

**VIETNAM'S
REVOLUTION REVISITED**

CAPITALISM AND
SOCIALISM



**TWITTER
AS A
MARKETING
TOOL**



INTERVIEW

**LAMON
RUTTEN**
CEO OF MCX



ASIA-PACIFIC

Business & Technology

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REPORT

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Korea's Second Rocket Attempt



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Korea's Second Rocket Attempt

BY MATTHEW WEIGAND

Usually when you hear the news of a Korean rocket launch, it is North Korea being belligerent. But this time, it's South Koreans being scientific. South Korea will launch its Naro rocket, officially called the Korea Space Launch Vehicle-1, in June. It is the second attempt at launching a satellite into orbit, the first being just August of last year. The country has high hopes for a successful second rocket launch. This peaceful, scientific use of rocket technology shows that the path North Korea follows is not the only path. And Korea's burning desire to be a technology center is what is driving this forward.

The launch is tentatively scheduled to be June 9, and preparations have been ongoing since April 8. However, if there are weather delays, it can be up to ten days later. The Korea Aerospace Research Institute (KARI) built half of this rocket – the upper half. The lower half is a Russian booster stage, an Angara rocket, manufactured in Khrunichev State Space Science and Production Center. The two stages of the rocket are currently being looked over at the Naro Space Center in Goheung, South Jolla Province. The 100 kg satellite payload was also created in Korea. It is the Science and Technology Satellite No. 2, built jointly by the Korea Advanced Institute of Science and Technology (KAIST) Satellite Technology Research Center and the Gwangju Institute of Science and Technology. The research satellite's two-year mission is to measure the hydrogen content in the atmosphere to get a better understanding of climate change. So far, the Naro space program has cost Korea 502 billion won (\$428 million) and has lasted 8 years.

The first launch last August was unsuccessful, and while details are unclear, experts say that faulty electrical wiring or a mechanical problem caused the two fairings protecting the satellite to open too slowly. The satellite was unable to separate from the rest of the vehicle in time and failed to reach orbit. It is presumed that the payload reentered the atmosphere and disintegrated.

Some of South Korea's reasons for the launch seem to be politically-

mindful. For instance, the country plans to notify neighboring countries, the International Civil Aviation Organization, and the U.S.-affiliated International Maritime Organization in order to make sure all the planes and ships in the area are aware of the launch, according to officials. While not explicitly stated, this stands in sharp contrast with the practice of the country's northern brother, which is known for shooting missiles west and east willy-nilly without giving much warning at all. It stands in even stronger contrast because North Korea has announced possible rocket tests during the same period of time. According to some sources, North Korea may fire an intermediate range ballistic missile into the East Sea in May. However, it is difficult to nail down any specific launch site or date, because the North Korean missiles use solid fuel, which is easily transported, and also use a mobile launchpad. It could be a coincidence, or it could be South Korea trying to steal news-focus away from North Korea. This type of strategy has been suggested before by political pundits, that South Korea should become more media-savvy and try to steal the spotlight from its belligerent cousin, in order to curb the effectiveness of the North's highly-politicized and public extortion attempts. This time, it seems to be working, as rumors of North Korea's launch are happening in May, but South Korea's launch is happening in June. The buildup and media attention will probably be greater on South Korea's, or even if it

isn't, the impact will be quickly forgotten in the face of a successful satellite orbit achieved by South Korea just a few weeks after North Korea's latest Japan-threatening gesture.

It is striking to see North and South Korea using the same technology development for such different ends. Both countries have had significant technological developments in the past fifty years, but the North has used their technological development to spread fear to, and demand things from, their neighbors. They use technology only to support their bombastic rhetoric, which alone would have been overused to the point of powerlessness already. They have developed nuclear technology in the form of nuclear reactors that create weapons-grade plutonium, and in nuclear bombs, which they have tested more than once. They have developed long-range rocket technology and have applied it to make missiles that are capable of hitting their neighbors and, they claim, some islands of Alaska. And while they have announced twice now that they have launched satellites into orbit, once in 1998 and once this year, they clearly have failed both times.

South Korea also has nuclear, rocket, and satellite technologies, but they have taken them in a different direction. South Korea has developed clean nuclear energy which they use to power 45 percent of their country's total electrical needs. These nuclear reactors do not produce weapons-grade nuclear material, but they do produce almost half of the



power necessary to drive the world's 13th largest economy. South Korea already has six satellites in orbit as well, put there with the help of other space-faring nations. And, of course, their rocket and satellite technologies are being used for scientific research on global warming.

But this rocket launch is also a symbolic gesture for South Korea, as it wants to join the space-faring nation club. If successful, it will become only the 10th country in the world to send up an artificial satellite from its own territory. Long-range plans are to domestically build a first stage by 2018 and to send a probe to the moon by 2025. This is seen as a money-making industry for the nation, who hopes to be able to compete with NASA and the Russian space program for putting things into orbit. Oh, and Japan, and the EU, and other countries. Even a private company, Virgin Galactic, has been preparing to offer satellite launches in addition to its current space tourism program by 2014. It is probably to compete with the SpaceX company, which already launches private satellites into orbit as of last year. Actually, the satellite-launching business might just be pretty competitive soon.

But despite that fact, it is very important to South Korea to be seen as a technology-focused nation, and launching satellites is part of the image that it wants to create. Other parts of that image are other facets of the Korean economy – display manufacturing, semiconductors, even Korea's building of the KTX high-speed railway, also illustrate this technology hunger. It is not sufficient for Korea to simply hire German engineers to create the KTX railway system was not enough – they had to additionally purchase training and manufacturing processes as well, so that Korea could build and maintain its own railway system in the same fashion. In fact, the country established the Korea Technology Transfer Center, or KTTC, ten years ago in order to make sure that these kinds of technology transfer deals are created. By not only buying the technology, but the training and education needed to make more, Korea creates the very important “indigenous technology,” a point of pride and potential profit.

Each time South Korea becomes able to manufacture something on its own, it is a national news item and a point of pride. Indigenously-created tanks, helicopters, nuclear reactors – the list goes on and on. This is in striking contrast to the trend in the U.S., which is to outsource everything possible. Manufacturing, technology creation, technical support – all of those are being sent to other countries by the U.S. economy. When Korea is bringing the manufacturing of as many different products as possible home to its own country, the U.S. is sending them overseas as much as possible. Korea might have the right idea here, because its performance in the recent global economic crisis was excellent. It did not see too much of a drop in its GDP or the earning power of its citizens, or for that matter job loss. The country held up remarkably



well under the strain, and already has completed a full recovery. Perhaps the US could take a page from Korea's play-book on this issue.

Indigenous technology is an important aspect to the Korean global game strategy, and as previously mentioned, has been pursued with everything from rockets, to tanks and infantry weapons, to airplanes, trains, and automobiles. When the KTTC was founded, it recorded only 68 cases of technology transfer. But by the time 2005 rolled around, it had racked up a record of 284 technology transfers. These came in a wide variety of forms, from license and stock purchases, to academic exchanges and research database acquisition. Both academia and government agencies have been active in getting technologies from abroad. But the accumulation of these signifiers of technology – licenses, stock, papers, agreements, memoranda of understanding – has been the focus of a lot of work in the peninsula.

This is, of course, completely understandable from Korea's viewpoint, since it created its current economy with technological development. Korea's rise to its current status was with radios, TVs, and computers. It is just good sense to keep using technological development to fuel further growth in the economy. And that is the true purpose of the rocket launch, and the entire Naro space program, and space center. The program, the center, and the rocket all have the same name. The Naro Space Center's purpose is about 500 km south of Seoul, and covers 5 million square meters. It cost \$251 million to build in 2005. The center includes a mission control, flight safety control, and one launch pad. It also has a meteorological observatory, radar, and optical tracking systems, which are all state of the art. The only thing that it currently lacks is an engine combustion test building, which is what is holding back full-fledged development of indigenous South Korean rockets. Korea has been launching satellites since 1992, but they have been using foreign countries' equipment to do so. The country really wants to end this dependency. They want to

launch satellites into space completely independently by 2018, which would reduce the technology gap between South Korea and formally first-world nations like the US and Russia.

So even if the second launch of the Naro-1 doesn't go as planned, South Korea will keep trying. It is a long-haul project its got going on here, and they are not ones to give up on technology-related things. From nuclear reactors, to jet fighters, to rockets, Korea is trying to make everything itself. And seeing as how the global economy is doing, and how badly globalization has worked out, maybe that's not a bad thing. Everything seems to be working out for Korea right now, and it doesn't look like this trend will change in the near future. Korea's technology acquisitions are in full swing, it is drawing attention away from its northern neighbor, and if successful the June launch will bring a new era of Korea getting paid for sending other people's satellites into orbit, rather than the other way around. And all in all, that won't be too bad. AFP



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Q&A

CHO BYUNG-CHEOL

Asia-Pacific Business and Technology Report was able to sit down with Cho Byung-cheol, CEO of Taejin Infotech Co., and discuss his company's latest developments in high-speed data storage systems. For the past 14 years, Taejin Infotech has been developing new solutions in the area of semiconductor memory systems and business solutions. Now, they have something that might significantly change most computing environments – Ed.

BY MATTHEW WEIGAND

Next-generation Semiconductor Storage System Developed in Korea

Question: Mr. Cho Byung-cheol, can you please give a brief introduction about your company?

Answer: I started my company in 1996 providing business software solutions such as ERP (Enterprise Resource Planning) and CRM (Customer Relationship Management). Those software solutions were the profit generators for our company in the beginning. While we were working on these solutions, we were aware of a gap in storage technology. We noticed that several applications were not able to run due to slow storage devices such as DSAD. So we took the revenue from those profit generation schemes and started developing SSD technology. We have made some good revenue so far, enough to open branch offices in Indonesia and China, and expand our business in China significantly.

Q: So you're not getting into the SSD solution business?

A: Yes. We started selling a basic SSD solution in 2007, and this product



has gone out to over 100 different companies worldwide so far. But now, this silicon-based SSD solution we have begun selling early this year. We have just finished filing all patents for this solution in Korea, and we also have ten patents for this technology in the U.S. We have also begun selling this solution in China, Taiwan, and India.

Q: Can you explain a little more about what the silicon-based SSD solution is?

A: Well, as you may already be aware, most of today's computer-intensive services require a large amount of storage space. Whether a company is offering e-mail services, business data storage, Web servers, or cloud computing services, it all requires a tremendous amount of data storage. And today's data storage infrastructure is very complex, creating challenges in fundamental areas such as heat dissipation and power consumption. The management of a reliable data storage environment can be difficult. But our solution, the Silicon Storage Device, or SSD, is 250 times faster, uses less electricity, generates less heat, and is physically



smaller than existing solutions. It is therefore cheaper and more reliable. It is simply an improvement in all aspects from traditional data storage equipment.

Technically speaking, it is a melding of the very best of DDR RAM with solid state flash drives. Reading speeds on solid state drives are very fast, but writing speeds are much slower. The very large amount of RAM provides a large buffer that works in tandem with the solid state drives, giving them their huge speed boost and power savings.

Q: And this was originally developed by your company? How did you come up with this?

A: We got the idea of faster storage while working with ERP solutions. Because when you work with this type of software, you know that there are many different operations that require high-speed memory. That's where I got the idea to develop the Silicon Storage Device. It uses silicon-based memory, instead of using a regular hard drive, and the speed is there.

Now I have the vision of delivering large amounts of data faster, and how many applications that will have. When you deliver very high quality media through broadband,

it requires faster storage devices than what is currently on the market. When you do that with video on demand, or movies on demand, you need to have a bigger and faster server for storage, so you can stream out that data so much faster. With a faster storage device you can handle more streams per server because you already have the capability to serve up that much data that fast.

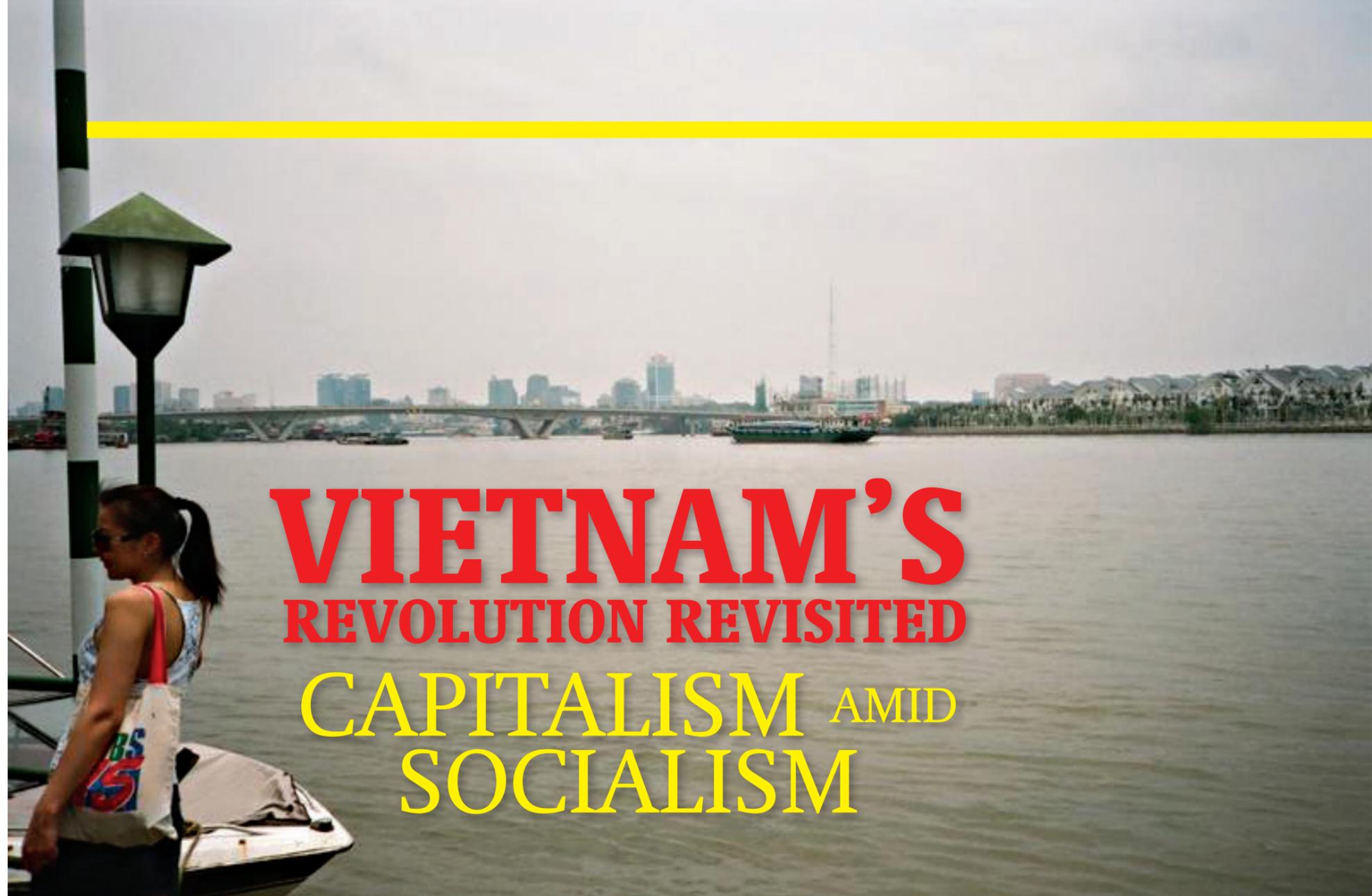
I saw the market opportunity for media streaming in early 2003. I knew that fast memory and storage is going to be needed to handle the media. I turned out to be right, and today you have cell phones, and iPad devices, and the iPhone, which are all using video delivery systems. But the current technology of hard drives cannot handle streaming data as fast as the devices demand it. But the Silicon Storage Devices will allow businesses to handle more streams of data with a smaller footprint. I saw that a smaller footprint storage device that uses less energy is crucial for the future development of the data industry. Our energy-efficient solution is exactly what the industry needs.

