

Take the case of Geetha Rao, a 26-year-old sales executive for a fast moving consumer goods (FMCG) company, based in south-central Mumbai. Selling to potential customers such as distributors and retailers has become a lot easier for her in the last two months, she would tell you.

Earlier, Rao would be at a loss when she forgot a particular aspect of the product she was pitching at the client, such as the ingredients of a facial cream or the packaging details. She would then have to tear across her memory or scan through manuals and product brochures she had to carry along, or call her team manager as a last resort.

But now, all she need do to get any information about her company's products is send a query through SMS to a central knowledge repository. An automated mechanism sends back the answer. No more sweat.

Similarly, 48-year-old Ashok Shah, chief executive officer of a placement firm located in Andheri in suburban Mumbai uses his mobile as a medium to get information on best practices in management that he could buttress his point with before clients. Carrying heavy manuals, books and guides would be so cumbersome in comparison.

The concept marks a major turn in the online education industry, which so far straddled genres such as web-based curricula, virtual classrooms, etc. The likes of Rao and Shah are among a growing population that's learning on the move.

According to industry experts, in the current scenario, where time is critical and training needs are a constant, m-learning is the apt self-learning tool.

Karthik KS, chief executive officer of Bangalore-based talent lifecycle management company 24x7 Learning, says, "M-learning is at present mainly used for training employees in an organisation and for senior management to learn about organisational challenges. This mode of learning does not interfere with the schedules of employees and enables swift transmission of information without the burden of books or manual or even computers."

Vipul Rastogi, vice-president and head of enterprise learning solutions at NIIT, sees more virtues. The biggest plus with m-learning is the mobility and the fact that it can reach a wider segment of people than classroom learning or even e-learning would allow, he says. "Moreover, it doesn't require setting up of infrastructure, trainers or manuals. So, m-learning actually comes dead cheap."

Both 24x7 Learning and NIIT create content in a digital format that can be accessed by employees of companies through their mobiles. Both these companies have over 30 clients each, from sectors such as FMCG, information technology, etc.

The modus operandi is simple, says Karthik of 24x7 Learning. The content is made available on a download mode on the mobile. "And not just data, but even voice and video downloads are possible."

For all that, however, m-learning is still just a tiny niche area in India and not much industry data is available yet. But, the growth potential is undeniable. NIIT's Rastogi is confident of double-digit growth, given that mobile subscribers are a whopping 250 million and swelling.

Going forward, NIIT also plans to cater to the needs of the student community. "Though we have to still work out the details, as the market expands, we would also cater to educational institutions," Rastogi adds.

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मोबाइल फोन होंगे नए क्लासरूम

प्रियंका गोलीकेरी, मुंबई

मोबाइल फोन अब सिर्फ काल करने या सुनने के माध्यम नहीं रह गए हैं, बल्कि चलते-फिरते क्लासरूम बन चुके हैं। एम-लर्निंग के तहत उपभोक्ता अपने मोबाइल पर किसी विषय की विस्तृत जानकारी देख, सुन अथवा पढ़ सकते हैं। इसके लिए लैपटाप लेकर चलने की जरूरत भी नहीं।

चौबीस घंटे सीखने का दौर : देश की तमाम कंपनियां ग्राहकों में पकड़ बनाने और संस्थान में कुशल प्रबंधन सुनिश्चित करने के लिए इस सेवा का इस्तेमाल कर रही हैं। इसे शिक्षण संस्थानों से जोड़ने की योजना पर भी तेजी से काम चल रहा है।

क्या है एम-लर्निंग ? : साल्यूशन प्रोवाइडर या साफ्टवेयर कंपनियां विभिन्न विषयों पर खास जानकारियों को डिजिटल कंटेंट (सामग्री) में बदलती हैं, जिसे मोबाइल पर डाउनलोड किया जा सकता है। इसके तहत प्रबंधन के सिद्धांत से लेकर उत्पाद व सेवाओं की बारीकियों को मोबाइल पर डाटा, आवाज या वीडियो फार्मेट में उतारा जा सकता है।

