

SMALL MEDIUM



GUEST EDITOR: NEERJA BIRLA

RNI No. HARENG/2011/39608-L-2/FBD/286/18-20

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March-April 2019 | ₹ 200 | INDIA EDITION

Shepreneurs

WOMEN

TO WATCH

IN 2019

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EDITOR'S NOTE

CELEBRATING THE RISE OF SHEPRENEURS

In my editorial role, I get to attend and speak at many conferences and business meets both in India and abroad. It gives me great opportunity to meet and observe women entrepreneurs and study their behavior, leadership styles, which often do not get highlighted. As a country, India has unique traits and opportunities for women entrepreneurship to proliferate and these initiatives need to be encouraged in their own turfs instead of trying to push them into a definitive style and scope of starting a business.

FAMILY BUSINESS

According to National Sample Survey Office (NSSO) around 14 percent businesses in India are run by women entrepreneurs but I feel the figure is much more than that. It does not take into account the family business cult in India where the millennial women are today contributing informally to the business in many ways. They may be handling many functions of the business from finance to marketing but they may not necessarily be counted in the ranks of entrepreneurship. These women have a sense of ownership, which is very big and that shows in their performance. After gaining enough confidence, a majority of them also launched their own ventures and make them a success. In India, we would probably see more women entrepreneurship off shooting from the family roots than pure play — do it my own way style of building a business. Here age, skills and learning curve is not the main concern but learning on the job teaches one a great many things.



OUR SHEPRENEURS COVER FROM 2018

CONSUMER AND LIFESTYLE BUSINESS

Over 60 percent of women-led ventures come from the lifestyle and consumer-facing segment largely in fashion, wellness, food, healthcare, education, and interior decoration. A majority of tech ventures too have these sectors as the foundation. Paired to this, there are very limited entrepreneurship education opportunities and case-based learnings that exist within these segments. It also gets reflected in the ratio of the number of investors willing to invest in women-led companies as opposed to those led by men. It is naturally very low. It is thus, creating women entrepreneurship cells at the government level won't be enough. It calls for a deeper understanding of women occupations in India and building accelerators around it.



STARTUP ENTREPRENEURSHIP

It is wonderful to witness a significant rise in the number of women who are building their own startups. Most of them are professionals who saw an opportunity and built a startup around it. They are becoming successful but we need more women to go through a complete lifecycle of entrepreneurship: starting a venture, raising money, exiting it, giving in to healthy returns. Unless this happens the ratio of investments in female- and male-led ventures won't change. Indian women entrepreneurs have been traditionally working either for necessity or for keeping themselves occupied. There is very less evidence and successful case studies around women entrepreneurs who have built large enterprises. Scalable entrepreneurs are the ones who foresaw opportunities five years before they were visible to the common people. This issue is dedicated to shepreneurs who are changing the self-belief system for women entrepreneurs as a whole. The women who are featured have been there and are ready to do whatever it will take to reach the infinite.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Ritu Marya'.

Ritu Marya
Editor in chief
E-mail me at:
rmarya@entrepreneurindia.com

GUEST EDITOR'S NOTE

#BALANCE FOR BETTER

By Neerja Birla, Founder, Mpower

This International Women's Day, let's talk about gender equality in society – #BalanceForBetter! Modern women have taken giant strides and quantum leaps to establish themselves with authority in the world of business and commerce. However, to achieve a truly 'gender-balanced' and level playing field, there are obstacles that we need to overcome and barriers that we need to break as society on the whole. In the 'entrepreneurial arena', the balance is still heavily tilted in favour of men. Women have to constantly deal with gender biases and sexism, exploitation and harassment, along with lack of opportunities and paucity of finance. They are constantly forced to prove their calibre and competence and fight the notion that women cannot achieve what men can – when, in reality, nothing can be farther from the truth.

Even today, when women express entrepreneurial ambitions, they're often not taken seriously. Their dreams are insensitively relegated to 'hobbies' or 'part-time work'. They're expressly told that they must give priority to their domestic duties because husbands and family members are unwilling to share that burden. Add to that – the restrictions imposed on women. So many women are not even allowed out of the house alone, let alone pursue their dreams. For many, staying out till late for work, out-of-town trips and interaction with men are frowned upon and often cause discord at home.

It is far more difficult for women to procure finance for their dream ventures than it is for men. Thankfully, government loan schemes and private microfinance for women are changing the scenario rapidly. But going even beyond that, if men can invest the family money into their businesses or ambitions, don't women have the right to do the same? Women must also have access to 21st century global education, resources, technology and infrastructure. The internet is changing the world and new-age products and services, new-age platforms and new-age delivery systems are the order of the day. Having all of these at their disposal can help women stand up to competition from other entrepreneurs and also fight the discrimination, harassment and resistance that they may face from local buyers and middle men.

And whether it is discrimination or harassment, women

“TODAY, WE'RE WITNESSING A GLOBAL RE-AWAKENING OF THE FEMINIST MOVEMENT. TODAY, WOMEN MUST NOT HESITATE TO SPEAK OUT OR FIGHT FOR THEIR RIGHTS.”



should not take things lying down. Women were once conditioned into believing that they're the weaker sex. But today, we're witnessing a global re-awakening of the feminist movement. Today, women must not hesitate to speak out or fight for their rights. A movement that is of the women, by the women and for the women is needed stamp out regressive gender-based practices. The power dynamics of the male ego vs. the female ambition are now at a juncture where the proverbial wall of chauvinism must crumble, once and for all. Gender plays a critical role in mental health. Women are inherently different from men in their psychological make-up, and far more prone to depression, anxiety, stress and other psychological disorders. Women must understand that their mental health is of prime importance and they must strive for a work-life balance that is rewarding, both mentally and emotionally.

Being a successful entrepreneur and, at the same time, being the glue that keeps the family together can a daunting ask. All of us try to attain perfection in everything that we do. Women, in particular, tend to have unrealistic expectations from themselves. They're forever endeavouring to be the perfect moms, daughters, daughter-in-laws, bosses, colleagues and what not. Often, it gets too much to deal with. We are all human, and ups and downs are a part of our lives. Women must never feel ashamed of themselves if they're unable to live up to their own expectations or those of others. Finally, I'd like to wish Happy International Women's Day to all the women and 'men' out there. Together, let's empower women like never before. Let our motto be #BalanceForBetter.

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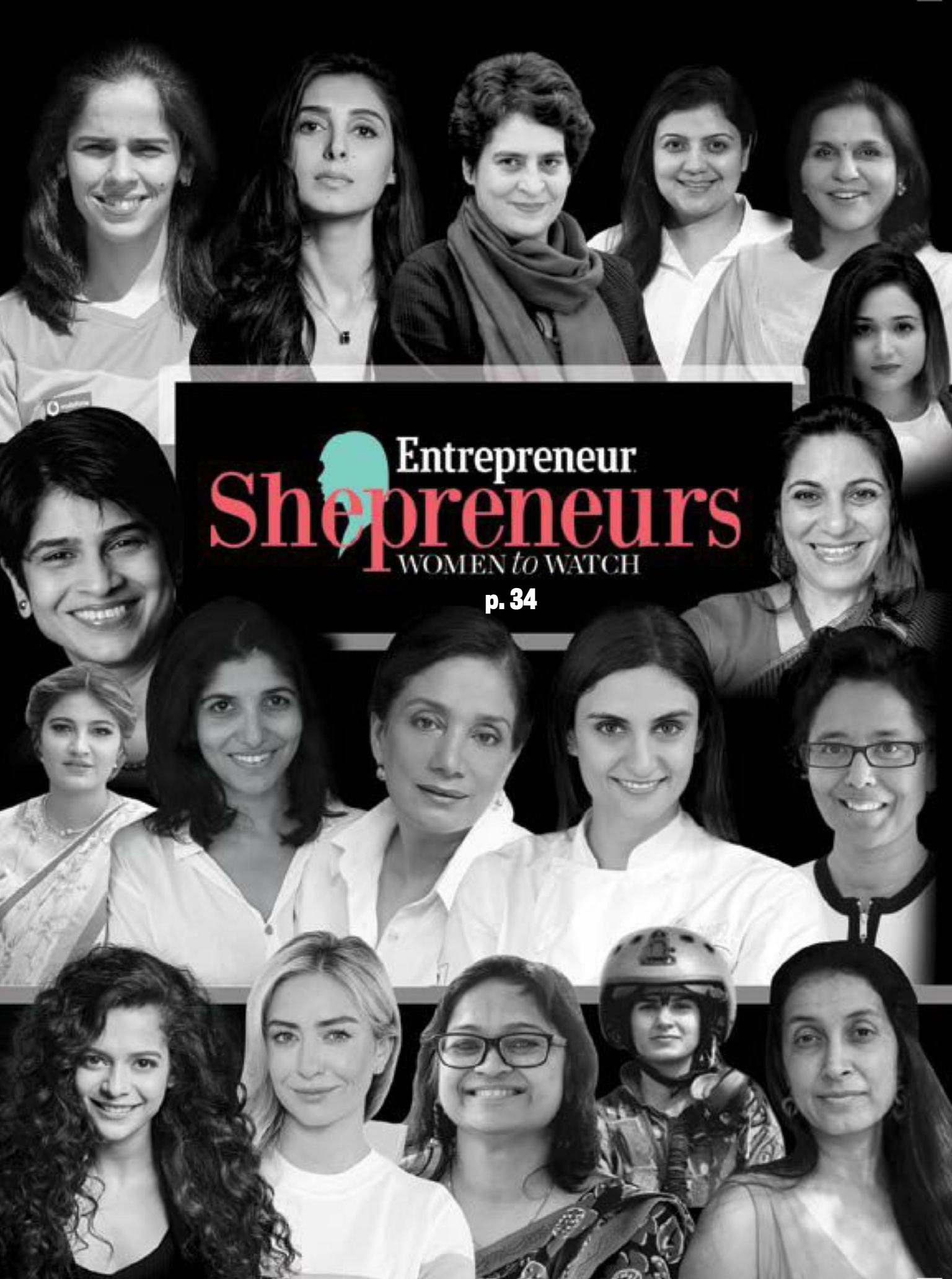
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The milk landscape in India is witnessing winds of change revolving around two keywords: transparency and freshness. Startups are tapping into this growing demand and working to capture niche geographical markets. Entrepreneur examines this evolving terrain.

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EDITOR IN CHIEF Ritu Marya

EDITORIAL

DEPUTY EDITOR

Punita Sabharwal Kapoor

SR. COPY EDITOR M. Saad

SR. CORRESPONDENT Mohit Sabharwal

FEATURE WRITERS

Kartik Sood & Nimisha Gautam

ART

SR. ART DIRECTOR Manish Raghav

ASSISTANT ART DIRECTOR Rajeev Kumar

SR. GRAPHIC DESIGNER Shailendra Jethuri

ENTREPRENEUR.COM

ASSOCIATE EDITOR Aashika Jain

FEATURES EDITORS Pooja Singh & Priyadarshini Patwa

SR. CORRESPONDENTS Vanita D'Souza & Madhurima Roy

CORRESPONDENTS

Nidhi Singh & Komal Nathani

FEATURE WRITERS

Aastha Singal & Bhavya Kaushal

ADVERTISING

REGIONAL HEAD-SALES

Kapil Jaiswal #9911281658

kjaiswal@startupppublication.com

FRANCHISE & BUSINESS

OPPORTUNITY ADVERTISING

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Ashita Marya #9810092379

ashita@entrepreneurindia.com

SUBSCRIPTION/CIRCULATION ENQUIRIES

Tel: 0129-4228800 #9311148342,

magazine@entrepreneurindia.net

CHAIRMAN Gaurav Marya

PUBLISHER Sachin Marya

CORPORATE OFFICE

405 B, The Pinnacle,
Hotel Vivanta by Taj,
Shooting Range Road,
Faridabad - 121 001

MUMBAI OFFICE

Unit 11A & 11B, Ground floor,
Technopolis Knowledge Park,
Mahakali Caves Road, Near Nelco Bus Stand,
Andheri (E), Mumbai - 400093

DELHI OFFICE

4th - 5th Floor, Charmwood Plaza,
Eros Garden, Charmwood Village,
Surajkund Road, Faridabad - 121009

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Aurum, Behind Eden Garden Society, Nagar
Road, Viman Nagar,
Pune - 411014, Maharashtra

BENGALURU OFFICE

#2, Second Floor, Church Street,
(Opposite to Starbucks),
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KOLKATA OFFICE

Merlin Infinite, Unit No. 502, 5th Floor India,
DN-51, Sector V, Kolkata- 700091,

ENTREPRENEUR MEDIA INC.

CHAIRMAN Peter J. Shea, PRESIDENT/CEO Ryan Shea

EDITOR IN CHIEF Jason Feifer

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How SaaS Company Anchanto is Driving Southeast Asia's E-commerce Boom



Meet Warren Vache – A Jazz Trumpeter Who Creates Music That Touches Your Soul

TOP VIDEOS



Decoding Amuleek Singh Bijral, who turned tea into a successful business



Meet Malaysia's New King who is an Extreme Sports Buff



Siddharth Oberoi on Why Going Offline is the Right Approach For Online Company

TOP LISTICLES



Five Mumpreneurs Keep their Chins up so that the Crown of Entrepreneurship doesn't Fall



These Six Vibrant Entrepreneurs from North East Are Making India Proud



Top Five Millennial-Friendly Cities in Asia-Pacific to Live and Work

TOP CONTRIBUTORS



KEVIN NG
Managing Director, ThunderQuote,
Three Ways to Survive as a Startup Beyond the First Three Years



SWETASREE ROY
Assistant Professor, BML Munjal University,
5 Soft Skills for Tough Women



BHUVANESHWARI SAWANT AND SONAL GADHVI
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A good mix of entrepreneurship and sports has been showcased in your magazine. I had a gala time reading about Michael Strahan who redefined himself in least imaginative way.

Ritwik Seth, Delhi

INSIGHTFUL INFORMATION

The well-researched articles give an in-depth knowledge of the sector. These researches are also backed with numbers that give an idea of as to how industry is faring.

Saloni Mathur, Chennai

CLUTTERED, BUT MOTIVATIONAL

Though, the information is cluttered but the stories of entrepreneurs are inspiring and worth a read. This was the first time I had read this magazine and felt it a class apart when compared to other business magazines. But it still needs to improve on covering the Indian aspect.

Bijoy Chatterjee, Kolkata

ACHIEVERS GALORE

I was enthused and engrossed reading the stories of the top 35 people that you have shortlisted for your list. I must admit that there was not only variety but also thorough research put in to bring to the fore the leaders of tomorrow. The cover looks a bit bland but content-wise Entrepreneur has lived up to its reputation.

Sonal Chauhan, Mumbai

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Badminton
player, World
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Parag Desai,
Executive
Director, Wagh
Bakri Tea Group

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ODE TO THE ENTREPRENEUR

An Innovative Industrialist who Strived to Transform India

Born on October 11, 1943, he was the youngest of the four siblings of TS Krishna of the TVS Group. He is survived by wife, two daughters and son Krishna Mahesh, who is the managing director of SBL. Also the whole time director of TV Sundram Iyenger & Sons Pvt Ltd, he relinquished

his role as head at SBL in 2014 to pave the way for his son. After retirement, he continued to be a director and non-executive chairman. Mahesh insisted on quality systems and saw to it that his company followed that. In 2001, SBL became the first manufacturer of friction material for brake lining and clutch facings, and won the prestigious Deming award from the Union of

Japanese Scientists and Engineers. That he took his union-leaders, too, to Japan to receive the award speaks volumes for not only his man-management skills but also his caring attitude towards workmen. An apolitical man in the workplace, he often said that his job was to create value for all stakeholders of his company. A man of principle and a dedicated leader, the inspirational figure was also known to be a perfectionist and a taskmaster.

An IIT-Madras graduate, Mahesh was an engineer at heart till the end. His recent obsession was the Tata Nano, a product he admired. He bought one and soon, started modifying the car to improve it. Fueled by progressive ideas, the industrialist often wrote to Tata Motors on how the car could be made a bestseller by appealing to younger drivers through a coupe model.

An early riser, the man would finish reading the news online before 6 am and head to the factory, where he spent much of his time on the shop floor. His other passion was photography and Mahesh frequented Kodaikanal, as long as his health permitted, to shoot wild animals there. Those who knew him well will miss the deep baritone and the loud laughter that marked any conversation with the iconic individual.



At the airport and paying a single scoop of ice cream for Rs 210 but if I pay with PayTM, I get Rs 75 back! Mad mad when will this funding revenues with cash back and discounts and paying out of equity money end! I do agree that convenience is big - flash and pay vs. credit/debit card - but if you were to pay a 5% charge every time and not get cash back schemes would you still do it every time?

RONNIE SCREWVALA
Chairman and Co-Founder, UpGrad and Swades Foundation

India has withdrawn MFN status to Pakistan after the Pulwama incident. Upon withdrawal, basic customs duty on all goods exported from Pakistan to India has been raised to 200% with immediate effect. #Pulwama.

ARUN JAITLEY
Minister of Finance and Corporate Affairs, GoI

Definition of #Startups has been widened.

An entity shall be considered a Startup upto 10 years from its date of incorporation/registration instead of the existing period of 7 years. #AngelTax @DIPPGOI.

SURESH PRABHU
Minister of Commerce and Industry, and Civil Aviation, GoI



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Some of the leading companies of the world have recognized the inherent value of branding. These companies thrive on a coherent brand promise – a set of values and culture that enable everyone in the organization to think and act in a particular way. These companies are consistently regarded as the most attractive places to work and have also continually grown their brand and business value.

And yet, we find several companies still paying lip service to branding, treating it as an advertising or marketing initiative. Calling it a cosmetic programme, these are the sceptics who believe that branding starts and ends with a logo and clever taglines. Within these organizations, branding often fails to gain boardroom prominence and is disregarded as an activity that will have no bearing to the immediate top line. It is imperative to make branding the fulcrum of the business. Here are some of the reasons why branding should lead the various functions in your organization:

Aligning Sales & Branding

In most organizations, marketing and sales functions are separated and are always at



loggerheads. It is important to recognize that customers see more than just products and services. They want to understand culture, values, heritage and legacy. Representing the brand through the sales journey is important since it builds belief and emotional value. Something which can't necessarily be replicated by competitors and something through which you can gain competitive advantage. We recently worked with a real estate developer whose marketing and sales teams operated independently, without syncing together. We aligned the two through a succinct brand promise and gave the two teams a common premise to elucidate.

Brand Value in Organizational Culture

A singularly focussed and unified message that translates through the organization's brand and work culture ensures that everyone is aligned and is aware of what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour. Your human resource teams are also well guided on recruitment, training and creating performance evaluation systems that are in sync with your organizational values. Tata as a brand and an organizational entity is built on the premise of trust. This singular promise translates and pervades into the skin of the organization. The Taj brand upholds this value and translates it through its customer service across touchpoints. The brand value system provides a filter to hire the right people, train them and evaluate how they perform across touchpoints.

Branding for Innovation

Innovation begins from the premise that your organization stands for. The brand can offer to be a filter for the many ideas that come up within your teams. For instance, finding a new product extension, entering into a new market etc. The innovation ultimately also validates and substantiates the idea of the brand thereby building, rather than deflecting long-term value. While working with a popular food chain brand we used a brand-led innovation ideation method to come up with new ideas for the business. Using the premise of the brand, we ideated on several new possibilities for it to enter into new segments and products. Branding should be integrated within the skin of the organization just like business strategy. Making branding the fulcrum of the business is about defining the ethos of the brand and anchoring its meaning in everything that the organization does, which will enable an increase in operational efficiency, accuracy and quality in behaviour. Ultimately, taking the organization closer to its vision. 

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ONE OF THE MOST COMMON CLICHÉS ON AN INVESTOR PITCH DECK IS THE DISRUPTIVE PREDICTION: IF WE CAPTURE X PERCENT OF Y MARKET, OUR COMPANY WILL BE WORTH Z DOLLARS IN A YEAR

When founders launch a startup in the Asia-Pacific region, their first inclination is often to fundraise, even if they may not be ready.

Their startup, in other words, is not yet investable. Any serious venture capitalist will be able to see through the slick visuals and bold predictions on their pitch deck and come to a simple conclusion that they are not ready to put an investment to productive use. Assuming you already have an exciting service or a product market-fit, how can you as a founder prepare to become investable? Though the challenges will vary from startup to startup, there are three fundamentals that founders must get right to lure investors.

Itemize What You Are Building

One of the most common clichés on an investor pitch deck is the disruptive prediction: if we capture X percent of Y market, our company will be worth Z dollars in A years. Considerably less attention is given to the other side of the equation: how will your startup actually use the investment? You must have a clear idea of how much money you need and what you need it for. This advice may seem like

common sense, but far too many founders draw a blank when pressed by investors during due diligence. One key metric that founders should prepare is their burn rate: how much will they spend per month if they will pursue their plans? Again, this may seem like basic advice, but too many startups have not done any cash flow management at all. Founders need to realize that managing runway is not an administrative task, but central to their business strategy and their investability.

Know Your Customer Acquisition Cost

Since the day-to-day life of an early stage startup can be chaotic, many founders throw everything at the wall to see what sticks. The challenge is that some marketing efforts may be stickier than others—in short, some channels may produce more leads than the rest. Unfortunately, amid the chaos, many founders are unable to track their customer acquisition cost (CAC). Entrepreneurs must keep constant track of their overall CAC as well as their most efficient lead-producing channels, so they can minimize or even close expensive channels and double down on those that are especially fruitful. Knowing your CAC will mean that you can more quickly and predictably expand if you were to get cash infusion from an investor. Having a growth plan based on your current funnel will make you infinitely more attractive to an investor, or in other words, investable.

Strive for a Balanced Skillset

Founding teams will almost always have a concentration of talent in a single area of expertise, as it's unlikely for co-founders with diverse skillsets to start a business together. The most common case is that a developer-founder will recruit developer friends and colleagues to join him, resulting in a founding team that is composed of all engineers. This team composition is not a problem on its own—the issue is that many co-founders let this lack of balance carry on for far too long. Founders should instead choose their founding team and early employees based on the key needs of an early-stage startup. For tech startups, you need to understand your market well enough to promote your product at a price point that is competitive (marketing), know how to present it as a solution (sales), and manage expenses to get these and other key functions going (finance). That's why a minimum viable product is such a buzzword these days—it really is practical to build a minimum viable product (MVP) first and it is equally important to know how you can test it out in the market and you can only achieve this with a well-balanced team. ☺



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Entrepreneurs Should Teach to Become More Successful



FEI YAO,
Co-founder,
NewCampus

THINGS GROW BETTER WHEN THEY GROW TOGETHER. THE MORE WE NURTURE OURSELVES AND THOSE AROUND, THE MORE CHANCES WE HAVE OF CREATING A THRIVING COMPANY

Teaching and sharing wisdom is deep-rooted in our psyche. From cave paintings to manuscripts and books, one generation passes on knowledge and ideas to the next. We formalized this practice through schools and universities. But learning seems to pause after that. The medieval trade guilds begged to be different. The learning process went beyond an educational institution and was a journey of practice. One joined a guild as an apprentice, where they would train under a master of a particular field. Then came the journeyman phase, where they would spend many years learning from other masters as they honed their skills. Finally, one became a master. This qualified them to take on apprentices, give back to the field and continue perfecting their practice. Today, many companies use a mentoring system for skill building. But it seems to fulfill intra-organizational compliance rather than truly foster growth. How can entrepreneurs rewrite this story? Simple: entrepreneurs should teach.

The Importance of Teaching

Our expertise could be anything from writing code to networking. But when we sit down to

share our wisdom with others, there are two forces at play. The first is a retrieval practice. It suggests that recalling skills and ideas helps us retain them better. We don't preach, we practice. We also learn by teaching due to the protégé effect. When we have someone to teach, we learn our subject in detail. We tend to recall it better and share it effectively.