Q: So what kinds of applications will super-fast data storage have?

A: Well the first applications that

come to mind are medical simulations, video on demand, IPTV, and basically any small devices that contain huge and fast storage. That's the general idea. This enables you to do the business that wasn't possible for you before, years ago. For instance, when you do satellite video surveillance, you have live video from the satellite that is coming when you're taking a picture. If you want to do real-time analysis on the data that is being stored, you need fast storage in order to accommodate all the operations you're trying to do to that data. Today real-time analysis on satellite data is simply not possible. But my company's technology allows you to do that. Some other applications are automated visual inspection systems, molecular simulations, or earthquake simulation systems. Or coordinating real-time sonar exploration when searching for oil. You can have exploration ships that all use sonar to find out where oil is. Right now you can analyze the sonar data from one ship in real-time, but you can't do that with ten ships coordinated together. Once you get that much data coming in, it becomes too much for current technology. But the Silicon Storage Device will allow you to perform operations on that data while its being

Continued on Page 29



VIETNAM'S REVOLUTION REVISITED CAPITALISM AMID SOCIALISM

ARTICLE AND PHOTOS BY DONALD KIRK

The diminutive president of Vietnam, Nguyen Minh Triet, was on the reviewing stand greeting high-level well-wishers after the big reunification day parade in Ho Chi Minh City. In the absence of Vietnam Communist Party General Secretary Nong Duc Manh, Triet was the central figure on hand to lend top-level dignity to a three-hour review of history as reenacted on the 35th anniversary of “the fall” of the ancien regime of old “South” Vietnam.



After compelling journalists to arrive at dawn and stand on a platform for the media, minders and guards mostly wandered off as the crowd dispersed in the heat. Policemen who had blocked us most of the morning from getting down from the media platform seemed to have lost all interest. Having ventured across the street for a closer look at President Triet, I found him managing diffident smiles for a small cluster of the faithful gathered around him.

No one questioned my presence as I shook hands with the president and then followed him down the avenue in the center of a smaller entourage toward the gates through which a tank had crashed on April 30, 1975, and then rolled onto the expansive lawn of Independence Palace, once the center of power of the old U.S.-backed Saigon regime. Inside the gate, I met a man in white shirt and dark trousers who said he was providing security before pointing the president and aides to their limousines, parked behind the fence. Apologizing for breaking off our brief exchange, he hopped into an SUV and was off, just ahead of the VIPs in vehicles massed behind him.

It was a strange ending to an anniversary laden with symbol-

ism and significance for a country and a society that seems strangely uncertain whether it's socialist or capitalist – and old-style communism exists less as a frighteningly repressive influence than as a firm reminder that the power still lies with the forces that marched to victory in 1975. The flag of Vietnam, gold star on a red field, flew everywhere, from shops and stores and office buildings, for the long holiday weekend, but whoever planned the celebration seemed more interested in appealing to southern sensitivities, and promoting capitalism, than in preaching revolutionary values.

Undoubtedly for that reason the most visible man on the anniversary was Triet, a southerner who had been with the old National Liberation Front, i.e., the Viet Cong, the guerrillas and activists who fought in the South before the Americans arrived in force in 1965 and the North Vietnamese began taking over. And it seemed equally logical that Nong Duc Manh, who may have more power than Triet in his role as general secretary of the Communist Party of Vietnam, was not there. He after all is a northerner – rumored to be the son of Uncle Ho and his one-time housekeeper, from an ethnic group near the Chinese border, though he has denied the rumor.

The course of the parade was only a couple of miles, up the broad avenue leading to the palace, and all those in the cheering throng had to have passes to attend, but non-stop television coverage on a panoply of government and party networks insured maximum publicity. It was the biggest event of the holiday, this city's day to wallow in pride – or, more accurately, the chance for the Ho Chi Minh People's Committee – that is City Hall – and the local branch of the party to breathe inspiration and loyalty into a populace that tries not to think about the ultimate dominance of Hanoi.

In that spirit the vice chairman of the HCM People's Committee dwelled on the vibrancy of a metropolitan region that rivals that of some of the major cities of China



in its aggressive pursuit of industrialization and modernization. “You can see a lot of changes here,” he reminded a group of foreign journalists, many of whom had covered Vietnam in “the old days,” that is, before April 30, 1975. “We are the most vibrant center for economic advance. We are a city of enormous economic potential with an average economic growth rate of ten percent a year.”

While such figures are always difficult to prove, this city does appear to be the driving force, the hub, of expansion whose tendrils extend throughout at least the southern one third of the country – and whose influence and benefits cover all Vietnam. Ho Chi Minh City, now bursting with at least 9 million people, including 2 million who have moved in from outlying provinces in search of jobs, contributes 21 percent of the country’s gross domestic product, 13 percent of the national budget and an astounding 40 percent of the country’s export revenue.

The question is whether the people of Ho Chi Minh – and much of the rest of the southern reaches of the country, including the Mekong delta rice bowl – will eventually grow restive under the grip of the northerners. The answer for now and at least the near future is maybe – but certainly not to the point of a rebellion that would only end the economic boom but also result in tremendous hardship and suffering reminiscent of the tragedy of the Vietnam War.

As the holiday parade suggested, the policy of Hanoi is to display nationalist benevolence, to encourage free enterprise and let the good times roll. There is just one catch: All news and views, everything in print, on the air, in theaters or on the Internet, even if totally non-political, has got to be reviewed and censored. And, of course, there is no bona fide political opposition in a society where the party, which includes the president, but is controlled by the general secretary, reigns supreme.

A retired general, Nguyen Van Tai, talking about the “Ho Chi Minh campaign” that precipitated the downfall of the Saigon regime, said General Duong Van “Big” Minh, who took over as president for the last 43 hours of the regime’s existence in order to arrange the surrender, and his cabinet were free to “return to their families” after the Communist victory. He claimed, however, to have no information when asked about the reeducation camps to which thousands of southerners, notably officers of the South Vietnamese armed forces, were consigned, many of them never to return.

“Our policy is to put aside the past and look to the future,” said Colonel Nguyen Van Bach of the Veterans’ Association. “The victory was a victory of the whole nation.” That’s a message repeated constantly as television channels broadcast endless footage of Communist

forces on the march to victory. There is no mistaking the need to hark back again and again to those days. People in the south need no better reminder of the need to stick to business and leave policy to the conquerors. If Ho Chi Minh City dominates the economy, no one forgets that Hanoi, 1,500 kilometers to the north, remains the center of power – and final dispenser of fear and favor.

Thus it was that goose-stepping soldiers, airmen and sailors led the anniversary parade, followed by rows of marching Viet Cong decked out in pith helmets and black uniforms, then cardboard tanks, prancing ballerinas in pink and white, mountain people in traditional dress, schoolchildren holding balloons and float after float. No special interest, it seemed was left out in an endless procession of mobile displays with one bit of décor in common. They all featured huge portraits of Ho Chi Minh, who died in 1969 but remains the unifying revolutionary figure.

For those who had known “South” Vietnam in the late 1960’s and early 1970s, the whole show conjured memories. One letter in those days from an employer to the Joint U.S. Public Affairs Office on the ground floor of the Rex Hotel in Saigon (the name by which the historic core of Ho Chi Minh City is still known), or two letters from editors willing to vouch for freelancers, sufficed to get a press card good for U.S. military transport, for cheap dining in military mess halls, for discount shopping at post and base exchanges, and even for receiving and sending mail via the Army post office.

And hotels, markets, bars, and restaurants of Saigon and other Vietnamese cities offered services at amazing discounts for those who changed their dollars for local dong at “the bank of India” – the catch-all name for the money-changers from India who operated behind the cover of book stores and offices.

One-time war correspondents in Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos share nostalgic memories of restaurants purveying fine French menus, mingled with the adrenalin rush of rocket attacks and firefights, distant battles and close-up coups. Even the daily military briefings, known as the “five o’clock follies,” evoke stories of tiffs with briefing officers, of reporters noted for relying more on the word of MACV, the Military Assistance Command Vietnam, than on first-hand views from the scene. Those days have disappeared into the miasma of history while U.S. forces wage war in very different environments in which security is never certain and nightlife, as experienced in Saigon, Phnom Penh, and Vientiane, the sleepy capital of Laos, largely nonexistent.

Prince Norodom Sihanouk, Cambodia’s long-reigning hereditary leader, called his country as “an oasis of peace,” and it still seemed that way after he was over-

For those who had known “South” Vietnam in the late 1960’s and early 1970s, the whole show conjured memories.



thrown in March 1970 while drumming up support on a mission to Moscow and Beijing. You could go to war in Cambodia, accompanied by a local assistant, in an old Mercedes-Benz taxi, picked up behind the Hotel Royale, listening to American pop music on the Armed Forces Vietnam Network. Down the road, you might hear the crump of artillery or even staccato of small arms fire, interview a few villagers about the spreading war, return in time to file a story by cable or telex, and then relax over dinner by the pool.

It was all deceptively easy, and then it got dangerous. I never saw my interpreter again after visiting Cambodia for the last time in 1974, where we interviewed peasants telling us the Khmer Rouge were terrifying the populace, sawing off heads with sugar palm leaves in public displays of torture. British photographer Tim Page, wounded severely four times, has been searching for years for the remains of photographers Sean Flynn, the son of the swashbuckling actor Errol Flynn, and Dana Stone. I last saw them at a roadside stand on Route One in eastern Cambodia in early April, 1970 before they vanished on motorcycles, never to be seen alive again. All told 37 foreign correspondents, photographers and assistants died in Cambodia and 32 in Vietnam before April 30, 1975.

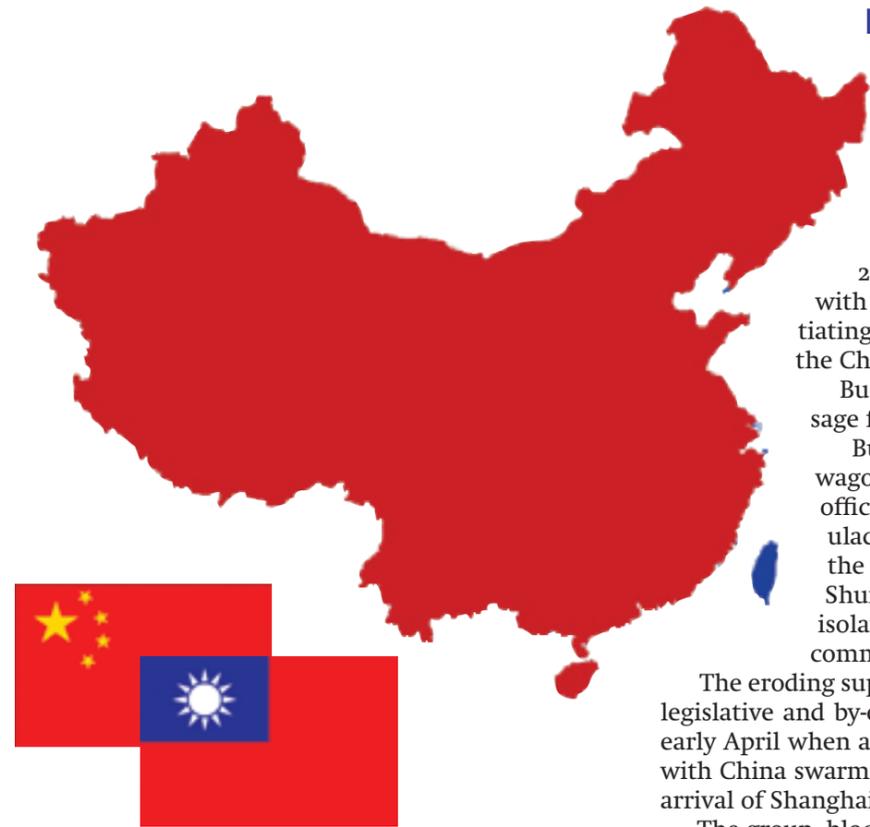
Such terrible episodes, though, seemed isolated in a war that ebbed and flowed. There was no censor-

ship, no officials blocking or slowing the flow of stories or photographs. Not that reporters were totally free to roam everywhere. No reporters witnessed the “secret air war” over portions of Laos and Cambodia. The bombing of the Ho Chi Minh trail down which North Vietnam shipped men and supplies to the South remained a mystery, exposed occasionally but never actually seen.

Nowadays you can go down the Ho Chi Minh Highway, a newly built route through the mountains and valleys on the Vietnamese side of the border, roaring through jungle once scarred by air strikes and artillery fire. People and products routinely cross the borders with no fear of ambushes or hassles, and lurid casinos lure Vietnamese into Cambodia in the Parrot’s Beak, the area of Cambodia that juts into Vietnam on Route One. It seems safe to bet on the economic future of a region that is gambling on capitalism long after the victory of revolutionary socialists. ☞

Donald Kirk covered Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos for the Washington (D.C.) Star and Chicago Tribune in the late 1960s and early 1970s, wrote articles for The New York Times Magazine and others and is the author of two books from that period, “Tell It to the Dead: Stories of a War,” an expanded edition of “Tell it to the Dead: Memories of a War,” and “Wider War: The Struggle for Cambodia, Thailand, and Laos.”

CHANGING CHINA-TAIWANESE TIES



Since the party began its term in earnest, however, the tension that engulfed the small island of 23 million for decades has subsided, with the government of Ma Ying-jeou initiating unprecedented warmer ties with the Chinese government.

Business talks, seems to be the message from the galleries.

But cracks are emerging in the bandwagon that propelled the Kuomintang to office, a win which was buoyed by a populace spooked by the machinations of the pro-independence incumbent Chen Shui-bian that had apparently further isolated them from the international community.

The eroding support – marked at the polls in recent legislative and by-election losses – were capped off in early April when angry protesters fearful of closer ties with China swarmed Taipei’s Sungshan airport for the arrival of Shanghai Mayor Han Zheng.

The group, blocked by police with shields from getting near him, were denouncing a proposed Economic Cooperation Framework Agreement between Taiwan – unrecognized by most of the world – and China, a pact seen by many as a precursor to a free trade treaty.

With ties between the nations accelerating and China appearing to exhibit a somewhat conciliatory approach, the demonstration fronts a growing feeling of unease among Taiwanese people, according to a smattering of locals interviewed by Asia-Pacific Business and Technology Report on the streets of capital Taipei shortly after the arrival of the Shanghai mayor.

While some analysts say the Ma government represents the most viable opportunity for peace and prosperity, opponents predict increased ties will take the island one step closer to falling under the control of Beijing.

Despite the business opportunities likely to open up if relations with China are normalized – not least of which a nod from Beijing that would allow it to strike economic pacts with other countries and trade blocs

– many fear the overarching hand of the Chinese Communist Party in politics and every day life.

Some commentators point out the obvious consequence.