कैसे हो रहा इस्तेमाल? : सेल्स एक्जीक्यूटिव्स को अब ग्राहकों को कंपनी की योजनाओं व उत्पादों के बारे में जानकारी मुहैया कराने के लिए किताबें व ब्रोशर लेकर चलने की जरूरत नहीं। दिक्कत आने पर वे एक एसएमएस भेज कर संबंधित विषय पर जानकारी हासिल कर सकते हैं। कंपनी के उच्च अधिकारी कर्मचारियों को कुशल प्रबंधन का पाठ पढ़ाने के अलावा कंपनी की नीतियों के प्रचार-प्रसार में भी इसका इस्तेमाल कर सकते हैं।

कौन है मास्टरमाइंड : 24.7 लर्निंग और एनआईआईटी जैसी कंपनियां डाटा को डिजिटल फार्म (रूप) में बदलने का काम कर रही है। दोनों ही से करीब तीन-तीन दर्जन कंपनियां सेवाएं ले रही है।

IN BRIEF

IIMs launch executive courses at 22 centres

The Indian Institutes of Management (IIMs) — Calcutta, Indore and Lucknow, have introduced five executive programmes through NIIT Imperia Centre for Advanced Learning's branches countrywide. On offer are a one-year Senior Management Programme, Executive Programme in Applied Finance (IIM-Kolkata), Post Graduate Certificate Programme in Management, PG Certificate in Family-Owned Business and Entrepreneurship (IIM-Indore), and Executive General Management Programme (IIM-Lucknow).

एनआईआईटी इंपीरिया में नए मैनेजमेंट पाठ्यक्रम

नवज्योति ब्यूरो

नई दिल्ली, 7 अगस्त। सेंटर फॉर एडवांस लर्निंग(एनआईआईटी) इंपीरिया ने अगस्त 2008 से पांच नए प्रबंधन पाठ्यक्रम शुरू करने की घोषणा की है। इस पाठ्यक्रम को इंडियन इंस्टीच्यूट ऑफ मैनेजमेंट(आईआईएम) कोलकाता, इंदौर और लखनऊ के सहयोग से संचालित किया जाएगा। कामकाजी पेशेवरों के लिए इन नए पाठ्यक्रमों को एनआईआईटी इंपीरिया के देशभर में 22 अलग–अलग स्थानों पर कार्यरत लर्निंग सेंटर्स दिल्ली, गुड़गांव, मुंबई, हैदराबाद, चेन्नई, कोलकाता, बैंगलोर, अहमदाबाद, पुणे, नागपुर, भुवनेश्वर, विशाखापट्टनम, चंडीगढ़ और जमशेदपुर में उपलब्ध कराया जाएगा। पाठ्यक्रम में प्रवेश लेने के लिए छात्र आनलाईन आवेदन कर सकते हैं। प्रवेश के लिए छात्रों को पीटी देना होगा और इसके आधार पर ही उन्हें अपने मनपसंद कोर्स में प्रवेश दिया जाएगा।

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Wanna sit in a virtual classroom?

After revolutionising computer education, NIIT's new learning initiative now connects students across the country.

BY SUSHMITA CHATTERJEE

BENGALURU

An online tutorial is the Gen Y teaching method that has gained popularity in the recent times. But imagine if you are studying online, and at the same time can raise your hand and ask questions to your teacher? That's exactly what NIIT's 'Imperia' programme enables you to do. You get a feel of a virtual classroom!

The technology of synchronous learning helps in bringing together students across various parts in India and the teachers sitting away at far off places.

There is a dedicated broadband two-way audio-video, together with special software to replicate face-to-face teaching. Thus, it not only allows the students to clarify doubts immediately, submit quizzes, send assignments and use the white board application, but also helps in a better understanding of the subject by interaction with other classmates while working on case studies and assignments.

