NIIT In The News

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WHERE WILL YOU TAKE THE FUTURE?

NIIT eguru
THE JOY OF LEARNING

element k

EVOLV
The Next Level

NIIT Globalnet+
Network & Infrastructure Management Programs

INDUSTRY ENDORSED GNIIT

hiwel
Hole-in-the-Wall Education Ltd.

ifbi
Institute of Finance, Banking & Insurance

NIIT IMPERIA
CENTRE FOR ADVANCED LEARNING

NIIT Litmus

NIIT SWIFT

NIIT UNIQUA
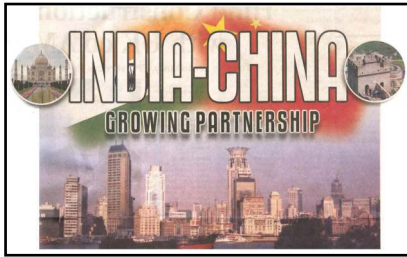CENTRE FOR PROCESS EXCELLENCE
AN NIIT-GENPACT VENTURE

The Hindu Business Line

New Delhi

01 October, 2009

CHINA AT 60

As the People's Republic of China marks its 60th anniversary today, there are many reasons for the country to celebrate, from its rapid emergence on the world stage as a major power to the remarkable speed of its economic progress since Deng Xiaoping's reform and opening up three decades ago. Another reason to celebrate is the growing closeness between China and India, two of Asia's giants, two countries with thousands of years of rich history and long contact that have, however, been slow to take their relationship forward. That is all now set to change. In recent years, the speed at which the commercial relationship between the two of the world's fastest growing economies has grown has been nothing short of mind-boggling. A decade ago, bilateral trade between India and China stood at a paltry few million. India's focus was westward, while China's gaze was firmly fixed across the Pacific. Today, China is India's largest trading partner. In 2001, bilateral trade between India and China stood at US$ 2billion. Last year, the figure crossed $52 billion, and has in the last decade grown at a stunning 50 per cent a year. All trade targets set by the two countries have been smashed two years ahead of schedule. Officials on both sides of the border say the speed of growing trade ties is now single-handedly driving the overall bilateral relationship between the two countries, and is even playing an increasing role in getting the two neighbours to address their long-standing political disagreements. Trade has so far been largely driven by the huge demand for Chinese machinery from India's fast-developing manufacturing sector, and China's growing demand for raw materials, chiefly metal ores. Now, businesses in India and China are poised to take the relationship to the next level. More and more Indian companies in sectors like banking, IT and manufacturing are setting up shop in China and ready to take on the Chinese market. And, in equal measure, Chinese investments in India are surging, from infrastructure projects to telecommunications.

Partnership in IT Sector

The biggest names in Indian software and education, from NIIT and Infosys to Tata Consultancy Services and Wipro, have all begun making inroads into the Chinese market in the last two years. In a major watershed for Indian IT in China, TCS was recently awarded a $100million contract to provide IT services for the Bank of China. The floodgates, many say, have now been opened. Perhaps the biggest success story has been that of NIIT, the IT educator. The success of NIIT is lesson for any company on how to tackle the Chinese market. Through a brilliant strategy of local tie-ups and localisation, the company has built an impressive network in China. By 2011, NIIT will produce more Chinese IT graduates than all of China's universities combined.

Partnership in Manufacturing Sector

Other sectors are not far behind. In manufacturing, many Indian companies have been sourcing parts for China, particularly in the Auto sector. In 2005, Sundram Fasteners of the TVS opened a new page by launching its impressive state-of-the-art facility in Zhejiang province. Now, No. 1 Sundram Road in Wuyuan town in Zhejiang has in recent years been shipping out high-tensile fasteners, bearing housings and other supplies to a range of overseas customers as well as multi-national companies such as John Deer that operate out of China.

Partnership in Banking Sector

China's reform policies, launched three decades ago, has also gradually paved the way for Indian companies to lend their expertise in other sectors, such as banking. India's largest bank, the State Bank

Business leads the way in growing partnership between China and India

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of India, which has 130 overseas branches, has opened a branch in Shanghai that has provided invaluable services by fostering the expanding trade between the growing number of Indian businesses in China's prosperous south-east. In addition to its Shanghai branch, SBI has also opened a representative office in the northern industrial city of Tianjin, and has also opened two branches in Hong Kong. Mutual investment between the two countries is also on the fast track. India has become an increasingly important destination for Chinese companies, which have in recent years secured contracts from infrastructure projects to manufacturing to the tune of $26 billion.

Partnership in Telecom Sector

Telecom major ZTE, which has been in India since 1999, has established a major presence here, providing state of the art telecom equipment to Indian customers. ZTE's unprecedented success in India has created waves in China, encouraging more Chinese companies to turn their sights to India. ZTE's sales revenue in India has rapidly grown, to $650 million in 2008 up from $ 100 million in 2004. The company aims to cross $ 1 billion this year. Telecom giant Huawei is poised to expand its already significant presence in the Indian market. The global giant recorded an impressive 100% revenue growth last year, and is targeting doubling its India revenues. Huawei has an impressive Research and Development Centre in Bangalore, where it employs more than 2,000 young professionals.

Leading China's IT revolution – A success story

A shining example of the success of Indian enterprise in China is the success story of NIIT. The well-known IT training and software solutions provider has enjoyed unprecedented success in the Chinese market, and has become a well-recognised brand among Chinese professionals. By 2011, NIIT, remarkably, will be producing more IT graduates than all of China's universities combined. Starting with only two centres in the commercial hub of Shanghai in 1997, Today, NIIT has 183 cooperative education and training sites across 25 provinces and cities in China, an unmatched national presence. NIIT currently trains more than 50,000 Chinese students in software skills every year, and has become the unrivalled choice among Chinese students looking for an IT education. The company, which has fostered close relationships with every software company in China, has a 100 per cent placement record. By next year, NIIT will be training 100 students a day.