“Ma’s diplomatic efforts to this point make any form of aggression between the two nations far less imaginable than at any point in the past,” wrote Teri Schure, the founder of Worldpress, in a recent column for Canadian newspaper the Globe and Mail.

The advances are palpable: Flights between the nations are on the rise. High-profile delegation interchanges like the one involving Shanghai’s mayor are becoming more common. And trade is increasing.

On the streets, many accept the economic benefits. But they fear what may come with further advances. “I don’t want (the Chinese mayor) here,” says Lin Long-chin, a 50-year-old contractor, “I don’t like it. We are getting too close and I feel like Taiwan is selling out to China. We don’t want China to control us.”

Bank clerk Joanna Riu, 27, said that though she was happy about the visit of Han, she feared what may follow any economic boost. “For business, it is good,” she says. “But if we get closer to China, we are going to lose our personal freedoms.” She fears a China-controlled Taipei modeled on the semi-autonomous status of Hong Kong, which she sees as pseudo-freedom.

Though the idea of outright independence in Taiwan is supported by many, any move toward it from the island’s current de facto status is seen as taboo – a big part of the reason the Kuomintang won back power from the Democratic Progressive Party. “I want total independence,” explains small business owner Vanessa Tsai, “but we don’t declare because we don’t want to give China a reason to act.”

Others see Chinese control as inevitable. Recent university graduate Sylvia Wang, 23, who disagrees with the closer ties, believing they will pose a danger to Taiwanese businesses, says that 20 years from now “we won’t have independence.”

There are other worries, say sources, over the impact of the pro-China policy on relations with Japan. This week also saw a visit by the contentious figure of former Japanese Prime Minister Taro Aso, who while foreign minister in 2006 angered Beijing by referring to Taiwan as a “law abiding country.”

The opposition DPP – which considers the economic agreement a threat to local jobs and susceptible to a flood of cheap Chinese goods on the domestic market – criticized the government for welcoming Mayor Han in a lavish ceremony, while

maintaining a low profile in its dealings with Aso.

But the Ma government insists the pact, which it wants in place as early as June, will be pivotal to Taiwan’s competitiveness on the world stage. Other observers agree. Douglas Paal, director of the American Institute in Taiwan, said it would reduce the island’s marginalization and create opportunities for free trade agreements with other countries.

That does not seem to be enough, however, to persuade those among an apparently considerable section of the public who talk about the possible consequences with an air of nervousness.

While the ruling Kuomintang’s founding father, the nationalist Chiang Kai-shek, who fled to the island in 1949 after his defeat at the hands of the communists, envisioned a united China controlled by his party, Ma insists he will not pursue unification, maintaining he supports the status quo.

Public support is in flight, coming against the backdrop of a United States, long the implied protector of Taiwan, facing the rising might of China, and pressure from Beijing as it pushes its claims to sovereign rights over Taiwan and the western region of Tibet, home of the contentious figure the Dalai Lama.

That possibility has not been lost on ordinary Taiwanese. Small businesswoman Tsai fears Washington won’t come to Taiwan’s aid if China was to make a more aggressive move to assert control over the island, despite a recent incident in which the superpower came in for criticism from Beijing over an arms deal with Taipei. “The U.S. is too clever,” she says. “It won’t want to get involved.”

Professing an apparent apathy for politics, she added: “I just want to live my life with freedom.” A-P

The tension has subsided, with the government of Ma Ying-jeou initiating unprecedented warmer ties with the Chinese government.



BY BRYAN KAY

Before the Kuomintang government reclaimed the podium of power in Taiwan two years ago, relations with China were tense and there was at least one move for the international exit among the foreign diplomatic corp. in favor of the carrots dangled by Beijing.



LAMON RUTTEN

Lamon Rutten, CEO of MCX recently visited Korea to attend The Seoul International Financial Forum. MCX ranks No. 1 in Silver, No. 2 in Gold, Copper and Natural Gas and No. 3 in Crude Oil in terms of number of futures contracts traded in the world during 2009. Following is the interview with Asia Pacific Business and Technology Report

BY AMANDA MIN CHUNG HAN

Q: Could you tell us little bit about MCX?

A: MCX stands for Multi Commodity Exchange of India. We are a quite young company; we started trading in November 2003. We take commodity futures. We are the largest in India. We have market share of more than 80 percent. We take contracts in products like gold, silver, crude oil, a number of agricultural products. We have grown fast. We are one of the fastest growing exchanges. We are the sixth largest commodity futures exchange in markets. Our trading value of last year was \$1.24 trillion.

Q: So your company is the largest in India, and second largest in Asia?

A: In Asia, no. There are three exchanges in China. All three of them are larger, so we are the largest outside of China.

Q: Could you tell us the portion of carbon emission trading of total revenue of MCX?

A: Carbon trading is still very small. The problem is the complexity of markets. There are not yet domestic markets in India. So the all of exchange would be only the capture point on export change that calling industry still poorly organized. There are not many exporters – only a couple of the largest Indian companies has learned how to reduce carbon. Those companies are normally so large that they can export directly using services of own focuses. In order to properly develop the market, we need to develop the local market. For that we have to create an additional market for support exchanges on which we're working. China is the largest exporter of carbon trades right now. India is the second largest, but we expect that India will be the largest in carbon trades.

Q: Before starting talking about carbon emission trading itself I want to briefly review about the carbon emissions. According to United Nations Convention on Contracts for the International Sale of Goods, gas is subject to U.N. Convention. Do you see carbon as sim-



ple goods just like gas or financial products?

A: We see it as goods. But frankly I would like to see it as service, purely financial product so is it. The fact of matter it is you can package it like a product. You can trade it like a ton of coffee and a ton of rice. You can trade a ton of CO₂. You can trade it like a commodity. It works like a product. So you can trade it like commodity exchange.

Q: In Korea, right now two exchanges try to be a carbon exchange. One is the Korea electricity exchange and the other is the Korea Exchange. Who do you think should deal with carbon emission credits?

A: For example, in India renewable energy certificate, they are part of the electricity sector. They follow the electricity ministry regulation. Therefore, it can be traded only by electricity exchange. We (MCX) have no possibility there. This is the largest power company in India, so it's fine. So the regulation makes the value where you see the products. For commercial perspective, you trade it where you have the best usage. There is nothing to stop the financial market platform reaching people who trade in goods. We trade products like copper; there are many copper companies in India that trade in other platform. Similarly if we trade in carbon emissions, we know how we can reach people who generate also. At the same time we are financial players, investors, speculators. It's not a problem. It helps market liquidity. It makes easy for people who want to sell to find buyer, it is easier for buyer to find seller. So I would think for commercial perspective, you should put a place which has the best reach.

Q: So many people just jump into the carbon emission market. Do you see the carbon market rosy? If you do believe so, what are the reasons and how big will the market be?

A: Starting with the last question, experts' opinions on how big the market will be ranges very very widely. For 2015, which is only 5 years away, the range is between \$95 billion to \$1.1 trillion. My feeling is still the higher

side. For a very simple reason, this is such a big problem and the whole world is not doing enough about it. Once they do more, the market will be a very valuable instrument; the markets allow you to reach a certain target of objective at a low cost. If we agree that the targets will reduce the initial greenhouse gases and empowering markets will be the most efficient way and the cheapest way to reach that goal. I believe government will see this and will provide more for this market globally in many countries. Therefore, we will see how this estimate would be realized.

Q: There are some arguments that carbon emission trading market is just a political creation. Also, there are arguments that I heard that emissions trading does not help reduce pollution problems overall, since groups that do not pollute sell their conservation to the highest bidder.

A: That's incorrect. You can say it doesn't help enough. The whole logic of this system is scientists set a maximum permissible pollution level. Government entities then allocate that as a right to pollute to companies in the country. If the scientific process has been done properly, you've got to be realistic and you've got the proper level of maximum pollution. The only way that you pollute more than you are supposed to do as a company is buying free carbon from someone else, another entity which produces less. Now everyone less at a limit some companies are not doing anything to reduce the pollution they will find very very high price in the market for carbon emission. So this market is extremely effective. People see immediately how much it will cost them. Not to do anything, they would need to buy in a market and see the market price. They will actually act. They will see the value of action.

Q: You said the price could be quite high; carbon futures for delivery this December traded on London's European Climate Exchange at 14.66 euros (\$19.64) a ton on the 19th April. How much would the

price rise by 2012?

A: We don't make predictions. Prices are flexible on demand and particularly the demand side is politically driven and the buy side is also politically driven, but more stable and more predictable, because it sets many years in advance. Frankly I don't want to guess what the market price will be except that the market will be larger.

Q: You just said emission trading is a very effective way to reduce carbon emissions. What about a carbon tax? Do you think we should use both to reduce carbon emissions?

A: The big disadvantage of trading is that you have to give people initial permits. The way it is normally done is that giving away. So compared to this, the tax would be better. However, you can do it different. You can have superior system you can auction your permit. My opinion of auction system of permit is superior to tax system. It is equivalent that people pay for the right of pollution but they pay what is necessary to reach a certain scientific goal in terms of pollution. If you have a government body setting a tax level, it's very very difficult to see appropriate tax level, and if you put it too high, there will be unnecessary cost for economy. If you put it too low people will pollute too much and frankly that is a big risk for our world. So markets are much better that setting deadlines.

Q: So you're not really agreeing with the tax.

A: I believe auctioning is a much better system. I think in the international context you will see taxes unless more countries take different measures to reduce carbon emissions.

Q: What do you think would be the things Korea should consider to establish a carbon exchange?

A: I am not in the place to advise the Korean government. I think there need be a lot of foresight in every expressed policy. A carbon tax, some level of carbon tax, lets say an optimal level of tax is \$10, but you really don't know.

Q: It seems to be easier for

big companies to reduce carbon emissions on its own by developing the necessary facilities, but not for small companies who lack technological and financial capability to do so. In this sense, what do you think is the feasible technical solution for small companies?

A: It is a very interesting question and indeed this is a global problem. Large companies' normally have diversity of technologies, even if they can't do in one; they can do it in another part of the company. Small companies are not necessarily diversified. So I think they have to deliver government policies for small and medium enterprises with two components. One would be advisory; it helps the company and identify what they can do and provide financing facilities to enable this company to invest. They may not have cash flow otherwise. The other component that government should think about is dedicated to work technologies. Technologies that you can use that one company can't afford, but as government body can do feasible.

Q: As more carbon emissions related projects are launched, disputes over carbon emissions projects are also growing. Recently, there was the first arbitration case about carbon emissions trade in Korea. Are there many disputes over emission trading?

A: There are not many, but they happen. They are mostly related to the weakness of a verification system. They have some problems of double selling carbon emissions, which is only possible if you have a weak registry system. The other problem is the reality of emission deduction in offset projects. There are definitely some scandals in some countries.

Q: Do you have a plan or idea to reach the Korean market in emission trading like subsidiaries?

A: No, we don't. But MCX group are looking at the Asian market and we are looking at building links. We are definitely open for discussions.

Continued on Page 24

INDIAN IT INDUSTRY ON HIRING SPREE

BY RAJANI BABURAJAN

Revival of the global economy and an expected 8.3 percent GDP growth in India is good news for the business process outsourcing industry. The IT-ITeS segment is set to hire more this year. The year 2010 will be a good year for the industry.

Many IT-ITeS companies are on a hiring spree. According to Nasscom, the projected net hiring in the IT/BPO sector will touch 150,000 during the financial year 2011.

Infosys Technologies, one of the IT leaders, is planning to hire 30,000 employees during the current financial year to add its existing headcount of 113,796. During the last financial year, Infosys hired around 27,000 employees while the plan at the

beginning of the year was to hire 18,000 employees.

As part of the expansion, Infosys has made 19,000 campus offers for the year

(With a hit rate of 75-80 percent, about 15,000 freshers are expected to join). At Infosys, the lateral recruits would total 6,000. The company plans to add about 2,000 employees overseas in places like China, Philippines, Mexico and the U.S. Infosys will be hiring across verticals.

The BPO arm will hire about 7,000. Nandita Gurjar, senior VP and group head, Human Resources at Infosys told Asia Pacific Business and Technology Report, "We have a guidance to recruit 30,000 in FY'11 as a part of our business expansion plans. We have already made 19,000 campus offers and we expect 15,000 freshers to join us, going by a hit rate of 80 percent. We will be recruiting 6,000 laterals and 7,000 for the BPO. We are also adding 2,000 employees overseas in places like China, Manila, Mexico and the U.S."

Infosys Technologies recently forecast revenue growth of 16-18 percent for 2010-11, slightly higher than market estimates. The forecast was primarily based on robust outsourcing demand. Infosys had also announced wage hike for its employees. The company feels that it can afford this, since it would largely come from the bottom of the pyramid. Many leading BPOs are looking to hire people from rural areas. There is also a push to increase their presence in rural areas.

Convergys recently announced that it will be hiring more than 1,000 employees in Gurgaon, India in the next three months. There is a growing interest in technical support and troubleshooting work.

"Based on new and existing clients' sustained demand for the same, our hiring forecast has doubled on tech profiles over the last couple of years. We also have new business from telecommunications and financial services clients and new Convergys employees will



Nandita Gurjar



provide a wide range of voice-based support to the clients' customers," Ashutosh Sinha, director of Recruitment for Convergys' Customer Management operations in India, told Asia Pacific Business and Technology Report.

Research conducted by Convergys found that customers place knowledgeable service representatives and issue resolution at the top of their wish list when it comes to customer service.

"To support Convergys' ability to deliver the results customers want, my recruitment team focuses on hiring people with superior voice quality and a keen interest in helping others. Employees then go through a robust training program that enables them to resolve customer issues quickly and with empathy. In addition to comprehensive training, Convergys offers employees a positive work environment, competitive wages, and benefits including tuition reimbursement," Sinha added.

"We do anticipate further hiring needs in our other locations throughout the year. Interested applicants in India can simply text the letters "CVG" to 57 57 54 from a mobile phone to get a personal call from a recruiter. They can also learn about job openings at Convergys in India by following our Twitter page @cvgindia, which also showcases the latest Convergys commercials and "A Day Inside Convergys." Interested candidates may also submit their résumés to hrindia@convergys.com or visit one of our many recruitment offices in the New Delhi area," he added.

Mumbai-based Patni Computers is planning to increase its headcount by 2,500-3,000 employees in 2010 and the normal ratio of engineering to non-engineering graduates is 2:1. The company expects the highest hiring upswing in the areas of IMS, BPO and application development.

Mahindra Satyam, the fourth largest software services company, has recently said it is planning to hire 4,000 associates this quarter. At present it has a headcount of 25,000. Satyam had a headcount of 53,000 in January last year when its founder and chairman B Ramalinga Raju confessed to a 7,800 rupee accounting fraud.

Aricent, a provider of communications technology and services, plans to hire 3,000 employees globally.

"Just as with 2009-2010, where we hired a total of 3,000 new employees globally, we expect to hire another 3,000 employees globally in 2010-11 and will maintain our 60/40 lateral/fresher ratio. This is almost a 40 percent growth for us as our current global strength stands at 8,500. Out of these, we would be hiring 1,000 people in India alone, over the next 3 months," Aricent spokesperson said in an interview.

India's largest IT firm, Tata Consultancy Services, and its subsidiaries are planning to hire 38,000. HCL Technologies is planning to hire 5,000 freshers in 2010, compared with the 2,000 it hired in calendar year 2009.