Inspiring and Supporting Others

In 1980, the Morley family, on a vacation in China, met an eager kid who wanted to practice his English with them. They stayed in touch with him over letters and email, fostering him and even giving him his first taste of an overseas trip. We all know this kid today as Jack Ma, the founder of the multi-billion dollar company Alibaba. The timely mentoring and support that the Morley family offered influenced young Ma and spurred him on. We all hold infinite power to inspire future leaders.

Teaching for Brand-building

For entrepreneurs, teaching could be an excellent brand-building exercise. We get exposed beyond our industry to reach potential customers, ambassadors or employees. The exposure that teaching can get us is exponential. When we take on the role of an educator outside of our day to day responsibilities, we look at our profession from new angles. This opens new avenues like speaking at conferences, writing books on our subject matter or podcasting. It can help us find new ways to position ourselves to the world. Our brand presence expands.

High Level of Satisfaction

It is most satisfying to see someone you have taught succeed. Teaching is more than "just a job." It is a profession that can impact the lives of others in profound ways. We struggle with the everyday problems of running a business. And teaching may be just the cure we need to re-energize ourselves and take heart again for another day's battle.

Exposure to diversity

As a teacher, we meet people from different backgrounds. When we engage in dialogue with our learners, we expose ourselves to unfamiliar viewpoints. This elevates our perception of the world. It breaks assumptions, recalibrates expectations, and expands thought. Entrepreneurs work hard on elevating their product or service to the next best level. But we often forget that things grow better when they grow together. The more we nurture ourselves and those around, the more chances we have of creating a thriving company. 📌



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WOMEN HAVE THE ABILITY TO BRIDGE THE YAWNING GAP BETWEEN SHARP LOGICAL DISPOSITIONS AND STRONG EMOTIONAL PURSUITS BY STRIKING THE PERFECT CHORD BETWEEN THE TWO.

If we take a walk back in time, women rarely got out of their homes. Their knowledge on finance was only limited to ensuring that the house should run smoothly. Yet, most women even back then were encouraged to save a certain portion of money that was given to them for emergencies. The saved money at the end of every month was simply put it in the corner of the cupboard or bank lockers without the knowledge of reaping any benefits out of it. As times progressed, women started getting education and getting out of their homes to earn. They were exposed to many mediums, which gave them insight on how to save money in a bank. Frequent visits to the bank exposed them to an array of investible financial products. This encouraged them to know more deeply and start thinking strategically with logic in order to ensure growth of finances.

Women Today

With the slow and steady approach, women today, are well exposed to the financial know-hows. She is no more a victim to embezzlers and takes absolute responsibility to run not only their homes, but also move and change the fate of prominent counting houses for



the better. Yes, women now preside over the making of important financial decisions, which could positively impact the economy.

Early Awareness

Women should start learning about financial products, while they are just teenagers and seeking campus placement with small stipends in hand. From that very age, they are exposed to a bouquet of financial products that helps them save money. From day one they are involved in managing their financial assets and learn to secure themselves at a very young age.

Becoming Entrepreneurs

It might interest one to learn that some women think creatively into the future envisioning themselves as entrepreneurs. They save up in the attempt of bootstrapping in order to initiate their dreams from scratch. They have taken account of the calculated risks involved in starting their business.

The Growing Scope for Micro-loans

Well-known organizations go lengths to give women impetus to start with their own venture by lending them microloans at almost negligible interest rates. This move doesn't only empower women but also empowers all entrepreneurial business scenes that have immense growth potential to pin the same on global charts. Women are measured as strategic thinkers, planners and are armed with excellent management skills.

Lessons from Stock Market

Recent studies prove that women can be better players at the stock market. Unlike men, they take calculated risks, and use patience fittingly to convert their traded stocks to profitable gains. Also, they delve into reason concerning the rise or fall of a certain stock with great dexterity in turn propelling the trade more efficaciously as compared to men.

The New Status

Women are strongly emerging as decision-makers and influencers to major counting houses. They are known to boost the economy and catalyze productivity in order to foster economic diversification and income equality. Women couple empathy with exquisite management skills in order to foster desired results. Women design their own path to success without following a rulebook. They are driven by their instinct and heavily invest in the best of ability to deliver unfailingly. This is the reason why women's involvement in the financial segment and their need for finances are directly proportional. [®]

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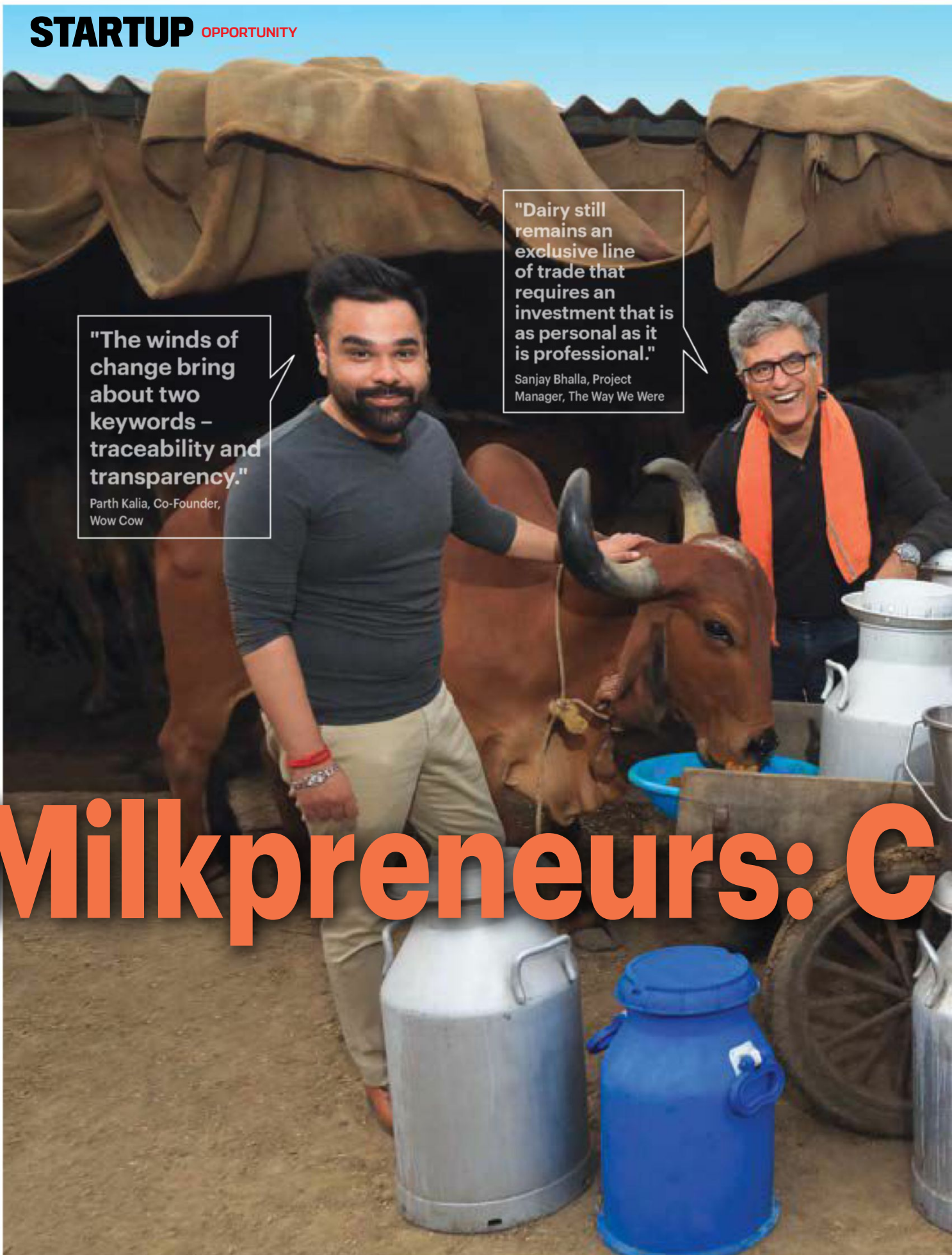
"The winds of change bring about two keywords – traceability and transparency."

Parth Kalia, Co-Founder, Wow Cow

"Dairy still remains an exclusive line of trade that requires an investment that is as personal as it is professional."

Sanjay Bhalla, Project Manager, The Way We Were

Milkpreneurs: C



"Starting small gives us the advantage of knowing our product and its consumer inside out."

Gajjender Singh Yadav,
Founder, 4S Foods

"Our USP is speed. An extremely short delivery window is what differentiates frontrunners in this segment."

Aditya Sinhal, CEO and
Founder, iOrganic

Washing The Cow



It is commonplace to see urban dwellers in India worry about how fresh and sanitary their morning dose of calcium really is. Bridging a gaping divide in the market born out of untraceable and diluted milk, many entrepreneurs are beginning to restyle themselves to act the part of the new-age, upstanding doodhwaala.

By Nimisha Gautam

What differentiates the dairy industry from other food segments is the fact that milk is a commodity most Indian households consume extensively daily throughout the year. Much of the credit for the surge in milk production goes to the White Revolution of the 1970s. Though our nation already accounts for more than 18 percent of the world's total milk production, there is a second White Revolution brewing in the market, a movement propelled by the numerous milkpreneurs that have mushroomed in the still nascent domain of farm-fresh milk. Up until now, most urban customers have been procuring their milk in the form of standard plastic pouches at retail stores and kiranas. Ordered in bulk, this milk is bought after customers inspect expiry dates and calculate how long they can actually use it for. Gayatri, a home-baker based in Mumbai, would walk home from her neighborhood store with five packets of milk, all this while calculating how she needed to manage her most recent orders before her milk went bad in two days time. "I would be plagued by paranoia born out of not knowing where my milk came from. Adulteration would affect the outcome of my baked goods and I could often tell when the milk has been tampered with," she adds. The winds of change, however, brought about two keywords very important to her and many other milk drinkers in India – transparency and traceability. In the past few years, startups in this ecosystem have set up a straight farm-to-fridge business model, a concept that has caught on well. Differentiating themselves from staple names such as Amul and Mother Dairy, these milkpreneurs' other USP is speed. For some, the transportation window is even a brief two hours! Because brands greatly prize the time it takes for milk to reach a doorstep from a milking station at a farmery, their delivery radius is small and their service purely subscription-based, unlike the milk giants of yore that sold crates of milk to retailers all over the country not sure of whether they will actually sell and when. Battling other players vying for loyal customers and rising operational costs, milkpreneurs offer insight into how they've captured small but penetrative networks catering straight to their patrons' fridges.

BACK TO THE VERY BASICS

○wing to how extensively Indian homes use milk in the kitchen for a number of different preparations, it is not surprising to see customers vacillating between brands to find the best offering in the market. Talking of the many brands that have cropped up and disappeared just as inconspicuously in the segment, Gajender Yadav of 4S Foods opines, "Most milk brands enter the race with an eye on raising funds in the first two years of operations. No amount of external capital or technological convenience you provide your customers with can substitute the authenticity of your milk, which in turn is determined by how well you look after your herd and provide for its nutritional well-being." He stresses on how pertinent it is, in a category like milk, to first establish a deep-rooted trust with the end user before eyeing larger shares of the market. "Most unsuccessful milk firms make the mistake of starting big and setting up the supply end of the coin before demand for the brand can start pouring in," agrees Rahul Uppal of Woohoo Doodh. Having recently raised Rs 4.5 crore in funding, the milkpreneur has expanded operations from Pune to include Mumbai but grapples with the monopoly Parag Milks' renewed delivery brand Pride of Cows enjoys in the city. A number of staple names like Milk Mantra have also responded to the need for subscription-based delivery channels in Bengaluru and Kolkata but few have managed to stand the test of time with factors like mismanaged technological intervention and lack of re-marketing spends weighing them under.

While a few milkpreneurs like Sanjay Bhalla from The Way We Were have their own cattle and farms, others like Aditya Sinhal from iOrganic have tied up with independent ventures that operate under statutory checks on quality and remain asset-light. This alternate model enables companies to use digital applications to match supply with demand based on automatic linking of geographical subscribers to dairy farms located within 50 km of their residence, while still keeping initial investment to the minimum. Among milk startups that outsource their milk, teams that have carefully-managed animal husbandry units dedicated to working with dairy farmers on-ground tend to perform better.

Country Delight, a frontrunner in milk-delivery, has a daily supply of around 15,000 litres and is a testament to the fact that inclusiveness breeds goodwill. Having recently picked up a whopping \$10 million in equity funding, an amount rather unheard of in the dairy sector, it is a consumer-first brand that provides self-testing kits at the tail end of the chain to build on compendious user evaluation of their milk. Propelled by investor support in the sector, milk brands can readily variegate important tasks such as periodical and exhaustive testing at source and maintaining milk-giving breeds of cattle instead of worrying about selling more milk each day. However, funding from large VCs can help firms scale operations up to continuously push market horizons and offer more than just one SKU in milk.

MILKING MORE THAN GEOGRAPHICAL MARKETS

Nevertheless, with an unmovable focus on quality, how much can one scale up in terms of quantity? Many in the industry believe, not much. We would be making an apposite assumption by categorizing this as a sound business decision. Binsar Farms, a leading firm, has been operational for eight

years now, but has restricted its delivery radius to Delhi-NCR and scaled up only in terms of how many subscribers it holds in the region. For such marquee players, sustainability and its mirroring growth has been a slow but increasingly steady game. K S Narayana, an independent advisor on F&B, says, "Any dairy startup's geographic penetration is measured in variables such as the number of litres of milk it delivers everyday along with the number of households it caters to with this yield. Because milk is a fast-flowing commodity, a subscription-based model works to the advantage of the industry as less wasteful equations can be formulated between demand and supply. Most credible brands choose to expand their reach within one locality as opposed to eyeing newer geographies and delivery arms," he explained with characteristic trenchancy.

Why then do dairy farmers continuously acquire new cattle and work toward building on the number of cows lactating within a herd at any given time? The approach circumscribing intensive regional perforation and customer retention is sagacious but only partly responsible for how a dairy business grows. The tactic is coupled with the clever diversification of a product portfolio to steer the business on the road to being cash flow positive. "Once you are making more milk than you are required to deliver every day, converting this surplus into valuable, marketable assets is a no brainer for any entrepreneur who knows milk and its properties inside out. One can expand product offerings to include other dairy products such as paneer, ghee, organic cream, butter and khoya. While these items are produced on the same farm, they need not be distributed via subscriptions and instead, can be pushed as FMCG goods remarkably well," adds Narayana.

Farmery, a fairly popular brand in milk-delivery, broke even within 10 months of launch back in 2015 without deploying any external capital. The firm looks at initiating more SKUs in high cream buffalo milk for its existing customers and roping

in new ones by launching a portfolio of ghee, mozzarella cheese and paneer products this year. While most brands remain inclined toward reaching domestic doorsteps, some like DesiGo in Rajasthan have also forayed into the business to business line of trade. As more institutions, caterers and coffee chains call for transparently-sourced milk, demand in these large factions is snowballing to indicate better opportunities for milkpreneurs with ample supply.

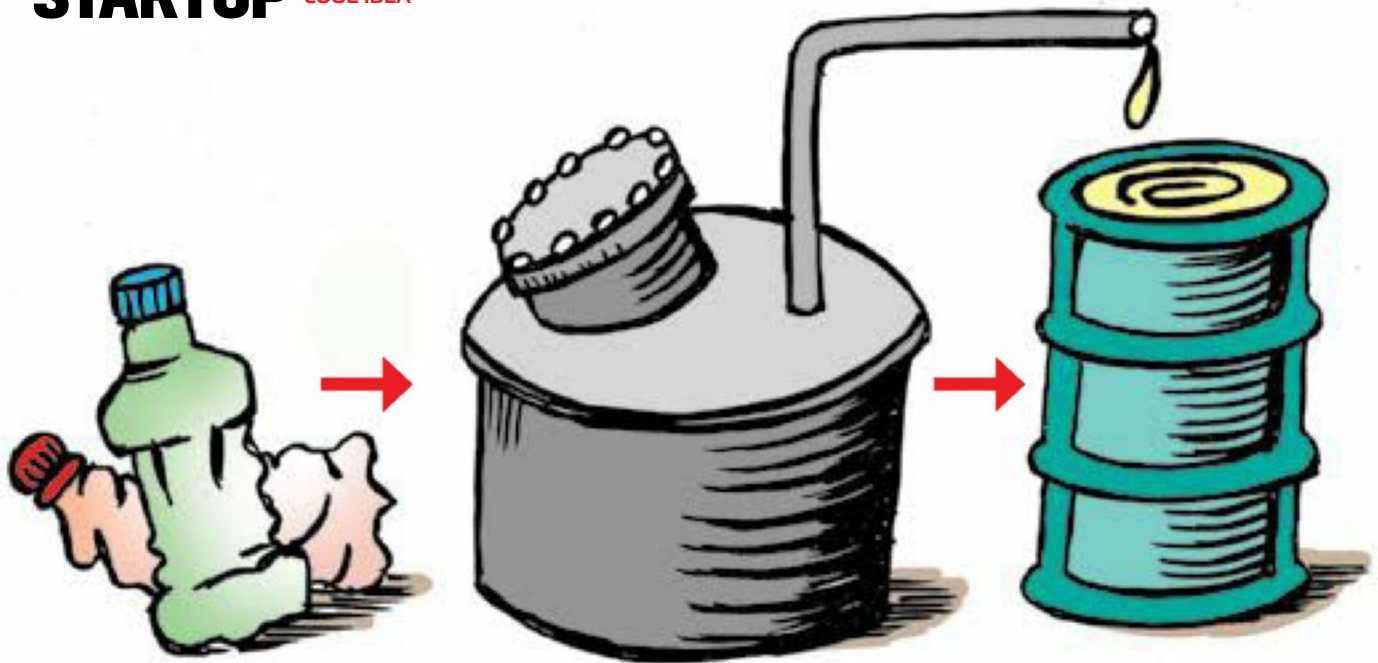
WILL THE INDUSTRY DANCE TO THE MUSIC?

Sanjay Bhalla from The Way We Were still names each of his cattle and has personal sentiment attached to his milk trade. Other milkpreneurs like Parth Kalia and Jatin Verma from Wow Cow put their money on the fact that even though milk touches 1.3 billion lives in India every day, how closely it is associated with a credible provider is yet to be established.

While a great many people still buy milk at Rs 30 a litre from conglomerate brands, a notable majority of conversant consumers have started accepting that producing and delivering farm-fresh milk guaranteed to have come from well-reared livestock is not easy and more importantly, not cheap at all. Hesitant to switch over to organic milk due to the high pricing, milk drinkers in India need only do simple math. For a family of four, consuming unprocessed milk for a month costs Rs 500 more than what it would normally pay for regular packets. In the end, it comes down to choosing good milk for a full month in less than the price of a large-sized pizza! With an evolving, more receptive market, milkpreneurs have their work cut out. The demand for milk borders on one crore litres per day in urban hubs of the country and because organic delivery startups are only now beginning to bloom, 99 percent of the market remains untapped. Is another revolution on the cards? About time to lay them on the table and find out. ☺

THE LOWDOWN

FARMERY	IORGANIC	4S FOODS	WOOHOO DOODH	DESIGO	THE WAY WE WERE	WOW COW
Farm In Mahendergarh, Sohna (Haryana)	Farm In Sonipat, Haryana	Farm In Rewari, Haryana	Farm In Ranjangaon, Maharashtra	Farm In Jodhpur, Rajasthan	Farm In Noida, Uttar Pradesh	Farm In Viratnagar, Rajasthan
Cows 750	Cows 350	Cows 160	Cows 250	Cows 400	Cows 207	Cows 150
Litres Sold Per Day 5000	Litres Sold Per Day 2000	Litres Sold Per Day 2000	Litres Sold Per Day 1100	Litres Sold Per Day 1000	Litres Sold Per Day 350	Litres Sold Per Day 350
Cost Per Litre 65	Cost Per Litre 72	Cost Per Litre 70	Cost Per Litre 120	Cost Per Litre 65	Cost Per Litre 160	Cost Per Litre 70
Delivery Within Less Than 24 hours	Delivery Within 8 hours	Delivery Within 3 to 6 hours	Delivery Within Less than 24 hours	Delivery Within 2 to 12 hours	Delivery Within 2 to 5 hours	Delivery Within 10 hours



Firing Engines with Plastic Waste

Paterson Energy perfected technology to produce pyro fuel from waste plastic. Now, the world is buying the pilot project.

By Kartik Sood

2012

The menace of mindless disposal of plastic waste and its effects on the environment led Vidya Amarnath to devise a more ethical way of mitigating plastic waste. During the research phase, she worked with IIT Madras and Central Institute of Plastics Engineering & Technology.

2013

Ultimately, she chanced upon a Thermochemical Depolymerisation Technology (TDT), which was being used for shredded tyres. The process was then perfected to accept plastic waste as feed stock and obtain a high grade diesel variant of oil.

2014

With the technology perfected overtime, Vidya established first plant in Sriperumbudur, Tamil Nadu at a cost of Rs 5 crore. "Initially, it was just a social venture. But later, I decided to take this commercial," she says. The model can produce 500 litres of oil for every ton of plastic waste.

2016

Vidya saw a great market potential for plastic oil, as it could be sold 25 percent below the market price of hydrocarbon fuels. She took the idea further with Paterson Energy. "We thought it could be utilized as an energy-alternative by industrial boilers, fuel generators, etc," she says.

2017

This not only removes the harmful menace of plastic waste disposal from our atmosphere but also converts it into effective fuel. She increased the capacity of plant from two to five tons a day. The production cost is less than Rs 25 per litre. However, the yield relies upon the quality of the feedstock.

2018

Another plant is in the offing at Mathura, Uttar Pradesh for the Government of India under the Swatch Bharat Abhiyan Scheme. It is a unique model where the state government hands over the land on lease, undertakes to supply plastics, and a Navratna PSU gives financial support by means of a VGF for commissioning the plant.

2019

So far, the company has processed over 500 tons of plastic and has also received various interest for the fuel from several companies like Dalmia cement and Shell. "We have made a headway overseas with Australian and German companies approaching us," she says gleefully.



"Initially, it was just a social venture. But later when I saw its potential, I decided to take this commercial. The fuel could be utilized as an energy-alternative by industrial boilers, fuel generators, furnaces, diesel-powered engines, etc." **Vidya Amarnath**
Managing Director, Paterson Energy

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A Whiff of Malabar's Blue Brew

With strong Malabari roots and classy packaging, Blue Tokai is slowly and steadily brewing up a storm. Here's why it is a hit among coffee-lovers. *By Nimisha Gautam*



Nilgiris down south," says Asthana, who sources her single-estate coffee from Tamil Nadu and Karnataka.

Each coffee pouch retails with a roast date stamped on it to document how fresh the commodity is. Open to brewers, the brand also offers information on the altitude at which an Arabica shrub was planted at and whether a particular variant was washed or sun-dried.

Amidst hushed conversation and the sound of cups on saucers, Blue Tokai Coffee Roasters uses drop-down pendant lighting and potted plants hanging from the ceiling to carry its authentically rustic aura forward. Wooden furniture and walls adorned with illustrated art add to the humdrum of customers trying out manual coffee brewing techniques unique to the brand. Representative of art from South India, we see folk art adorn a lot of its merchandise including screen prints and coffee journals.