NIIT, leading Global Talent Development Corporation and Asia's largest IT trainer, was recently honoured for its contribution to the IT Training industry in China, by the Chinese Society of Educational Development Strategy (CSEDS), under Ministry of Education of PRC, at a recently held function in Beijing, to mark the 60th Anniversary of the People's Republic of China. Besides being honoured as the as the most Influential IT Training Brand in China, NIIT received a total of five Education Awards as below:

- The most influential IT Training Brand in China
- Top 10 Brand in overall Training industry of China
- Top 10 Brand in student placement within Training industry in China
- Most influential Brand in Franchising within Training industry of China
- Celebrity award to Prakash Menon, President, NIIT China, for influencing the development of Training industry in China.

NIIT's success story holds lessons for any company that seeks to penetrate the Chinese market. Prakash Menon, the head of NIIT China, says the key to the company's success has been a strategy that has combined localisation to suit the needs of the domestic market and a network of local tie-ups. NIIT works with dozens of China's premier universities, training students in its state-of-the-art laboratory class rooms and making tens of thousands of China's graduates industry-ready. China's IT and outsourcing industry is steadily growing at more than 20 per cent every year, even in tough financial times. And India's NIIT is leading the country's IT revolution.

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Business Standard
New Delhi
01 October, 2009

NIIT wins 5 awards from Chinese govt

Global talent development company NIIT has won five awards from the Chinese Society of Educational Development Strategy under the Ministry of Education of People's Republic of China for being the most influential IT training brand in China and the most influential brand in franchising within China's training industry.
BS REPORTER

Business Standard
Kolkata
01 October, 2009

NIIT wins five awards in China

Global talent development company NIIT has won five awards from the Chinese Society of Educational Development Strategy under the Ministry of Education of People's Republic of China for being the most influential IT training brand in China and the most influential brand in franchising within China's training industry
BS REPORTER

The Indian Express
# Hyderabad
01 October, 2009

India's NIIT bags awards in China

New Delhi: The NIIT, a leading IT training company, has bagged five Chinese awards, including the one for the most influential IT training brand in China, for its efforts to create well-trained world-class professionals in that country. According to the IT training major, the awards were conferred by the Chinese Society of Educational Development Strategy, which is under China's Ministry of Education. The awards include the Most Influential IT Training Brand in China, Top-10 Brand in the overall training industry of China, Top-10 Brand in Student Placement within training industry in China, Most Influential Brand in Franchising within the training industry of China and Celebrity award to Prakash Menon, president of NIIT China, for influencing the development of training industry in that country *IANS

The Hindu Business Line
New Delhi

05 October, 2009

The M in learning
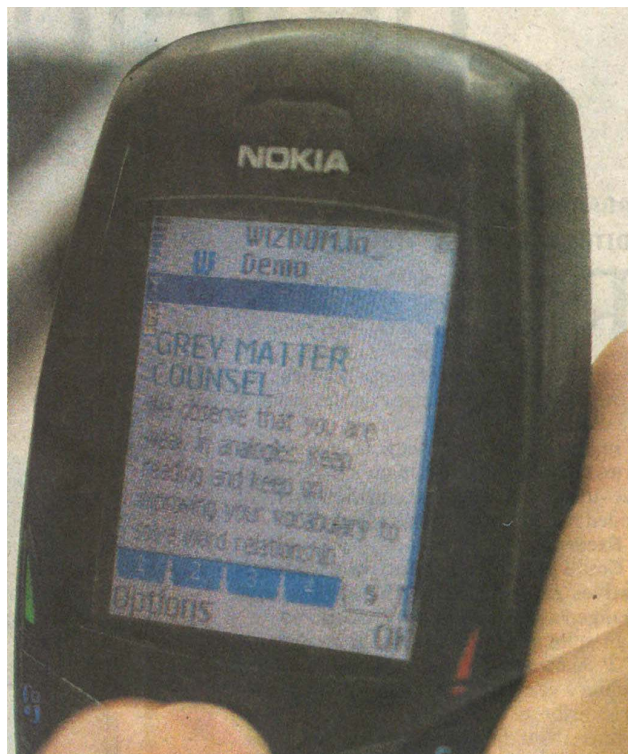
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The mobile phone can enable learning in a developing country such as India where its usage is growing by leaps and bounds.

G. KRISHNA KUMAR

V. SRIDHAR

In today's classrooms, mobile phones are seen as a nuisance, but they can be the key to a new, personal way of learning. Today's learners – of all age groups – use their mobiles in nearly all their daily activities. Mobile media enable learners to access information and learning support whenever they need.

"The students of the future will demand learning support that is appropriate for their situation or context. Nothing more; nothing less. And they want it at the moment the need arises. Not sooner; not later. Mobiles will be a key technology to provide that learning support," says **Dr Marcus Specht**, professor for Advanced Learning Technologies of the Centre for Learning Sciences and Technologies at the Open University, Netherlands. By enabling learning on the go, m-learning supports learners in that access to learning content and instructors is not restricted by location.

Nothing can be more apt for India which has witnessed colossal growth in mobile usage in the last five years. With close to 450 million mobile phones, India has the second largest mobile subscriber base in the world, next only to China. Mobile usage, restricted to urban India a few years ago, has started penetrating the rural hinterland at a good pace. The rural teledensity has grown from 1.9 per cent in 2005 to over 15 per cent now.