The driving forces

The IT services industry will resume growth in 2010. The growth will be led by the commercial sector due to a number of factors, according to Fitch.

The main factors that could influence growth include improvement in the global economic outlook and a resurgence in business confidence among key sectors, demand in core markets, declining contract restructurings and client losses from bankruptcies or M&A and increasing interest in transformational and discretionary consulting and systems integration projects that were delayed during the recession.

During the recession, the BPO industry faced less business from the financial and banking industry. Many ITeS companies based in India rely on the growth of the financial and banking industry, which will grow in 2010.

According to Fitch, strength in the commercial IT services market will be partially offset by weakness in the public market primarily attributable to budgetary constraints in developed countries.

John M. Witt, director, Fitch Ratings, says that the consistency of government IT spending could be undermined by the implementation of cost containment measures necessary to moderate worldwide government spending amid ballooning debt borrowings.

According to a survey by global consultancy PricewaterhouseCoopers and Duke University's Offshoring Research Network, the economic crisis of 2009 reemphasized the importance of cost saving and efficiency improvement as top strategic reasons for outsourcing, followed by access to qualified personnel.

Curbing Unhealthy HR Practices

More hiring means more unhealthy practices for the industry. The \$60 billion IT-BPO industry, which directly employs more than 2.3 million people, is facing the music from the Nasscom. Nasscom, the key industry association for IT and ITeS companies, wants to curb wrong HR practices.

The growing attrition rate, which is a major concern for the industry, and the increase in the growth force the BPO segment to look for poaching through referral programs.

ITeS companies are opting for wrong practices to meet short term demand of employees, as they bag projects. This leads to exit of entire teams from other companies working on important projects. This can affect the profitability of the projects in the long run as poachers end up paying more for new people.

Chaired by Infosys chairman NR Narayana Murthy, the Nasscom committee on Ethics and Corporate Governance recommended IT-BPO companies ask for relieving letters from new employees. The Nasscom action plan, which is in place, includes.

- no to poaching
- get relieving letter
- serve entire notice period

The industry body has also advised IT-BPO companies to approach prospective employees with unbiased means like advertisements in newspapers, websites, radio or television.

Nasscom's Ethics and Corporate Governance committee formed after the Satyam debacle has members like Genpact president and CEO Pramod Bhasin, Mastek board member Ashank Desai, Zensar CEO Ganesh Natarajan, ex CVC chairman N Vittal and S Ramadorai, vice-chairman at TCS.

The interesting fact is that BPO employees do not have a single platform to share their concerns.

Nasscom also advised companies to follow a whistleblower policy and appoint an ombudsman for addressing the ethics concerns. The scope of whistle blowing should extend to external relations such as customers, partners, competitors, vendors, other external agencies, and society.

Nasscom is also coming down heavily on employees who are misusing their opportunities. It is noticed that some of the employees opt for part-time private work while simultaneously working with large IT-BPO companies. This is leading to less employment opportunities for freshers. According to Nasscom, an employee should not accept a position of responsibility in any other company without specific sanction.

Hurdles on Growth Curve

The country's power situation is worsening day by day. For instance, Gurgaon in the Delhi NCR region, one of the BPO hubs in the country, faces power cuts for more than 4 hours a day.

Almost 45 percent of companies in the IT sector produce their own power, which is an additional cost. Their focus on green IT is yet to give considerable gains. The ITeS industry is expecting big investments in infrastructure from the government to support the growth



Ashutosh Sinha

of the segment.

The domestic BPO is competing with several emerging countries. Investment in infrastructure to support the growth of the ITeS industry should be the top priority for the Union government. Infrastructure and power are the basic issues, said a top official with a leading BPO in Delhi.

There is a sharp growth in the number of small companies. They are looking for incentives from government. Small companies that cannot afford SEZs should be given tax benefits.

Commuting to Gurgaon from Delhi and Noida areas is a big challenge for the employees. Increasing in fuel prices are forcing employers to rethink transportation currently given to their employees. Availability of public transportation in Gurgaon may force some of the companies to suspend company-offered transport facilities.

Country Competition

Main competition is not among companies which are based in India, but with those in emerging countries. If other countries are planning to start offering IT services at competitive rates, India can lose its edge.

There are new countries which are emerging in IT services. They are posing a threat to the dominance of Indian and North American companies. These emerging nations are offering people with similar skill sets, while cost is comparable to those of dominant nations.

Outsourcing companies in North America and India, which have long dominated the industry, are being challenged by competition from Latin America, Eastern Europe and Asia in service areas such as contact centers, business process outsourcing, and information

technology outsourcing, according to a recent survey by global consultancy PricewaterhouseCoopers and Duke University's Offshoring Research Network.

As per the survey, the outsourcing industry is transforming due to the emergence of new providers around the world and efforts of existing outsourcers to expand into new markets.

Though India remains the outsourcing market leader, other emerging economies are seeking to expand in the sector. "Growing competition has transformed the outsourcing industry into a global race for market share. India's success as the world's back office has motivated other developing countries with well educated and under-employed populations to seek to duplicate their experience," Charles Aird, managing director, PricewaterhouseCoopers, said.

However, only 16 per cent of Indian service providers see competitors from other emerging economies as a threat, the survey added.

These new nations are charting new strategies to capture market share. To capture market share, the Chinese government has designated 20 cities as outsourcing hubs in an effort to attract more international investment. The Philippines, which is emerging as a strong competitor to India, has declared outsourcing a priority industry. In fact, several Indian companies have BPO centers in the Philippines.

According to the survey, 62 percent of service providers said they plan to expand the scale of their existing offerings. Moreover, the number of service providers planning to offer new finance and accounting, human resources and innovation services more than doubled from the previous year.

Moreover, unrealistic client expectations and the lack of an outsourcing strategy for them were the top reasons for contract terminations. "Near-shoring" has gained momentum among companies using or considering outsourcing services.

In line with the industry growth, the ITeS sector will gain growth. It is time to support them through more incentives and additional protection to its employees. A-P



Q&A

LAMON RUTTEN

Continued from Page 19

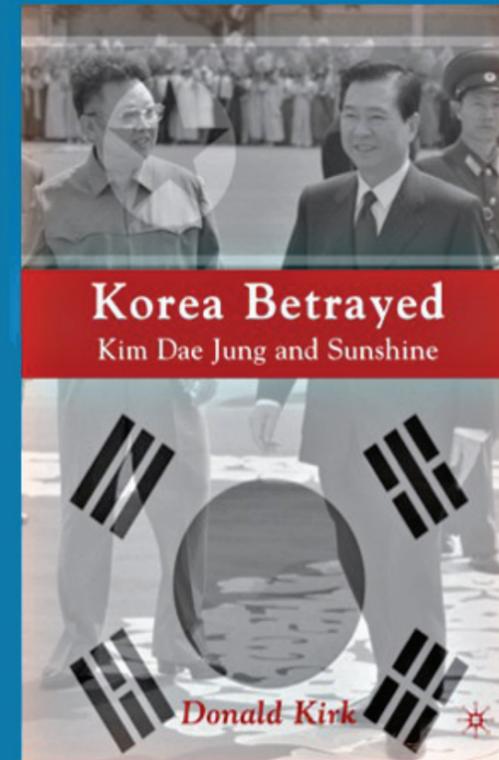
Q: In order to foster the carbon emission trading market, it is important to enhance liquidity on the part of investors who join the market. Do you have any specific measures for such liquidity man-

agement? In relation to the investment, do you think it is necessary to offer tax benefits such as VAT, capital gain taxes?

A: The No. 1 factor is some credibility and stability of government policy. People are very much afraid to do trades if there's no certain policy. After that, exchanges do best if they have, so you should link utility companies, shipping companies, and also banks and brokers. So for the exchange, you have to set up diversified links to industries.

Q: Before closing the interview, I want to ask a personal question: Some people argue that carbon emissions are totally exaggerated and it's not critical for humankind. What do you think about this opinion?

A: Keep in mind that CO₂ is a term for many other pollutants like methane, which is produced by sheep production, it's not just CO₂, but there are many other pollutants out there. The level is higher than ever before. The science indicates the link between those high levels and global warming. We are now talking about disappearing glaciers, shrinking species. A-P



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Korea Betrayed

Kim Dae Jung and Sunshine

Praise:

"The late Kim Dae Jung--the remarkable political dissident who rose to be President of South Korea and to win the Nobel Prize for Peace--is revered internationally, but his reputation in his native South Korea is much more controversial and contested. In this critical biography, Donald Kirk--a journalistic eminence who has been covering Korea for more than 30 years--helps us understand why this could be so. In his fascinating book, Kirk not only traces Kim Dae Jung's great political rise, but also details the moral and financial corruption that came to engulf, and permanently tarnish, the 'DJ' Presidency. *Korea Betrayed* will be a welcome addition to the bookshelf of every student of modern Korea. Kirk's account of the failure of DJ's 'Sunshine Policy' toward North Korea, furthermore, should be 'must reading' for all American policymakers before they prepare to deal with Pyongyang."--Nicholas Eberstadt, Henry Wendt Chair in Political Economy, The American Enterprise Institute.

About the book:

For the first time, using original sources and his own reporting going back to 1972 when he met Kim Dae Jung at his home in Seoul, Donald Kirk explores the great untold story of modern Korean history. This book recounts the rise of Kim Dae Jung from an oppressed region of Korea, beginning with his schooldays, his activities in the Korean War and his entry into politics. The book addresses his populist politics, his ascent to the national stage and his encounters first with the dictators who tried to take his life and then had him tried and sentenced to death for the Kwangju revolt. The book outlines DJ's life in exile in the United States, his great return to Korea and his entry into presidential politics climaxed by his election in 1997 at the height of economic crisis. Focusing on DJ's Sunshine policy, his summit with North Korea's Kim Jong Il and his drive for the Nobel, the book tells the story of payments that brought about the summit and the prize along with the corruption that ensnared his sons and top aides.

About the Author:

Donald Kirk, journalist and author, has covered Korea for American newspapers and magazines beginning with assignments there as Far East correspondent for the *Chicago Tribune* in the early 1970s. Since then he's reported from Korea for *The Observer* of London and *USA Today* and served as Seoul correspondent for the *International Herald Tribune*, the *Christian Science Monitor*, CBS Radio and the *Asia Times*. He is the author of two books on Korean economic issues, *Korean Dynasty: Hyundai and Chung Ju Yung and Korean Crisis: Unraveling of the Miracle in the IMF Era* as well as books on his years as a war correspondent in Vietnam and a Fulbright research scholar in the Philippines. He currently travels to Korea and elsewhere from his home base in Washington, D.C.

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USING CaaS TO ENHANCE CALL CENTER OPERATIONS

BY ANURADHA SHUKLA

“Communications as a Service” or CaaS solutions are now being used by several companies to improve their business prospects especially through call centers. Call centers serve to link a company with customers directly. Whether to handle complaints or promote a product or solution it is the call center executives who handle end user queries.

But call centers generally face problems like high turnover, increased expenses, continuous training requirements and the necessity of the quick adoption of new technologies, which are cost prohibitive.

It is imperative for businesses to enhance customer interactions, but at minimum cost. The solution does not remain in trying to derive more functionality with existing technology. Also, older technology solutions may not be effective in responding to changing business and customer service requirements.

In order to improve functionality and enhance call center operations businesses are increasingly adopting CaaS solutions.

Advantages of CaaS implementation

CaaS solutions not only help reduce the capital expense of setting up a business call center, but they also minimize operating costs. They also enable high flexibility in the dynamic business environment.

For any business the two parameters – Total Cost of Ownership and Return on In-

vestment – are and survivability a premise-based the total costs in-hardware, data implementation, system maintenance, constant upgrades and

Research reports show that hosted contact center solutions are more cost effective as they help over ride staffing, implementation, maintenance and upgrade costs. The CaaS model is found to be more effective than any premise-based solution, according to studies by Frost & Sullivan.

Premise-based solutions need more hardware, middleware and complex integrations and will require longer periods of time to implement. But CaaS solutions can be deployed in weeks and the business has to pay only for the capacity and functionality they use as a monthly subscription. CaaS vendors also offer the IT resources needed to manage system integration, configuration, adminis-

vital for the sustainability of the business. In case of contact center solution clude those of software, center infrastructure, energy expenses, system maintenance, IT staff salaries, constant upgrades and monthly subscrip-

tions.

tions.

tration, support and upgrades. So clients need to spend only on the parts of the CaaS package they use and when they use it.

Also, CaaS enables significant savings in staff numbers and the space required to house the staff and hardware including furniture, power, etc. Constant training of call center agents and other staff is minimized, which is an important factor keeping in mind the high attrition rates in this industry and shortage of experienced staff.

CaaS is being offered through various technologies like IP-based LAN, WAN and MPLS networks. This allows companies to expand their contact center setups by upgrading to the next technology instead of expanding in terms of staff numbers and buildings. Also, such technologies allow staff to work from any remote location if they satisfy other requirements. This also benefits highly skilled workers who do not like traditional call center setups. They can work flexibly via a networked deployment and avoid traveling too.

A CaaS-based, fully integrated, workforce-management solution can help schedule call center agents by forecasting need based on historical data. Such solutions also help monitor agents to see if they are strictly following the schedules drawn according to staff availability and skills.





A fully-integrated CaaS routing application can be used, which will improve agent utilization and route multichannel interactions effectively. Customer experience is enhanced as their interaction can be routed quickly and accurately. Outbound dialing from a call center can also be optimized in order to maintain the productivity of agents. Predictive dialing helps avoid time in dialing and waiting. It also schedules outbound calls when incoming calls are expected to be low. Telemarketing campaigns covering several customers can be attempted using CaaS-based outbound dialing solutions.

Quality monitoring leverages supervisor-client interfaces to provide real-time details regarding various aspects of call center agent responsiveness. This can be used to impart training to agents on how to handle certain calls. Also, automatic multichannel recording saves voice files of all customer interactions, which can be used in the future.

While deploying a CaaS solution, the existing network and telephony architecture can itself be leveraged, this eliminates the need for costly purchases and implementations. Some of the CaaS models used widely are Time Division Multiplexing (TDM), networked voiceover IP or a combination of both.

How to Select a CaaS Solution

The CaaS deployment model depends on the existing PBX or onsite phone system with advanced services. Replacing or adding a new solution may alter the onsite hardware or software deployment. If an IP-based solution is preferred then it is important to check if the existing network that is LAN or WAN can run VoIP or not.

The type of CaaS solution also depends on whether the contact center operations are centralized or distributed and also on the time available for the implementation. Arrangements have to be made in case call recordings and call detail records are needed.

Migrating to a new system not only costs money, but there will be time concerns as well. Both have to be kept at a minimum while catering to the call volume. The CaaS system allows the business to scale to a larger call volume if required. Based on general conditions, the call center may have arrangements for a small number of agents with basic call routing and call recording facilities. In case an increase in calls is expected owing to a new product launch or advertising campaign then the call center capacity can easily be increased by adding more agents or introducing Interactive Voice Recording or IVR facilities.

Contact center managers may be desirous of implementing a new CaaS solution. To test its efficacy, he can just try it on a small group of agents with the service provider making the necessary investments. The business manager needs to add the feature on a monthly fee basis. But in a traditional setup, such trials can be made only with the purchase of a server and the procurement of other hardware and software licenses.

Another flexible option offered by CaaS implementations is that if a business manager does not prefer the new solution he can move to a premise-based solution any time. They can also use the hardware such as IP phones bought for a CaaS solution again.