Why synchronous learning format? SaysDr. Smarajit Dey, President-Strategic Initiatives of NIIT: "Though online education is an effective way, at times there is a need to see, if students are taking the course seriously and face-to-face technique comes in handy then. Here everything happens in real time and students can interact at the click of a button."
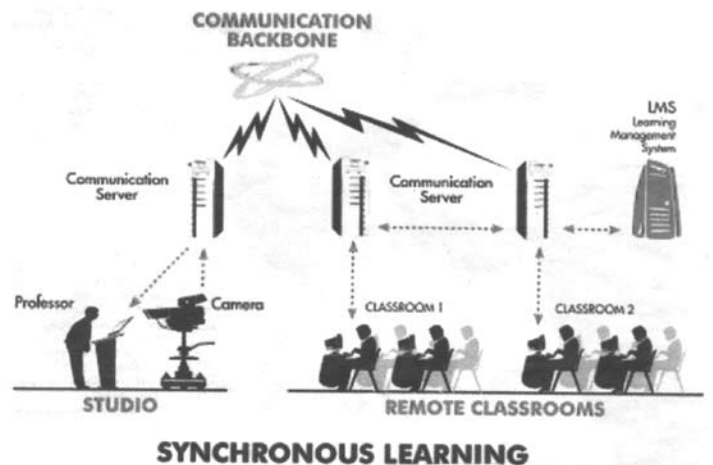
Deccan Chronicle was also asked to experience a demonstration of this online classroom and we were more than excited. We went inside the classroom where there were hundreds of computers lined up with web cams, head phones and all other arrangements needed for an online interaction. The server was connected to Delhi, from where we were constantly receiving inputs. And don't be under the misconception that only you can see and hear the teacher.

COMMUNICATION BACKBONE

Communication Server

Communication Server

LMS
Learning
Management
System

Professor

Camera

CLASSROOM 1

CLASSROOM 2

STUDIO

REMOTE CLASSROOMS

SYNCHRONOUS LEARNING

Zoom into class

There are web-cams across every classroom which allows the teacher to zoom in and see what each student is doing while a class is going on. Thus, no scope for sleeping inside the classrooms!

This technique has enabled students in rural areas to take classes from faculty members of premier B-schools like the IIMs. Moreover, it has also helped institutes reach out to a wider audience without constraints of infrastructure. While NIIT has already been delivering 20 programmes through classrooms set up across 22 locations, it is soon going to include another five programmes to its kitty by August end.

"To improve the productivity of middle level managers, we are launching five new executive management courses in association with IIM Kolkata, Indore and Lucknow. They are in senior management, applied finance, family owned business and entrepreneurship, executive general management and a certificate programme in management. All the courses are customized to the needs of working professionals. For instance, if someone has more than six years of experience, the course he chooses will emphasise more on application and case studies.

GROOMING THE FUTURE: The introduction of the new
programme follows NIIT's partnership with SAS Institute

BSIM curriculum

NIIT launched its new Business System
and Information Management programme
as part of its flagship GNIIT programme.

NIIT and Pearson VUE to offer Testing facilities in India

Pearson VUE, the electronic certification and licensure testing business of Pearson, and NIIT Ltd., the leading Global Talent Development Corporation, have agreed to expand their certification network in India, and extend a range of IT and non-IT tests for students and professionals, across the country.

NIIT, which offers IT training in various cutting-edge platforms and technologies in the individual and enterprise segment, will also offer testing for Pearson VUE's key IT clients.

Through this relationship, NIIT students will benefit from the convenience of testing at the same place where they receive training, and Pearson VUE's candidates will benefit from additional testing locations and easy access to NIIT's prominently located centres.

According to G Raghavan, President-Individual Learning Solutions, NIIT, "Our curriculum design competency, distributed education process management and ability to partner with world's leading technology companies make us the preferred choice of students and employers. NIIT's relationship with Pearson VUE will strengthen our IT testing services, and develop a large pool of certified professionals for the global IT industry."

NIIT focuses on North East

CITY REPORTER

GUWAHATI, Aug 11: The leading computer training institute, NIIT is now focusing more on the placement service considering the demand in the IT sector.