While the world recognises this phenomenal transformation in communication, India's Human Development Index ranks an appalling 132 out of the 179 countries. With more than 40 per cent of our population being youth, literacy is of immense importance for a country that depends on this demographic dividend to spur growth and economic development. While Russia, China and Brazil have close to 100 per cent literacy, India, with about 80 per cent, needs to catch up.

Indian rural population has challenges in terms of low literacy, poor health care, low per capita income, and other infrastructure problems that inhibit development. If only the mobile phone and associated wireless technologies could be used to tackle one of the problems, namely, literacy, it might have a cascading effect on the economic development of the region.

ANYTIME, ANYWHERE

While telecom service providers now concentrate on subscriber acquisition in the rural market, primarily for voice services, which has become commoditised due to intense competition, it is not the end. The dwindling average revenue per user (ARPU) can be offset by using mobile services not just for communication but for more basic aspects of life such as education and healthcare. In advanced countries such as the UK, although the rural population is smaller vis-à-vis the urban, rural subscribers have overtaken their urban counterparts on many of the wireless and broadband parameters. In countries such as the US and Australia, rural mobile health services have picked up momentum.

Examples abound on the use of mobile phones for learning. Mobile devices, which are truly personal, provide an opportunity to learn anytime, anywhere. Through an innovative university-businesses collaborative model, Stanford University's International Outreach Program launched the Dunia Moja Project in Swahili in Africa to teach university courses to students using mobile phones. The Teachermates projects at Stanford University attempts to make education fun by using innovative mobile games.

A pan-European research and development programme on m-learning is aimed at improving literacy and numerical skills in the age group of 16-24, who were not doing well in the normal education system. Recently the European Community project called BLOOM (Bite-sized Learning Opportunities on Mobile Devices) carried out 'M-learning in Taxi', an interesting experiment whereby taxi drivers would utilise waiting time effectively by learning about subjects of interest and improving their knowledge about the city using smartphones. M-learning has certainly picked up momentum across the world and most of the projects are universal in nature and with regional adaptations that can be tailored to each country.

ACTIVE M-LITERACY PROGRAMME

For m-learning to reach the masses, an active m-literacy programme is a must. Though children and youth have the innate ability to use gadgets with ease, as was demonstrated by the Hole-in-the-Wall project pioneered by NIIT, use of mobile devices for activities such as learning needs training. Many services, especially those that are targeted at the rural masses, such as Nokia Life Tools, provide market and educational information through mobile phones. Hence, it is important that the target audience is trained and adept at using these for successful adoption.

Imparting m-literacy will enable the users to understand and appreciate the value of these technology services and help increase the adoption rate. With 3G and broadband wireless access on the horizon, new opportunities abound to provide a rich m-learning experience. With the rapid fall in the cost of mobile hardware components, and the development of less expensive open source mobile software, the availability of economical feature-rich phones with high-end graphic support that makes m-learning conducive, the days of innovative m-learning solutions are not far off.

There certainly is a huge opportunity that can be tapped by addressing the learning needs of youth in urban and rural India using mobile services. Breaking into the Indian rural market requires a lot more creativity. One way is to embark on a mission of m-literacy and m-learning with an active collaboration amongst various stakeholders such as telecom companies, learning content providers, universities and schools, and local administration. What better way to make the life of our future hopefuls better than educating them through the ubiquitous mobile technologies?

Mr Krishna Kumar is Director and Head of Engineering, Teleca Software Solutions India, and Dr Sridhar is former professor of Management Development Institute, Gurgaon. The views expressed are personal.

Market intelligence
for farmers or GRE coaching or English vocabulary, there are many lessons to be learnt on the mobile.

— M. SRINATH; BIJOY GHOSH

▶M-learning supports learners in that access to learning content and instructors is not restricted by location.

Hindustan Times
New Delhi
06 October, 2009

Govt failing job skill test, private players march ahead

ALARM BELLS State-run vocational training institutes are dying. It's bad news for economy which needs a constant supply of skilled workforce

skilldevelopment

Ruchi Hajela

in Chhindwara & New Delhi

✉ruchi.hajela@hindustantimes.com

For Lata Mahore, a 22-year-old village girl in Madhya Pradesh, it is an achievement beyond expectation — working for India's leading consumer goods company Hindustan Unilever (HUL) and earning Rs 20,000 a month.

"My father's farm was behind NIIT's district learning centre in Chhindwara (258 km south-west of Bhopal). I joined the one-year diploma course in 2007 and am now working as a systems officer at HUL's Bangalore office," said Lata on the telephone from Bangalore.

NIIT's centre is an example of how the private sector can impart skills for jobs among those with limited opportunities. Of the total Rs 85 lakh (Rs 8.5 million) spent on setting up the centre, NIIT has contributed Rs 60 lakh (Rs 6 million).

While private players like NIIT are expanding their spheres of operation, the ones run by the government to impart vocational training are dying slowly. This is alarming both from the point of view of job creation as well as providing a skilled workforce to keep up the economic growth tempo.

Two km west of the policy-making hub in New Delhi is a state government-sponsored Society for Self Employment, which is in a decrepit state. Dingy corridors lead to the training centre.

While we were trying to make our way to the institute, after several queries we finally managed to find a person who directed us to the centre on the first floor. As the classrooms were closed, two persons who identified themselves as teachers claimed that students have gone out for on-the-job training.