CaaS in Asia

The Asia-Pacific region is a lucrative market for CaaS solutions as call centers throng the region. Interaction management software packages have fast replaced traditional telecommunications and compute telephony integration solutions. Applications include multimedia routing and queuing, IVR, screen pop, Internet text chat and unified messaging to name a few. Interactive Intelligence Inc. operates through resellers in the Asia-Pacific region and Japan.

In Thailand Computer Telephony Asia is a distributor of communications solutions. CT Asia also implements call center systems in South East Asia apart from Thailand. CT Asia provides Enterprise Interaction software to call centers, enterprises and service providers with the flexibility to use phone, fax, e-mail, etc., without requiring multiple devices. The EIC itself works as a PBX, IVR, fax server and Web server.

Datacraft India, a subsidiary of IT services company Datacraft Asia, provides software for IP telephony, contact center automation, unified communications and customer self-service. Its Customer Interaction Center and Enterprise Interaction Center have been adopted on a large scale by Indian companies and that of other SAARC nations. Datacraft also provides implementation services.

The solutions have been so designed that they help organizations migrate to IP slowly without much disturbance. In Asian countries there is a marked increase in productivity-enhancing customer interaction and IP convergence solutions which form part of CaaS implementations.

The spurt in this demand for IP telephony solutions in the Asia-Pacific region wit-

nessed some years back was due to a desire to replace old PABX systems. Gartner Inc. researchers predicted then that voice service installations will become predominant in this region, which has been found to be correct as there is a greater need to increase productivity and improve call center interactions now.

Malaysia, Japan, Korea, Hong Kong, Australia and Singapore are major markets for CaaS based solutions. A Forrester Consulting study conducted in 2009 on 900 small and medium businesses commissioned by HP in nine countries across the world found that there is a great demand for six types of CaaS services.

The study also included countries in the Asia-Pacific region. The six types of services included self-service interactive voice response (IVR), IP contact center, Unified Communications, video surveillance, PC back-up and recovery and multimedia conferencing.

Also, studies conducted by Gartner Inc. reveal that more users will adopt CaaS from 2009 onwards as it

promises predictable costs for telecoms. Companies will also find this a suitable solution as CaaS enables shifting technology risk to the service provider. Technology obsolescence can also be managed by a scalable third party, according to Gartner sources.

As the markets rebounded, CaaS also grew gradually from 2008 through 2009. A significant growth trend will be witnessed between 2010 and 2011 and the market is expected to grow from \$1.2 billion to \$2.3 billion.

CaaS, like Software as a Service (SaaS), allows technology organizations to acquire software resources. Here, communications technology is housed in a data center of a communications service provider and is managed by the provider as a multi-tenant infrastructure. Small and medium-sized businesses requiring enterprise-class communications services will benefit a lot from these services that are offered to customers on a pay-per-minute or pay-per-subscription basis as they may lack the resources to own a full system. **A-P**



CHO BYUNG-CHEOL

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collected in real-time.

Also, 3D imaging needs this type of super-fast storage. Right now, 3D body images, such as in a CAT scan, take a very long time to coordinate. Also, 3D transmission of digital TV requires twice the amount of information to be sent as regular 2D. This huge amount of three-dimensional information must be read and written fast enough to be viable, and our silicon storage devices can do that.

On a less serious note, virtual reality games can also benefit from this. Currently, in games like Second Life, you can't walk through the world in real-time, because the data

about all the objects in the world comes to your computer too slowly. This is partly because of your Internet connection, but also because of the hard drive storage. Its just not fast enough. A faster storage system on both the server and client end can take care of those problems.

Q: Which market are you hoping to aim for first?

A: Our SSD technology is a home-grown Korean technology. This is Korea's first storage system product. And therefore, right now we are concentrating on China and Korea, but later this year we will be going into the U.S. market. And after that, we will try to enter Europe.

Q: The Korean market is easy to understand, because you are a Korean company, but why China next after that?

A: Based on our market intelligence, Korean IT companies and skills are better than the Chinese. So, Chinese companies are often looking to Korean companies to provide IT services. Our company already has a presence in the Chinese market providing those services. Furthermore, we think that the Chinese market is moving very fast, especially in the high tech area, so we want to make sure that we have this business in China covered. Thirdly, the Chinese market is several times

bigger than Korea, and much more profitable. It is about twenty times larger than the Korean market.

Q: But why China before the U.S.? Or India? Or even another market?

I really want to get involved in the U.S. market, but it takes a lot of expertise to get into that market. We are a Korean company, so in order to get into the U.S. we need some guidance from people who are familiar with the U.S. market. Once we do get into the U.S. market, I am confident that the technology will carry us to success. But we need help from professionals first to make sure that our company is presented in a sophisticated and U.S.-oriented manner in order to give the right impression.

Q: What are your business expectations and goals about this new technology?

A: We expect that once we get into the U.S. and European market, the company will explode. We fully expect to become a billion dollar company. So we are moving forward with getting an office in the U.S. which will do an IPO sometime later this year or next year. We have enough revenue, but we could always use a little more along with a little more exposure to the outside. I'm a technical guy myself, so I have to delegate these business decisions to my management team. **A-P**



TECHNICAL ADVANCES IN AGRICULTURE IN CHINA

BY VINTI VAID

One of the most important fundamental commodities that are critical to man's existence is food. In this regard, a country's agricultural backbone is vital to sustain the way of life for its citizens. Without a sound food and agricultural support system, the country's continual development in all other areas including economic, cultural, social and industrial aspects will simply move forward at a very slow rate or even not at all.

Food production and agriculture is given more meaning and importance in China than in other developing countries in Asia, due its need for domestic support and its continuously ballooning population and high income growth. China's efforts towards agricultural development and domestic food production has grown rapidly and impressively in recent years, paving the country's accession to the World Trade Organization, which had virtually closed its doors to China until reforms in these areas were met – and the coun-

try has succeeded in doing so.

China's efforts in the food production and agricultural field have been very impressive as compared to any other country in the Asia Pacific region.

Food per capita has increased, rural incomes generated become substantial and robust, and China has continued to be a major net exporter of agricultural products. This can be attributed to the concerted focus on developing food sciences and technologies and using these technical advances to improve agriculture and food production.

One good example is the use of scientific and technological advances in China's Jilin Province in the northeast, where more than 264 improved crop breeds were developed, 80 of which have been used successfully in production. According to the National Bureau of Economic Research, more than 220,000 farmers participating in training programs in this area, the satisfactory results and community involvement in this region speaks for the rest of China in the country's sustained efforts in furthering improvements and advances in agriculture and food production for the nation.

A Background of Agriculture in China: Challenges and Needs

The challenge in China, is in the area of producing an adequate supply of food through agriculture, food production, processing, handling and distribution. To achieve this, labor-saving innovations and technologies should be established resulting in high-levels of production stability and large scale production output with a focus on single crops or livestock. China has managed to sustain this, resulting in significant advances in the agricultural field.



This was not the situation, however, several decades ago, particularly the years after 1949 when the People's Republic of China was established. Agricultural land, cultivated and used for thousands of years in China's long history, had lost most of the organic matter and nutrients needed to sustain a good agricultural yield. The impact of this situation on China's growing population was severe, resulting in more than 30 million people dying of starvation in the aftermath of China's Great Leap Forward.

China had no recourse but to eventually rely on chemical fertilizers to increase production, with the government helping out by increasing imports, providing price subsidies for farmers, establish cultural reforms and the abolishment of the commune system, allowing farmers to privatize their farm lands. The result was a significant increase in grain production, with farmers empowered to sell crops in excess of their grain quotas at profitable market prices.

However, the resulting economic gains had some significant drawbacks as the use of chemical fertilizers as well as pollution-creating agricultural run-off from farms posed environmental concerns, which threatened China's aquatic resources and viable sources of drinking water. In this regard, technical advances are needed to provide more agricultural technologies that yield sustainable economic yields, while at the same time provide ecologically and environmentally sustainable options.

Calls for the building of a new socialist countryside have been put forward during the Fourth Plenary Session of the 10th National People's Congress, by providing a systematic improvement of agricultural production through the use of improved agricultural related technologies, resulting in more economic and more effective means for food production. This not only includes efforts in improving grains and crops, but should also include a separate focus on livestock development, while taking into consideration related environmental and ecological concerns.

Recent Technical Advances in Agriculture and Their Benefits to China

China's efforts in improving agricultural yield and food production have led to several technological and innovative advancements that helped catapult China's overall agricultural industry into one of the most successful the world over. The use and development of technological advances in this area has moved from government financing to technologically-inclined corporations wanting to open up new markets.

One classic example is the development of the super hybrid rice variety by Yuan Longping. Companies providing seeds and technological know-how on super hybrid rice have partnered with townships to generate better yields. Results showed better yield per mu (0.67 hectare), providing farmers with more income using the same tracts of land.

Several regions have also stood out in the use of technological advances for better yields, particular the northeast province of Jilin, which ranked first in the country in per capita grain yields. These include corn, rice, beets, millet, small red bean, sorghum, soya, sunflower, wheat, tobacco and 60 other green foods already devel-

oped for production, which is part of the more than 127 varieties already developed in the province. Aside from that, the province has also excelled in advancements in other agricultural industries, which include cattle, pig, chicken and forestry.

In terms of livestock development, China's LEAD or Livestock Environment and Development Initiative has worked with the Research Center for Rural Economy or RCRE of the Chinese Ministry of Agriculture to establish what they called "livestock revolution." resulting in quadrupled production in livestock output during the last 20 years. These efforts include developing technical advances in improving the modern feed industry as well as developing solutions to livestock-related environmental issues.

According to figures available from the Crop Science Society of China, the development in other crops and grains has also yielded superb results similar to those achieved in the development of several varieties of the super and hybrid rice. Foremost are the developments in wheat breeding, the second largest crop in China, which showcase higher yields, higher gluten quality, and resistance to stripe rust, scabs, mildew and other diseases as a result to biotechnical breeding. There are over 300 varieties already developed that can yield an average of 3.8 tons per hectare.

The third largest crop, maize, has also been developed through germplasm improvement and development as well as biotechnical breeding to produce the hybrid maize, which produces higher yields and greater resistance to diseases. The same advancements were also adapted to the development of cotton, which is the most important fiber crop in China with approximately more than 4.2 million hectares grown annually. Other crops include soybean and rape, which are important oil and protein crops in China.

Aside from crops and livestock, technical advances in other agricultural products have also been developed and used in China, resulting in better agricultural yields. Foremost among these advances is the introduction of the new soil conditioner BGA or the Beijing green Angel. BGA is made from a composite of corncobs, dead wood, straw, sawdust and other shavings and was developed to improve the quality of the soil to make it more effective in saving water, resistant to desertification and drought, improve disease resistance in crops and improve crop yields.

The introduction of BGA to agricultural lands makes crop yield positive in extreme weather and environmental conditions such as cold, drought, alkaline soil, low sunshine, high UV radiation, and pollution. BGA is pollution free and environment friendly unlike traditional fertilizers, pesticides and other biological hormones that farmers have used over the years. It is a totally green solution to agricultural development.

The use and applications of these technological developments have enhanced the quality of crop production and livestock generation in China, while maintaining and safekeeping environmental aspects. These are critical in sustaining the developmental goals of the country for the rural community and the agricultural countryside, which is vital for the overall development

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BOOMING OF ENERGY SECTOR IN CHINESE ECONOMY

BY ANURADHA SHUKLA

If anybody thought that the economic downturn experienced by the world over will bring the Chinese energy sector to a standstill, then they were grossly wrong. For one, this period of economic uncertainty has made the country more determined to rise to the occasion when the economy revives.

It is true that the financial crisis has made it difficult for the energy industry to cope, with the demand for energy also reducing. There exists a scene of energy companies slashing prices and increasing stockpiles. The oil and electricity industries are facing heavy losses. But China plans no reduction in energy output as it is preparing with watchful eyes for an upturn in the economy. The nation will be well prepared to cater to the energy demands, according to reliable sources.

This argument gains credence from the fact that China is busy constructing new nuclear power stations, wind farms and solar power stations. This will enhance the energy mix of the country, which has been traditionally dependent on energy from coal.

Besides restructuring the energy mix, nuclear power construction is being boosted by leveraging the technological know-how processed by the Chinese. Also, nuclear energy is considered more energy-efficient and environmentally friendly and it will also create more

jobs. The nuclear power capacity is set to shoot up to 60 gigawatts by 2020. At present China has only 9 gigawatts of nuclear power capacity.

The construction activity of nuclear power generation plants is expected to give a fillip to other industries such as cement, steel, transport and material handling. Several Banks have entered the fray in a big way, which will give the energy sector a push.

With fast development comes responsibility. The Chinese government implemented strict environmental standards and refused to approve several coal-fired projects. The China Electricity Council also confirms that investments in nuclear and wind energy generation plants have increased, while those for coal-fired projects have been curtailed.

The investment in nuclear power increased by 71.85 percent and wind power by 88 percent in 2008 compared to 2007 with the same trend continuing till now. Also, China's total power generating capacity touched 790 million kW in 2008 according to available statistics.

China has started constructing two large solar power plants in the western provinces of Qinghai and Yunnan to further reduce dependence on coal and oil. The Qinghai plant will be a gigawatt-level solar station while the Yunnan solar plant will be a 166-megawatt solar power plant. The country is also set to promote mergers and acquisitions in the energy and resources sector. Overseas cooperation will be required in the sectors of oil, gas and mineral resources exploration.

Government Initiatives

China is the second largest consumer of energy after the U.S. To beat the economic downturn, China announced a 4-trillion Yuan or \$586 billion investment two years back. The focus was on improving industry value chains and energy conservation so as to reduce dependence on an export-driven economy. The government announced tax reductions, rebates, fiscal subsidies and

other measures.

All sectors of industry including real estate, transport, power infrastructure, rural development were benefited. State-owned oil companies were given a hand in improving their output through tax breaks. Economic development is expected to follow owing to the government stimulus especially in enhancing energy security and energy efficiency with an increase in domestic consumption and increase in demand for energy commodities.

China is a giant consumer of energy and is hence a large importer of oil and natural gas. The country is trying to cater to natural gas demands by laying pipelines for the import of liquefied natural gas into the country. However China is the largest producer and consumer of coal. China is now trying to boost other sources of energy like nuclear, hydroelectric and natural gas.

Problems Faced by the Chinese Energy Sector

The growth in energy demand is faced with supply reliability and energy security blockades. According to 2000-2005 estimates, it was forecast that the requirement of energy will be 400 gigawatts by 2005, 500 gigawatts by 2010 and 850-900 gigawatts by 2020. But actual figures show much higher rates which the power suppliers are not able to provide. Many provinces involved in export industries situated in the provinces of Fujian, Jiangsu, Shanghai and others have been affected by power outages. The transmission grid's inability to supply power has hit many industries resulting in manufacturing problems, which may have long run repercussions.

The problems facing the power sector are the inadequacy of a proper restructuring program, slow development of a regulatory framework, a monopoly in the power sector and low efficiency of electricity supply and use, among others. The government has taken steps to tackle all issues and improve efficiency in this sector.

China's growing energy consumption, especially in the oil sector, touched new heights with tremendous growth in passenger vehicles, an increase in inland freight transportation, industrial output etc. Also, energy consumption is expected to be more than double by 2020. The government is trying to reduce China's dependence on oil imports by developing strategic oil reserves, acquiring upstream oil assets and imposing fuel efficiency standards for all vehicles.