Regional manager of the NIIT, Surojit Biswas, while addressing a press conference here today said that the youths in the region can take advantage of the upswing IT market by their talents.

In the past two months HCL has selected 25 NIIT students in campus interview, TCS has selected five while Wipro has also short-listed 15 students of NIIT in the region," he said.

"We are about to open new centres in Maligaon (Guwahati), Tinsukia, Imphal, Aizawl and Itanagar considering the demand from the youths. Our placement team is also being strengthened with newer techniques and resources, so that the talents from this region get the maximum benefit," he said. The annual business turnover from Assam is Rs 1 crore every month.

"The NIIT GS Road centre aims to provide quality training for an array of programmes in IT fields. As part of its latest Industry Endorsed Curriculum version II, the new centre will offer a series of programmes of varying durations," said Palak Parashar, head of the new centre.

TIMES ASCENT

An IT company spends a considerable amount of time and money on freshers so that they can be integrated into a corporate work environment. In an attempt to bridge the gap between educational curriculum and actual job requirements, companies have collaborated with educational institutes. This is where the industry provides training to the college faculty on current requisites in the industry, and imparts new skills to them which could be of demand in the future.

THE NEED OF THE HOUR...

Today, corporates face a huge challenge in recruiting the right talent. During a typical campus connect program, an organisation manages to hire an average of 10 people out of every 500 interviewed. A mere two per cent! A deeper probe reveals that at least half of the remaining 490 miss out on employment due to lack of behavioural skills or domain specialisation. "The industry and academia need to embark on a fire-fighting mission together. The need of the hour is to identify and map the right requirement at the right place and at the right time," says Deependra Chumble, Chief People Person for Hexaware.

According to a recent consulting study conducted by Mercer, only 25 per cent graduates in India are employed. The figure indicates that there is a huge gap between the pace of change of university curriculum and the technology needs of the current industry. As a result, students have good theoretical knowledge but they lack problem solving skills due to lack of exposure to practical projects. "Given the situation, it is imperative that industry and academia collaborate to improve the quality of students who are entering into the industry for various roles and positions," asserts Sachin Tikekar, chief of people operations, KPIT Cummins Infosystems.

According to Romit Dasgupta, director, Globsyn, "One of the biggest indicators

WHATEVER ROLE YOU PLAY IN AN ORGANISATION, THE NEED TO FOCUS ON CUSTOMER SATISFACTION IS A BASIC REQUISITE. HAVING UNDERSTOOD THESE ASPECTS OF CORPORATE LIFE, DEVELOPING CUSTOMER RELATED SKILLS AND FILLING SKILL GAPS IS CRITICAL TO A SUCCESSFUL CAREER. THIS IS THE GAP THE INDUSTRY–ACADEMIA COLLABORATION IS CURRENTLY TRYING TO ADDRESS. SHEETAL SRIVASTAVA FINDS OUT...

ILLUS AMIT BANDRE

A symbiotic relationship

that determine the need for a company to partner with an educational institute is the shortage of relevant skills. The other indicators include research driven initiatives where academic institutions can form the breeding grounds for development of newer technologies."

JOINING HANDS!

Keeping this in mind, many companies have tied up with some of the best institutes in order to bridge the gap

between industry and academia. Hexaware Technologies, in an attempt to increase communication between academics and industry, has started the "Train the Trainers Programme". The programme conducted a workshop on 'Recent Trends in Information Technology', jointly organised by IIT Madras and Hexaware Technologies. The workshop, meant for faculty members in the Computer Science Department of various Engineering & Computer Applications in Arts & Science

Colleges, is a part of the Industry-Academia interaction. "The purpose is to give a better exposure to the faculty on the latest trends in the IT industry. Training teachers who in turn train students helps polish certain additional skills required by the industry, and educating the students on the latest technologies," notes Chumble.

Multi Commodities Exchange (MCX), in collaboration with some of the top notch institutes such as IIM Indore, IIM Ahmedabad

and IIM Bangalore, IIF-New Delhi, Welingkar Institute of Management Development and Research, Symbiosis Institute of International Business, etc., provides general as well as customised training programmes at various levels.