"We offer courses like fashion designing and television and radio repair at highly subsidised fees," one of them said. When asked about the poor infrastructure and the lack of job guarantee, she hesitantly said, "Government processes are bureaucratic, and it takes
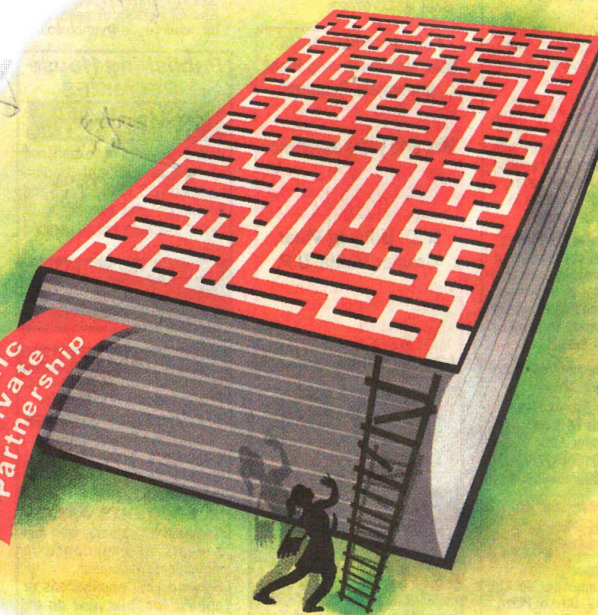
Illustration: **ABHIMANYU**

time for things to change."

Around 3 per cent of around 12 million added to India's workforce annually (457 million people already in the workforce, of which 90 per cent are in the informal sector) receive formal vocational training whereas in countries like the US, Europe, Japan and Korea the figure is 60-80 per cent

There are about 1,900 government-run industrial training institutes (ITIs), besides which there are another 4,000 privately run industrial training centres (ITCs).

The central government in the 2007 budget had announced a scheme to upgrade 1,396 ITIs to centres of excellence through public private partnership (PPP) and had allocated Rs 2.5 crore (Rs 25 million) for turning around each ITI. The National Council on Skill

VITAL STATS

- Every year 12 million people are added to India's work force. Of them, only 3 per cent get vocational training

- In the US, Europe, Japan and Korea 60-80 per cent of the workforce is trained

- Of the 1,396 ITIs the government planned to upgrade, only 600 have become centres of excellence so far

Development, headed by the Prime Minister, was set up last year to expedite skill development initiatives.

Around 600 ITIs have been upgraded so far. Industry body Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) had planned to adopt 100 ITIs in the first year of the scheme but so far has adopted 26. "There is a lack of mission mode with different ministries looking after different skill development initiatives. The PPP scheme itself needs to be simplified and operational bureaucratic hurdles have to be done away with," said Amit Mitra, secretary-general at FICCI.

"We are in talks with the district administrations to set up more centres at Azamgarh (in eastern Uttar Pradesh), Coimbatore (490 km south-west of Chennai) and Srinagar. Also, we have done pilot projects for organised retail and a car sales programme in Delhi and plan to introduce these soon," said Neeraj Agarwal, project director (affirmative action), NIIT.

The Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs) and Indian Institutes of Management (IIMs), despite being government-run, are still some of the most coveted institutes for a career aspirant. There is no reason why the same government cannot raise the standards of industrial training institutes, with some effort and political will.

The Pioneer
Lucknow
06 October, 2009

India's NIIT bags awards in China

NEW DELHI: NIIT, a leading IT training company in India, has bagged five Chinese awards including the one for the Most Influential IT Training Brand in China for its efforts to create well-trained world-class professionals in that country.

According to the IT training major, the awards were conferred by the Chinese Society of Educational Development Strategy (CSEDS), which is under China's ministry of education.

"For over a decade now, NIIT has been involved in creation of skilled ICT manpower in China and has trained close to a hundred thousand students till date. These awards are recognition of our efforts, to create a large number of well-trained, world-class IT professionals in line with business needs for IT enterprises in the country," Vijay Thadani, chief executive of the company, said in a statement.

The awards include the Most Influential IT Training Brand in China, Top-10 Brand in the overall training industry of China, Top-10 Brand in Student Placement within training industry in China, Most Influential Brand in Franchising within training industry of China and Celebrity award to Prakash Menon, president of NIIT China, for influencing the development of training industry in that country.

The awards were conferred on the firm at a summit, "60 years of new direction - Who will lead the next 60 years", that was aimed at highlighting China's achievement in private educational training, to set new targets for the next 60 years and to lead the new direction in the next 60 years.

NIIT started its operations in China 1997 and was the first Indian IT enterprise to do so, according to the company. Currently, it has 183 cooperative education and training sites at 25 provinces and cities in China. IANS

Intelligent Enterprise
National
08 October 2009

Polycom Intelligent Enterprise Awards

The end of the first day of Technology Senate 2009 saw the announcement of the Polycom Intelligent Enterprise Awards after an address by the CIO of Polycom, Inc.

Glenn Noga, Vice President and CIO, Polycom, Inc. took the stage after the panel discussion, saying, "For me an interesting comment from the panel discussion was to be aware of what is possible. For me, as an IT professional, that's really core to our job to make sure that the business community is aware of the potential that technology has for changing what they do on a day-to-day basis."

He said that the only thing better than giving out awards was to receive them. "Tonight we have the opportunity to recognize some of our peers who have done a fantastic job in taking technology into their company helping make the company run smarter," he added.

"Firstly, one of the things I have to do over the next 12-18 months is to drive business productivity. Experts are telling us that an economic recovery is underway. Secondly, how do I make it easier for employees to get their work done by streamlining processes so that business moves efficiently? What are the communications, process reengineering and BI tools that I have to put in place? Thirdly, it's about IT efficiency and leveraging the assets that we've invested in so that IT doesn't burden the company while scaling as the company grows," he concluded.