The country's present energy policy focuses on lesser dependence on oil imports and a reduction in particulate sulphur in vehicle emissions and the use of clean, green technologies. In November last year, China announced initiatives to reduce its carbon intensity by 40 percent to 45 percent below 2005 levels by 2020. Urbanization in China will result in more housing and infrastructure requirements made from energy-intensive commodities like steel, cement and glass. Also, the populace will buy energy-consuming equipment and appliances, besides using energy in urban public transport systems and

cars. According to the China Energy Group, household energy consumption increases steeply with urbanization. Hence the requirement of more energy to support China's urban development policy.

Green Energy: A Sustainable Source of Power

China is not going to be left behind in the pursuit of green energy. The nation invested \$34.6 billion in clean energy technology last year alone. The efforts of the government have drawn private-sector foreign investments to the green energy sector. An expanding economy that needs more domestic energy and the requirement of non-polluting energy sources made the government adopt a national renewable energy standard. It stipulates that 10-15 percent of its electricity supplies should come from renewable sources by 2020. To meet future needs for expertise in the green energy sector, China has set up 16 energy technology research centers for training engineers to develop green energy tech solutions.

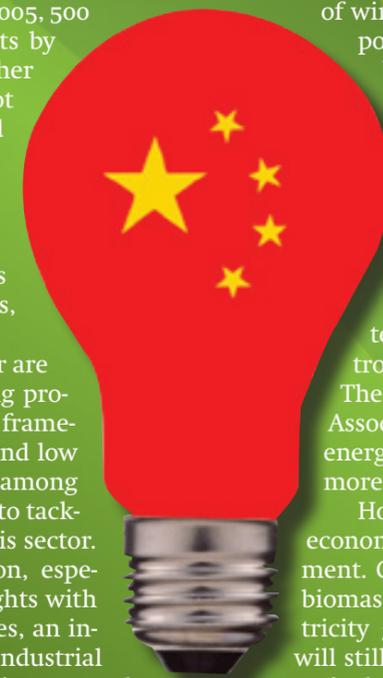
The concerted efforts made by China in this field helped it to jump ahead of Denmark, Germany, Spain and the U.S. to become the world's largest producer of wind turbines. It has also gained a leading position in solar panel manufacture, too, besides building nuclear reactors and efficient types of coal power plants. Such efforts take dependence away from oil.

China is expected to lead the race in the renewable energy sector. Vestas of Denmark has erected a large wind turbine manufacturing complex in northeastern China and transferred technology for building electronic controls and generators to Chinese engineers. The Chinese Renewable Energy Industries Association revealed that the renewable energy industries are also adding more and more jobs every year.

However, this industry is spurring China's economy more than improving the environment. China plans to increase wind, solar and biomass energy to reach 8 percent of its electricity generation capacity by 2020. But coal will still represent two-thirds of China's energy capacity by 2020 and nuclear, and hydropower will account for the rest.

The Chinese government has formed a National Energy Commission Ministry comprising of cabinet ministers, led by the prime minister. More emphasis is given on expanding the electricity grid, also. Power generation companies have been advised to use renewable energy more. Subsidies are awarded to consumers for installing solar panels and solar water heaters.

Compared to developed nations, China has an advantage because it can plan and develop efficient energy producing sources as it is in the formative years in this high growth sector. The government's active policies in developing green sources of energy and the participation of the country's banks in backing related projects have helped develop the energy sector, taking it to new heights.





RENEWABLE ENERGY OPTIONS FOR TELECOM SECTOR

BY NK GOYAL

During the current decade, there has been an exponential growth in the telecom sector, especially in wireless. Telecom users also view the telephone as not only a tool for communication, but also a tool to impart education and entertainment. The mobile network has become a forum to promote common interests, ideas and goals. There is an understanding that everybody should have the opportunity to connect with the world beyond their geographical boundaries.

There are about 2 billion wireless subscribers in the world. China is the largest and India is the second largest, followed by the U.S. There are about 600 million mobile users in India. There is a global digital divide and te-

lephony has not so far reached all rural areas. To sustain and accelerate it further, there is a need to encourage service providers to view the rural markets as an opportunity for sustainable revenues.

Need for Alternative Energy Opportunity for Telecom Sector

In a number of villages in India and around the world, electricity is either not available or is available only in limited quantities. As a result, even if battery backup is provided for the Base Transceiver Station (BTS), the batteries do not get fully charged. Further, due to frequent interruptions in the power supply, the life of these batteries get shortened, which in turn increases the operational cost to run services in rural areas. Unavailability of reliable power in semi-urban, rural and remote areas increases operational costs further because sufficient backup systems have to be maintained.

Maintenance costs of networks in rural areas are high compared to urban areas, because of several factors such as poor transportation systems, difficulty in supply of spare parts and non-availability of skilled manpower. Due to lack of reliable power in rural areas, there has been a substantial increase in the usage of diesel for running engine alternators to keep telecom exchanges, transmission equipment and BTSs up and running. This increases costs substantially.

There is high diesel consumption for operations of towers. Taking the example of India, there are more than 250,000 cell phone towers, which consume about 530 million gallons of diesel per month. The carbon emissions from the diesel are 22.2 pounds/gallon. Total carbon emissions from cell phone towers are 11.76 billion pounds or 5.3 million tons annually. The cost of diesel every year is INR 6,400 Crore.

Each tower consumes an average 5 kilowatts of power and the consumption increases with the number of telecom operators using the tower. For any generator which runs 10-12 hours a day, the actual cost of ownership is six times more than the cost of the generator. India is expected to have 1 billion mobile phone subscribers by 2015, which would mean about 250,000 more mobile towers. That, in turn, would double the carbon emissions saved. Even if solar panels supply a part of the total power required, it would still save substantial amounts of money, fuel and carbon emissions.

Solar and Wind Energy for Powering Telecom Towers

In spreading the reach of telecommunications in remote areas, renewable energy should be used to power relay towers in remote areas. By replacing diesel generators with solar panels in cell phone towers, more than 5 million tons of carbon emissions could be prevented from entering the atmosphere.

Telecom Operators have the optimum conditions for operation of solar devices. In India, the state of Gujarat has been a front-runner in the use of solar power. Recently, the Gujarat government, in a major climate initiative, came up with a solar power generation policy. As per the policy, those willing to set up solar photovoltaic and solar thermal projects in the state will get a number of concessions through this policy. There is a need to adopt a policy of developing solar power as a dominant component of the renewable energy mix, since being a densely populated region in the sunny tropical belt; the subcontinent has the ideal combination of both high solar insulation and a big potential consumer base.

Solar is a clean and effective way of harnessing energy. Also, the maintenance cost for the operation of solar equipment is comparatively lower as compared to diesel generators operated BTS towers. Solar generators have no carbon emissions and also help in preserving the environment for sustaining life on earth. It reduces global warming, as carbon emissions are null in solar devices. The manpower needed for the operation and maintenance for solar equipment do not require extra skill.



The move from diesel to solar and other alternate sources of energy will result in a reduction of 5 million tons of CO₂ emissions in India as well as a savings of \$1.4 billion in operating expenses for telecom tower companies. Tower cost comprises 30 percent of operating expenses for a company. It makes sense especially in rural and semi-urban areas where an electricity supply is not reliable. Even if the saving is 5 percent of operating expenses, it would make a huge difference.

The telecom majors have started operating mobile repeater and relay stations, which harness solar and wind energy with the wind turbines foisted on the telecom towers. The hybrid systems, involving solar photovoltaic systems and wind energy installations for this application assure uninterrupted supply of 2.8 kilowatts of power daily. A master control installed at the site acts as a voltage stabilizer, while a generator has been kept as a back-up for charging the batteries in case of emergency.

The Way Forward

Though the diesel generators are the lifelines of telecom towers, they contribute to significant carbon emissions. Going green and pushing the use of alternative energy sources like solar, wind and biofuel is the need of the hour; the government should provide high subsidies to help the telecoms taking this step, quickly and easily. Going solar is the way forward. [A-P](#)

TECHNICAL ADVANCES IN AGRICULTURE IN CHINA

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of the country in all aspects including cultural, sociological and technological.

These developments are also vital in ensuring food security for a country that is known to suffer the effects of an ever-growing popula-

tion, coupled with an industrial and economic revolution that is forecasted to be unparalleled in the near future. Frontier developments in agriculture as well as food production development have also taken into account the environmental aspects usually associated with these areas.

These challenges are not unique to China and are also typical in other parts of the world. Food secu-

urity, environmental concerns, and agricultural sustainability are some of the needs and challenges that governments and societies in most developing nations are totally concerned with. Learning the methods and successes achieved in China would be one great step that would benefit societies tremendously, in order to address all the concerns that each of their respective countries are facing. [A-P](#)



NEERAJ VYAS

Aricent, a provider of communications technology and services, works closely with communications service providers (CSPs) and equipment manufacturers to solve the emerging and complex innovation, SI and R&D challenges these organizations face in this highly competitive market. The company has co-developed some of the world's first Femtocell, WiMAX and In-flight broadband solutions.

Asia Pacific Business & Technology Report recently got an opportunity to interact with Neeraj Vyas, vice president of Business Development to know more about the company's activities in the Asia-Pacific region.

BY RAJANI BABURAJAN

Aricent to Focus on 3G/4G Opportunities in the APAC Region

Q: Briefly tell us about Aricent's activities in the Asia-Pacific region.

A: Aricent is a global innovation technology and services company focused exclusively on innovation. We are a strategic supplier to the world's leading application, infrastructure and service providers.

Asia Pacific is a very important region for us already and in FY11 we will have a strong focus on this to help our customers develop the next generation of communication services and technologies.

Our recent announcement of being the system integrator to provide Nepal Telecom with a convergent mediation and interconnect billing solutions is a great example of how we are helping our operator customers bring the next level of services and experience to their customers.

Q: What are the key markets for Aricent in the region? Who are your target customers?

A: Aricent is a strategic supplier to the world's leading application, infrastructure and service providers with operations in 19 countries worldwide. Some of our key markets in the APAC region include India, China, Japan, Korea amongst others.

We will continue to offer cutting edge innovation coupled with our strong delivery and lifecycle services to our customers in the region. Unfortunately, our legal contracts with our customers prevent us from naming them but they range from device manufacturers to service providers.

India is an important market for us. Our recent announcement of providing Convergent Mediation and Convergent Interconnect Billing solutions to Nepal Telecom - Nepal's largest and most prolific telecom operator demonstrates our ability to be the strategic SI partner with our customers. We do count some of the largest Indian operators as our customers and we will continue

to provide them with our services to help them deliver great experiences to their customers.

Q: The worldwide communications industry is undergoing revolutionary changes. Are you able to keep pace with the technological innovations happening at your clients' end?

A: I would say that in many ways we are helping power and co-create that change. The change that the communications industry is witnessing is disruptive. User experience is key and operators are realizing that the road to owning the customer loyalty and growing revenue is to provide a great experience to the consumers - this can span from the device UI to the network and all the way to the operations and billing systems (OSS/BSS).

If you see, in the case of Nepal Telecom, the reason why they are upgrading their OSS/BSS is to be able to provide a better overall experience to their customers as well as reduce time-to-market of deploying new services. Our cutting edge solutions and unique SI capabilities were the prime reason for us winning that deal.

There are many more examples such as our Android CoE, Media EXP as well as, of course, our recently announced offering of Experience Engineering - all are geared towards co-creating, along with our customers, some of the most innovative products and services in the communications space.

Q: Tell us about a few technologies that show Aricent keeps up with this technology momentum.

A: Aricent recently launched Experience Engineering, the industry's first integrated strategy, innovation, product development and systems integration engagement model aimed at enabling both fixed and mobile network operators to conceptualize, productize and

commercialize highly differentiated subscriber experiences. Experience Engineering has been developed specifically to enable network operators to deliver the best possible user experience.

Aricent's new Innovation Lab is designed to help operators assess, develop and deploy new business models and improve the overall customer experience. The new facility and associated services last year end which are aimed at helping service providers architect and implement the latest in multi-vendor Operational Support Systems (OSS) and Business Support Systems (BSS) technology. Based upon a Service-Oriented Architecture (SOA) approach, the lab highlights how service providers can evolve their existing OSS/ BSS solutions as well as rapidly implement new OSS/ BSS components in support of advanced services and 4G.

The biggest driving trend is significant focus on delivering a great user experience. More and more people are realizing that User Experience (UE) is not just about the User Interface (UI). Beyond the UI, the UE is heavily dependent on factors such as connectivity - as the available bandwidth directly affects the experience as well as what services can be provided on the device. Performance optimization is also key and with more moving parts today than ever before (display, power, processor, radio chips etc.), devices are complex and harmonizing - and not just integrating - components is more important than ever.

With platforms such as Android gaining momentum, we see a lot of people building Android based devices with a focus on providing a differentiated experience to consumers. This of course throws up a lot of opportunities for us with our Android CoE to provide a rich multimedia experience on the mobile devices.

Extending that, since more and more people want a rich multimedia experience on their mobile devices, there is a significant load on the current network infrastructure which was formed before the YouTube and iPhone era. Thus, we also see a move to higher speed networks such as 3G, LTE and WiMAX.

Q: Recently you also won an HR award. What motivat-



ed you to initiate a program like iRefer?

A: We won recognition for the "Best Employee Referral Program" across all industries at the Annual Global ERE Recruiting Excellence Awards.

The award was presented to Aricent for its iRefer program - a company-wide initiative that encourages employees to refer talented individuals to fill potential employment opportunities, thus fostering close-knit relationships among employees and resulting in tremendous synergy and team spirit.

Apart from this, our award winning employee referral program iRefer got its own micro-site on the company intranet - iRefer helped us hire 45 percent (of our) employees this year.

Last year, the economic conditions were difficult, but despite that, we grew by over 20 percent. This

was primarily due to our ability to align ourselves closely with our customers and engage with them at a strategic level to help them innovate out of these difficult times. Internally, from HR's perspective too, we followed the same principle; huge emphasis was given on communication where the organization and employees understood each others' need and delivered accordingly.

"Employee Engagement" has been given top-most priority in the organization as we firmly believe that only engaged employees can create engaged customers. Further, despite the tough economic situation, where most of the companies shied away from doing employee engagement surveys, we went ahead and did our annual survey to hear from our employees on their thoughts and where they think we could do better.

Q&A

Q: What are your views on the performance of the ICT sector in India during the past couple of years, especially during the economic crisis?

A: The Indian Telecommunications network with 430 million connections (as on March 2009) is the third largest in the world. The Telecom sector is growing at a speed of 46-50 percent during the recent years. This rapid growth is possible due to various proactive and positive decisions of the Government and contribution of both by the public and the private sectors. The rapid strides in the telecom sector have been facilitated by liberal policies of the Government that provides easy market access for telecom equipment and a fair regulatory framework for offering telecom services to the Indian consumers at affordable prices. Presently, all the telecom services have been opened for private participation.

India's software and services exports have been rising rapidly. The annual growth rate ranges between 20-22 percent in IT services and nearly 55 percent in IT-enabled services (ITES), such as call centres, Business Process Outsourcing (BPO) and other administrative support operations. Together they are predicted to grow at 25 percent until 2010.