Tokai, however, stands for much more than a quick caffeine fix. Its business design is as educational as it is tasteful. "With a vision to create coffee enthusiasts out of a tea-drinking nation, we provide French presses, filter papers, vacuum pots and grinders. You can even take a guided farm tour and sit in on a Coffee 101 class to learn the detailed nuances of brewing fresh coffee from experts at Tokai. Customer involvement and creating a culture around Arabica coffee are vision statements for us," adds Chitharanjan. ☺

Very few would know of the photogenic, almost Parisian Champa Gali — Delhi NCR's best

kept secret. Upon entering the passageway adorned with murals that leads to the backyard establishment, one catches a whiff of Neem trees under which art connoisseurs sit. This location is where high-end coffee brand Blue Tokai chose to open its first outlet for equally refined coffee hobbyists in the capital, adding a strong whiff of Arabica coffee to the setting.

In 2013, while they were still in Chennai, Matt Chitharanjan and Namrata Asthana set out to find how they could transport quality beans from farmlands in South India straight to a cup. In a bid to elevate a staple to a perishable luxury

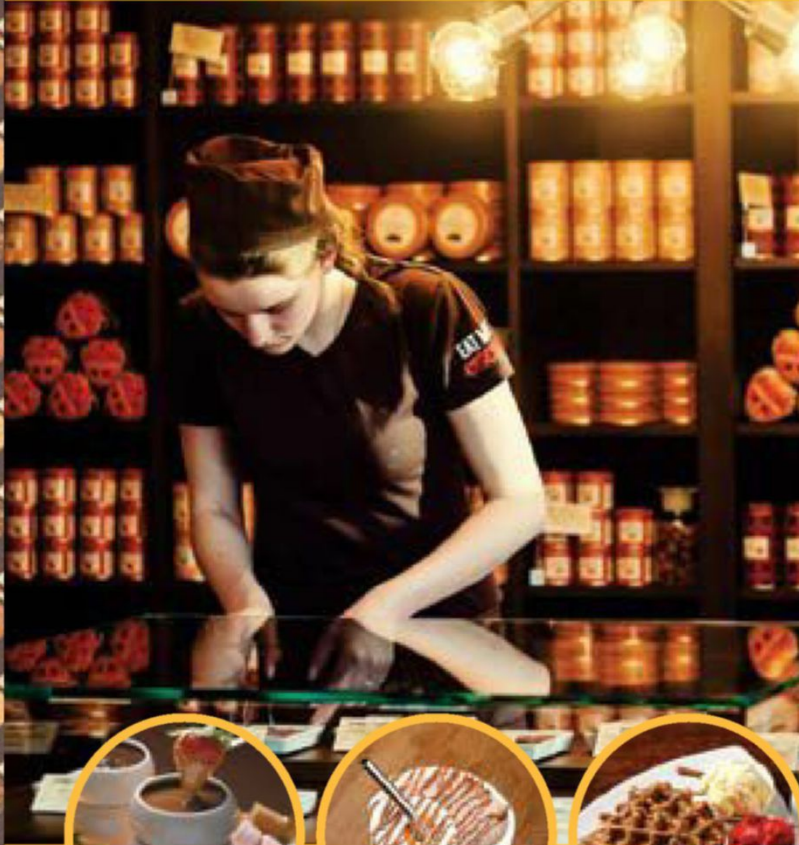


beverage, the duo set up a value-conservation chain for Blue Tokai and soon, painted India's coffee map a quaint turquoise blue. Tokai seeks to preserve its traditional Malabari roots using the design. "The conceptualization of our brand name and logo was organic. 'Tokai' is the ancient word for the tail of a peacock. It represents the Malabar

(Top) Some of Blue Tokai's trademark Arabica coffee variants available for retail. (Above) Blue Tokai in Champa Gali in New Delhi.

region where, rumour has it, the British spotted a peacock for the first time. This was also where they set up coffee estates. It is thus, our logo features a distinct peacock with an elongated tail in shades of blue, the characteristic colour of the

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inspiring journeys.

T

his year, Entrepreneur's list of women achievers features those personalities who have carved a niche for themselves in their respective fields. A proper epithet to describe these women is difficult to find — perhaps, calling them changemakers would be judicious. If there's something that is common among them, it's the winning spirit. From a politician, spacepreneur, sports personality, actor to a chef, innovator, educator, we have chosen to acknowledge those who have brought about a positive change in the world — they pushed the limits to be where they are today. And they are making their presence felt in areas, which are largely male-dominated. On cover, we have Priyanka Gandhi — the Congress Party's ace entrant in active politics — who is capable of bringing a shift in the winds of Indian politics in the years to come. This time, the list features a flight lieutenant who has shattered gender stereotypes. Plus, an incredible shuttler who has brought accolades to the nation in multitudes and more.



By Punita Sabharwal

With Mohit Sabharwal, Kartik Sood, Nimisha Gautam, Aastha Singhal & Bhavya Kaushal

Leader in the Making

PRIYANKA GANDHI VADRA / GENERAL SECRETARY, ALL INDIA CONGRESS COMMITTEE

IT IS HER INNATE QUALITY TO TOUCH THE EMOTIONAL CHORD OF POPULI THAT MAGNIFIES HER POPULARITY AMONG PEOPLE.

When the political dangle for the 2019 Lok Sabha Elections was gaining momentum, Congress dealt its ace card. On January 29, Priyanka Gandhi Vadra officially announced

her political debut as general secretary of India's oldest political party. The move had a rippling effect: it raised a furore, with the script of 'Clash of the Titans' witnessing major alterations, and people swearing for her as the next Prime Ministerial candidate pitted against Narendra Modi. Priyanka came to the fore with all guns blazing. It was evident that she meant business stepping onto the Congress bandwagon. She held rallies, revamped the secretaries of the East UP region (she holds the charge of East UP). Even today the maxim used during poll canvassing in the Amethi constituency is "Amethi ka danka, bitiya Priyanka." While the entire world is gripped in social media frenzy, Priyanka joined Twitter on February 11, weeks after joining active politics.

It is her innate quality to touch the emotional chord of the masses that magnifies her popularity among people. She showcased her unwavering trust in her husband Robert Vadra at a time when he is embroiled in an Enforcement Directorate case.

On one hand, Congress supremo Rahul Gandhi's responsibilities are shouldered by his younger sibling while on the other Priyanka augmented a different persona to the party. On several occasions, her fiery speeches have reminded us of former Prime Minister Indira Gandhi. A glimpse of her deftness could be iterated from a decade ago when she asserted acquiescence within two weeks while she was in-charge of ten seats in the Amethi Rae Bareilly region. The Congress cadres were bickering among themselves, when Priyanka intervened and resolved the infighting.





**“WE
CONCEPTUALIZED
A WRITERS’
PLATFORM
THAT GIVES
BUDDING WRITERS
AN OPPORTUNITY
TO DIGITALLY
PUBLISH THEIR
WORK AND WIN
CONTRACTS AT
JUGGERNAUT.”**

The New-Age Publisher

CHIKI SARKAR // CO-FOUNDER,
JUGGERNAUT BOOKS

In an age where people remain hooked to their smartphones, Chiki Sarkar found a way to pass on the culture of consuming intelligent literature using the infectious smartphone boom. Fuelled by high-speed internet, anything ever published around the globe can be sitting in the palm of your hand albeit without a spine. Sarkar was already a well-known figure in the Indian literary circle when she decided to launch Juggernaut Books along with fellow counterpart Durga Raghunath in 2015. The company straddles the world of books and digital devices by acting as a smartphone publishing platform for professional as well as amateur authors. While some classics by the likes of Jane Austen are available for free, other books are priced between Rs 10 and Rs 250.

The former editor-in-chief of Random House and ex-publisher of Penguin India conceptualized a writers' platform that also gives budding writers an opportunity to digitally publish their work and win contracts at Juggernaut. Some big names that have published work on Juggernaut include Twinkle Khanna, Sourav Ganguly, Rajdeep Sardesai and Sunny Leone. As a testament to the popularity of the concept, the app eyes over a million downloads across both Android and iOS platforms and boasts of investor biggies like Airtel and Nandan Nilekani.

About how she runs the app, Sarkar says, "I am well aware of what my reader wants. I know now that readers in Mumbai mostly read at night and that those in Bengaluru buy the most books. Understanding the customer profile helps scale the business." With a skilled hand at encouraging author confidence and marketing books well, she now plans on building platforms based on regional languages and ramping up subscriptions for the Airtel books arm.

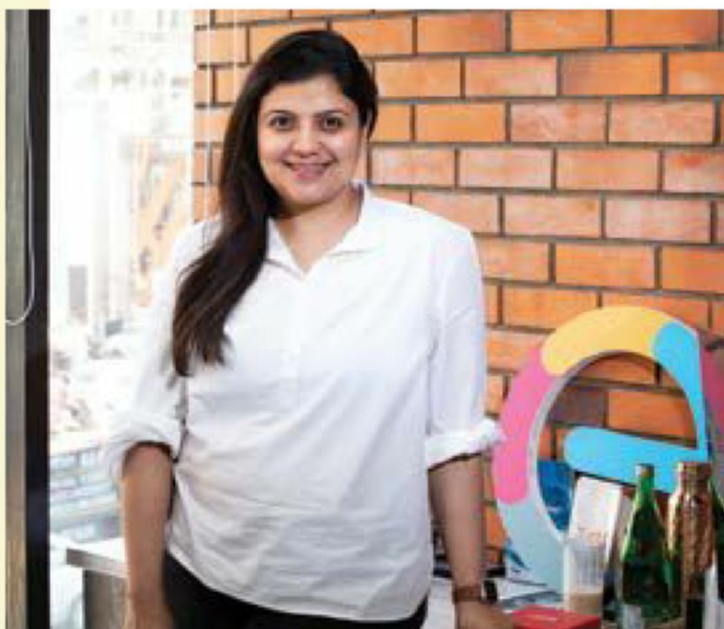
The Modern Teacher

ADITI AVASTHI // FOUNDER AND CEO, EMBIBE

The testament of Embibe founder Aditi Avasthi's unrelenting passion for improving the state of education in India is evident in students associated with Embibe achieving remarkable outcomes in seemingly unfavorable situations. Embibe's pilot project was with the tribal students of Rajasthan, who were unknown to computers before Embibe's intervention. The students were not only confident but also went on to crack the most competitive pre-engineering and pre-medical exams in India. Embibe, a deep personalization platform, is designed to deliver learning and life outcomes for students. By keeping artificial intelligence and data science at the core

of the platform, the company empowers both students and educators. When asked about Byju's, she says, "While Byju's is a video learning company, for Embibe, learning videos are just one aspect of achieving personalization. Our goal is not to create one video per topic, but to create a range of learning media, which caters to every learning style." Aditi took on entrepreneurship with an aim to democratize education but building a deep technology platform company in India was a challenge.

Initially, Kalaari Capital and Lightbox were early-stage investors for Embibe in 2013. Mukesh Ambani's Reliance Industries Limited (RIL) led a strategic investment, buying a major stake of around 73 percent in Embibe in 2018.



The Dessert Diva

KAINAZ MESSMAN // FOUNDER & CHEF, THEOBROMA

Kainaz Messman's culinary journey began at home when as a little girl, she used to help her mother bake and cook. She says, "Often, when my dad travelled on business, my mother, sister and I had dessert for dinner. We went through recipe books, mum baked for us and we made a meal of it." At the age of 16, Kainaz went to France as part of a youth cultural exchange program. That year, she says, changed her life and determined who would she become. "I lived with a family that owned fruit orchards, vegetable gardens and vineyards. I learned to respect ingredients, cook with passion and keep things simple."

On returning home, Kainaz had decided to become a chef. She secured admission at Institute of Hotel Management (IHM) Mumbai, and further, went to study at the Oberoi Centre of Learning and Development (OCLD) in New Delhi. Post completing the course, she became a pastry chef at the Oberoi in Udaipur but still missed France's quaint little patisseries. With a little hope and prayer, she decided to open a small pastry shop in Mumbai, completely unaware of the growth that followed. What started with a single shop in 2004 has now become a retail chain of 35+ outlets across five cities in India. The venture raised money via private equity and is currently clocking profits. Kainaz says, "Theobroma is primarily a dessert destination. It has evolved over the years and has added sandwiches and savouries as per guest requests. "Sharing Theobroma's growth plans, Kainaz says, "We have plans to expand beyond five cities but opting a cautious approach so that the quality doesn't get compromised as we spread our wings."



"WE DECIDED TO MAKE THE FOOD WE ENJOY OURSELVES AND KEPT THINGS SIMPLE. THIS FORMULA HAS WORKED FOR US."

The Guardian of Indian Skies

FLIGHT LIEUTENANT AVANI CHATURVEDI // COMBAT PILOT, INDIAN AIR FORCE

Pakistan began inducting women into combat roles as part of their air force way back in 2006. Whereas till 2016, women made up just 2.5 percent of India's armed forces, working mainly in non-combat roles such as transportation and administration. In a country where the National Defence Academy is still all-men, it was only in October 2015 that the Indian government took the decision to open the fighter pilot stream in the Indian Air Force for women. Flight Lieutenant Avani Chaturvedi wrote history when she became the first woman to fly the MiG-21 fighter jet on a solo training sortie in 2018. A relatively difficult plane to fly because of high landing and take-off speeds, the MiG became her vessel on her path to glory. Hailing from Rewa district in Madhya Pradesh, she was born to an executive engineer in the Water Resource Department of her home state. With a brother serving in the Indian Army, she had the fire to serve in uniform raging in her blood. Chaturvedi

dreamt of flying high and while still in college, she joined the flying club at Banasthali University. With multiple flying hours already under her belt, the pilot appeared for the common entrance exam AFCAT and cleared her screening rounds rather impressively. And soon, she was undergoing rigorous training at Air Force Academy, Dundigal and following strenuous efforts, was commissioned into the Indian Air Force by the then Defense Minister Manohar Parrikar in 2016. On 19th February 2018, the Flight Lieutenant scripted history by flying solo – a feat

that has helped shatter gender stereotypes in a male-dominated profession. Her achievement has put India on the list of countries such as Britain, the United States, Israel and Pakistan, where women are allowed to fly fighter jets.

The best thing about being a pilot, the twenty-five-year-old believes, is that the machine she flies doesn't know whether the pilot flying it is a man or a woman and hence, doesn't differentiate between them at all. She has contributed immensely in simplifying the complex narrative surrounding gender equality in India.

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“THIS IS OLYMPIC QUALIFYING YEAR AND I AM FOCUSED ON GIVING MY BEST FOR THE SAME.”

The Golden Smasher

SAINA NEHWAL / BADMINTON PLAYER, WORLD NUMBER 9

Saina grew up in a small village in Haryana and moved to Hyderabad at the age of five. In 1998, she had taken up Karate and acquired the brown belt. But, the road ahead seemed obscure in a sport dominated by boys. Later, she took the racquet and soon her talent at the badminton court caught the eye of the national badminton coaches. Her parents, former state badminton players, sacrificed a lot to give her the required impetus. Since then, there was no looking back for her. Saina, still cherishes the Olympic bronze medal that she had won during the 2012 London Olympics but she also knows that Olympic gold is the elixir that quenches the desire of all athletes. While many of the international players

like Tine Baun, Juliane Schenk who were contemporaries of Saina, have retired in the past decade, Saina is still going strong. “In sports, fitness and agility are the most important aspects for a player. It’s crucial that you stick to your fitness regime. Injuries are something that all players need to be cautious about but you can’t let everything fall apart. The most important part is putting in utmost dedication and time in the recovery process so that you can get back that fitness level and play your natural game again.” Now, she has set her sights on the 2020 Tokyo Olympics. The berths will be up for grabs this year and she is working hard with her childhood love and husband Parupalli Kashyap to accomplish the same. “This is Olympic qualifying year and I am sweating it out and focused on giving my best. Hopefully, I will be successful in changing the colour of the medal in 2020,” she says with a gleaming smile.

For Saina as well, Olympic gold is the target. The feisty athlete has been in top-notch form eking out crucial victories from new-age players in old school style. “Every player has different strengths and weaknesses. You need to be on top of your game when you are playing against the top shuttlers especially on that particular day,”

she adds. Saina has featured in all the three seasons of the Premier Badminton League (PBL), the richest badminton league in the world and is also a part of its fourth edition. “The league has been a great opportunity — it has shaped the career of youngsters. It not only gives them the chance to rub shoulders with some stalwarts of the game, but also brings them to the centerstage. The senior players test their mettle against the top international shuttlers.

It was definitely a bombastic start to 2019 for the ace shuttler both personally and professionally. Her biggest gift came towards the end of 2018, when she tied the knot with her fellow shuttler Parupalli Kashyap. “Personally, as well, I am in a happy and contented state; marrying the person who has been my best friend,” she says.

The Mistress of Small Finance

KSHAMA FERNANDES // CEO AND MANAGING DIRECTOR, NORTHERN ARC CAPITAL

From having humble, pastoral beginnings to becoming a mission-driven banker who has become a compelling force in solving the problem of access to finance in the economy, the story of Kshama Fernandes is one such wonder, well, with a bent of credit! Fernandes is the CEO and managing director of Northern Arc Capital (formerly known as IFMR Capital), which connects NBFCs impacting financially excluded households and businesses to capital market investors. Fernandes entered the corporate world after she let go of her post of being the Head of Finance Faculty at the Goa Institute of Management.

TAKING THE MISSION-DRIVEN COURSE

India is struggling with the idea of credit. Access to debt and giving this access in a reliable manner are two main aspects of a predicament that besets this country. Fernandes' story is about being intensely driven and having a tunnel focus to set up institutions that would exclusively work at cracking the financial inclusion problem of India. There is a big gap between the credit seekers and creditors, Northern Arc Capital, endeavors to tackle exactly this so that access to finance is unequivocally available for all, including for the many institutions that served the unbanked

and the under-banked but themselves faced challenges raising debt.

"I joined to set up the risk function with the goal of creating a strong scientific data and analytics-driven approach to understanding credit and risk," she says. And now the progress of the company is brilliant in its own stride. "We have enabled Rs 60,000 crore of debt to financial institutions like microfinance, affordable housing finance, small business loans finance, agri-business finance and vehicle finance and have reached out to over 33 million individuals in over 580 districts of the country," she shares.

A SOLID FOUNDATION

Fernandes, coming from a tiny village by the beachside, shares about her beginnings, "My earliest memories are that of waking up to the sound of the sea, of running through coconut palms into the waters and beginning my day

with the sprinkle of spray from the waves on my face!"

Perhaps, it is due to such simple and life-kissing experiences, she knows the value of life and that gets reflected in her way of handling success and failure. "If one is excessively worried about failing, then one won't take the risks required to create new frontiers. Failures are the stepping stones that

pave the path for success," she says. In addition to such valuable lessons, she adds, "For Northern Arc, which is based on the foundations of innovation, success is the iterative culmination of a series of failures."

Success has a crystal clear definition in the dictionary of Fernandes. Life has come a full circle. Or is there more to it?



"IF ONE IS EXCESSIVELY WORRIED ABOUT FAILING, THEN ONE WON'T TAKE THE RISKS REQUIRED TO CREATE NEW FRONTIERS."

The 'Space Habitat' Builder

DR. SUSMITA MOHANTY /
FOUNDER & CEO, EARTH2ORBIT

For nearly a decade (1998-2008), spaceship designer Susmita Mohanty worked assiduously for the American and European space programs, first through NASA (Shuttle-Mir projects) and Boeing (International Space Station Program) and then through her first two entrepreneurial ventures — MoonFront (2001-07), an aerospace consulting firm based in San Francisco and Liquifer (2004-ongoing), an aerospace architecture and design firm in Vienna, Austria. Aerospace, which has been for long a male-dominated bastion, saw the enigmatic rise of Susmita, who is today known in international quarters as the Indian Space Lady. But her innate desire to do something for India had always been burgeoning as she was raised

amongst India's space pioneers, her dad being one of them. Her two biggest influences growing up in Ahmedabad were exposure to India's space program and to contemporary architecture and design thanks to textile-mill owner families like the Sarabhais and Lalbhais who patronised avant-garde architects and designers. It is not surprising that Susmita evolved into a renaissance woman, who seamlessly straddles the worlds of art, architecture, design, technology and business. Educated in India, France and Sweden, she has an eclectic background the includes engineering, space studies, industrial design and aerospace architecture.

"I consider myself to be ISRO's daughter. My dad's generation built India's first satellites, rockets and earth stations. I had the responsibility to take it to the next level, to ensure that India goes beyond an accomplished government space program and becomes a true international player. It was difficult to undertake the task from far away," Susmita claims.

In 2008, she moved her base to India and launched her third venture Earth2Orbit or E2O (2008-ongoing) — India's first aerospace start-up that played a pivotal role in opening the US launch market for India despite an embargo and stringent export control laws. E2O focused on facilitating international launches on the PSLV rocket from 2008-2016. E2O launched a Japanese satellite in 2012 and a Google satellite in 2016. Starting 2017, E2O is committed to support global climate action by making human activities climate-smart. E2O leverages big data (including satellite remote sensing data) analytics to deliver actionable intelligence for social, business and environmental impact.

Photo: Siddharth Das



"MY HOPE IS THAT MANY PEOPLE WOULD GET ON BOARD FOR THE MOVEMENT TOWARDS EDUCATIONAL EQUITY."

The Social Sparker

SHAHEEN MISTRI / FOUNDER & CEO,
THE AKANSHA FOUNDATION AND
TEACH FOR INDIA



F

orty-eight-year old Shaheen Mistri finds children as her ultimate inspiration. Walking through the socio-economically disadvantaged neighbourhoods in Mumbai in her teens made her realize that an incredible change in the society was possible if all children were given an equal opportunity to unleash their potential. Thus, making sure that poverty doesn't define a child's destiny, Shaheen founded Akansha Foundation in 1989 — a non-profit organization with a mission to provide children from low-income communities with a high quality educa-

tion. What started with one center and 15 children has now become a mass movement, catering to more than 6500 children through its centers in Mumbai and Pune.

Nearly two decades after founding Akansha, Shaheen decided to take the movement pan India and founded Teach For India in 2008. The program hires India's most promising college graduates and young professionals to spend two years teaching in low-income schools in an attempt to bridge the educational gap in the country. Today, Teach for India has directly benefited more than 38,000 school children .

To get more people on board for her

movement toward educational equity, Shaheen is currently spearheading InnovatED — an incubation program aimed at early stage entrepreneurs focusing on the education space for social impact. The aspiring entrepreneurs provided funding and access to the ecosystem to be able to scale up their innovative ideas into sustainable educational organizations in the long-run. Reflecting on her journey of past three decades, Shaheen says, “My journey has had its ups and downs, but the vision of all the children attaining excellent education propels me through the challenges and moments of struggle.”

The Fashion Hostess

ANAM MIRZA // FOUNDER, LABEL BAZAAR

In college campuses, fashion is the medium of self expression and *dress to impress* a decree. But, to Anam Mirza (then 19), a dearth of good fashion stores in Hyderabad only worsened her yearning to look her best during her college days. “This is where I sensed an opportunity of building a business. I envisioned that the fashion arena in Hyderabad could really benefit if the designers from all across India could be brought to the city to showcase their work,” says the 25-year-old fashion enthusiast. Determined to bring fashion to her city, Anam launched Label Bazaar in 2016. She says, “Label Bazaar is a multi-designer exhibition with the industry’s best fashion designers and brands showcasing their work under one roof.” Within three years of its launch, Label Bazaar has seen quite a success. It has already conducted 27 exhibitions in Hyderabad, Chennai, Bengaluru, Mumbai, and went overseas with Dubai in the second year of its launch. Such fashion exhibitions attract a footfall of 3000-6000 people.

Asked what worked well for her venture, Anam says, “It has been putting in place a two pronged strategy. First, doing a thorough city specific research to make sure that the fashion trends we host in our exhibitions are entirely new to the city. Second, offering premium brands at a pocket-friendly budget, keeping the target audience in mind — women of age group 18-35. On having built a strong foundation for her initiative, Anam plans to make Label Bazaar a pan India exhibition, and subsequently make its presence felt globally.