Harish Agarwal, Partner - Advisory Services, Ernst &Young, came on to the stage and explained the process behind the awards. He said, "The awards aim to recognize and honor organizations that have implemented innovative ICT which are collaborative, competitive and used for business advantage and are eco-friendly. The process starts 9-10 months before the awards are given out. The Indian Express management invites participation by sending out forms to CIOs and the forms are put up on the Web site. The group receives the completed questionnaires and about 20-25% of the entries are disqualified because they are incomplete. Another quarter is disqualified when they are independently validated for complete and correct information. After that the Indian Express Group collates and tabulates entries that are in each category and this is independently verified by Ernst & Young after which there's an internal jury that shortlists three nominees for each category based on the tabulated scores. Then each shortlisted nominee comes in and makes a presentation to the jury where E&Y is also present. The jury votes and scores these nominees through a closed ballot process. E&Y takes the tabulated results. This year the entire jury round was moderated by E&Y to identify the top entries in each category for both the awards and we had 74 nominations across categories for IEA and 52 for SSA. All the shortlisted nominees made live presentations to the jury members who scored each nominee using a predetermined rating scale. Then E&Y tabulated these scores to determine the winners."

Glenn Noga came back on stage to hand over awards for the first three categories. The first category was Technology & Communciations. The nominees included Sumit Chowdhury, CIO, Reliance Communications; Rupinder Goel, CIO, Airtel; Ashok Adhikary, Associate Director-Systems, Aker Solutions. The winner was Rupinder Goel of Bharti Airtel. Felix Mohan, CISO Bharti Airtel accepted the award on Goel's behalf.

Next up was the BFSI category with C Mohan, CTO, Reliance Life Insurance Company Ltd; Ravikiran Mankikar, General Manager at Shamrao Vithal Co-op Bank and Manoj Chandiramani, Sr. VP and APAC head of IT operations, MF Global. Mohan of Reliance Life Insurance won the award.

In the General Industry category, the nominees were Pertisth Mankotia. Head IT at Sheela Foam India; Rajat Sharma, CIO, Shree Cements Limited and VN Bhaskar, IFFCO Ltd. The winner was Rajat Sharma of Shree Cements Ltd.

Sharma said, "It's a great honor and privilege for me to receive this coveted award on behalf of the Shree Cement family. I'd like to thank Indian Express and the Tech Senate group for providing us with this opportunity to showcase our stuff and get this level of exposure. This award goes to our domain team and my IT team, as the domain team led the innovation and we were the ones who executed it on the ground."

Rajiv Jaitly, President, Marketing, The Indian Express Ltd, came on stage to hand out the award for the next category which was Pharma & Health Sciences. K T Rajan - Director Operations IS & Projects, Allergan India; Dr. R. S. Tyagi, Deputy Director & Head, AIIMS and Vishnu Gupta, CIO, Calcutta Medical Research Institute were nominated. KT Rajan won.

Rajan commented, "It was a BI solution. There wasn't much of technology involved; it was more about changing the business process. Without being modest, this award is

Cont...

AND THE WINNERS ARE...
From (L to R): Rajat Sharma, CIO, Shree Cements Limited, Satyen Naik, Manager - IT, Sumul Diaries, K T Rajan - Director Operations IS & Projects, Allergan India, Felix Mohan, CISO, Bharti Airtel, and Udai Singh, Executive Vice President, NIIT

dedicated to the users from Sales & Marketing, Supply Chain etc. who were willing to step out their comfort zone, bring in transparency to what they were doing and to implement the entire solution."

Retail and Consumer Products was the next category with Nilesh Sangoi, CTO, Meru Cabs; J Ramesh, GM-IT, MIRC Electronics Ltd and Satyen Naik, Manager - IT, Sumul Diaries. Satyen Naik won.

Naik introduced Sumul's Chairman and MD who shared the stage. He added, "I thank Indian Express for first recognizing us in 2004 and now again.

"This award goes to the 2.5 lakh farmers who are using our applications across Surat and Surat District. The winners are those guys who are adopting this solution in the villages of Surat."

Next it was announced that the award for Government/PSU had been scrapped as no entry had been found to be of merit. That brought us to the last category, which was the Jury Special Mention to recognize early movers in the Education segment. This award went to Udai Singh, Executive Vice President, NIIT.

Singh, said, "NIIT stands for both IT and education. We've always used technology in education whether it started with simple video-based education when NIIT was set up in 1981. This particular effort is unique because it established a PPP model where we provided a technology platform that would allow premier institutes such as the IIMs (Ahmedabad, Calcutta, Lucknow and Indore) to deliver education for working professionals. One area that we'd researched and found a pressing need that people are not just changing jobs, they are changing careers. Most of us complete our under-grad or post-grad education and after that it is a long haul of 30-40 years where one is working and typically organizations invest in tactical training programs that are relevant to the current role but are not very relevant from a long term career growth point of view. Many of us in this room are engineers and technology professionals but increasingly we find ourselves in roles where we are managing businesses. What this solution enabled was the utilization of scarce resources-gurus are always in short supply-and make it convenient for them to offer a live, interactive experience by recreating the classroom experience at convenient times for working professionals."

With that the awards came to a close and the day wound to a close. ∎

—By Prashant L Rao
prashant.rao@expressindia.com

The Times of India

Lucknow

09 October, 2009

The TRP scheme was launched by IT department in 2007 on an experimental basis and its expansion in terms of roles of TRPs indicates that it has fared well

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Lucknow: The Tax Return Preparers (TRPs) who were brought in by the Income Tax (IT) department about two years back to help tax payers file their IT returns have now been given an extended role. Tax payers can turn to these professionals for consultation on tax related matters as well.