Globsyn's entire business model is based on bridging the gap between Industry and Academia. "We run a post-graduate programme with the University of Calcutta on Applied Economics and Information Management; we also run a post-graduate

programme with Jadavpur University on Software Engineering and Business Management," states Dasgupta.

NIIT Imperia offers long and short term management programmes to individuals and corporates, using its innovative synchronous learning technology. The institute has created a special programme for Genpact, to train its employees, across multiple locations.

There are various challenges of this system including sustaining such programmes in campuses and encouraging the academic fraternity to attend them at regular intervals. "We need a dedicated workforce to deliver such special lectures, value-added sessions etc.," says Chumble.

"One of the biggest challenges is that of mindset adjustment. Pure Academics has always had an 'input driven' mindset whereas industry initiatives are more 'output driven'," affirms Dasgupta.

A SUCCESSFUL ENDEAVOUR!

There is no doubt that Industry-Academia collaboration is one of the successful ways to fight skill shortage. Candidates are now expected to demonstrate initiative and confidence to take on business challenges, and to portray a positive brand image that is necessary while facing a customer. Whatever the route, the onus of helping students keep pace with the dynamic business environment lies with the academia. Modification of academic curriculum and its implementation is traditionally a long process involving careful research, curriculum design, customisation and delivery.

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Students get tips on picking right career

HT Live Correspondent
Chandigarh, August 21

MODERN CAREERS are fluid and changing and students need to adapt themselves to be good at multitasking, Amitoz Dogra, NIIT's head of education delivery in Chandigarh, Haryana and Himachal Pradesh, said during a symposium on the 21st-century careers here on Thursday.

The symposium launched the year-long activities of the Career Counselling and Placement Cell at the Sector 11 Government College.

The symposium was aimed at introducing students to various career options. Dogra enumerated the 10 steps required for choosing the right career. He advised students to look for economic independence, opportunities to learn, potential for growth, job satisfaction and clear objectives in a career.

Career counselling and placement cell coordinator Dr Rakesh Thakur talked about the skills and attributes that employers would look for in job candidates.

Gainfully employed youth could keep the GDP growing and Chandigarh could be a hot spot for the IT professionals from diverse backgrounds, Dr Thakur said, adding that the placement cell would groom students for future professional challenges.

Efforts on for sourcing quality people

Mini Joseph Tejaswi &
Sujit John | TNN

Bangalore: The acute skill mismatch in the labour-intensive BPO industry is spawning a whole new breed of BPO schools in the country. NIIT with Genpact, has set up a JV, NIIT Institute of Process Excellence (NIPE) which has a mandate to train over 100,000 people in two years. All of the top 15 Indian BPO firms are likely to join the initiative. Lathika Pai, co-founder of B2K, has just set up a BPO training outfit called Fides Global Consultants.

IGNOU will soon start offering, in alliance with Accenture, a diploma course to train students for jobs in the BPO industry.

Som Mittal, president, Nasscom, says BPO has migrated from vanilla tech support services to supply chain and high-end analytics; so industry needs people with vertical knowledge in insurance, supply chain and retail.

"The world over, even undergrad level people are trained for vocation. In India, on the contrary, even graduates are confused about what career to take up. People are increasingly realising that BPO is a serious career and offers limitless growth opportunity. It's high time our academia revised the curricula and syllabi to include BPO courses," said Mittal.

Ashish Basu, president of new business incubation at NIIT, said NIPE will open 200 BPO training centres in three years. Each of these centres will have 10 to 12 faculty members.

IGNOU will offer BPO courses to support practices in finance and accounting, insurance, banking, HR sourcing and category management, customer contact services, healthcare, pharma, engineering services and equity research. "The BPO industry needs experts in areas like finance and legal matters. We are today forced sometimes to depend on college dropouts or 10th/12th pass people," says Rincy Roosevelt of Sunbelt Business Solution.