“MY SISTER, SANIA [MIRZA], AND MY FAMILY AND FRIENDS HAVE BEEN A ROCK-SOLID SUPPORT BEHIND LABEL BAZAAR.”



The Sibyl of Ayurveda

MIRA KULKARNI // CHAIRMAN AND MANAGING DIRECTOR, MOUNTAIN VALLEY SPRINGS INDIA

With interests varying from painting in water colors and journalism to organic plants and herbal culture, Mira Kulkarni was exposed to the Ayurvedic way to life early on. She used her knowledge of Ayurveda and natural products to source local herbs, oils and medicinal roots from the Tehri Garhwal region for many years. On noticing a gap in the market for user-friendly products made using traditional ingredient combinations, she set up Mountain Valley Spring's flagship brand Forest Essentials in 2001. She worked with Vaidis and modern biochemists

to produce a product line ranging from handmade soaps made from natural spring water to sensual body oils and scented candles. The inspiration behind launching the venture came to her organically and propelled action. She realized then that while Ayurveda relied on cold-pressing oils, most manufacturers looked at it as an old-fashioned and expensive method.

Most companies used machine-made processed oil. Ayurveda also requires picking of fresh herbs at certain times of the day, when they are most potent. But this requires skilled labor. To save costs, many Ayurvedic brands resorted to using dry herbs stored in dusty godowns.

Kulkarni, however,



insisted on organically grown unprocessed oils cold-pressed by hand, commissioning only pure plant, herb, and flower infusions, and sourcing the purest steam-distilled essential oils. Her products are not only salubrious but also very consumer friendly.

In today's date, Forest Essentials is India's

quintessential beauty brand that familiarizes modern customers with how beneficial Ayurveda can be. In addition to growing to over 72 exclusive retail stores in FY18, Forest Essentials is also the leading supplier to a majority of luxury hotel chains in India.

The People's Person

BARKHA SHARMA // FOUNDER, BASH.AI

Today, there are limited technologies in place that facilitate or assist the interaction between the HR function and employees, and all the interactions are manually managed. Barkha Sharma, founder of Bash.AI, an employee engagement and automation tool in the HR function was initially skeptical about HR team adopting the gen-next tech. "We can rate algorithms built for specific tasks just as we rate employees," she asserts. "We assumed the business owners, CxO and CIO were our audience. When you talk of automation too much it also feels like selling a rope to a prisoner," Barkha adds. Barkha



rode on a seven-year experience in talent acquisition and took her first entrepreneurial plunge in 2009 with a recruitment and tech-staff augmentation startup. After making some quick-bucks, she realized that she needed more experience. In 2014, came the second stint with an e-commerce entity. The growing experience slowly revealed the real value of tech in HR. "We are also scouting the market for modules and in future would like to be a 360 degree solution with an umbrella of services spread horizontally," she says. In 2018, Bash.AI acquired tech startup Wemo, which is known for its UX expertise in building mobile apps and websites.



The Kitchen Hacker

RASHMI DAGA // FOUNDER & CEO, FRESHMENU

Rashmi Daga laid the foundation of FreshMenu in September 2014. Armed with a rich experience in spearheading and managing several start-ups and diverse businesses, she wanted to bring the best of food on customer's table.

Rather than setting up a restaurant, Daga set up the food delivery platform under the FreshMenu umbrella. She went ahead with her first prototype with a home kitchen making it the proof of concept. People got excited for such food to come home and were willing to pay. The 1700 strong army of FreshMenu currently

delivers to Gurgaon, Mumbai and Bangalore right now with 38 cloud kitchens. It currently serves half a million orders monthly generating revenue of Rs 150 crore. She says, "We have been very focused on building a retail brand for consumers. Institutional side is something we would love to look at in the future. Going

forward, we would like to go the top ten cities in India."

The venture has raised close to Rs 160 crore so far. "Operating cloud kitchens is a different business altogether. This business needs lot of execution." For her, being fast, and not regretting mistakes has been the key to success.

The Rising Star

MITHILA PALKAR // ACTOR

Mithila Palkar has had a quintessential career path every aspiring actor dreams of. She rose to fame with an accidental home video — a cover of Anna Kendrick's 'Cups' titled Hi Chal Turu Turu that went viral in 2016. "It was not planned because I was just having fun with what I was doing. The cup video just blew out of proportion (laughs), not in the negative sense of course," she says.

Mithila's journey to success has been a helluva ride. Popularity obviously doesn't come overnight and for her, it was a very slow process but she never gave up. "Nobody had ever painted a rosy picture about

struggling and making it. As you start being a part of this struggle, you start experimenting and realizing that nothing comes easy." The 26-year-old had no specific direction in her mind when she started off. News Darshan — a news/comedy show with the YouTube channel FilterCopy was fundamentally her first gig with the Internet. Mithali, who has 1.5 million followers on Instagram, is a rage among the masses. Having led a Hindi film Karwaan co-starring Irrfan Khan, she made her debut in Marathi cinema through Varun Narvekar's Muramba and recently, the second season of Little Things in which she features, has been picked by Netflix. Her rise has been fuelled by her innate talent.





The Love Guru

WHITNEY WOLFE HERD / FOUNDER, BUMBLE

How a low moment in life can transpire you to a new empowered journey has been the story of Bumble.

The dating app launched in India last year in December with an active user base of around 45 million. Bumble's expansion in India was led with the support of actor Priyanka Chopra. Whitney Wolfe Herd, the American entrepreneur made India the first country in Asia to get Bumble.

Running a separate fund for female founders, Whitney also started a venture fund and has so far invested in almost a dozen startups. Sharing more on her startup's journey, Herd says, "What got me here was my struggle against a patriarchal society, which I faced throughout my relationships in all walks of my life."

She realized men hate when women message first and that's where Bumble wanted to inspire and empower today's generation

of women. As per her, the hardest and the most rewarding part of the journey has been that she could show that there is a room for change. "It is about changing the way women feel about how they should connect, that is why we do what we really do," shares Herd. About her investor and advisor, Chopra, she says, "I had the opportunity to sit next to Priyanka Chopra at a dinner. They were speaking about why I am doing bumble, what's the message, mission and vision. That excited her and she said let's take it to India together." Bumble came to India with a lot of customizations like empowering women to sign in with just the first initial, focusing much more on security and safety of women. Bumble is available in more than 160 countries around the world. The dating app has done well in several countries. The 100 people team at Bumble is all set to make a change by letting women be in charge of their love life.

The Tele-Medical Guru

DR. SUNITA MAHESHWARI, CO-FOUNDER AND CHIEF DREAMER, TELERADIOLOGY SOLUTIONS

There are entrepreneurs who know they have business in their blood and then there are accidental entrepreneurs. Falling in the latter category, doctor-turned-entrepreneur Sunita Maheshwari is a visionary but first, she is a skilled cardiologist for children with a penchant for providing pioneering solutions in still-developing markets. After completing her tenure at Yale University and leading paediatric divisions in many a national hospital, she stumbled onto the idea of online consultancy and started offering expert diagnosis of CT scans and MRIs for patients in the US while living in Bengaluru. Such was the inception of now globally accredited Teleradiology Solutions.

Partnering with her husband initially, the tele-medical startup was diagnosing 20-30 scans per day. "Now it comprises of a network of 80 doctors from different parts of the world that respond to over 3,500 studies a day, a number of which are uploaded to our software from remote and underdeveloped areas in India and Africa," she offered. The over-achiever also poured in profits from her venture to open six primary healthcare clinics by the name of RxDx in Bengaluru, operating one of them personally for ten straight years. With a keen interest in addressing sports-related injuries and mental health, she currently runs a lab that automatically detects breast cancer in women among other AI solutions for doctors.

She also finds time for conducting online training sessions for specialist doctors in India. In her own words, Maheshwari is an entrepreneur driven by making an impact in needy markets.





**“ALL OUR
GROWTH HAS
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AND I CREDIT
IT TO OUR
ATTENTION
TO DETAIL
IN SHOOTS,
SOCIAL MEDIA
CAMPAIGNS
AND EVEN
PACKAGING.”**

The Hip Fashion Designer

PERNIA QURESHI, FASHION ENTREPRENEUR AND FOUNDER OF PERNIA'S POP-UP SHOP

Living and breathing fashion, Pernia Qureshi is a dynamic soul and an even more moving icon in the apparel industry. A name to be reckoned with, she embodies the spirit of clean and fresh design in her personality. Switching from criminal justice to the competitive world of fashion, her first assignment on her return to India after her time working for some of the world's leading fashion magazines was costume design for the Bollywood blockbuster *Aisha* in 2010. That, however, is still one of her lesser known achievements. With a vision to curate style quotients and start something of her own, she began working on Pernia's Pop-Up Shop in 2011. Her venture is an online design platform that brings Indian fashion to everyone from New York to Lucknow with just a click. Asked how it all began, she remarks, "A fruit of the labour of love, the collective started out with selling just 10 designers with a small office in a basement. All our growth has been organic and I credit it to our attention to detail in shoots, social media campaigns and even packaging."

Having built a strong global presence, it now sells creations by hundreds of Indian designers and also carries her own label — an extension to her sophisticated but clean-cut aura. Attracting investors from far and wide, the firm has grown into other parallels that include offline stores and exhibitions. With an eye always on the future, Qureshi is currently engrossed in growing another side arm in the form of PerniaQureshiBrands.com, an online space that circumscribes several clothing labels and even jewelry, all of which she produces in-house.



The Healthcare Transformer

SANGITA REDDY, JOINT MANAGING DIRECTOR, APOLLO HOSPITALS

Sangita Reddy is one of the four Reddy sisters who lead the Apollo Group of Hospitals with their father, Dr Prathap C Reddy, at the helm. She heads the IT and Human Resources vertical in the group and has been a key player in evolving a patient-centric culture across the chain of hospitals. Reflecting on her journey spanning more than three decades, she says, "My personal commitment to patient care has always been my driving force." Sangita attributes the success of the Apollo Hospitals to the passionate commitment of 80,000 members of the group who have always strived to transform the healthier milieu of India.

The group, since its inception in 1983, has consistently resolved to make technological investments, and till date, continues to do so. Exhibiting a commitment toward building a healthier and inclusive India via technology, she says, "We are reaching the unreached in the Himalayas and have established the world's first Telemedicine Center at an altitude of 14,000 feet." The initiative, according to Sangita, has been seamlessly delivering emergency, primary and speciality tele-consultation services to a population of 34,000 in Kaza and Keylong, Himachal Pradesh. Sangita believes that artificial intelligence would play a huge role in the healthcare sector. From enhancing productivity to extracting insights to gauge patient's risk in advance, the Apollo Group of Hospitals is partnering with IT behemoths in the country to analyze the huge amount of health data available in order to provide a more robust preventive healthcare in advance, and, in turn, diminish patients' health risks to the minimal.



C

STRICTLY

R E Q U I R E M E N T S

Being a creative entrepreneur requires special guts. Of course, people have always relied on their creativity to create a successful brand and wealth, but the modern creative entrepreneur goes a step further. She uses her creativity to unlock the wealth that lies within her, and uses that force to conquer uncharted territories. This March, as the world celebrates #Balanceforbetter as theme of International Women's Day, we spoke with six creative entrepreneurs across Asia-Pacific and beyond to learn why they chose the path they took and how they became successful leaders in their respective fields.

By Nidhi Singh, Komal Nathani & Pooja Singh



The Unicorn Designer

Canva's Melanie Perkins shares the journey of her \$1 billion business

Melanie Perkins was 22 when she flew from her home in Perth, Australia, to the Silicon Valley in the US to pitch a startup idea to a multi-millionaire. Although Bill Tai, the famous technology investor, initially didn't pay much attention to the college dropout's "future of publishing" idea, he did introduce her to other investors, engineers and developers — and ultimately, he himself invested in her brainchild, Canva. Today, Canva, an online platform that allows anyone to design everything from greeting cards to posters, and websites to calendars, is worth more than one billion dollars, available in over 100 languages and used by people across the world.

The Other Story

The shaping of Canva started when Perkins was at the University of Western Australia. Then 19, she used to teach students how to use a design software. It was then she realized how long it took them "to feel remotely confident while designing something basic." The idea behind Canva was to make the future of design simpler. Along with her partner, Cliff Obrecht, Perkins decided to test the idea by launching Fusion Books.

"It was the idea of Canva, but for the very niche market of high school yearbooks in Australia," she says. Securing funding, however, was a big challenge. It took her three years from her first conversation with an investor to get her first cheque. "I even woke up at 4am to catch the train to Silicon

Valley for a breakfast meeting. I heard the words 'no' or 'not yet' many, many times but whenever I did, I listened to their questions and made our pitch deck stronger," she says.

Perkins believes being a female entrepreneur in a male-dominated world can be difficult, but one must always stay focused to one's vision.

"We want Canva to be the place you can go to by default, and so we've made it free to use. You can upload your own images or choose from our library of images and illustrations which cost \$1 when you publish," she says.



"Solve a real problem that many people experience. If you find a problem that people care about, then it will make every other aspect of running a business much easier."

Building a Unicorn

According to Perkins, one of the most important things to remember when building any successful startup is to get started. "If I listened to all naysayers, knew the stats about how many startups fail or realized everything I would have to learn to make Canva work, I never would have got started."

She adds, "Solve a real problem that many people experience. If you find a problem that people care about, then it will make every other aspect of running a business much easier." And finally, go niche before you go wide.



Beyond Beauty

Former Miss Universe Jakarta
Stephanie Yoe shares her journey

After Stephanie Yoe became Miss Universe Jakarta in 2015 at the age of 19, she had no idea about her next step career-wise. All she knew was she was inclined toward entrepreneurship as she had her roots ingrained in an entrepreneurial family. To learn about the startup ecosystem, she took on a role in business development at Blibli, an e-commerce startup backed by GDP Ventures. By the age of 24, Yoe held several positions in a host of companies.

Being a third-generation kid in her family, she got her first taste of running a company after joining her family's coconut business. Turning away from agriculture, she learned about tech entrepreneurship from mentors like Monk's Hill Ventures' Peng Ong.

Yoe entered the tech startup scene with her property service CutBroker. In 2016, she started out her own venture, CutBroker, a prop tech platform. As the name suggests, Cutbroker lets house seekers connect with owners without the need for middlemen. "I realized how middlemen were using consumers to take larger slice of share through their deals, so my idea was to cut their share and help consumers," says Yoe.

Talking about her journey so far, she says, "I'm more of an intrapreneur now where I help conglomerate companies and corporations to leverage on their assets and diversify."

The Real Superwoman

Lilly Singh, the famous YouTuber, comedian and actor, on life, work, fighting taboos and every thing in between

Lilly Singh discovered YouTube in 2010 — the year she "wasn't in a good place". She says, those 12 months, while finishing college to get a psychology degree, were tough. "I didn't feel creative, which made me sad because I was very creative as a kid. I wasn't sure what I wanted to do after school and I just wasn't excited about life." So she picked up a camera, made a video and posted it on YouTube. It was an attempt to make herself feel happy, and it made her more than happy. Soon she found a community of people who also found happiness in her videos and it snowballed into a successful career.

The Artist in the Making

In the past 10 years, Lilly, known to her fans as Superwoman (inspired by her childhood idea that she had an invisible "S" on her chest), has earned 14.5 million subscribers on YouTube, written a *New York Times* best-seller (*How To Be A Bawse: A Guide to Conquering Life*), acted, produced and starred in a live world tour, released a feature film (*A Trip to Unicorn Island*), earned tenth position in *Forbes'* 2017 list of the world's highest paid YouTube stars, and topped its 2017 Top Influencers List in the entertainment category. Initially, she focused on making observational videos that tackled everyday life. But eventually, as her popularity grew, she started attracting celebrities like Dwayne Johnson, Selena Gomez, Seth Rogen, James Franco, Steve Aoki and Madhuri Dixit. Punjabi culture, however, has remained a constant. "My Indian heritage is a big part of me and so it does inspire a lot of my storytelling," says Lilly, who was born and raised in Scarborough, Ontario.

What the World Wants

Lilly credits her Punjabi parents, Malwinder and Sukhwinder Singh, for supporting her throughout the journey. "When I told my parents that I didn't want to go to graduate school and get my master's degree but instead pursue YouTube they didn't say no. Naturally, they were concerned because they didn't know what YouTube was and didn't really understand the Internet. They told me I had a year to try it and if it didn't work in a year I'd have to go to grad school," says the 30-year-old artist. Lilly reacted to their response by hustling "really, really hard" and from that point, she learned how to edit videos, use a camera ("I saved up for a camera"), taught herself comedy, and how to write a script. "I convinced them through hard work and luckily in that year it did go somewhere."

Of course, it hasn't been an easy journey for her. "The biggest (challenge) has been work-life balance. I am in an industry that is 24/7, social media does not turn off, the industry is very demanding so it's challenging to have a personal life," says Lilly, who last year started her production company, Unicorn Island Productions, to create long-form premium content to tell some "risky, authentic stories."

Asked about her inspiration, she says. "Finding common threads between all of humanity. I like when people watch my videos and relate to them in a deep sense. You come to realize that, we all go through this experience together even though we feel lonely at times. I want my videos to be positive for someone who is having a bad day and just wants to escape."



“The biggest (challenge) has been work-life balance. I am in an industry that is 24/7, social media does not turn off, the industry is very demanding so it’s challenging to have a personal life.”

— Lilly Singh



"I have no regrets and I would like to encourage women to believe in themselves and follow their own path," says the mother of one.
— Yuki He



The 'Unpopular' Choice-Maker

LiveMe's Yuki He on going against the norm and carving her unique path

Yuki He worked in the tech industry for years but the work culture frustrated her. After much thinking, she decided to utilize her experience in both the Chinese and overseas mobile Internet markets and become an entrepreneur. "I had a passion for singing when I was in college but I was studying computer science, so it was just a hobby. Years later I thought about myself and other people who could sing, dance, or had other talents but didn't know how or where to showcase those skills. I thought, 'What if I can create a platform for people to showcase their talents live and in front of a global audience?'" That's what led to the creation of LiveMe, a popular Chinese live broadcasting app that lets anyone start broadcasting live and includes features like virtual gifting, and beam-in video, in 2016. The platform encourages users and broadcasters to share their talents, whether it's singing, dancing, comedy, or even if it's just spreading positivity.

The Choices We Make

Yuki, 37, has made many "unpopular" choices to carve out her own path, including attending a technology university and choosing to work at Tencent, then a small Internet company, instead of an established corporation. She later left to help grow a fledgling startup, Cheetah Mobile into a prominent company that would eventually be listed on the New York Stock Exchange (NYSE), and finally, she launched LiveMe. "I have no regrets and I would like to encourage women to believe in themselves and follow their own path," says the mother of one. "Trust your abilities, build a product that adds value."

Although LiveMe became a household name within few months of its inception, Yuki wanted to ensure that it goes well

with Western audience as well. And her timing was right. She explains, "The content industry was going through a dramatic shift. More social platforms were adopting live video, so audiences were becoming more aware. Also, creators were looking for new ways to monetize their content, since many platforms like YouTube were shifting their revenue models to accommodate advertisers. LiveMe checked the boxes for a lot of those creators, so we experienced incredible growth very early on in the process." Yuki believes LiveMe has been one of the most fulfilling experiences of her life. "I hear stories from our broadcasters about how LiveMe has changed their lives for the better. One broadcaster was suffering from depression after the loss of a loved one. She said LiveMe helped her find a community where she could get support," she says.

Standing Apart

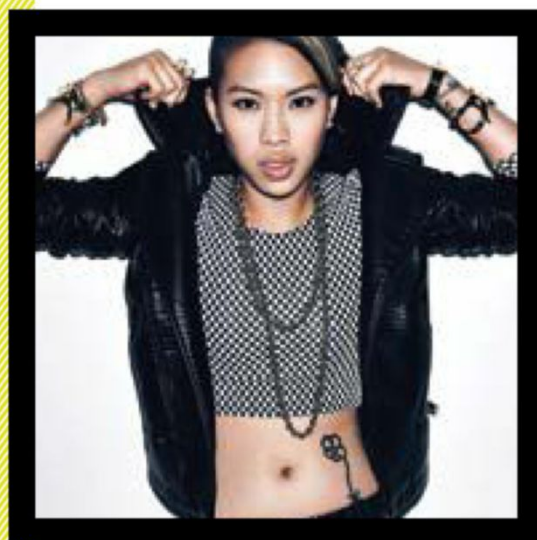
The world of live streaming platforms is a crowded one. What makes LiveMe different from others? "Our focus is to help independent creators thrive both financially and creatively. It is one of our biggest differentiators. Our broadcasters are financially rewarded based on the quality of the content they provide their fans, not the brand sponsorships they attract or the number of views they receive. We also invest in our community through our Broadcaster Development Program, which provides resources, talent managers, and more to help independent creators hone their skills and grow their followings," Yuki explains. Her company has also launched a Safety Advocate program, a community-driven effort to flag and remove harmful content. "We employ human moderators and advanced AI software to monitor all content on the platform 24/7," she says.

Rap it Up

Taiwanese-American Miss Ko breaks stereotypes through her songs

Miss Ko is known to speak her mind through songs. From domestic violence, to racial discrimination and "horrible" pizza, the Taiwanese-American rapper-songwriter has weaved into several real life experiences in catchy melodies and upbeat work and earned worldwide fan following. Being a female rapper in a male-dominated music industry has not been easy, and the 32-year-old, who hails from Queens, New York, has worked hard enough to create a name for herself. Ko can rap in both English and Chinese Mandarin and has three albums to her credit till date. She made the world sit up and take notice in 2012 when she won Best New Artist at the 24th Annual Golden Melody Awards, the Grammy's of Taiwan, becoming the first rapper to ever win the gong. Living in New York, Ko was exposed to hip-hop music and culture at a young age. By high school, she knew how to sing and rap songs. "My inspiration was Tupac Shakur's Changes," she says. When it comes to rapping, content is an important factor, Ko believes. However, she struggled with writing challenges like learning how to rhyme and transition from single to multi-syllable words. "I feel like music is for the ears. All you need to do is hear it and like it. Everything else is just propaganda," she explains.

"Being able to evoke a certain emotion and relate with others and connect with different people. It's a beautiful thing and very rewarding when you can do it effectively," says Ko, who is busy working on her fourth album.



Instant Chinese

Chineasy founder Shaolan Hsueh's quick, eye-catching solution to learn Mandarin

How do you learn a language spoken by 15 percent of the world's population? You could start by learning to read Chinese first. But how? There are about 10,000 Chinese characters in common use. Well, ShaoLan Husueh, a Taiwanese entrepreneur and venture investor living in London, has a solution. Her startup, Chineasy, transforms cornerstone Chinese characters known as radicals into clever illustrations and stories to teach people basic vocabulary.

The idea of Chineasy came to ShaoLan in February 2013 while giving a TED talk in Long Beach, California, revealing a personal project for teaching Chinese — a task she had originally started to develop as a hobby to teach her British-born children their mother tongue, and also appreciate the Chinese culture. “The Chinese language has long been considered the most difficult major language to learn, largely on account of the vast number and complexity of the characters. When I began to teach my children Chinese, I realized just how difficult Chinese characters are for a native English speaker to learn. It was like torture for my kids!” she says. With Chineasy, her mission is to bridge the gap between the East and the West.

The Creative Streak

ShaoLan's educational background has been in science and international

affairs, but there's also the creative streak in her DNA. Being the daughter of a calligrapher and ceramic artist, she grew up immersed in art and with a deep appreciation for the beauty of the Chinese language. “I was the youngest among three daughters, and there was a majority of women in my family, and I grew up to be more of the tomboy. Everyone in my family is very artistic except me,” she says. In her youth, she was more into Taoism (a set of ancient beliefs and philosophy recognised as a religion in China), Chinese acupuncture and science.