"Tax payers can consult TRPs on many tax issues now like tax planning, advance tax, IT returns and e-TDS returns," said Ujjwal Kapoor, a TRP. Besides, TRPs, this year in April, were specially trained for filing of e-TDS returns and service tax.

There are about 32 TRPs, who have been trained by the NIIT and recognised by the IT department to work in Lucknow. People can locate them by referring to the TRP-website (www.trpscheme.com). They can be called at home to offer help at your doorstep or taxpayers can also reach them at the address mentioned on the website.

"We mostly get the individual returns filed within 2 to 3 days and handover the acknowledgement to the tax payer," said Prakash Chandra, a TRP working in Lucknow. All that a tax payer has to pay to get his ITR filed is Rs 250 to a TRP. The fee is same whether a taxpayer calls a TRP at his place or reaches his office.

If the taxpayer comes with all the needed documents to file the return it will not require him to come again and again to the TRP. "It is advisable if people first consult what all documents they need to bring for filing the return before they come to meet us," said Chandra.

The tax payers might have to wait a little in case TRPs already have a waiting list running.

Though most of the TRPs are of the opinion that scheme is still to get a great response from people yet there are times (especially around July 31, which is the date for submitting the returns) that they have to work on 'first come first serve' basis.

While for ITR filing, IT department has fixed a fee that TRP should be charging but in case of e-TDS and service tax the department has not laid down a fee.

"It is mostly negotiable though for service tax department has laid down Rs 1,000 per tax payer," said TRP, Archana Sinha.

The scheme is gradually being expanded by the department for the benefit of tax payers. "People can always take services of TRPs for affordable charges and easy availability," added Kapoor.

TRPs CAN show the way

Illustration: Hasan Zaidi

IT'S SURE A CUSHY JOB

Govt support to TRPs	Remuneration for TRPs	Availability of TRPs	Contact
● 24/7 help desk to clarify TRPs' doubts ● Monitoring and coordinating their activities and providing logistical support through resource centres	● TRPs receive 3% of the tax paid on the returns prepared and filed for every new assessee in the first year, 2% in the second year and 1% in the third year and Rs 250 for old assessees	● TRPs are meant to operate from their residence or offices ● In keeping with public convenience TRPs are allowed to offer doorstep services as well	To find a TRP to help you file your taxes in your area call on the toll free number (1800 11 8777) or log on to www.trp-scheme.com

SCHEMING FACTS

Raise your income, be a TRP

The TRP scheme was started by the government on pilot basis in January, 2007, to train unemployed and partially employed persons to assist small and medium tax payers in preparing their returns of income. As many as 5,000 TRPs were trained at 100 centres in about 80 cities in the first year.

● Approach TRPs not only for free of cost consultation but also for ITR forms

● Call TRPs for help at doorstep

● Lucknow has 32 authorised TRPs (though all of them might not be active but the concerned website or call at the toll free number can always lead tax payer to the right one)

The scheme proposes to

● Reduce cost of compliance for small and marginal tax payers and encourage them to comply with tax laws

● Provide self-employment opportunities to unemployed or partially employed graduates all over the country

Salient features of the scheme

● Assistance in filing tax returns free of cost would be extended to self-employed and small businessmen, salaried employees, senior citizens, and women having total income up to a specified amount.

Facts about TRP training

● Minimum qualification for undergoing training as TRP is a graduation degree in Commerce, Law, Economics, Mathematics, Statistics or Management

● TRPs are trained by the IT department with the help of its training partner, NIIT

● Cost of training, cost of examination and all other associated costs are borne by government

● Fee of Rs 100 is charged along with application and refundable deposit of Rs 1,000 is collected from the candidates before enrolment which is returned after successful completion of training

● TRPs course completion certificate and an identity card bearing a unique identification number is issued at the end of each training programme

● The unique identification number is used for monitoring performance of the TRPs issuing quality alerts and cancellation of certificates, if required

The Hindu
New Delhi
10 October, 2009

E-learning — the challenges

Sruthi Krishnan

Classrooms without teachers, no textbooks, and learning that could happen anytime, anywhere - this was the promise e-learning started with. But how much of that has been achieved?

We spoke to experts in the field to understand the current scenario of e-learning in India and what the challenges are in adopting it.

A catch-all phrase that included any form of technology-assisted learning, e-learning was poised to revolutionise the process of education.

"After the big bang, people expected the big bang to continue," says Vipul Rastogi, president, Enterprise Solutions (India), NIIT, which offers e-learning solutions, talking about after the initial buzz on e-learning and how the journey was expected to be.

In place of the big bang, there is a "silent revolution taking place," he says.

The sectors which are entering the field of e-learning serve as a testimony to the growth of e-learning.

Telecom, banking, finance, and government are rapidly moving towards e-learning, he says, adding that the primary driver is not just to decrease cost but also to increase reach. Universities are also looking at e-learning modules to supplement their regular curriculum courses.

Effectiveness

In this context, it becomes necessary to understand how effective e-learning courses are. Three to five years ago, e-learning was 'good to have', rather than 'must have' in universities and corporate houses, says Rajesh R. Jumani, chief marketing officer, Tata Interactive Systems, which offers e-learning solutions. The focus was on the "look and feel" rather than the learning. "You had fancy things moving about, planes zooming," rather than making sure the learning process was right, which is now changing, he says.

More simulation-based training based on games are being incorporated in e-learning. And a high level of acumen is required to develop such e-learning mod-

WIDENING REACH: *For e-learning to be effective, the learning process is important.*
— PHOTO: K. RAMESH BABU

Revolutionising the process of education - that was the big promise it started with. Has e-learning achieved that today? A reality check with experts in the field.

ules.