The communications industry is experiencing unprecedented change. For consumers, user experience now trumps technology and price as the key driver of purchase and adoption of new products and services. Communications Service Providers (CSPs) are facing aggressive new competition from device makers and powerful Internet companies all looking

to capitalize on the mobile Internet. And for equipment manufacturers, cost pressures and the need to invest in new technologies are driving the need for new ways to improve efficiency and scale, while achieving a significantly lower cost structure.

These market forces are creating a fundamental new set of innovation and system integration (SI) challenges for CSPs. These include creating a subscriber device competitive with the iPhone, delivering rich converged services, connecting a wide range of new electronics such as digital picture frames and navigation devices, and building network APIs and SDKs to best monetize cloud-based services.

Equipment makers now must strike a delicate research and development balance between investments in existing products and those required to ensure competitive readiness in new growth areas like metro Ethernet and Long Term Evolution (LTE).

“Employee Engagement” has been given top-most priority in the organization.

Aricent is the first company purposely constructed to work closely with CSPs and equipment manufacturers to solve the emerging and complex innovation, SI and R&D challenges these organizations now face, in what some analysts estimate to be a \$9 billion market. Aricent is a fundamentally new breed of strategic supplier architected to co-create, together with our customers, the world's most innovative communications products and services.

Q: What are your immediate expansion plans in the APAC region?

The APAC region is an important area for us and there are many opportunities as the 3G/4G roll out grows and operators look to create valuable and differentiated services for their customers.

Our recent Nepal Telecom announcement is one such example where we were a strategic supplier

and system integrator for the solution to Nepal Telecom. This is a three three year systems integration contract to provide Convergent Mediation and Convergent Interconnect Billing solution that enables a wide range of next generation communication services. Aricent will act as the primary systems integrator for convergent Mediation and Interconnect solutions. As a turnkey implementation provider offering supply, delivery, installation and commissioning, Aricent will integrate systems, which together enable next-generation product and service offerings for both pre-paid and post-paid customers. In support of the agreement, Aricent will be implementing and integrating its proven and broadly deployed Active Mediation System, in conjunction with Intec's market-leading Interconnect software. The engagement also includes post-deployment managed services in support of the converged solution. The broad compatibility of Aricent's solution across different networks and systems will pioneer operational convergence within Nepal Telecom by enabling the operator to create a common, unified mediation platform and a single interconnect system for the entire network. The solution has the potential to reduce total cost of ownership and minimize revenue leakage.

Q: Any new technologies in the pipeline?

A: We will continue to make significant investments into nextgen technologies such as LTE, WiMAX as well as upcoming platforms like Android and rapidly growing areas such as MVAS, 4G and Cloud Computing.

4G or the fourth-generation wireless is expected to use available radio spectrum more efficiently, and as a result, provide end users with cable-modem transmission speeds which will support high-quality streaming video.

Our strategy is to continue to co-create the most innovative communications products, services and technologies. We continue to invest in areas such as Android, VAS, LTE WiMAX and more to further cement our position as the top global telecom R&D services provider in the world. A-P



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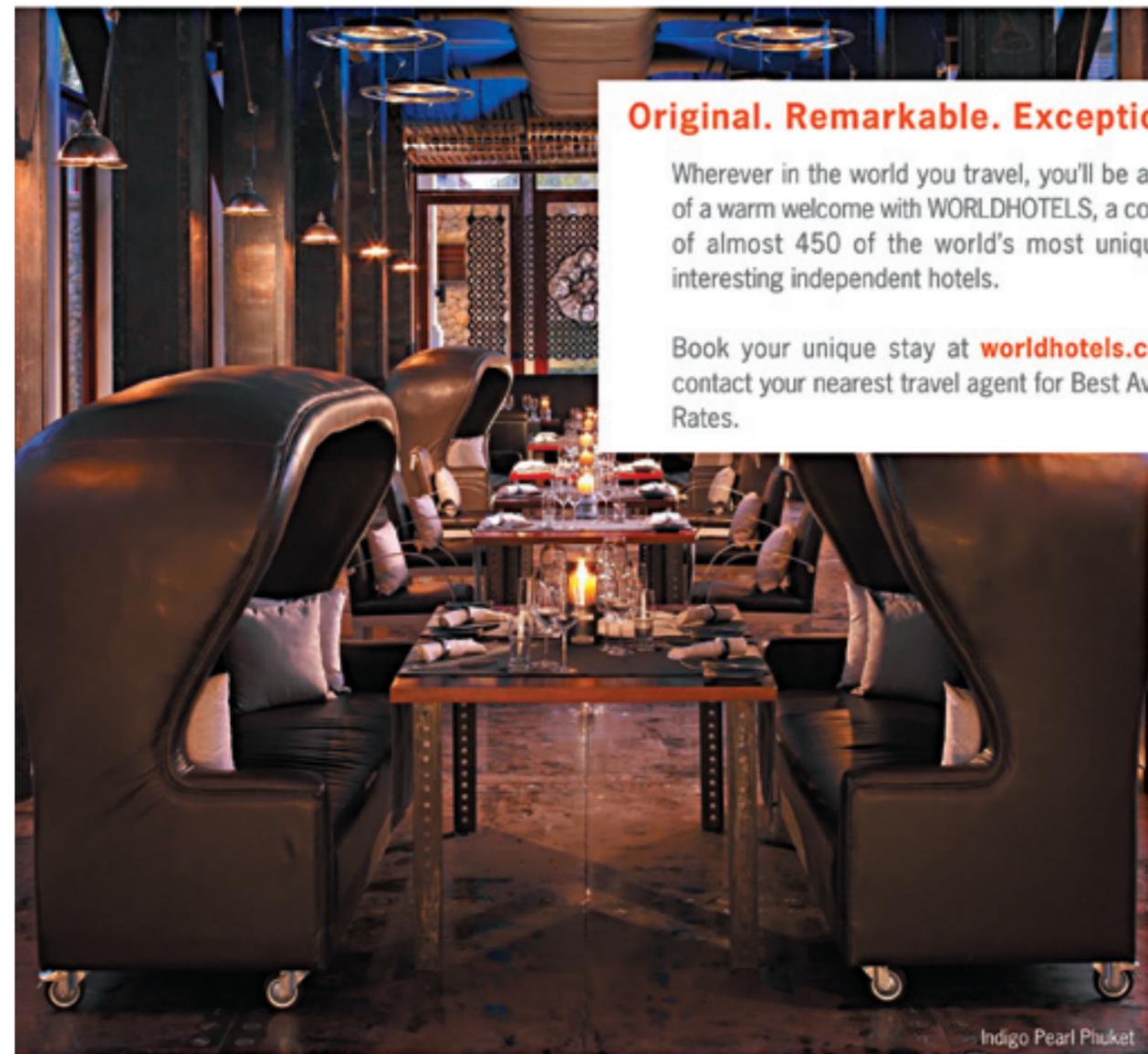


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BUSINESS

TWITTER AS A MARKETING TOOL



BY RAJANI BABURAJAN

Within a few years of its launch, Twitter has become the most popular micro-blogging application. Users can access Twitter on powerful broadband connections and even on their mobile phones. It allows 140 characters in a single message to share information among members through mobile phones.

Twitter can also be accessed through more than 50,000 third-party Internet and mobile applications. "The timely bits of information that spread through Twitter help users to make better choices and decisions," the company says.

Twitter is free to join and use. There is no cost for using Twitter to promote your personal or business site. Celebrities are using Twitter to update their fans with the latest info on them. Businesses find it as the most beneficial way to build brand image and earn more business. Twitter is also used as an effective Internet marketing tool. With Twitter, you can increase traffic to your website and earn a higher page ranking. Nowadays Twitter is gaining popularity as an alternate RSS, news monitor, and a tool to socialize.

According to comScore, the number of visitors who visited Twitter in January 2010 was 75 million. This, according to Twitter officials, represents 1,100 percent growth in one year. Most Twitter users reside in the United States. Twitter says they send 50 million tweets a day to followers worldwide. Traffic to the website grew explosively. According to Alexa, a popular Web analytics company, Twitter.com is No. 12 in the world in terms of user traffic.

Website analytics find that Twitter.com scores the highest rank in South Africa, where it is ranked as the 8th most-visited website. In the U.S. it is ranked twelfth. In countries like the United Kingdom, Pakistan and the Philippines, the website is tenth.

Twitter as a Marketing Tool

Because of its rising popularity, Twitter is also used as a marketing tool to promote businesses. This helps businesses stay connected to customers. Business can use it to quickly share information with people interested in the company, gather real-time market intelligence and feedback, and build relationships with customers, partners and other people who care about the company. Twitter is a simple tool that helps connect businesses more meaningfully with the right audience at the right time.

Brand marketing has become more complicated nowadays. It demands a huge amount of money, resources and a lot of time. Since Twitter is a social networking app, brand marketing through Twitter is more economical. It can spread the message to a number of users instantly. The tweeting facility helps companies deliver information about the brand to users in a cheaper way. It is also a very efficient way of brand marketing because the information is passed to the right person at the right time. Only interested parties will follow the company, so the brand is getting the desired visibility among prospective customers.

The chain of customers connected through Twitter

helps the brand gain sudden popularity. For this reason Twitter is widely used as brand marketing tool. The short tweet that spreads through Twitter is highly effective. Users show special interest in them because they are sent from known sources or their buddies. Twitter may also contain other relevant information interesting to its followers. These functionalities make Twitter as the most effective brand marketing platform.

With Twitter, organizations are now able to stay connected with their customers whenever and wherever they want. The app provides users with a number of customization options. Being a social network, Twitter is connected to millions of customers from different countries. Thus the company gains a wider reach than could have been gained through any other media.

Twitter has plans to offer Tweets over SMS and MMS as a free service. The company is involved in talks with leading telecom operators. In today's mobile world, people are increasingly depending on mobile phones for their jobs. New apps are being developed to enable mobile users to handle their day-to-day activities like conferencing, banking, ticket reservation, etc., through their mobiles. Businesses are increasingly leveraging the capabilities of these applications to reduce costs and increase productivity. The availability of Twitter over SMS and MMS will make the service more acceptable to common people as well as the business community.

However, businesses, especially the not-so-popular brands, may find it difficult to get followers. This is the negative side of the Twitter story. Almost every business – big and small – tweets today. However, as tweeting competition increases, people get lots of tweet messages on their mobile. Soon they become frustrated with the flood of tweets they receive. They are no more motivated to subscribe to more such offers as they are already fed up with them.

Some of the leading companies using Twitter for brand marketing are Dell, JetBlue, Teusner Wines, Current, Tasti D Lite, Coffe Groundz, Etsy, NAKED Pizza, American Apparels, Pepsi and Levi's.



The success of JetBlue is often cited as an example of the power of brand marketing using Twitter. The company joined Twitter in the spring of 2007. Today the company has more than one million followers. Similar is the case with major brands like Dell and Pepsi.

A Twitter case study on Dell explains, "Dell Outlet faces a common but vexing challenge. A division of the giant made-to-order computer business, Dell Outlet carries refurbished equipment and other inventory that it needs to sell quickly. Because the division has to get the word out fast, it doesn't have the luxury of hiring an agency and developing an ad campaign."

"Pepsi may be a classic brand, but it's using 21st century tools to collaborate and build relationships with customers," says the case study published by Twitter.

"We're trying to humanize the brand, to make it more accessible to consumers," said Anamaria Irazabal, brand director for Pepsi. "On Twitter, they can complain or praise, and we can use it as a way to gauge how people are feeling."

Methods to Increase Brand Visibility Using Twitter

It is important for businesses to maintain their existing followers while also gaining new ones. To achieve this, the company has to tweet with the latest information interesting to their users. Not only that, the information should reach them at the correct time. You can opt to send a message on a particular date or day of the week. By giving options such as "Follow Friday," you can increase the impact of the message. Such options also allow you to customize the message and make it more acceptable to followers.

Most businesses also provide their website links while sending a tweet message. This is effective as it generates traffic right to the website from Twitter. Being a popular social networking site, Twitter has gained a good page ranking in all search engines including Google. Thus, gain-

ing traffic from highly-ranked Twitter websites will help optimize your website for popular search engines. This is an additional advantage of using Twitter, apart from the commercial benefits.

Innovation is the buzz word on the Internet. Twitter is no exception. As the community involves the participation of millions of users, ideas may jump from anywhere in the world. Watch out for such innovative ideas and create new ways of communications. You may get creative ideas such as sending an exclusive car deal or a printable redeemable coupon to your followers via tweets. They are the best opportunities to conversion.

Information is key to promoting any business activity. Your customer should know what you are offering them, and micro-blogging is an excellent way to inform your customers. The message written within the tweet window attracts the eyes of a customer because they are short and direct. To write such a short message may be difficult for the company. However, considering the importance of this communications medium, you should make the message crystal clear and avoid bombastic phrases.

Over-tweeting invites more trouble than good. If you tweet more than once about the same information, people may label you a spammer. It's important that you distribute the information only when it is absolutely necessary. Don't tweet over every bit of information about your brand. It will never be appreciated. It is better if you could send tweets at regular intervals. This method will invite more interest among users because they develop a mindset to accept your message at that particular time.

Constant communication with followers is necessary to keep in touch with them. The latest information about the company and also other information going around the world should be discussed with the followers. This is a highly successful method in marketing through social media. As Twitter is the most famous social networking site, you will get wide acceptance by sending non-marketing tweets along with

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LEVERAGING IP COMMUNICATIONS TO ENHANCE BUSINESS

BY ANURAG AGNIHOTRI

Technological developments have such a powerful impact on society and have often been the catalysts for major global changes.

Such is the allure of digital communications in almost any major industry, revolutionizing the way businesses are operating, resulting in higher efficiencies, lowered total costs and increased profits. The possibilities of increased broadband capacities as well as more efficient wireless digital communication facilities have prompted new and existing businesses to explore the benefits of moving towards digital communications, particularly in the realm of IP communications.

This trend holds true in the Asia Pacific, where studies made by experts from Frost and Sullivan indicated that companies spent over 56 percent of their total expenditures on IP-based enterprise telephony solutions. This is due largely to the increasing need for collaboration and conferencing with offshore or remote branches. Aside from that, more enterprises in this region have a steadily growing mobile workforce, which would require constant communication through e-mail or telephony through mobile means.

On top of that, there is a growing trend within Asia Pacific companies towards a unification or convergence in their communication solutions. Convergence between desktop and telephony facilities as well as other communication infrastructure within these enterprises is only made possible through the use of digital IP communications. Communications have also grown complex, evolving from text-based or voice communications, to the use of multimedia.

A white paper by China Telecom Americas indicates that the need for convergence in IP communications to enhance businesses is much more evident in China, with Internet users growing at a staggering annual rate of more than 40 percent. This rate has grown so rapid that there were over 300 million Internet users in China in 2009, which made up more than 40 percent of total Internet us-



ers worldwide. Studies also show that among these users, more than 117 million are mobile Internet subscribers. This trend is true not only for the continually booming business community, but also among Chinese bloggers, gamers, shoppers and social networkers.

These figures go to show how technologically driven the Chinese as well as the rest of the Asia Pacific region are. As the industrial and economic landscape in the region continue to evolve, businesses should continue to learn more how they can leverage these technological advances particularly in the area of IP communications. A continued shift into this paradigm would eventually reface the social, economic and business outlook in this region in the years to come.