“As a Taoist, it was important for me to find my path and what could become a form of legacy. I am trying to make sure that our existence contributes positively to the world.”

“Looking back, I see Chineasy as a return to my artistic upbringing, and technology background. It is an arts project that is the culmination of my life's journey between traditional and modern, as well as through the East and the West,” she says.

ShaoLan says people are keen to be able to communicate with the 1.3 billion people in China, yet there is not much out there to enable them to do so. “As a Taoist, it was important for me to find my path and what could become a form of legacy. I am trying to make sure that our existence contributes positively to the world.”





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What's Your Dream Gadget?

Technology is fast evolving, making the impossible possible. It has brought about ease of living in our lives through various communication tools, apps, gadgets etc. We asked some entrepreneurs about their dream gadget and got interesting answers.



JULIEN GUEUNING AND CHRISTOPHE BRANCHUR

Co-founders, JU&KE Design Studio, China

We will go for a robot that prepares meals at our workplace in an instant based on our different personal culinary preferences.



JON TSE

Co-founder, Zookal, Singapore

A smartphone that comes with a small chip lodged in my stomach, which measures my nutrient and water intake and sends me live recommendations to optimize my body.



RUBY CHUI

Founder Brandnographer, Hong Kong

Something that can help me fix my sleeping posture. I tend to sleep on my side and it isn't good for me - not only causing shoulder soreness, but also wrinkles.



JODI KOVITZ

CEO-founder, #MovetheDial, Global

My dream gadget is already a reality: the Bedtime app. I put in long hours at work. With Bedtime, I can keep track of how many hours of consecutive sleep I am getting, since rest is my secret weapon for productivity.



ANDREW BARNES

CEO-founder, GO1.com, Australia

Robot lawn mower. Fortunately, there are a few that are now coming on to the market. It would be great to see prices become more accessible as competition heats up.



JANGKAR BAWONO

Founder of Portblue, Indonesia

A device that can scan the condition of your body and provide a solution if something is wrong or hurt. It can give recommendations on what you should eat, treat, or when you should go to the doctor.



MAYANK BHANGADIA

Co-founder-CEO, ROPOSO, India

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POWER COUPLE

THE BUSINESS OF COUPLEPRENEURS

Five couples share the highs and lows of running a business together. Read on to know how they couterpoise the act of love and business.

By Punita Sabharwal, Mohit Sabharwal and Kartik Sood



Desi Designers, Pardesi Clientele

FALGUNI PEACOCK, CREATIVE DIRECTOR,
SHANE PEACOCK, CHIEF CREATIVE DIRECTOR,
FALGUNI SHANE PEACOCK

“Dressing Beyonce and Lady Gaga, and to be able to showcase our collections in international fashion weeks have been amongst the most surreal moments of our career.”

Designers Falguni and Shane Peacock had a flair for fashion since an early age. For being life long associated with their interest, the duo pursued education in fashion, and went on to work in the industry to gain some experience before launching their own fashion label, Falguni Shane Peacock in 2004.

Describing their design as avante-garde and edgy, the husband-wife duo say, “We like experimenting with opulent elements of surface ornamentation, incorporating them in an unconventional way into our designs. The silhouettes we create are modern and contemporary with a juxtaposition of our signature components like sequin, feather, prints and other embellishments.”

The designer couple is credited for having brought international recognition to the domestic fashion sphere. International celebrities like Beyonce and Lady Gaga have worn their couture. Further, the duo has showcased their collection in the international fashion weeks like the New York and the London Fashion Week.

On reflecting back on their journey spanning more than a decade-and-a-half, both Falguni and Shane feel overwhelmed. They say, “The reach and impact of our label over the last decade has been overwhelmingly impressive. Our clientele isn’t constrained within the country; we dress brides from all over the world.”

Citing team spirit as one of their reasons for success, the duo says, “Over the years, we have embraced every professional conflict with a level-headed discussion, where we weigh in practical solutions and then come to a conclusion unanimously.”

For the year 2019, the couple is upbeat and promises to come out with a lot of new collections, from bridal couture to cocktail ensembles to pret and menswear lines.



Indian ‘Tadka’ in Global Palate

ZORAWAR & DILDEEP KALRA, FOUNDERS, MASSIVE RESTAURANTS

The Indian palate is already stuffed with a plethora of dishes but how Delhi-born Zorawar Kalra reinvented the culinary ingredients is truly amazing. It came natural to Zorawar as he was raised in a family that was immersed in the food industry. His father Jiggs Kalra is the pioneering food columnist, author, gastronome and food consultant often referred to as the ‘Tastemaker to the Nation.’ And thus, he came to be known as the Prince of Indian Cuisine.

But his counterpart, Dildeep Kalra, with whom he tied the knot in July 2007, also got the hang of gluttony as she metaphorically iterates that their bond is like a perfect combination of wine and cheese. Massive Restaurants is a company, which owns and operates restaurants like KODE, Masala Library, Pa Pa Ya, Farzi Café and Made, in Punjab, that Zorawar and Dildeep have strived together to build. It was their first venture together which they established in 2012. It is a combined effort with parallel and similar responsibilities. “I was in Delhi to meet my friends and I went to Aqua at the Park Hotel where I happened to meet him at that party,” says Dildeep. They started dating in December 2005.

The couple has plans to take the venture global after raising its second round of funding, amounting to roughly Rs 160 crore. “We are now expanding internationally and our vision and mission is to take Indian cuisine global,” she denotes. The couple loves to travel and try cuisines and explore eating joints despite having contrasting personalities. But over the years, they adapted to each other’s ways. They are mostly on-the-go handling different aspects of the business. “This involves a lot of international and domestic travel. It is difficult but we ensure we spend quality time with kids,” she says. Raising kids is a combined role. “Zorawar does his bit and I do mine. Homework and extracurricular activities are something Dildeep looks into. Having said the same, he never misses any important event at school,” she says.

Whenever they have any argument one of them comes around and charms the other. “Like I said there are times when we are like chalk and cheese and then there are times we are thinking of the same thing at the same time” asserts Dildeep. They have been through their share of rough times. “There are situations where I am the calming factor and then there are times where he is the guiding light. When we are together no challenge or phase seems big. We get through it all together,” she comments.

POWER COUPLE



The Olympic 'jodi'

PVV LAKSHMI, PULLELA GOPICHAND SPORTS COUPLE

When Entrepreneur interviewed 1996 Atlanta Olympian PVV Lakshmi, wife of the Padma Bhushan and Arjuna Awardee Pullela Gopichand, she was engrossed in watching her daughter Gayathri's live match on YouTube.

Her prompt reply was that Gayathri had won the match. The faint gumption in her voice reverberated the toil that she and Gopichand underwent for their daughter's success. After marrying Lakshmi in 2002, Gopichand bid adieu to the sport in 2004. Lakshmi and Gopichand had realized the torment of not having requisite facilities and coaches for their training. After retirement, Gopichand strived for eradicating the problems that he had encountered. His career was cut short due to injuries and lack of management in the sport. Thus, began his second innings as a coach. He aimed to build a state-of-the-art facility for the budding shuttlers of the country. There came a time when the duo had to mortgage their house for establishing the first Gopichand Academy in Hyderabad. "It was an arduous time for us. The kids were young and we had a loan on our head. But Gopi wanted the sport to be beneficial for players," she iterates.

After the success of first academy in Hyderabad, a second facility was opened as a part of 40 acres Shahid Vijay Singh Pathik Sports Complex in Greater Noida in March 2017. It was India's third and North India's first High Performance Center at the time.

For 17 years, Gopichand and Lakshmi have been through thick and thin of times. "I have never ever opposed any of his plans and have always backed him," she says. Lakshmi feels that Gopi has evolved overtime as a player, coach and entrepreneur. "He always had the grit, devotion and dedication as a player but as a coach he matured those qualities," she concludes.

A space of their own

ANURAG SRIVASTAVA, CO-FOUNDER JUNGLE VENTURES,
SHAGUFTA ANURAG, FOUNDER, SPACE MATRIX

Anurag had started working in Singapore in 1993 and visited India in 1995 and met Shagufta who happened to be his colleague's classmate on one of these trips. After this formal meeting, Anurag returned to Bangalore for work and knew none in the city except Shagufta. Coincidentally, their offices were opposite to each other and that's where their interaction grew into conversations. Shagufta who had graduated in Architect Engineering had her own business at that point in time. After four years of a long-distance relationship they got married in 1999.

Post marriage, the couple moved to Singapore that's when Shagufta wanted to set up her business. She founded an interior design company in 2001 named Space Matrix. Today, its counted amongst the top 10 workplace design firms in the world. Around the same time, Anurag moved to London. As Anurag didn't like his work there and wanted to move back to Asia, that's when the idea of working together for Space Matrix clicked the couple. In year 2006, when the couple thought of starting a family Anurag started focusing more on Space Matrix. Moving from being a professional to an entrepreneur in 2012 Anurag thought of starting Jungle Ventures to invest in tech platforms. Even Shagufta went on to be a serial entrepreneur and co-founded Livspace in 2014 and Saltmine in 2016. "Anurag is a very calm person and extremely focused. That doesn't leave any space for conflicts." As per Anurag, "Whatever decisions we take have been in discussion with each other, keeping the ego out," Shagufta says.

The couple has been together for last 24 years making a great working combination of an entrepreneur and a VC. Their skills are complementary. While Shagufta can conceptualize new ideas and can also see and solve a problem very early. She is strong with customers and clients. Anurag can work on finance, strategy, culture building, vision, leadership development, M&As.





Saving Lives Together

PIYUSH JAIN, CEO, KHUSHBOO JAIN, COO & CO-FOUNDERS, IMPACT GURU

Internet entrepreneurship is tough, believes the duo behind Impact Guru — an online crowdfunding platform started in 2014 to empower individuals, NGOs and social enterprises raise funds for medical emergencies, personal needs or a social cause.

Proving that patience is a virtue, the couple is glad that they didn't close their venture, a move they had considered to be pragmatic at a point. Today, Impact Guru has successfully mobilized over Rs 150 crore across 15 countries via its platform. It claims to be the largest crowdfunding platform in India for medical emergencies, benefiting over 20,000 patients with

200,000 donors on board.

The duo shares that often they are so busy managing the business that they forget to take a pause to realize the impact of their work. Sharing a real life incident that speaks volumes about the kind of work they are doing, Khushboo says, "A woman named Gopi raised Rs 45 lakh for her husband's medical emergency. When I went to meet them in the hospital, both had tears in their eyes. I actually realized that our work was saving lives."

The duo believes, it is moments like these that give them strength in difficult times. However, while working together professional disagreements do arise at times,

the two call final shots only in their respective domains, well aware of each other's expertise. "While initially, everything from preparation, research and brainstorming was driven by us together, the responsibilities today are different. Piyush looks after the overall strategy and finance, and I oversee the brand building process," says Khushboo.

Committed to making healthcare accessible to all across geographies, the company aims to go global and is shortly seeking to foray in the Middle East. "We are on a mission to make and save more lives and cast the ImpactGuru net across geographies," Piyush says.

GROWTH BRAND JOURNEY

Within India, Wagh Bakri expanded its footprint from Gujarat to Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, and other northern and southern states.

Pivoting to the need of millennials, Wagh Bakri launched its first tea lounge in Ahmedabad.

Another tea lounge opened in Vile Parle, Mumbai. Now, the tea brand has 15 tea lounges in Mumbai, Delhi, Ahmedabad and Goa.

Wagh Bakri Tea went global. It started exports to USA, Canada, UK and Australia.

The business had grown to seven shops in Ahmedabad under Desai and his three sons.

Brand Wagh Bakri was born. Inspired by Gandhian values, its name and logo comprises of tiger (wagh) and goat (bakri), denoting the need to forget differences.

After working for a while for a tea estate in Mahabaleshwar, Maharashtra, Desai opened Gujarat Tea Depot in Ahmedabad.



Protesting against the ill-practice of Apartheid, Desai, following Mahatma Gandhi, moved back to India.



The founder, Shri Narandas Desai, procured 500 acres of tea estates on lease in Durban, South Africa.

A 'KADAK' CENTURY

India is a tea-drinking nation, where a refreshing cup of 'chai' is an indispensable part of the culture. Here's how Wagh Bakri simmered its way to become the third-largest packaged tea company in the country.

Established an in-house laboratory to test the quality of tea and its safety for consumption.

Increased its share in the packaged tea market in India to 8.09 percent, up from 7.18 percent in 2012.

Wagh Bakri completes 100 years in India and stands tall as the third largest packaged tea company in the country.



"We have been ahead of the times. Almost 20 years back, we started offering our tea to our consumers through our e-commerce platform "buytea.com". Moreover, it was us who pioneered the concept of Tea lounges in India in 2002. They were created with the objective of reinventing the tea-drinking culture in India at a time when the market was completely dominated by Coffee places." — **Parag Desai, Executive Director**



PARTNER WITH AUSTRALIA'S POPULAR AWARD WINNING COFFEE CHAIN



WHY THE COFFEE CLUB?



- Serving since 1989 & already a successful franchise model
- Good Food, Great Service and Excellent Coffee being served at more than 400 coffee club globally
- A welcoming relaxed meeting place enriching contemporary lifestyle
- Operating in Various Formats : Restaurant, Café & Kiosks
- Experienced & Trained staff already making 60 million cups of coffee locally and internationally



Where will I meet you?



Investment (Area Franchise)
INR 1.3 Cr



Area Required
500 Sq.Ft. Onwards



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Metro Cities

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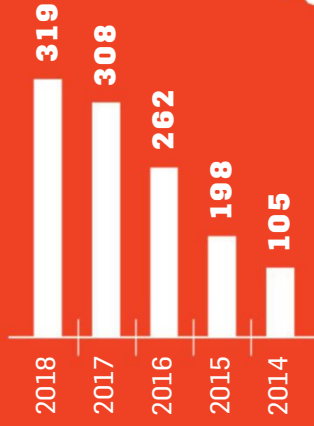
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HITS & MISSES OF THE MODI GOVERNMENT

In May 2014, India was promised a new economic epoch. Fifty-seven months later, Entrepreneur examines the state of the economy — then and now.

FINANCIAL INCLUSION

BASIC ACCOUNTS OPENED
EACH YEAR (IN MILLION)

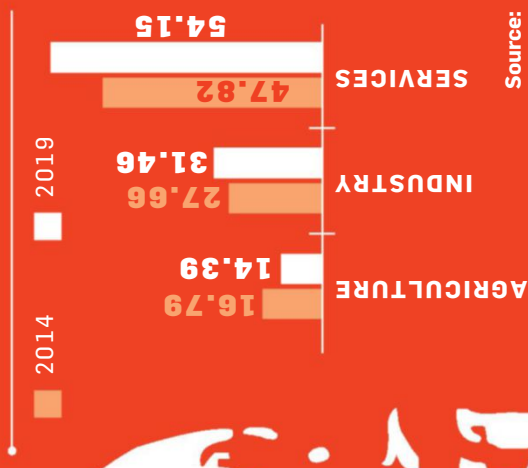


Source: Bloomberg

**BAD LOANS
WITH PSBS
(RS LAKH CR)**

FY 14 **2.16**

SECTOR WISE INDUSTRY CONTRIBUTION TO GDP (%)



Source:
Statistic Times



FY 18

8.45

Source: Ministry of Finance

FOREIGN DIRECT INVESTMENT (FDI)

Figures in \$ US billion



Source: DIPP

HIGHWAYS CONSTRUCTED EVERY DAY (IN KM)



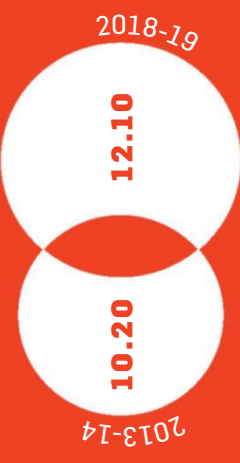
Source: Ministry of Road Transport and Highways (MoRTH)

EASE OF DOING BUSINESS



Source: World Bank's Ease of Doing Business 2019 Survey

GROSS TAX REVENUE AS % OF GDP:



*2018-19 figures are budgeted.

Source: Bloomberg

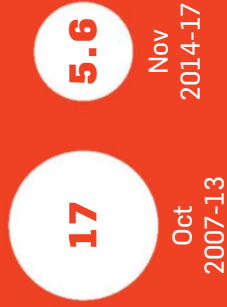
UNEMPLOYMENT RATE (IN %)



Source: NSSO

Source: CMIE

GROWTH RATE IN NOMINAL AGRICULTURAL WAGES (%)



Source: RBI

STARTUP INDIA

Launch Year	DIPP Recognised Startups	Jobs Created	Total States' Startup Policies	Budget Allocated till Dec 2018
2016	16,200	1,48,897 (11 jobs per startup)	20	Rs 10,000 Cr
				Rs 1900 Crore (19%)

Source: Startup India
*Total states with Startup policies are 24.
Four formulated before the program.

P2P LENDERS TO THE RESCUE OF MSMEs

Access to credit is one of the most painful points among the MSMEs in India. However, with alternate data, GST data stack and AI-driven algorithms, MSMEs are hoping for a change in the credit positions — P2P lenders have stepped up to take up the challenge.

By Vanita D'Souza



Statista notes that the transaction value in the P2P segment is about \$1,123 million and is expected to grow at CAGR (2019-2023) of 19 percent resulting to about \$2,249 million by 2023.

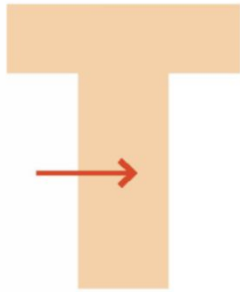
\$1,123m

MSME Credit Gap
\$600b
Source: Omidyar Network and Boston Consulting Group



MSME lending via digital platforms in annual disbursements
\$80-100b
Source: Omidyar Network and Boston Consulting Group





The Indian Micro, Small & Medium Enterprise (MSME) sector is massive. There are more than 60 million MSMEs in the country. The sector contributes 30 percent to the country's GDP and employs over 100 million people. And yet, often it is declined formal credit that helps keep businesses up and running. According to an Omidyar

Network and Boston Consulting Group's report, the SME credit gap in the country is close to \$600 billion and almost 40 percent of MSMEs borrow from informal sources at double the interest rate. Most of the SMEs fail to raise funds due to inadequate financial records, lack of credit histories etc. Also, from a bank's perspective, the cost of servicing an MSME loan is higher as opposed to a corporate loan. With the constant need to keep their NPAs in check, banks tend to avoid servicing MSME clients. However, with the age of digitalization, reorganization of informal players in the sector led by the GST drive and growth of alternative lending platforms, there is a new ray of hope for the sector. The same report suggests that India's open digital infrastructure, unmet customer demand, and leapfrogging digital behaviour have the potential to benefit a broad range of players and MSME digital lending can grow to \$80-100 billion in annual disbursements. Having said that, a year or two ago, one could have barely imagined how peer-to-peer (P2P) lending startups would contribute to this growth trajectory.

BUILDING THE BRIDGE

P2P platforms have now realized the importance of SME credit and also, it can potentially act as the chorus for the sector's growth story in the future. Rajat Gandhi, CEO and Founder of Faircent.com, which has disbursed 64 percent of its total loan in 2018 to SMEs, says with P2P's digital platform, paper-less and presence-less process cuts intermediary cost, thereby, offering faster and cheaper credit. P2P lending is offering a ray of hope to a large chunk of the unbanked and under-banked population of India. "By going beyond traditional means of credit evaluation and using tech-driven underwriting algorithm, the industry has brought thousands of SMEs under the purview of organized credit," Gandhi says. With the country's GDP expected to grow, the MSME sector is bound to improve and rise above the stagnancy it has remained confined to. Bhavin Patel, co-founder, LenDenClub feels that there is a huge opportunity for P2P platforms to fund these SMEs as well as their employees. "Higher aspiration of individuals and SMEs will bring a huge future growth in P2P lending. According to ICRA, the share of lending by Non Banking Financial Companies (NBFCs) to MSMEs is projected to rise to 23 percent by March 2022 from the current level of 15 percent. If P2P loans will come to support, SME lending may touch 30 percent," Patel says.

THE REGULATORY BLOCK

While P2P players are trying hard to solve at least some part of India's SME credit issue, but it won't be an easy task. At present, when it comes to financing, SMEs generally do not evaluate P2P as a source of funding due to lack of awareness. With education drives, the players are hoping to rope in more SMEs on their platform. More so, the present NBFC-P2P regulation is giving them nightmares. From a regulatory point of view, the Reserve Bank of India also needs to relax its P2P guidelines. Presently, a company seeking registration as an NBFC-P2P needs to show Net Owned Funds (NOF) of not less than Rs 20 crore and it cannot raise the deposit under Section 45I(bb) of the Act or the Companies Act, 2013. Additionally, the P2P players also cannot make their own books. This guideline caps aggregate exposure of a lender across all P2Ps to Rs 10 lakh. The same cap is applied to a borrower. To top it all, the exposure of a single lender to the same borrower cannot exceed Rs 50,000 and maturity of the loans should not be more than 36 months. Ambar Kasliwal, director and CRO, PaisaDukan.com says, "The cap on exposure is limiting P2P lending sector's growth, regulators might be playing safe but for its growth they need to focus on scrutiny rather than limiting the business. Such a small cap of lending P2P platforms cannot create volume and cannot serve MSMEs, which historically have remained underserved."

CONNECTING THE DOTS

SMEs often fail to share relevant data to access their credit report and digital players, including P2Ps are required to connect dots while servicing the sector. This combined with low data confidentiality, Patel says, creates the biggest assessment problem for lenders. "A lot of time, SME credit assessment is also linked with an assessment of the individual who is running the show. To address these, P2Ps have developed their own AI-analytics based model, which evaluates several data points that are not readily available in physical documents and assess the company along with the person who is the vital force behind it. This methodology helps us do a better assessment of SMEs, which is not possible otherwise," he adds.

So, players like LenDenClub use the bank statements to understand a company's cash flow, while other players like RupeeCircle and CashKumar use alternate data and personal financial data of the entrepreneurs or self-employed individuals to access their ability and stability to repay the loan. "We have our proprietary algorithms and policy to assess the credibility of borrowers on the platform. The system analyzes loan applications based on credit reports and financial statements. We use a lot of alternate data as well to gauge the ability and intention of potential borrowers. SMEs can be a tricky group when it comes to credibility checking. It is thus, other parameters like tax records, customer feedback could be of help apart from the normal credit and financial checks," Abhishek Gandhi, co-founder, RupeeCircle points out. With the next financial year around the corner, it remains to be seen whether this trend would pickup the pace or not and whether SMEs and P2Ps will continue to support each other in the coming years. 📌



"If P2P loans will come to support, SME lending may touch 30%."

Bhavin Patel, Co-founder, LenDenClub



"By going beyond traditional means of credit evaluation and using tech-driven underwriting algorithm, the industry has brought thousands of SMEs under the purview of organized credit."

Rajat Gandhi, CEO and Founder, Faircent.com



WHEN YOUNGISTAN CAME TOGETHER

Entrepreneur's 35U35 show presented by Blenders Pride Reserve Collection was a spectacle with an entrepreneurial bent. The show saw many names from the business world come together to applaud the winners of the coveted 35U35 list.



TRUE DISRUPTIONS IN BUSINESS

The third edition of the show began with Ritu Marya, Editor-in-Chief of *Entrepreneur India and Asia-Pacific* talking about disrupting businesses. Today, the word "disruption" has become a norm in the business dictionary of entrepreneurs. Everyone is almost obsessed with the idea of coming up with concepts that can disrupt the existing business ecosystems. Marya spoke at length about how people are confusing disruption with ruining businesses. "Disruptions don't happen by destroying other small businesses. The burn wouldn't help anyone in the long run." She also highlighted that coming from a family of entrepreneurs, she understands it better that entrepreneurship is never going to be easy.