For instance, a course in finance could be taught by a game where you are the Finance Minister. The decisions you take would impact the economy of a country - a game you would play to understand financial concepts, he says.

Feedback

"The most difficult question to answer is how effective is a training programme," says Mr. Jumani. Instead of surveys or feedback forms on how good the course was, there have to be measurable feedback, he adds. For instance, in a corporate house, the feedback could be in terms of whether there was an increase in productivity after going through the course, he says. And for an e-learning programme to work, it is important to first understand whether something is suitable for e-learning or

not, he adds.

Audience

The audience has to be understood, says Mr. Rastogi. There is a difference between the way a 10+2 student understands a concept versus the way a professional working for 10 years understands it, he says , adding that after understanding the audience, the audio-visual components need to be woven around that. Hence, there are two layers to a successful e-learning programme - the technology component and the learning component.

In India, e-learning courses could be made more popular through availability of broadband connections at competitive rates, regional language-based content for technical subjects, two-way interaction for doubts, and performance feedback with students,

says S. Giridharan, CEO, EdServ, a education firm. "The real India, the bottom of the pyramid, still lacks education and guidance to a proper career," he says, adding that e-learning could be a solution for employability.

A shift in mindset is required to adopt e-learning, says Mr. Rastogi. It is the same barrier that exists with any adoption to technology. But once that is overcome, e-learning would prove beneficial, he says.

Who will invest?

The issue with e-learning being adopted more in universities and government is the classic chicken and hen case - who would pay for developing e-learning content, asks Mr. Jumani.

Private companies would not invest in creating content, unless they knew they would have a market, and universities and the government are reluctant to invest money up front in creating content, he says. And content could not be imported from abroad, as it has to be culturally sensitive to the context, he says.

The Times of India

Bangalore

20 September, 2009

Chance for corporates to take on Anand

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Bangalore: Fancy a game of chess with world champion Viswanathan Anand? If you are a corporate with a penchant for the game, the NIIT Corporate Chess Championship 2009 is the place to be.

The event — a corporate team and individual championship — to be held between December 17 and 20 at the Chinnaswamy Stadium in Bangalore, will culminate in the first-of-its-kind simultaneous lightning chess match. The special match of the championship, which has the backing of United Karnataka Chess Association and the Karnataka State Cricket Association, will see with the top 20 individual performers square off against Anand.

The match will also be a platform to strengthen team and organizational unity as each individual player will be allowed to consult with two other members from his/her company (one from

V Anand

HR level and another from the decision-making level) before making a move against Anand.

The winners of the team championship will be eligible to participate in the National championship in 2010, while the individual winner can participate in the National B event the same year. Women players also stand to win the Leela Biswas Memorial award for the most promising player.

The organizers, who aim to pop-ularize chess at the grassroots level and corporates, will donate part of their proceedings to under-privileged kids in government and corporation schools, an NGO (RVM Fosa Humanitarian Hospital), orphanages and old age shelters.

Event schedule: Dec. 17-18 — Team championship; Dec. 18-19 — Individual championship. Dec. 20 — Simultaneous lightning chess with Viswanathan Anand. **Participation fee:** Rs 10,000 for each corporate team (6 players for both individual and team events); Rs 2,000 for individual entries. Last date to submit entries is November 5. Contact 98451-72749.

The Pioneer

New Delhi

21 October, 2009

NIIT honoured

NIIT USA Inc has received the 'Learning in Practice' award for the second consecutive year from *Chief Learning Officer* magazine. It was awarded the gold excellence in E-learning award for its accomplishments in the excellence in E-learning category.

The awards were announced during the Fall 2009 *Chief Learning Officer* magazine symposium held at The Broadmoor in Colorado Springs, Colo recently. All of the award winners will be featured in a special supplement in the December issue of the magazine.

"The awards were established to recognise transformational and visionary leaders in enterprise education," said Norm Kamikow, President and Editor-in-Chief of the magazine. "A record number of top learning executives and solution providers were nominated by their peers. The winners are the industry leaders who truly champion innovation and transform it into learning and value for their organisations."

It was honored specifically for its bespoke E-learning programme developed for Diageo. Diageo leveraged NIIT's award winning CMA methodology to develop its information system training programme which has returned its investment back to the organisation in just 90 short days. The solution, which is just one component of managed training services portfolio, enabled Diageo to quickly and efficiently train new hires on systems and procedures thereby decreasing service desk calls.

The Hindu Business Line
New Delhi
24 October, 2009

NIIT to offer courses in IBM technologies

Our Bureau

New Delhi, Oct. 23

Talent development and IT training company NIIT and tech major IBM have entered into a global alliance to offer training programmes in IBM technologies, starting with software testing and quality assurance space.

Under the partnership, NIIT will offer training programmes on IBM's CEIS (Career Education in IBM Software) framework. Initially, training will be offered on curriculum from the 'Rational' brand (dealing with software testing and quality assurance).

It will be later extended to other platforms including database administration, e-business system administration, enterprise collaboration and enterprise IT management.

Candidates with background in science or engineering will be eligible.

NIIT will offer the programmes across key markets in India, starting with 10 centres and scaling up to 100 over 12 months, the NIIT CEO, Mr Vijay K. Thadani, said.