(**Top**): Winners of Entrepreneur 35U35; (**Middle**): Ritu Marya in conversation with Co-founder, Livspace; Anuj Srivastava; (**Bottom**): Suchita Salwan, Co-founder, Little Black Book, Akhil Malik, CEO, Zostel Hospitality, Aditi Shrivastava, Co-founder, Pocket Aces, Prabhtej Singh Bhatia, Founder & CEO, Simba Craft Beverages, Karan Tanna, Founder & CEO, Yellow Tie Hospitality, Som Narayan, Co-founder, Carbon Masters in a panel discussion with Entrepreneur India Deputy Editor Punita Sabharwal Kapoor



OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Among the dignitaries present, was Livspace co-founder and CEO, Anuj Srivastava. In an interesting discussion with Marya, Srivastava shared his journey from a professional to an entrepreneur. He spoke about his short stint with Google and then coming back to India to start a venture. "I didn't want to be the Indian who moved to the US to start something. I wanted to be the Indian who came back..."

UNDERSTANDING STARTUPS

The interaction between Srivastava and Marya saw many ingredients of startups getting deconstructed. There are some important things that one can learn from Srivastava's idea of making startups a huge success. **First**, he emphasized upon the strength and capability of ideas when it comes to startups. **Second**, he said that "phenomenal companies have

phenomenal teams." **Third**, he encouraged entrepreneurs to adopt technology. "Technology has made small business owners very successful." **Fourth**, he summed up in three more points, "Great Markets, great ideas and a great team ensure the success of a startup."

Post Anuj Srivastava's opening chat, there was a panel discussion moderated by Punita Sabharwal, Deputy Editor of *Entrepreneur India*. Some distinguished names in the panel included the likes of Suchita Salwan, co-founder of Little Black Book; Akhil Malik, co-founder of Zostel; Aditi Srivastava, co-founder of Pocket Aces; Prabhtej Singh Bhatia, founder of Simba Craft Beverages; Karan Tanna, founder of Yellow Tie Hospitality and Som Narayan, co-founder of Carbon Masters. The panel discussion was largely on the millennial trends titled "Making of Future Leaders." It saw some revelations of how Indian millennials are seeing a transition in

everything that contests in the business world. The discussion also saw several millennial behaviours come to the surface.

Tanna shared that restaurant business is very dynamic. Therefore, entrepreneurs must focus on training and improving culture of businesses. Bhatia shared that globally 70 percent of the consumption is of beer whereas 30 percent includes consumption of other things. But in India, the scenario is exactly the opposite, the numbers get reversed. Aditi Srivastava said that as a startup, they have to constantly keep evolving the content for millennials. Narayan spoke about how his business is resulting in a lot of capital returns in just a span of four years. Malik shared that he was amused by the concept of backpacker hostel and he also emphasized that nothing existed in this paradigm of accommodation in India.

While, Salwan shared that in her line of business, tech has single-handedly democratized taste. ☺

CELEBRATE THE SPIRIT OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Title Partner



AGES AHEAD

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THE ECONOMIC TIMES

The event also saw the launch of Entrepreneur's Coffee Table book, an initiative by *Entrepreneur India*. The Coffee table Book is a collection of India's finest and the most successful entrepreneurs. It's dedicated to the men and women who have left enduring stories of entrepreneurship. The 35U35 event saw winners and people come together to celebrate the victories of entrepreneurs under 35 and most importantly, to celebrate the spirit of entrepreneurship. Each of the winners is changing the business ecosystem in India with disruptive



technologies and innovative business ideas. The vibe of 35U35 initiative is also meant to inspire the generations to come who are finding a footing in the industry.



Group Photograph of the Small Business Heroes

LtoR: Rajnish Goenka, Chairman & Managing Director, MSME Development Forum; Sohani Hossain CMD, Universal Group Pabna, Bangladesh and Christopher Richard, Chairman & Managing Director, G7 CR Technologies



LtoR: Rajnish Goenka, Chairman & Managing Director, MSME Development Forum; K.C.Sangeeth Mohan, Managing Director, Advanced Animal Nutrition and Christopher Richard, Chairman & Managing Director, G7 CR Technologies

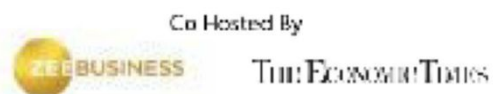
Celebrating the Best in Business

The 8th Annual Edition of Small Business Awards 2019, the leading awards for small and emerging businesses took place on 13th February at JW Marriott, Aerocity, New Delhi. The Awards night witnessed a glorious evening where businesses got countrywide acclaim and recognition. Considered as the most coveted awards show complementing the league's best across SMEs, SMBs and new and emerging small scale ventures, Small Business Awards 2019 recognised achievers across sectors and sub-sectors.



LtoR: Rajnish Goenka, Chairman & Managing Director, MSME Development Forum; RN Thakur, Vice President, GANS Lifestyle and Christopher Richard, Chairman & Managing Director, G7 CR Technologies

OUR SPONSORS





CATEGORY	WINNER
Food & Beverages Business of the Year - Manufacturing	Medusa Beverages Private Limited
Pharmaceutical Business of the Year	Addisun Life Sciences Private Limited
Automotive and Ancillary Business of the Year - Manufacturing	Technocrat Connectivity Systems Private Limited
Home and Home Products Business of the Year	Orizzonte Interiors Private Limited
Food and Beverages Business of the Year - Services	Licious - Delightful Gourmet Private Limited
Training and Education Business of the Year	SpellQuest India
Transportation and Logistics Business of the Year	Shree Nasik Goods Transport Co Private Limited
Healthcare, Beauty & Wellness Business of the Year	Enrich
E- Commerce Business of the Year	LetsShave.com
Financial Services Business of the Year	Hem Securities Limited
Gems and Jewellery Business of the Year	Kanak Mahalaxmi Jewellers
Printing and Publishing Business of the Year	Just Urbane Magazine
Micro Business of the Year - Agriculture	Avanathi Agro Agencies
Whole sale Business of the Year	DDS International
Retail Business of the Year	phoneup Franchising LLP
Dealer/ Distributor of the Year	Auto Lounge

Professional Service Provider of the Year	CivilMantra Infracon Private Limited
Human Resource Provider of the Year	Thinkinfinty Technology and Consulting Private Limited
Craft based Business of the Year	Udaipur Haat
Fastest Growing Small Business of the Year	"Yaantra Gadgetwood eservices Private Limited"
Social Entrepreneur of the Year	Shriyans Bhandari; CEO & Co-founder; Greensole
Young Entrepreneur of the Year	Bala Sarda; Founder & CEO; Vahdam Teas
Biotechnology Business of the Year	Advanced Animal Nutrition Private Limited
Start Up of the Year	Wakefit Innovations Private Limited
Micro Business of the Year - Electronic	Savitri Electronics Private Limited
Women Entrepreneur of the Year	Nidhi Yadav; Founder & Creative Head; AKS Clothings
Emerging Consumer Business of the Year	GANS Lifestyle Private Limited
IT & IteS Business of the Year	MoveInSync Technology Solutions Private Limited
Best Exporter of the Year - Small Business	Fardaan Seafoods
Best Exporter of the Year - Micro Business	Dhiraj Engineering Works - Kalol
Technology Provider of the Year	Viitorcloud Technologies Private Limited
Micro Business of the Year	Vignesh Aravind Transports

Green Business of the Year	Rashi E Waste Solutions Private Limited
Home Grown Business of the Year	Denave India Private Limited
Innovative Business Of The Year	Clensta International
Dynamic Business of the Year	QuirkyByte Media
Business Support of the Year	TanServ
Medium Business Of The Year	Ambrane India Private Limited
Energy Business of the Year	MYSUN
Hall of Fame	"Sohani Hossain, CMD, Universal Group Pabna, Bangladesh"
Small Business of the Year	Zostel
Creative Business of the Year	Mukunda Foods Pvt. Ltd
Financial Institution Of The Year	OBOPAY
Automotive and Ancillary Business of the Year	Pitstop
Travel and Tourism Business of the Year	ixigo
Textile Manufacturing Business of the Year	Raisin
Engineering & Allied Goods	Gensol Group
Serial Entrepreneur of the Year	V Raman Kumar, Chairman, CASHe
Small Business Mentor of the Year	Rajiv Talreja, Founder & MD, Quantum Leap Learning Solutions Private Limited
Entrepreneur of the Year	Mohan Lakhamraju, Founder and CEO, Great Learning



ADITYA GOEL Founder and CEO, QuirkyByte

QUICK FACTS

- Content Firm:**
QuirkyByte.com
- Sister Sites:** Southflix.com, FilmyByte.com
- Company Turnover:**
INR 5 crore
- Number of Writers Employed:** 150
- Funding Status:**
Bootstrapped
- Year Founded:** 2015
- Specialty:** Magazine, Blog, News

ANTHEM OF THE UNDERDOG

Relentless and insatiable are two words that describe serial entrepreneur Aditya Goel the best. Not many young aspirants have the gut or the skill to open not one but two businesses while still in college. Battling more than just pressure in the competitive sphere of business, he has emerged as a frontrunner in sectors that were previously untapped.

How did the concept of your content aggregation platform QuirkyByte come into being?

I was still pursuing my BBA in 2015 when I decided to launch an individual blog documenting my thoughts on the many movies and TV shows I watched in my free time. This page soon blossomed into a full-fledged online community for six million internet users across the globe and is now known as QuirkyByte.com.

Have you always wanted to leverage the internet to reach out to so many readers?

I initially wanted to become a software engineer. However, when an unfortunate brain hemorrhage confined me to a hospital for a year-and-a-half, my life saw drastic change. Faced with a lot of

time to think, I came out of the illness suffering from severe depression and a disheartened soul. For a passionate creator like me, an unthinking, passive existence wasn't an acceptable one and soon, I was enrolled in business school.

How does QuirkyByte work and what is its USP?

Thriving on witty analyses of fictional characters and plotlines of the most popular movies and television series, QuirkyByte garnered traffic enough to include regional cinema and vernacular entertainment as well. The website today has 150 writers, and plans on delivering a content discovery platform that will be able to read a user's profile and recommend audio-visual content based on what they

have already viewed and current moods.

What have you taken away from the business and how has that aided your green coffee brand Greenbrew?

Becoming an accomplished expert in digital marketing and content management within a short year of running the website, I decided to partner with his brother and launch yet another business venture in 2016. I tapped the fitness trend this time and produced green coffee under the brand name Greenbrew. The product now retails at 55,000 customer touch points across India and is also exported to international markets.

Does operating in unrelated sectors act as an advantage?

Leveraging a spot many in the business community think to be too tight, I learn lessons from one company and apply it to the other. A lot of people I come across have pointed out how I'm operating in domains completely unrelated to each other but I believe that every business remains the same at the core and is on an indisputable mission to become profitable.

What is the most unconventional aspect of your businesses?

I have never received a penny in external funding and have poured all my profits into scaling the ladder to success. QuirkyByte and Greenbrew together produce a joint turnover of INR 15 crore and boast of no debt or investors to pay off. I often quote my team and I as the proud underdogs.

SLEEP EXPERTS USHER YOUR SWEET DREAMS

Founders Chaitanya Ramalingegowda and Ankit Garg each had three failed attempts in entrepreneurial arena. But their camaraderie fructified with Wakefit, which achieved breakeven in just three months of its inception.



CHAITANYA RAMALINGEGOWDA



ANKIT GARG

Ever heard of sleep experts? No? Well, they are not doctors. They are a bunch of Wakefit's highly-trained customer delight executives who have a solution for your sleep issues with their unique products. The founders feel that these experts have been a game-changer culminating to the success of their venture. Showcasing consistent sales, they garnered a funding of Rs 65 crore in December 2018 clocking a turnover of whopping Rs 27 crore in FY 2018. They are en-route to triple the sales in FY 19.

What is the founding story of Wakefit?

Chaitanya: Ankit had a personal experience of buying a mattress in 2014. Eventually, he was left miffed with expensive purchase which was unsuitable for his sleep; this was coupled with poor purchase experience at the store. He had a vast experience in the foam industry, working with large incumbents. We were working for a startup where I joined as head of operations and Ankit was part of the team. The idea germinated in Ankit's head.

What has Chaitanya brought to the table?

Ankit: I am more aggressive, spontaneous and Chaitanya complements my traits with

his composure, discipline and futuristic thinking. Whenever we debate on any major decision to be implemented he knows how to make it sustainable and at the same time I can back it with rapid growth through scalability.

What has been the turning point for Wakefit?

Chaitanya: We are blessed that there have been more highs than lows in our journey. We do not count the highs in terms of money but weigh it by the number of satisfied customers. Until 2015, mattresses were not selling online as the people thought that this category was offline and touch-and-feel based. I think completing first 100 orders was when the tide turned for us.

In future how do you want Wakefit to grow?

Ankit: We want to be known as India's best sleep solutions provider. We design our product as per the needs and expectations of our customers. Our products give deep, quick and sound sleep. Hence, the venture was also named Wakefit. We lay special emphasis on research and development (R&D) to give better experience, with the use of imported lab machinery around pressure mapping, temperature measurement and stress testing.

How do you manage the distribution and marketing of your products?

Ankit: We have our own production centre in Bangalore. For smoother deliveries we have tied up with logistics companies like Fed Ex, Blue Dart and have also set up four warehouses in Mumbai, Pune, Hyderabad and Bangalore. We have delivered products from Leh-Ladakh to Andaman-Nicobar Islands but still have a lot to explore in other parts of India

How did you compete with established players?

Ankit: Our proprietary creation, CoolFit foam is combined with memory foam to regulate temperature, adjust with cellular structure and make mattress more breathable even in peak summer. We knew that the established brands had failed to provide experience. Thus, we employed sleep experts who are given one-month training. They follow-up three months post the sale to check how the mattress is behaving.

QUICK FACTS

Based in: **Bangalore**

Expected revenue for FY 19:

Rs 80 crore

Sleep experts: **35**

Funding: **Rs 65 crore**

Proprietary product:

CoolFit foam

Products: **Cots, pillows, mattress protectors, comforters, bed sheets**

SUNNY MARWAH, AVNEET SINGH & ARPAN SOOD
 Founders, Medusa Beverages



BREWING TASTILY

The quartet behind Medusa beverages sensed a business opportunity in tweaking the recipe of lager beer, whose taste, for long, had remained pungent and sharp. Acting quick on their feet, they introduced Medusa, the new-age lager beer, in the market, ensuring a euphoric feeling via a delightful taste.

How did Medusa Beverages come into being?

We are friends and had been working in the liquor business for years. In 2017, a chance conversation led us think of making beer in our own brand name. The idea immediately struck the chord with us, and in the same year, we incorporated our company, Medusa Beverages, and launched the beer brand 'Medusa' in 2018.

Were there any gaps in the Indian liquor market you thought of building a business from?

Yes, while there were some good craft beer brands when we started, there weren't many for lager beer. Our beer, Medusa, is mild in taste and strong in impact. It gives a euphoric feeling and tastes great too. Further, we stand

out in the design aspect. Our beer comes in aluminum cans with appealing designs. Recently, we have introduced Medusa into glass bottles.

How well has Medusa been received in the market?

It has surpassed our own expectations. We had set a target of selling one lakh beer cases in our first year, but we sold around three lakh. It holds immense value for us because we sold

QUICK FACTS

Company: Medusa Beverages Pvt Ltd

Brand Launch Year: 2018

Founders: Avneet Singh (25), Sunny Marwah (33), Arpan Sood (37) and Nitish Malhotra (28)

Initial Investment: Rs 12 Cr

Turnover(2018-YTD): Rs 70 Cr

such large volumes without venturing into the beer bottle industry, comprising of 80% of the beer market. Our YTD revenue stands at Rs 70 crore. Further, for 2018, Medusa bagged the best 'Food & Beverages' business award by ET, Entrepreneur and Franchise India.

What challenges did you face while running your liquor business?

The challenges are two pronged. First is the varied taxation of the Indian states. Each state appears as a separate country owing to their different taxation policies. Moreover, the taxes are too high; it stands the least in Delhi at 170%. Scenarios in other states are worse. Due to exorbitant import fees, it isn't feasible to sell in another state unless there's a manufacturing

there. Our second major challenge is the restriction in advertisement and promotion of our product. It is prohibited to avail any sort of media for promoting a liquor brand.

What are your future plans? Do you plan to diversify?

We currently are in Delhi. We plan to expand to Chhattisgarh, Punjab, Chandigarh and Uttar Pradesh. We will also venture into making non-alcoholic beverages. We believe that beer market in India is in nascent stages and would only become bigger and better owing to the rising disposable income of the people. Gauging this positive trend, we have set an ambitious target of selling two million beer cases by FY 21.

AN ENTREPRENEUR FOR THE UNDERREPRESENTED

A personal tragedy forced Bangladesh-based Sohani Hossain(53) to venture into business. Though initially perturbed, she resolved to not give up and learn on the go. Now, her business clocks a turnover of BDT 400-600 crore.

Tell us about your background and how did you get into the business?

In my teens, I used to take a lot of interest in politics. In fact, my college life to the major extent comprised of my active participation in politics. Post completing the college, I got married to a businessman. In 2007, unfortunately, my husband died and I had to take over the business.

How difficult was it to run the business alone?

The challenge seemed insurmountable. I had zero knowledge of managing the business. But, I did not have the option to give up as I had five daughters to take care of. Thus, with no one to rely on, I took over the control and decided to learn on the go.

Share with us your experience of running the business?

I derived my motivation from the women in Bangladesh who had been neglected and suppressed for long. Besides this, there was a lot of hard work of course. I had always been fascinated by corporates and wanted to learn from them. In those initial years, I, therefore, strived to regularly interact with them and draw learnings, which ultimately I incorporated into my husband's business.

What has been the impact of those learnings?

Oh! The business has achieved quantum jumps in both growth and diversification. While my husband ran movie theatres, I have successfully diversified into hospitality, pharma and food products' domain. In the near future, we will open hospitals to serve the society. Our turnover stands at BDT(Bangladeshi Taka) 400-600 crore, and we employ around 10,000 employees.

What's the differentiating factor of your business?

We are a business with a social bent. The suppression of women in Bangladesh is widely known. I've brought neglected women and those addicted to drugs into the mainstream by employing them. Further, while society doesn't recognize the third gender, Universal group strives to enable them to lead a life with dignity by giving them jobs. These people are the jewels of Universal group.

What would be your advice to the aspiring women entrepreneurs?

Don't be deterred by social norms and always strive to work hard. If I could start from such dire circumstances and reach this place, then, I believe that every woman can. If a woman aspires to start a business, I am happy to give them mentorship for free as well as assist them with funds.



QUICK FACTS

Company:

Universal Group

Turnover:

BDT 400-600 Cr

of Employees:

10,000

SOHANI
HOSSAIN
Managing
Director,
Universal Group,
Bangladesh

AQUAMAN: THE TENACIOUS BREEDER

When Mansoor Ahmed was young, he watched fishermen in the adjacent villages going out every morning and returning after days of fishing. Some fishing expeditions would turn into a mourning affair as the boats would drown in the weather.

Mansoor Ahmed, Founder,
Fardaan Seafoods



Fardaan Seafoods now export to four countries namely Singapore, Hong Kong, China and Taiwan. Instead of shipping the product, he flew it through flight agents. “It is a live product. Its quality depends on its freshness. That is why the business model was successful,” he iterates.

Mansoor happily says that the business works 365 days and it is devoid of recession. “Crabs is the national food of Singapore,” he adds. But a sliver of pain darts through his face when he reminisces the Chennai floods of 2015. “That was the only time that I had shut my business for 3 months. The only impediment is natural calamity. It greatly impacted our relation with the overseas partners also,” Mansoor states.

Witnessing a massive growth, Fardaan clocked a turnover of 12 crores this year. Mansoor also wants to expand to other European countries and the United States. “I need to procure special licence for selling there,” he said.

Mansoor knows that the 15-16 other exporters in Chennai have become old and their next generation is in various other sectors. “In a decade, I will capture their market share as well. The profits will increase exponentially,” he concludes.

QUICK FACTS

Established in: **2016**

Based in:

Chennai, Tamil Nadu

Number of aquatic breeders: **20**

Countries exported to:
Singapore, Hong Kong, China and Taiwan

Annual Turnover: **Rs 12 crore**

had suddenly spiked, others also joined him taking the head count to 20.

Singapore was the first market he penetrated. Instead of selling the product to a supplier, he decided to sell it to the end consumer. He inked pact with a prominent market player in Singapore and soon bought a 50% stake in the company.

the woes of fishers.

Mansoor also took cognizance of the declining fish shoals around the coastal region. “Year after year, the catch was becoming scarce. I could see the opportunity abroad and the potential of the fishermen workforce available with us,” he says with a resolute look on his face.

Mansoor earmarked a piece of land which he borrowed from the fishermen and constructed fish farms. Initially, 2 farmers joined hands with Mansoor. They would breed young sea creatures in the farms and at the time when they became fit for consumption, Mansoor would buy it from them and supply the product to overseas. But soon when the others saw that their incomes

Seafood is a product which has a very low shelf-life. Mansoor soon realized that once the catch was kept for too long, it did not fetch adequate market value and sometimes the fishing trips would cost more than their income. Mansoor had been witnessing this for years and in 2014 his entrepreneurial genes kicked in. A third-generation business scion, he decided to take the plunge into the seafood sector and established Fardaan Seafood.

“I have seen the fishers bring their catch to the local markets. But all of them do not sell it to the consumer. There is a middle-man who takes a pie of their earning,” Mansoor says while sharing

PERFORATING MONOPOLIZED MARKETS

Elucidate on your entrepreneurial journey. What attracted you to start a venture in the grooming segment?

My first job as a product engineer required me to conduct consumer product evaluations to help retailers and manufacturers analyze the performance of their products. Having understood consumer grievances inside out, I decided to bring quality razors to the Indian market and started LetsShave in 2015. The essence of the brand is best described using three words – quality, comfort and flexibility. LetsShave promotes the idea of affordable quality in grooming products and succeeds in catering to a large demographic of millennials and Gen-X customers.

What retail channels do you use to sell your products?

Business to Consumer is our main focus but we cater to Business to Business markets as well. We don't sell offline as of yet. We also have a presence on social media platforms and sell through mediums like Facebook, Instagram and direct emailing.

What differentiates your razors and other grooming products from others in the market?

We have a couple of clear distinctions that help us stand out among the plethora of options available to consumers. Our eco-friendly packaging brings down production costs while also contributing to environmental conservation. We have a greater range of product variants that address all demographics in the market. Apart from launching a pioneer six-blade razor, LetsShave also sells a one-razor handle that fits all interchangeable blades for men and women both.

How do you market yourself differently to boost sales?

Digital marketing and word-of-mouth is helping us achieve market penetration. We want the Indian market to take grooming ranges more seriously and wish to convey the message that grooming is not as



SIDHARTH S
OBEROI
Founder & CEO,
LetsShave

QUICK FACTS

Company: **LetsShave**
Consumer Sector: **FMCG
and Grooming**
Inception: **2015**
Retail Presence: **Online**

expensive and time-consuming as people mistake it to be. It is essential and can also be affordable. We are doing this through a range of subscription-based shaving kits and a range of products at reasonable prices.

What challenges have you faced in setting up LetsShave?

The gaps that LetsShave strived to fill in the market were the biggest challenges. That's because the men's shaving and grooming market in India was monopolized and hence, consumers had little idea what to expect or demand. Securing ample marketing budgets has been the most pressing challenge. I have now learnt to optimize various components of a

marketing campaign and have, over time, demonstrated positive marketing ROI. Managing the website was also a task when we entered the market. It is still high on my priority list as it is an asset that keeps working round the clock to draw in visitors and convert them into customers.