In the next phase, these courses will also be offered in other countries including China, Vietnam, Indonesia

Global initiative: (From right) The Chief Executive Officer, NIIT, Mr Vijay k. Thadani; the Director-Software Group, IBM India/South Asia, Mr Pradeep Nair; the President of Global Individual Learning Business, NIIT, Mr G. Raghavan; and the Country Manager, IBM, Mr Nitin Singhal, at a press conference in the Capital on Friday. — Ramesh Sharma

and Malaysia. "We are looking to train 25,000 people in the next three years, as part of the training programme in India," said Mr G. Raghavan, President-Global Individual Learning Business, NIIT.

COST OF COURSES

The certificate course costs Rs 25,000 and the diploma course Rs 35,000.

The certification programme will run through five months (or eight weeks on accelerated mode) and diploma 10 months (99 days in accelerate mode).

Mr Pradeep Nair, Director – Software Group, IBM India/South Asia, said, "This partnership enables students and professionals in India to acquire skills around our Rational suite in the application development and testing space."

$56-B MARKET

According to industry reports, the worldwide market for computer software and systems testing services is projected to reach $56 billion by 2013. India is emerging as a leader in the software testing market with an increasing number of companies outsourcing their software testing services to the country.

The Hindu
Chennai
24 October, 2009

NIIT in global alliance with IBM

Special Correspondent

NEW DELHI: NIIT and IBM on Friday entered into a global alliance to offer cutting edge training programs in IBM technologies. Through this strategic partnership, NIIT will offer training programmes on IBM's CEIS (Career Education in IBM Software) framework, customised for NIIT. Initially training will be offered on curriculum from the rational brand that deals with software testing and quality assurance. The partnership will be extended in successive phases to other platforms of IBM like database administration, e-business system administration, enterprise collaboration and enterprise IT management.

To offer training programmes in IBM technologies across key markets

Addressing a press conference here, NIIT Chief Executive Officer Vijay K. Thadani said NIIT would offer these training programs across key markets in India.

The courses will be offered as modular skill-building programmes as well as specialised job-oriented diploma programmes.

According to Pradeep Nair, Director (Software Group), IBM — India/South Asia, the partnership will enable students and professionals in India to acquire skills around our world-class rational suite.

CUTTING EDGE TRAINING: *Vijay K. Thadani (left), CEO, NIIT, shakes hands with Pradeep Nair, Director-Software Group, IBM India-South Asia, at a press conference in New Delhi on Friday.*
– PHOTO: SHANKER CHAKRAVARTY

Times of India
New Delhi
26 October, 2009

TALENT HUNT

NIIT has announced the launch of 'Viswanathan Anand IT Olympiad' to assess a student's IT Aptitude. The test will be conducted over a week — from November 16 to 21. The result will be announced on November 24, following which NIIT will also provide students with a detailed score card. The initiative aims at identifying talent through the 'Viswanathan Anand IT Olympiad,' supporting students with scholarships and mentoring them. 'Viswanathan Anand IT Olympiad' will rank students nationally, internally in schools as well as individually. National Winners in each group will be awarded with a scholarship of up to Rs 1,00,000.

The Hindu Business Line
New Delhi
27 October, 2009

Forex swings hit NIIT Q2 net

Our Bureau
New Delhi, Oct.26

NIIT Ltd on Monday posted a 12 per cent dip in consolidated net profit for the second quarter ended September 2009, at Rs 26.2 crore on account of forex volatility, a one-time adjustment, and a higher depreciation.

The total forex impact on its Q2 earnings was to the tune of Rs 4.8 crore.

NIIT also announced plans to raise Rs 230 crore in the coming months, to be utilised for growing new and current businesses.

In the just-ended quarter, the global system-wide revenue jumped 19 per cent to Rs 555.6 crore.

The growth was driven by strong performance of geographies such as India, sustained cost management efforts and completion of large State Government projects.

Net revenue for the compa-

Healthy revenue growth: The NIIT Chairman, Mr Rajendra S. Pawar (right), and the CEO, Mr Vijay K. Thadani, at a press conference, in the Capital on Monday. — Ramesh Sharma

ny was up 16 per cent year-on-year at Rs 359.8 crore. The EBITDA surged 22 per cent to Rs 49.6 crore.

The NIIT Ltd CEO, Mr Vijay Thadani, said earnings in the year-ago quarter had included a one-time benefit of Rs 9.5 crore.

"This was a one-time entry on account of transfer of land to NIIT University. This year, that entry is not there," he said, explaining one of the reasons behind the dip in net profit.

The NIIT Chairman, Mr Rajendra S Pawar, said the healthy revenue growth of 16 per cent was achieved through aggressive actions in India and other emerging economies, while the US and

Europe faced challenges.

The revenue from India grew 23 per cent over previous year (it now accounts for 52 per cent of the overall business); the rest of the world grew even faster at 46 per cent (contributing about 27 per cent to overall revenue).

EXPANSION PLANS

Meanwhile, the board of directors has approved raising Rs 230 crore.

The fund-raising will be via Qualified Institutional Placements (QIP) of equity or other instruments convertible into equity of up to Rs 200 crore and convertible warrants to promoters of up to Rs 30 crore.

Economic Times
New Delhi
27 October, 2009

NIIT net down 12%, says revenue may rise in H2

Our Bureau
NEW DELHI

IT training company NIIT on Monday said it expects revenue growth to accelerate in the second half of current year on the back of strong demand. The company posted 12% drop in net profit to Rs 26.2 crore in the second quarter ended September 30, 2009, from Rs 29.7 crore in the same quarter a year ago due to high depreciation, forex losses and one-time expenses.

Net revenue during the quarter increased 16% to Rs 360 crore from Rs 310 crore last year. The company also said its board has approved the proposed Rs 230-crore fund raising plan to partly retire debt and fund expansion of existing businesses and emerging opportunities in the education and training sector.

NIIT