What does the road to the future look like in terms of expanding your business?

We plan to use the newly raised funds by Dorco to expand our product portfolio to cater to men's and women's grooming needs more efficiently. LetsShave wants to become a one-stop solution for grooming while keeping shaving as its core category. We began with about four products, are now selling 22 products and plan to expand to 40 products in the near future.



Group Photograph of the life long learners

Lauding the Leaders in Learning

The Indian Education Awards witnessed Indian education professionals being appreciated and awarded for their hard work, unique and beneficial business ideas that carry the potential to revamp the Indian education industry.

CATEGORY	WINNER
Innovation in Early Learning / Child Development	EuroKids Pre-School
Standalone Pre-school of the Year - North	Early Learning Village
Best Early Education Innovative Curriculum	Klay Prep Schools and Daycare
Early Child Playschool Chain - National	Kidzee
Emerging Early Child Playschool Chain - North	Canvas International Pre-School
Early Child Playschool Chain - West	Young'in International Preschool & Child Care
Best Infrastructure in Early Education	Shri Ram Global Pre - School; Ludhiana
Principal of the Year - Early Education	Ms. Gina Bains; Principal, Saksham Pre-School
Emerging Play School of the Year	Dewan Global School
Excellence in Early Learning	Sanfort Play Schools
Early Child Playschool Chain - East	Little Laureates
Teaching Excellence Award - Early Education	Footprints Childcare
Best Emerging School of the Year - East	Magnus Global School
Best Emerging School of the Year - North	Dass and Brown World School
Best Emerging School of the Year - West	Ashoka Global Academy
Best Emerging School of the Year - South	Vaels International School

Best in Ongoing Teacher Enhancement	Narayana Educational Institutions
Standalone School of the Year - East	B.D.M. International
Best Sport Empowerment	Ramagya School
Best Residential School of the Year	Next Gen International School
Teaching Excellence Award - K12	Mr. Akash Raut; DSB International School
Early Child Playschool Chain - North	GD Goenka La Petite
K12 School Chain of the Year - National	Mount Litera Zee School
K12 School Chain of the Year - South	Narayana Educational Institutions
Best Edutainment Program - K12	Yatra Online Private Limited
Best Infrastructure / Resources Provider - K12	Tata ClassEdge
K12 Education Publisher of the Year	Oxford University Press, India
Principal of the Year - K12	Mrs. Ruchi sharma; Rainbow Academy Senior Secondary School
Best Use of Technology - K12	Heritage Xperiential Learning School
Teaching Excellence Award - Higher Education	Imarticus Learning Private Limited
Research Project of the Year	Mr.Thirumal Kumar D; Vellore Institute of Technology
Best Skill Learning Institute - Industry Placement	Times & Trends Academy

Hospitality & Hotel Management Training	Whitecaps International School of Pastry and Chocolate Art
Skill Learning Award - Interior Design	IVS School of Design
Skill Learning Award: Polytechnics - Language Training	NEC Japanese Language Academy
Most Impactful PPP (Public-Private Partnership) Initiative in Skill Development	National Institute of Fire and Safety Engineering, Nagpur
Skill Learning Award - Best Training Institution	NIIT Limited
Skill Learning Award - Medical Institute	Medvarsity Online Limited
Best Digital Learning Institute of the Year	Digital Academy 360
Best Innovative K-12 School	TRIO World School
Emerging Skills Programme of the Year	Indian Academy of Russian Ballet (A Unit of IARB Dance Foundation)
Outstanding Employer Engagement Initiative	Anudip Foundation for Social Welfare
Best Stem Learning Institute of the Year	RoboGenius
Excellence in Distance Learning Education	PAN India Education
Skill Learning Award - Computer Education	NISE Institute
Best Coaching Institute of the Year - Study Abroad	Manya Education Private Limited
Coaching Institute of the Year - North	Unique Shiksha
Coaching Institute of the Year - West	Padma Coaching Classes
Outstanding School Leader	Mr. Nipun Goenka; Managing Director; GD Goenka Group



LtoR: David Risher, Founder & Global President, Worldreader, awarding Ashoka Global Academy; Dr. Pathik Pathak, Director of Social Entrepreneurship and Founding Director- Social Impact Lab, University of Southampton)



Narayana Educational Institutions getting awarded by Ritu Marya, Editor-in-Chief, Franchise India; Suraj Spara, Chief Strategy Officer, NoPaperForms and Naveen Goyal, CEO & Founder, NoPaperForms



LtoR: Ritu Marya, Editor-in-Chief, Franchise India; Satyam Roychowdhury, Founder Managing Director, Techno India Group; Suraj Spara, Chief Strategy Officer, NoPaperForms and Naveen Goyal, CEO & Founder, NoPaperForms

University of the Year - East	Techno India
Most Emerging Higher Education Institute of the Year	BML Munjal university
Business School of the Year - East	Iridge Business School
Best Skill Learning Institute	Shri Vishwakarma Skill University
International Collaboration of the Year	Kohinoor International Management Institute
Excellence and Innovation in Medical Science	Mahatma Gandhi Medical College and Hospital, Jaipur
Excellence and Innovation in Engineering	Hope Foundation's - Finolex Academy of Management and Technology
Skill Learning Award - Clinical Research	ICRI - Institute of Clinical Research India
Best Education Counselor	Inspirus Education
Best Physical Education / Sports Education Programme	Sports Gurukul LLP
Best Corporate Training Programme	Manipal ProLearn, Bangalore
Best Online Education Platform	MySchoolpage
Sports Coaching	Footiculture India Private Limited
Medical Entrance Coaching	Narayana Educational Institutions
Civil Services Coaching	Kingmakers IAS academy
Best Use of Technology in Enrolment	BIMTECH - Birla Institute of Management and Technology, Greater Noida
Best Online Tutorial Professional	InnovED

Edupreneur of the Year	Mr. Satyam Roychowdhury; Founder Managing Director; Techno India Group
Skill Learning Award - Aviation Training	Inspire Academy
Best Education Company to Work With	BYJU'S
Best Educational use of Social Media	Unacademy
Best K12 Academic Innovative Curriculum	JBCN International School, Oshiwara
Institute with Best Placement	Vivekanand Education Society Institute of Management Studies & Research, Mumbai
K12 School Chain of the Year - East	Sudarshan World School
Standalone Pre-school of the Year - West	Casa Bambino Montessori
Business School of the Year - North	Management Development Institute
Teacher Training - K12	University Institute of Teachers Training and Research
Hospitality, Travel & Tourism Institute of the Year	Dr Ambedkar College and Training, Chandigarh
Debutant Skills Programme of the Year	HiAim Digital Marketing Institute
Contributing in Student Counseling	Jiten Chawla
Principal of the Year - Higher Education	Prof. V. Ramgopal Rao, Director, Indian Institute of Technology, Delhi
Woman Entrepreneur of the Year	Aditi Avasthi; Founder & CEO; Embibe
Lifetime Achievement Award	Mr. Sharad Jaipuria; Chairman; Seth M.R. Jaipuria Schools
Standalone Pre-school of the Year - East	Leap Years
Best innovative after school model / Robotics	Space
Best Use of Technology	Igloo Activity Centre, Pune
Standalone School of the Year - National	Step by Step
Standalone School of the Year - North	Kothari International School

Standalone School of the Year - South	Oakridge International School
Best Infrastructure of the Year - K12	Vega Schools
Best Emerging School of the Year (National)	Prakriti School
Best Infrastructure of the Year - Higher Education	OP Jindal University
Best Private University	Ashoka University, Haryana
Skill Learning Programme of the Year	Cuemath
Skill Learning - Beauty Training schools	Blossom Kochchar
Best Innovative Learning Tools	Talent edge
Best Edtech of the Year	Toppr
Contribution to the Community	Shiv Nadar School
Engineering Entrance Coaching	FitJee
Online Tutoring	Vedantu

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THE GILT-EDGED EDUPRENEUR

Ashoka Group of Schools was established with an intent of imparting world-class educational environment to students; so that they can be groomed into global citizens. The group already has 3 schools offering ICSE curriculum under the banner of Ashoka Universal Schools and 1 school offering IGCSE curriculum under the banner of Ashoka Global Academy. Over 5,000 students are building their future under the guidance of educators of the institute. The recently-built Ashoka Global Academy offers 3 lakh square feet of picturesque and pollution-free environment to its students.

What is the unique aspect of your venture in terms of education and everyday running?

Our chief objective is to provide skill-based, practical education which makes students future-ready. We are determined to equip them with knowledge and competence to be at par with global citizens. On the infrastructure front, we provide advanced learning tools such as 3D labs, STEM labs (where junior scientists and engineers get hands-on experience of working on robots), astronomical observatory while on the personality development front, we facilitate collaborative learning with students from schools in USA, Russia and Italy through various international projects.

How has affiliation with Cambridge panned out?

We opted for the Cambridge curriculum, to trigger, instigate and foster a global mindset. The results are visible with us being honoured as one of the best schools with a Cambridge curriculum in the region. Cambridge education focuses on building confidence,

accountability, self-reflection and innovation which augers well with our mission besides meeting the requirements of the Cambridge curriculum.

Education coupled with tech has caused a major disruption. What do you think?

It is imperative for us to incorporate technology to

make teaching methods effective. A click of the button and concepts begin to unfold. While technology is necessary, it cannot and must not replace educators. Only a human can sense a child's emotional and learning capacity, and accordingly alter their teaching strategies. We believe in Ed-Tech, where educators and technology



ASTHA KATARIA
Managing Trustee,
Ashoka Group of Schools

work together to ensure all-round development.

What impediments have you faced and how do you counter them?

Resource development suited to the dynamics of education on a vertical dimension is viewed as a challenge. In our bid to meet the shortage of manpower, we prepare students in the BSc-BEd integrated course, to create passionate educators.

What do you think of Indian education system when you look at the global aspect of it?

Education in India is transforming, wherein different pedagogies, such as, flipped classroom, MTV Routine are being used to impart education that would have far-reaching effect on the students. However, what makes us a class apart is our constant efforts to inculcate values in our students.

What is the impact and what are the future plans?

We have been able to successfully introduce groundbreaking education methodologies. Our efforts are taking us closer to our goal of establishing a world-class university in Nashik.

QUICK FACTS

Overall Campus:
More than 10 lakh square feet

Head count: 7,000 students, teachers and support staff

2008: Ashoka Education Foundation introduced UG courses like BA, BEd, BCA, BBA, MBA

USP: World-class infra with state-of-the-art facilities

PART-TIME WORKER TO FIRE-SAFETY PEDAGOGUE

When Anand Bankar was in college, his father Durjan Shreeram Bankar, a small-time contractor, was caught in financial trouble and even asked him to quit college. A resolute Anand persisted and started working part-time as an entry-level employee in the college to fund for his hostel fees and education. He managed to fund his entire graduation and it was later that he realized how obscure the fire-safety industry was in India. Bankar continued his studies while simultaneously opening a fire-safety institute in 2009 with just 10 students. After much hassle, he procured requisite licenses from the Ministry of Labour and Employment, UGC, AICTE and UGC. Gradually, as the number of students increased, he started expanding horizon while not abating his studies. Today his venture, the National Institute of Fire Safety Engineering has over 20,000 students undertaking diploma and certificate courses in fire safety. There are 6 campuses owned by Bankar coupled with more than 10 regional franchises and around 200 associate institutes. He also went on to complete his double Phd and is pursuing MS in Safety and Reliability Engineering from France.



DR ANAND BANKAR
Founder, National
Institute of Fire
Safety Engineering

What prompted you to take up a career in this dynamic field?

When I first started out, I was taken aback by the lack of awareness in the fire and safety sector. It was then that I decided to change the scenario of fire-fighting in India. The entrepreneurial aspect of the industry aside, I wanted people to take this field more seriously and equip the youth with equipment and knowledge for safer future.

What is the present scenario of fire safety in India?

In India, fire safety is still an ignored sector. There have been a lot of positive changes in the recent past. India is at a stage where development, technology and infrastructure

are booming. This makes it even more important for us to understand and follow safety standards.

What impact have you made in India so far?

The global fire-fighting industry is worth Rs 3,000 crores annually. As a matter of fact, more and more people have taken cognizance of fire safety issues. But even today

QUICK FACTS

NIFSE-owned campuses: **6**

Regional franchises: **12**

Associate institutes: **Over 200.**

Number of students enrolled annually: **20,000- 30,000**

Overseas presence: **2 companies in the UK, 1 in UAE and 1 R&D center in France**

there are many sectors which have not been captured. I feel that this is an ongoing process and the final aim is to tap these sectors. For this purpose, I have a team in France that is working tirelessly to change the scenario in India.

How did you counter failures in your entrepreneurial journey?

Failures are stepping stones to success. I have suffered many failures leading to situations when I knew that I was fighting a lost cause. It was in those moments that I surrounded myself with positive, successful and like-minded people, who helped me trudge through the difficult phase. Success is all about planning and setting goals. Fragment long

term goals into short term goals and push your limits to achieve them. That is my message for today's youth.

What does the future look like for industry when we think globally?

Apart from India, I have two companies in the United Kingdom (UK), one in the United Arab Emirates (UAE), and one in France, which is working on developing new technologies and software regarding safety and fire. I hope the products will be beneficial to the society and corporations in future. Though, many foreign entities have approached for partnership but I want it specifically tailor-made for India.

APPS FOR BEATING BURNOUT

For entrepreneurs, the lines between work and life are often blurred. Operating round the clock and in an environment of high uncertainty, it is fairly easy for them to hit burnout and suffer from the allied risk of inefficient decision-making. *Entrepreneur* asked various founders about apps they use to maintain their mental and physical well-being, and ultimately, their companies.

By Mohit Sabharwal

PRIYA PRAKASH

Founder & CEO, HealthSetGo

“Being an entrepreneur, there are more hard days than easy ones. The founders’ ‘burnout’ is well-documented, and to continue to do what I love for a long period of time, it was critical for me to take time out for my mental health. So, I started using ‘Headspace’ two years ago and it has truly transformed my daily routine and overall mental well-being. It eases you into mindfulness with guided meditations. You can meditate for specific goals and things you want to improve about yourself such as focus, productivity or even relationships. I typically use my time commuting between meetings to take out 10-15 minutes for this.”



KALYAN KUMAR

Co-Founder & CEO, Social Catalyzers

“Demystifying mindfulness and meditation can be an uphill task for any beginner. To become a believer of such spiritual practices, it is important to be guided constantly to know exactly what you’re doing and why you are doing it. I get my constant guidance from an app called Waking Up by Sam Harris. It provides a mix of meditations, both long and short, and lessons on a wide variety of topics relevant for deepening your meditation practice. I am a big fan of Sam Harris and having him lead and guide the meditation sessions on the app is what makes it dramatically effective for me.”



GAURI ANGRISH

Founder & CEO, CAREDOSE

“How I start my day often determines how the rest of it would go. So, I’m very mindful of starting my day on a high note and not let the stress of previous day affect the new day ahead. To achieve it, I perform exercise daily in the morning as it rejuvenates me. While earlier I had a personal fitness trainer to do so, now I use an app called Nike Training Club (NTC) by Nike. Whether I’m going to the gym or working out in a garden, the app has become my constant accompany, allowing me to set my weekly and monthly goals and follow a workout regime, comprising of both functional and weight training, spanning over a period 6-12 weeks.”



Why I Backed Them?

Explains **Kanwaljit Singh**, Co-founder & Managing Partner of Fireside Ventures

Being an early stage venture fund, Fireside Ventures, exclusively focuses its spotlight on new brand boomers and has recently closed its fund in February 2018 with a corpus of Rs 340 crore. So far the company has deployed Rs 204 crore across 18 investments and envisions to build 25 iconic \$100 million brands in the next 10-15 years. Among the chain of brands that the company promotes, some of them are even poised to become the next Rs 100 crore brand in the next few years. A second round of fund will be raised on a private placement basis post receipt of the requisite regulatory approvals.

By Madhurima Roy



EARLY STAGE INVESTMENT HAUL

Singh believes that this is a great time to tailor the new-age, exciting brands catering to the changing consumer preferences. But the question is why early stage funding? "We bring the right mix of capital and expertise in helping young companies build the right foundations for growth," explains Singh.

MILLENNIALS' DOMINATION

Like the consumer market, Fireside Ventures also concentrates on millennials as their target audience. They have assessed over 1,400 and evaluated over 350 companies before making 18 investments. Singh says, "The deal pipeline is across the consumer wallet. As a VC fund we are always on a look out for exciting and investable brands

across the pyramid. It is just that we have been investing in consumer brands focused on millennials and Gen Z till now. One can't afford to ignore the 45-plus audiences, as it is this segment of consumers who could actually end up having more disposable income."

LAYING DOWN THE SPECIFICS

The company was initially shedding its focus on fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG), but over the past two years has seen opportunities emerge from across the entire spectrum of consumer wallet spending. Singh emphasizes that 18 investments span in areas like food & beverages, personal care, home décor, education, lifestyle, etc.

Diving deeper, elucidating the factors that make startups look promising to invest in, he highlights that the quality of

the founding team is the most important decision-making criteria. He further beaks down the factors in detail.

Firstly, a couple of factors are accessed. Apart from domain and executive capabilities, Fireside also checks the levels of passion, vision and willingness that the founders hold in order to gear them up for the long run. Second key factor is the sector they are targeting and the 'white spaces' in that sector. "We try and understand the consumer that the startup is trying to target and, on the basis of that, we learn more about what the company's end goal is. Are they solving a real problem, is it a sustainable long-term differentiator... is it a real opportunity that is emerging because of market segmentation or changing consumer behavior and

whether they can they sustain the brand over time," he mentions.

GOING BEYOND INVESTMENTS

Beyond the investment spectrum, Fireside Ventures also host sessions with their advisory board, which comprises of industry veterans like Amit Agarwal, senior VP Amazon and country manager India, Harsh Mariwala, chairman, Marico Ltd, Sri Rajan, chairman, Bain & Company India and Aditya Ghosh - CEO of OYO Rooms, India and South Asia and former president IndiGo Airlines. They provide a great sounding board to the fund and portfolio companies especially in areas like brand building, 'go-to market' opportunities and most importantly how to manage rapid scale. 📌



Don't Wait Until Tomorrow

What's the greatest killer of companies? Corporate consultants **Benjamin Gilad** and **Mark Chussil**, who have worked with hundreds of giant brands, have an answer: It's waiting to act on something that needs to be done right now.

Practice saying *sed non hodie*. It means “but not today” in Latin. (Pronunciation: *sed known hoe-dee-ay*.) Why say it in Latin? Because it sounds better. It sounds scientific. And if you're saying it in Latin, nobody else can understand the terrible,

horrible, dangerous sentiment you're expressing.

Sed non hodie is what too many big companies say in response to a possible slowing or reversal of growth. Every entrepreneur should learn from their repetitive mistake. Consider where the impulse comes from: Every company wants to maintain or enhance its

performance. That's good—it's how capitalism is supposed to work! But their managers often react not by changing for the future but rather by extending whatever the company already has. In the process, they have no idea how to evaluate the outcome. Are they building up their company? Propping it up? Or just plain puffing it up?

Some examples:

When did airlines' cost-cutting go from sensible to requiring that passengers inhale before they can fit in their seats? They know someday a backlash will disrupt the model of sardines-in-a-can. But...not today.

When did pharma's infatuation with blockbuster drugs go from delightful jackpot to

essential lifeline? Every pharma executive we've worked with—and in our consulting practice, we've worked with hundreds—laments the overreliance on a few blockbusters and the culture that pushes lesser drugs off the development track. They know it will have to change because pipelines of the Next Big Thing are running dry, but...not today.

The problem is not that feverish growth won't last. The problem is not that stock prices rise and fall. The problem is that, judging by results, these companies have no idea what to do when growth stalls.

Sed non hodie! But not today, they say! Then when today happens, the inevitable is greeted as if the sky is falling. It's a complete and utter shock. Who would ever have predicted?

Today happens. And it happens in what looks like a sudden and unexpected decline even as signs might have been accumulating under a CEO's nose for *years*.

Today is always sudden. Frightened executives never recognize today until it is yesterday. Then the panic begins.

When companies push too hard to keep the growth going, it creates a bubble that ends up like the financial crisis of 2008: It blows up in their faces. You've seen the signs. A company squeezes too hard to keep costs down and starves the investment it needs to run the business in the future. When companies polish their numbers to make them shine, they create new expectations that are even harder to satisfy. It's happening now at GE, where shareholders of the once-venerable industrial giant are suing a former CEO, Jeffrey Immelt, for polishing GE's numbers as the company was deteriorating fast. His successor, John Flannery, was given

just 14 months to deal with this reality before he was fired.

Underlying the decline of executives' and managers' skill at competing is the inability to accept bad news. But the fault isn't all theirs. It comes, too, from the investors and the boards of directors who say, "If you can't get the job done, I'll get someone who can *today*."

How do you get past the performance addiction—whether you're inside one of these big corporations or running a startup? As part of learning and practicing your skill at competing, you need to develop resilience.

The best way we know to develop some resilience for bad news is to live through a bad situation.

One of us (Mark) was fortunate (his word) to be on a flight when an engine exploded in

do it by arguing in front of mock juries. One of these days, virtual reality devices will make this a common tool for other professions and occasions. Not today, but soon.

Critically, the exploding-engine incident was a learning experience for Mark but not for the pilots of his aircraft. They'd already had their learning experiences in flight simulators! Which is exactly the point.

When you face a challenge, the solution is rarely solved by calculating more decimal points. Instead, it's solved by thinking differently—and perhaps the most insightful, useful, and important part of thinking differently is asking what can go wrong, and developing robust strategies to enable resilience. Don't wait for something to *actually* go wrong. Instead, when it's all

world. If you happen to work in the automobile industry, for example, you might ask, "What happens to my brand if the acceptance of electric vehicles reaches a critical number?" That question is more than legitimate; it's *necessary* as part of your company's strategic due diligence. The answer might be to develop hybrid models because they are more acceptable to many consumers than pure electric cars. In other words, the strategy of hybrid is robust in several scenarios.

You can also apply this thinking to your own proposals and recommendations. Resilience and robustness mean making choices that don't depend on everything going just right. They can intrigue even a "not-today" executive overconfidently committed to heroic performance objectives.



IF YOU CAN CHALLENGE YOURSELF AND YOUR TEAM TO IMPROVE YOUR THINKING, THEN YOU'VE FOUND THE FASTEST, CHEAPEST, SUREST, AND HIGHEST-LEVERAGE WAY TO IMPROVE THE DECISIONS YOU MAKE.

midair. He was fortunate both in that he lived to tell the tale (no one was injured) and in that he was lucky to have had the experience. He's now *less* afraid of flying as a result: He saw what goes wrong and what goes right. While he does not recommend that we blow up lots of engines at 5,000 feet so all of us can enjoy this personal growth, he sees it as an utterly cheap way to learn an important lesson. (Cheap for him, not the airline.) No pain, no side effects, over in 20 minutes; that's about as cheap as it gets.

Here's the key: *A quick and cheap way to learn an important lesson.* The military does it with war games. Lawyers

going right, run simulations on the nightmare scenarios. Consider it the business equivalent of a flight simulator.

We've spent a lifetime—*invested* a lifetime—in this kind of approach. And we've seen it over and over again: Thinking differently doesn't happen automatically or overnight, but it does happen. And those who learn can pass the lesson on to others.

One way of looking at resilience is to test strategies against various scenarios. "What happens if..." questions are not negative but positive, because they help companies modify their strategies to survive various states of the

Big bets require a sense of looming change. It is legitimate to make big bets as long as the decision-maker accepts the possibility of failure. Given their *sed non hodie* mentality, though, many corporations don't believe in big bets. That's bad for them and good for their competition. If you can challenge yourself and your team to improve your thinking, then you've found the fastest, cheapest, surest, and highest-leverage way to improve the quality of the decisions you make. Start today.

This article is excerpted from the book The NEW Employee Manual, out now from Entrepreneur Press.



1. Kumar's dining room in form of a train compartment looks nothing less than a royal carriage

2. The hue of electric globe lights and fine work on the floor is the highlight.

3. Tulsi Kumar, Playback singer, and owner & director of T-Series StageWork Institute.



An Abode that Oozes Love, Warmth, and Elegance above all

By Priyadarshini Patwa

The moment her voice echoes from the speaker, you know it's bound to create magic. Perhaps, there is no one who understands music better than Tulsi Kumar's family in India. Daughter of the late singer and founder of T-Series music label, Gulshan Kumar, Tulsi needs no prologue. Be it 'Soch Na Sake', 'Sanam Re' or 'Love Mera Hit Hit', her versatile voice can be your lonely companion. A famed playback singer, Owner & Director, T-Series Stageworks Academy and Gulshan Kumar Film and Television Institute of India, Kumar is also a mastered homemaker, which is quite evident from her three-story bungalow at Greater Kailash-I, New Delhi. For Kumar home is the most comfortable space and no matter even if you stay at the best hotels around the globe, you always want to come back to this one place. "A home is a place where you can be you and have your family around. Home is where the heart is and where you can absolutely be yourself," says Kumar with a wide smile.

LOVE & TOGETHERNESS

Converting a concrete structure into a home needs three simple ingredients— love, warmth, and togetherness. And Kumar's house is made up of bricks that give you the unadulterated vibe of compassion, peace, and happiness. "A house is a structure that is created whereas you build a home in it with your family members and with all the love, warmth and togetherness. I think that a house can be made into a home when you give it all the love, by giving love to each of your family members and receiving love from everyone. There are certain attachments that you bring to your home. It could be various things like your decor items to your interiors, soft interiors to everything that you have chosen to make that four-walled house into a home. These things help you closely connect and give a more personal touch and convert a house into a home," she expresses.





A BLEND OF ART, QUIRKINESS & COMFORT

Kumar had a vision and interior designer, Archana Agarwal brought a 3D framework into life. The flooring in the grand living room has a distinctive floral blend. Hanging from the roof are these massive bronze globe chandeliers, which add the perfect style statement. Taking you through a unique ride is the red and black dining area in the shape of a train compartment that leaves you in awe. An internal lift connects all. Kumar's house has every amenity that a person's ideal house can consist of. A personal terrace, jacuzzi, a riyaz room (where she creates those musical songs), a personalised small studio, you

name and it exists. However, leaving everything apart is the temple room that adds the perfect spiritual vibe amidst the luxury.

BUILDING THE HOMELY BASE

A lot of thinking, creativity, planning and sheer hard work of two years went into the making of this five-bedroom villa. Kumar entered this home with her son Shivaay in her arms, which makes this year-old place a little more special. "I've got this house constructed with a lot of love and the thought of having an extended family. So I didn't know when I was shifting. It was a future house that was created and as I shifted, I moved in with the baby in the house," she says.

HUE OF PASTEL SHADES

Keeping it contemporary and simple, Kumar's house personifies elegance and style. Shades of mint, faded purple-mauve, and subdued pastel colours form the premises of the walls. Decked up with straight-lined furniture, the focus on artifacts is minimal. But certainly, the lighting is the major pinnacle among everything else. "The lights are very unique so everyone who walks into the drawing room, living room or the dining room has a lot to speak about the lights because we don't have too many decorative pieces or artifacts in the house. But it's the lights that add the glamour to the house and beautify the house," describes Kumar giving a complete gist of her den. ☺

THE WHEEL OF LIFE

By Priyadarshini Patwa

To say entrepreneurs have busy schedule would be an understatement, but why live a mundane life? Everyone should have the luxury to enjoy life. While the definition of gratification differs from one entrepreneur to another, there are some for whom getting behind the wheel is the greatest high. Well, in case you thought we are talking about expensive bikes, let us tell you these people believe in cycling and the satisfaction they get while riding is beyond what words can explain.



The Nonpareil Freedom

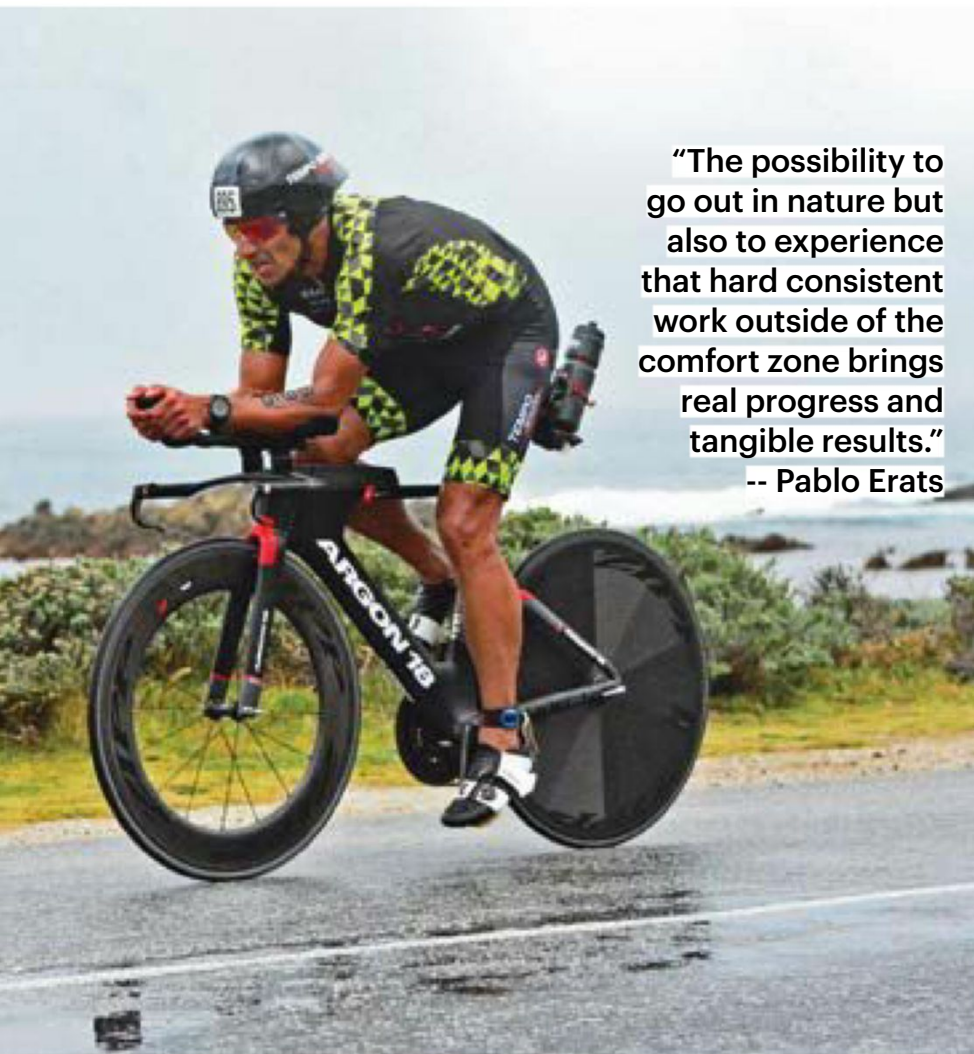
What better than a moment where you experience freedom in the purest form? For **George Muthoot**, **George, Managing Director - Muthoot Leisure & Hospitality Services**, cycling is an escapade. "From the time I learned to ride my first bicycle, I have enjoyed this sense of freedom that is hard to describe," shares George. Outdoorsy by nature, George loves to travel in remote areas. Growing up in New Delhi, he used to cycle on his BSA lot across the city. "On weekends I would spend entire days just cycling through the streets of Central Delhi with no particular destination in mind. I discovered that Kerala has a lot of enthusiastic cyclists and a number of informal and formal clubs that organise rides to various destinations. This has further strengthened my resolve to continue cycling, and given the beauty of the place I feel I have discovered the best place to cycle."

Positivity & Transformation

Everyone pursues something that gives a peace of mind and that's how cycling became a hobby for **Vishwas Ghai, MD and Founder, Servo Hospitality School**. "Cycling excites me because whenever I cycle, it provides a real essence of life to me, an opportunity to look at the world from a different point of view," shares Ghai. To stay disciplined to his routine, twice a week he goes out cycling and loves the early morning fresh air that he experiences between the jungle tracks or the curvy roads of the Shivalik. Ghai tags cycling with a positive change. "Cycling is like meditation to me or a medium to recreate myself every time I cycle," he says.

Calibration Of Healthy Mind And Body

Cycling lets you discover yourself and this is what **Dr. Pablo Erats, Co-founder and Partner of Pioneering Ventures**, investor and a passionate triathlete loves about cycling. "The possibility to go out in nature but also to experience that hard consistent work outside of the comfort zone brings real progress and tangible results," says Erats, who discovered biking through triathlon. "When I started with the sport in 2005, I was an embarrassingly bad cyclist and hardly had the power to ride up any hills. However, I did not resign but took it as a challenge and developed a single-minded focus to improve. I trained two hours every evening on a stationary bike over half a year and realised how rapidly my condition and muscle power improved. Within a few years biking became my strongest sporting ability and today on the bike I am one of the fastest triathlon riders in the world. My forte would be mental strength and pain tolerance," he adds. Like every enthusiastic, his favourite cycling moment is the Swiss Championship in Ultramarathon cycling which is about 1200 km around Switzerland with 12km of elevation difference. "I had participated with my wife Lucia in the couples' category where we won the Swiss championship. It was the best experience together on so many levels emotionally, physically and psychologically." For him, cycling is one of the healthiest forms of exercises (unless you crash).



“The possibility to go out in nature but also to experience that hard consistent work outside of the comfort zone brings real progress and tangible results.”

-- Pablo Erats

Need For Speed

For some speed has always been a driving factor and what better than a cycle to live it? **Baqar Nasser**, director, **Topsin India Healthcare**, **Ubercare Wellness & Fitness** enjoyed cycling more than any other sports. So much so, that this fascination compelled him to pioneer Indoor Cycling as a workout in India, when he started working. “I loved speed on the bike and found it very empowering and super fun with a sense of freedom,” he says.

Cycling brought some major changes in Nasser’s life. “When I became a National champion for the third time in a row in spite of having a major injury, which I overcame despite doctors saying otherwise. I was also awarded the best rider in All India University out of 24,000 participants following which I was sent to America to represent India. It is there that I was introduced to Spinning and became a certified Spinning instructor. I realized that anyone and everyone could spin without the fear of crashing and injury. I realized this could be a great fitness mantra as you can burn much more calories in just one session of spinning compared to other fitness regimens. More than anything, I was able to transform my passion into work and educate people about the benefits of cycling.”

Cycling to him is all about speed, freedom, empowerment, style, excitement, electrifying! It’s a passion that comes straight from the heart!

Fueling the Winning Spirit

Cycling is an activity which lets you take control of your pace, speed, and schedule. There is no hustle-bustle, it is all about letting the spirit in when it comes to riding. It is a great way to unwind and take your mind off things that bother you. More so, for entrepreneurs who are often engulfed in finding ways to tackle problems that they encounter daily whilst running their businesses.

Dhananjay Singh, co-founder of **Sqrrl Investments & Savings App** is a true supporter of cycling as it does help me to ward off the blues. He likes to start his day early and riding his bike

is something he loves, especially in the morning. Cycling is something that keeps him energized for the entire day. “The best part about cycling is that it brings my childhood back,” he says.

“I rediscovered myself with cycling, made some very good friends for life and most importantly extracted the kid out of myself who once did not sleep for the whole night when a cycle was presented to him for the first time in seventh grade,” says.

Following a simple routine, Singh pushes himself over the weekends. He starts his day at 4 am and likes to be in the

wild or on some trail. He loves all the trails in Aravalis and that also has a memory of climbing the manger trail in the Aravalis from Village side. “The incline is more than 45 degrees over 100m with turns. I had this feeling that I will do the climb one day without getting off my bike. It took six months of biking experience and skill to achieve it. And it really felt great once I achieved the same. I was very exciting indeed,” he says.

Over the years, cycling has been more of a psychology game than a physical one for him. It has taught him a great many lessons in life and fueled his winning spirit.



Traveling around the Globe with Spunk!

By Priyadarshini Patwa

Born in Mumbai, Aditi Dugar, the CEO and founder of fine dining restaurant Masque and Sage & Saffron, grew up surrounded by palatable delicacies. The aroma of her mother and grandmother's kitchen somewhere wrote her destiny. At the age of 16, she found her calling in baking and later rewrote her career graph in London at two-Michelin starred Le Gavroche and La Petite Maison.

A self-taught cook, Dugar has refined the dining experience in India and the talk about her restaurants acts as a testimony for the same. Her dedication to learn and explore the world of cooking has taken her to Thailand, Bangkok, Zuma, Tsunami and many more places. While she learns about taste and finesse of cooking, she carries her world in her Fendi Bugs Eye backpack with a swag. Her little bag comprises of everything essential and

living without it is quite a difficult task for Dugar.

Why Backpack?

Dugar is a true supporter of backpack and believes they are generally more versatile and gives one more mobility versus other modes of carrying your possessions around. "It is both stylish and rugged, and because I travel so extensively it makes my life a lot easier and ensures, that I have everything that's important, on me at all times. A backpack allows me to be completely mobile, well organized, efficient, and secure all whilst being trendy and comfortable at the same time," she says.

Fendi and the Spunk:

When it comes to picking a bag, Dugar believes it should describe you as a person. And this one symbolizes the spunk and creativity she has and at the same time also highlights her need to be secure and organized. A lover of Fendi, she recently



added this piece to her collection.

"It is extremely light to carry and has the required compartments and areas that allows me to store all my valuables safely at all times and gives me easy access to the ones I need most often," says Dugar.

Fendi, an Italian luxury fashion brand is known for making trendy luggage and its Bugs Eyes backpack is

an apt pick to make a style statement. "It has two basic compartments and a patch pocket in front. I generally don't like bags with too many compartments, as one tends to overstuff and be all over the place. This allows me to only look at two places for all that I need and makes it easier to access things I need more often than others," she adds. 📌

FOUR THINGS THAT YOU CANNOT TRAVEL WITHOUT?

LIP BALM

This ensures that I never have to suffer from chapped lips.



A BOTTLE OF WATER WITH VITAMIN C

My simple mantra to always stay fresh.



A PORTABLE CHARGER

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My Life As An ENTREPRENEUR

As told to Kartik Sood

If not an entrepreneur, I would have become:
A pilot

My favourite vacation getaway: **Koh Samui, Thailand's second largest island**

Favourite book/ Currently I am reading: **Zero to One by Peter Thiel**

The company I wish I'd founded or invested in: **Google (Alphabet)**

If I have spare \$1 million to spend, I would:
Buy a Lamborghini

My role model (if, other than Steve Jobs):
Bill Gates

I hate: **Inefficiency**

One thing I would like to correct about myself in life if given a chance:
Keeping up with a healthier lifestyle

TECH TALK



Gadget I want to have:
Flight Simulator

Laptop I use:
Microsoft Surface Pro



Latest apps I have installed:
Amazon, Head Space



Earphones I wear:
Sony

STYLE QUOTIENT

Shoes I wear:
Steptronic and Nike



Denims:
Calvin Klein, Levi's



My workout brand:
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Sanjay Kothari can read his books anywhere at any time as he loves to read. Due to extensive travel he is used to read at least two books every month. Books have always accompanied him, especially while travelling. Though he doesn't have any list of favourite authors, here are some, which gave him food for thought.



The People's Tycoon
by Steven Watts

The people's tycoon taught me many lessons of leadership and inspired me to look into innovations through a new prism. The book is based on the life of Sir Henry Ford, the founder of the Ford Motor Company. The story of a Michigan farm boy who became the richest man in America is a classic and seems almost a myth. This book looks at Henry Ford over his entire life span. Covering both his attributes as well as his faults. It is extremely interesting to view consumerism, a concept we today look at with distaste, through the eyes of those who saw it as a promise of good life and a leveling between the classes.



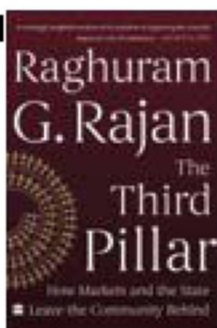
Titan: The Life of John D. Rockefeller, Sr by Steven Watts

A biography of John D Rockefeller, widely considered the wealthiest American of all time. This is one of my favorite books as it teaches both business and life lessons. John D. Rockefeller's story captures a crucial moment in American history, detailing the dramatic post-Civil War and the shift from small business to the rise of giant corporations that irrevocably transformed the nation.



Wings of fire
by APJ Abdul Kalam

This is an autobiography of my favorite leader Mr. Kalam and has many elements to be among my favorites. The major takeaway from this piece of writing is to know and follow one's passion. He explains that those who cannot work with their hearts achieve but a hollow, half-hearted success that breeds bitterness all around. The book will inspire you through the struggles and achievements of Mr. Kalam.



The Third Pillar: How Markets and the State Leave the Community Behind
By Raghuram G. Rajan

Indian economist and former governor of Reserve Bank of India, Raghuram G. Rajan is an authority on globalization's socio-economic consequences and its impact on politics. In his latest book, he delves deeper into the relationship between the state, markets

and communities and how it impacts us all at some level. Rajan argues why it is imperative for economists to not spurn social issues as history has shown us that it can backlash. He emphasizes that "all economics is actually socioeconomics."





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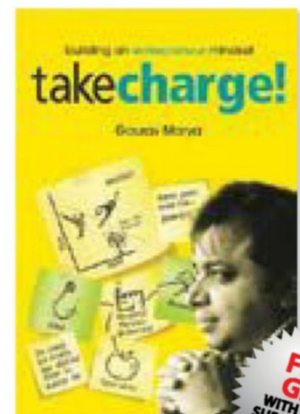
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The Man with a Pony & a Mallet

Mounting on a horseback to play a team sport isn't everyone's cup of tea. Naveen Jindal's first rendezvous with the sport back in 1987 was such a delight that he decided to buy horses and form his own team.

Polo remains the rich man's game, and the Indian industrialist and former Member of Parliament, Lok Sabha is acing it. Having played Polo for over 30 years, he has developed deep love for the sport.

Entrepreneur India caught up with Jindal in New Delhi where Jindal's team Jindal Panther lifted the Maharaja Jiwaji Rao Scindia Gold Cup 2019.

By Aashika Jain

How long have you been playing polo?

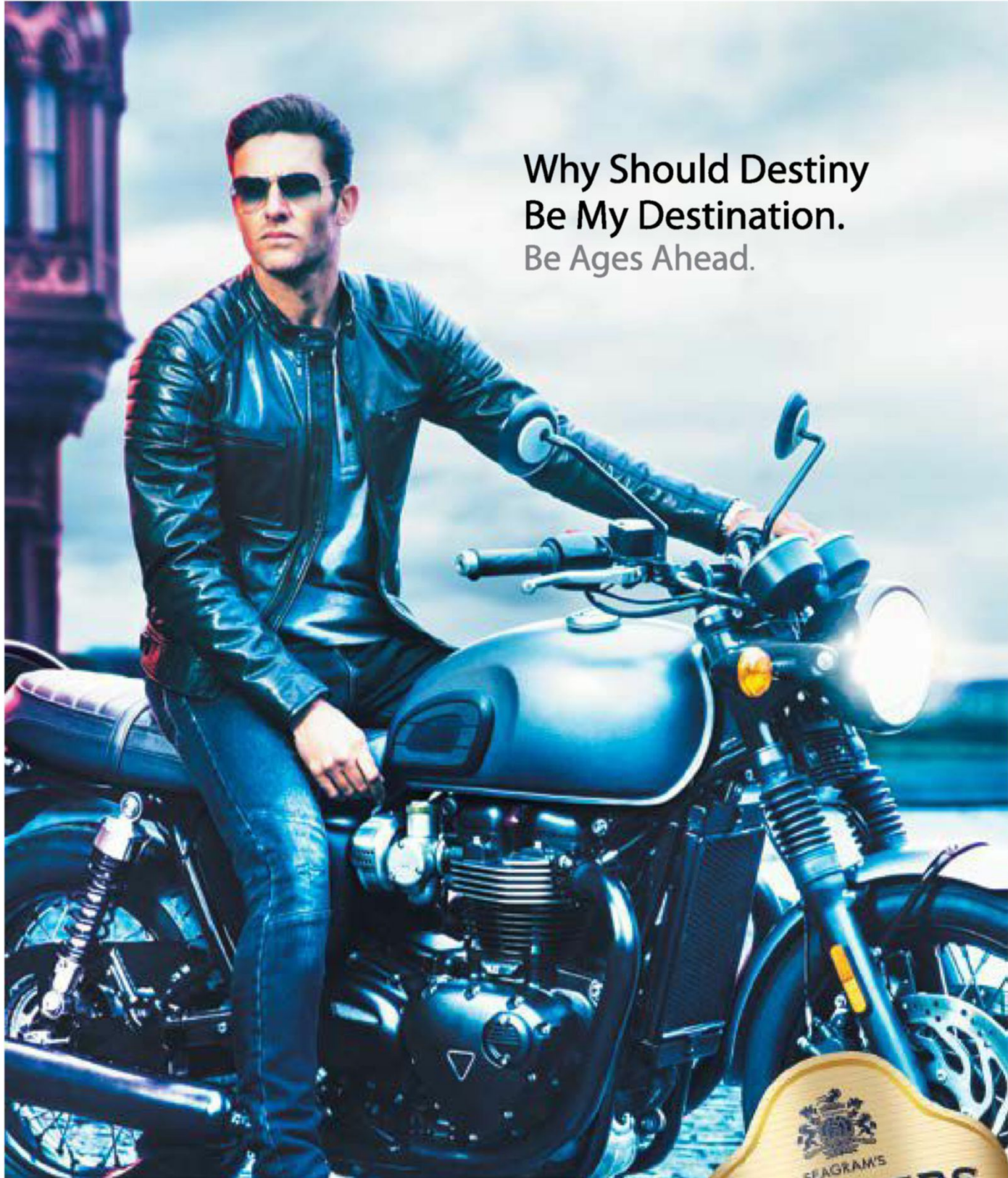
My father introduced me to horses when I was a child but I started playing polo only when I was 18.

What makes you love polo?

I love horses, horse riding and hitting the ball while galloping. It's a team sport and shows team spirit.

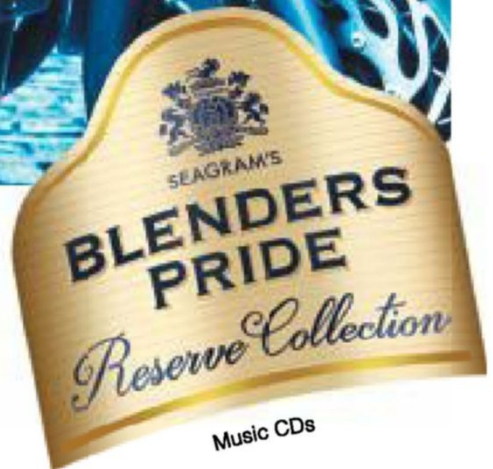
Your defining moment in polo?

There are multiple defining moments in a sport like polo. It is losing but not giving up till the end and then winning the battle that makes polo so interesting. Just like in the Maharaja Jiwaji Rao Scindia Gold Cup 2019 where we were trailing 1-4 in the match and ended up winning the match in the end. In polo, you don't give up till the end.



Why Should Destiny
Be My Destination.
Be Ages Ahead.

AGES AHEAD



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