Latest Advancements in IP Communications in Asia

The continuing paradigm shift towards convergence and the use of IP communications should be taken advantage of by businesses in the Asia Pacific region as a move to enhance the way they operate, communicate with suppliers, partners and customers, and the way they provide and deliver their products or services. Companies should learn to leverage these advances in technology to improve not only their productivity, but their overall business operations as well.

Several businesses in the region have already benefited much from convergence and the use of advancements in IP communications. These applications transverse all industries and are not bounded by their geographical locations. The following describes some of these success stories enjoyed by several companies in the Asia Pacific region as well as some news and trends that clearly show this paradigm shift in action.

- Several airlines have already implemented online infrastructures that allow passengers to check-in for their flights from anywhere as long as there is an Internet connection. The resulting benefit is a reduced need to additional personnel and staff to man counters and customer service points. On top of that, IP communication services provide real time and up-to-date status to clients even on their mobile devices – increasing customer satisfaction and reducing time-consuming and resource-intensive inquiries.
- The use of multimedia capabilities through IP communications have made it possible for Quality Assurance and Engineering teams on the factory floor to take accurate and up-to-date information and video, which can be immediately sent to managers anywhere in the world. In such arrangements, critical decisions can be made more accurately without further delays or costly downtime to operations.
- Companies save considerable amounts of money from more cost effective IP communication solutions, reducing capital expenditures as well as significant operational expenses.

Major corporations like Tata Communications are expanding their global networks, upgrading their supply capacity across these networks with its continually growing Telepresence Exchange Services. The company has expanded its global reach not only in the Asia Pacific region, but also in the Gulf and Eurasia sectors.

BPOs and Contact Centers in countries like the Philippines are continuing to enjoy the benefits of leveraging IP communications in their core businesses, particularly with the launching of VoiceOne's fully functional IP communications services offering top-of-the-line VoIP services and other enterprise solutions that this industry needs.

The business world has seen how the leading business communications provider Avaya Inc. has partnered with Samsung Electronics to develop and market various IP-related products for telecommunications. This move proved successful as more and more customers from the region and anywhere else opted to choose IP-based services and telephony solutions for their businesses.

How Can Businesses Leverage IP Communication Technologies

A white paper from Aspect shows that businesses planning to migrate and leverage IP communications to improve and enhance their core businesses need to determine the proper infrastructure that would cater to their business needs. Certain stages need to be carefully studied and taken into consideration to determine an efficient strategy that would make their transition as successful as possible to produce the best results for their business. These include the following key phases:

- Multi-Channel Capability – aside from VoIP calls, IP communications can also involve other Web-based contact avenues, particularly e-mail, Web-chat and Web call back. Businesses should carefully study whether these key features would integrate well with their core businesses or would just be hindrances to growth. If used properly in a Customer Relationship Management context, businesses can leverage these features well and improve customer services and relationships with key clients as well as prospective customers.
- Extending Geographic Capability – As businesses continue to grow as seen in the Asia Pacific marketplace, it would be inevitable for remote or even offshore locations to be established to cater to the growing customer and business needs. The ability to communicate beyond geographical borders would be critical and important at this stage, as main of-

fices need to be in constant touch with remote offices and locations, as well as with mobile staff.

- IP-Based Contact Centers – An intrinsic part of growing businesses is increased communications with customers, partners and suppliers. In this regard, maintaining contact centers, either through the company's own IP-PBX system or through hosted VoIP services, would be an added advantage to increase customer satisfaction and improved businesses.
- Mobile VoIP Capabilities – Global businesses are leveraging on the features and capabilities of mobile VoIP services for continued customer-to-agent communications. Advances in this area have resulted in better VoIP communication quality, which is critical in customer-focused businesses and organizations. With further advancements in VoIP services such as VoIP over 3G, mobile communications would be far better than ever.

Upcoming Trends that Asian Business Should Watch Out For

The growing popularity and increasing reliance of Asian businesses on VoIP communications have prompted providers with even better systems with new features and capabilities that would take IP communications to the next level. Such systems would be more cost effective in the long run and would ease the burden on the corporate budget as well as a significantly reduced cost of operations.

Global investments in the Chinese market as well as the Asia Pacific continue to flourish with tremendous growth, even in a currently unstable economy across the globe. Companies from North and South America as well as a variety of other entities from Europe and even Asia continue influx into the region to establish their presence. It is important

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Careers in Internal Communications

Overview and Opportunities

BY ANIISU K VERGHESE

Internal communications, a field that actively engages and communicates with internal stakeholders (employees, leadership, contract staff and alumni) is growing rapidly. Several research reports and trends point to internal communications as being among the fastest growing area of communication with a rate of between 25-30 percent. Significant improvement in communication effectiveness is associated with a nearly 20 percent increase in a company's market value.

Internal communications is a sub set of organizational or corporate communication, which also includes domains such as advertising, public relations, event management, marketing communication and direct marketing. In short, internal communications empowers employees to do their jobs to the best of their ability and ensure that all are aligned to the organization's goals.

The Growing Influence of the Internal Communicator

Internal communicators are experts and specialists who collaborate with leaders and human resources to help achieve a common understanding, build connections and recognize employees. There are numerous benefits of consistent internal communications such as enhanced productivity, greater commitment, improved working environment, lower turnover, increased customer orientation and better business growth.

Internal communications aims to support leadership in crafting suitable messages, managing communication channels, writing, organizing, editing and reviewing content. It also coaches employees in understanding the organization's values, mission, their role and responsibilities and promotes the adoption of appropriate communication strategies. Measuring the impact of communication, seeking and evaluating feedback, building a sense of community and assisting human resources

and business groups to motivate and improve engagement among their employees are among other objectives of internal communications.

Internal communications in recent times has grown in stature. Long known as the 'poor cousin' of public relations, it is today valued by most organizations due to its impact, reach and importance.

The internal communicator acts as a consultant and the role is crucial for the organization's success. Traditionally, internal communication departments were aligned with the human resources group and over time gained respect and credibility as independent practices. Today, while some organizations have these professionals report to the Executive Office, others build this expertise within the ambit of the corporate or marketing communications function. Still others allow this team to work as independent entities, giving professionals the freedom of intervening in organizational development, culture transformation and change communication needs.

Partnering with Human Resources

However, the partnership with human resources (HR) is key to the success of the organization since both these groups have a common stakeholder – employees. HR is a stakeholder, but internal communicators do more than just liaison on projects. Instead, internal communicators are consultants who guide and coach HR on the nuances of effective communication. HR's core strengths are in defining and administering policies and programs that make the organization a great place to work and supporting any employer branding effort. Internal communications, on the other hand, supports these initiatives by giving guidance on what works, which channels to use and how to ensure messages reach audiences appropriately and translate them into tangible benefits for the organization.

Due to the continued importance of communication, the growth of social media, increased span of control and varied scope of the role, the

internal communicator is sought after by most internal groups for advice and intervention while engaging potential clients, investors and prospective employees. Their span even includes corporate social responsibility, risk management, information security, office communication, crisis management, communication training, campus communication and recruitment marketing.

Exciting Nature of Work

Internal communicators are dedicated to improving the continuous two-way flow of communication between the organization and its internal constituents. They support the organization at multiple levels – framing key messages; building and managing communication channels such as intranets and portals; reviewing the organizational climate; ensuring consistent two-way flow; acting as internal brand custodians; managing large company-wide transformational communication programs; sharing best practices; coaching employees on knowledge sharing; and working as ambassadors of the organization's culture.

A typical communication program roll out will require planning, strategizing, budgeting, messaging, influencing, facilitating, measuring and reporting. The program might involve the design and production of collateral, which can be managed in-house or outsourced depending on budgets and need. It will expect the internal communicator to have a sound business understanding, leverage an internal network of contacts, have a good grasp of writing and bring creativity and consulting skills to the table.

The scope and scale of communication interventions are defined largely by the business environment and the organization's interest in employee engagement and communication. Most multinationals operating in India leverage the skills and experience of professionals from their global network to introduce best practices in the region. Issues like attrition, stiff competition for the limited talent pool (specifically in the IT industry) and engagement are also drivers to champion inter-

nal communications.

Internal Communicators – Expected Skills and Competencies

The roles and responsibilities of an internal communicator are the effective creation, delivery, measurement and reporting of employee communication. A representative job profile will include supporting the CEO's office; managing, editing and publishing content; establishing periodic face to face interactions with leadership and employees; overseeing the intranet and its usage; monitoring business activities; instant reporting about newsworthy events to employees; conducting and analyzing internal surveys; and collaborating with corporate communication or marketing with feedback and suggestions related to internal activities.

In this role knowledge of management, theory and practice relevant to the sector of operations helps immensely. That includes how communication works, what models exist, how audiences receive information, which channels are effective and what are the latest trends sweeping the industry and domain.

It is vital to learn more about the local culture and legal issues in communication. Internal communicators are expected to have an eye for detail and ear for local communication and news. They must have the ability to spot opportunities and translate them into concrete, measurable communication.

As an internal communicator, one must also understand the nuances of communication politics and planning, which includes the basics of audience, content and return on investment.

Among the essential skills expected of an internal communicator are writing, planning, managing complexity and media management. The softer aspects include influencing, relationship building, networking, listening, process implementation and professional knowledge. Knowledge of social media, design, photography and video editing are extremely handy and today most internal communicators are expected

to be experts in these areas.

Positions Available in Internal Communications

The entry-level expectations for the internal communicator are to have direct experience in organizing communication programs and delivering tangible results. The individual must have supported colleagues in appreciating the quality of communication, encouraged participation on internal communication channels and tools, written messages for a variety of media and influenced decision makers on the objectives and measurement of communication. Most internal communication requirements are advertised as word of mouth referrals and, therefore, professionals entering this domain may come in with experience in journalism, event management, content writing, public relations and marketing.

At the next stage, also known as the Specialist level, the individual is expected to own and manage medium-sized programs within business groups, demonstrate expertise in translating briefs into concrete interventions, drive the adoption of messages and periodically review channels for consistency.

Moving up the ladder will require the individual to be adept at relationship building with senior stakeholders; supporting change management efforts; conducting focus groups and surveys that help stakeholders gauge the pulse of their employees; tackle tough human resources issues; and collaborate across teams to maximize the impact of communication.

As the role matures, the internal communicator will need to establish frameworks, think ahead of the curve by identifying trends shaping the future of the workplace, assign value to communication goals, build accountability to communication impact and think like a business leader.

The career path is well defined and an experienced professional can grow to lead internal communication teams with designations ranging from a Director to a Senior Vice President. Internal communications today is a powerful domain

and has a seat at the table on most company boards and leadership teams.

Internal communicators are also aligned by business based on their level of expertise and interest areas. Therefore, you may see opportunities to service internal business needs in groups such as technology, consulting, business process outsourcing and marketing management.

Apart from the core functions, there are other specific positions available for those interested in joining the internal communications team. These include designer; client liaison; recognition manager; community relations manager; content writer; corporate citizenship officer; internal branding specialist; leadership coach; leadership communicator; social media integrator; culture communicators; human resources communication managers; internal researchers; intranet managers; international business communicators; newsletter editors; and internal event managers.

Joining the Internal Communications Team

The professional seeking an opportunity in this domain is expected to have an excellent knowledge of English; great listening skills; have a background in one of the marketing communication functions; good drafting and copy editing skills; expertise with online and social media tools; deep knowledge of the industry; and understanding of cultural and legal nuances in communication.

For students and practitioners interested in entering this field there is always a debate in their minds on being a specialist versus a generalist. Getting deeper into a domain has its pros and cons. By focusing on one area you can limit your learning and exposure in others. On the other hand, internal communications as a domain will always be around as a need and career if there are organizations that believe in improving employee engagement and increasing business value.

How professionals begin their career in this function continues to be a topic of discussion. In India,

people who enter this field usually come in with a knowledge of PR, advertising, corporate communications, journalism, direct marketing or event management – or even a combination of all these. Very often internal communications is just another element in their portfolio within the corporate communication function they handle. Leadership traits are an asset, especially since most leaders look to the internal communicator to own and drive a lot more than is expected in their immediate span of control. By demonstrating the ability and confidence to manage corporate assets such as intranets, newsletters, employee engagement programs and leadership messaging, one can gradually be entrusted with larger responsibilities in internal communications.

Challenges facing Internal Communications

Credibility and respect for the practice are necessary for it to blossom. The internal communication practice is quite nascent and therefore there is immense potential for growth and learning. Some organizations prefer a one-person-fits-all approach, expecting a professional handling PR to also manage internal communications. Sometimes, HR owns it and sometimes the executive office. It is quite rare to have a separate entity driving internal communications, which is possibly the best way forward.

Often the expectation is to manage more with the limited set of professionals and those who do not have the relevant experience or interest are saddled with the responsibility of internal communications. There is also a perception that internal communication doesn't make an impact, unlike a public relations or an event management activity. Therefore, this practice gets limited attention often at the organization's peril. Very few professionals are keen to focus on this specific domain due to the lack of visibility it provides for the individual. Also, organizations believe it is a skill which anyone can have without investing in skills and experience.

Today there is more emphasis

on building expertise for this practice, but unfortunately, it is rarely taught as a separate subject in management institutions in the country. At best, it is combined under a larger Marketing & Communications module.

Employee engagement is a hot topic when discussing retaining the best talent across industries globally, and internal communicators are 'thought leaders' who advise human resources and leaders on strategies. They articulate the need for executive presence, cascading internal messages and championing internal campaigns and events.

Unfortunately, limited investment in developing strategic thinking and planning, creating standards, improving professional's learning and lack of measurement are stifling growth.

Interestingly, India and China are at the top of minds worldwide, as these nations serve as case studies for global organizations, expanding their footprint and presence east or in other emerging regions. Indian and Chinese communication professionals are actively sought to understand how internal communications works in their geographies. Some organizations like Cisco, Accenture, BT and IBM have set benchmarks in this domain – more from their efforts in improving process-

es, practices and integrating workforces.

The other challenge internal communicators' face is information overload. Today, a professional is overwhelmed with so much information that they are unable to make sense of it completely. The internal communicator is expected to coach employees and provide leaders with alternate solutions to ensure messages are received, understood and acted upon.

Apart from these concerns, managing the grapevine as a channel of communication, measuring return on investment for communication and building suitable social tools internally are top of mind for internal communicators.

The Future of Internal Communications

There is a shift in the way employee communication is taking place. As more and more organizations debate the impact and implications of Web 2.0 on their staff, the internal communicator is expected to serve as a consultant in distilling trends and recommending relevant solutions for integration, knowledge management and learning.

Also, with increased targeted 'internal' marketing to career levels such as the key 'manager' community, internal communications will

need to structure direct messages and database-manage its internal constituents better. The internal communicator will need to be seen more and more as a 'people' integrator who can construct a 360 degree plan that supports the employees' lifecycle with the organization from the boarding to the alumni stages.

In the next five years, there will be an increase in the demand for specialists in internal communications and strategic consultants who can leverage evolving trends in employee communications. ^(A-P)

About the author: Anis K. Verghese has over 11 years of experience in the evolving internal communication arena, online media and corporate communications. He currently works as an internal communication expert for a global services company where he oversees employee communications for India. Prior to his current role, Anis worked for Leo Burnett, Saatchi & Saatchi, i-flex solutions and Accenture. He has won several employee communication awards and writes regularly for management and industry publications. Anis is passionate about engaging fellow communication practitioners through workshops and presentations. Visit Anis's blog at www.intraskope.wordpress.com. He can be contacted at intraskope@yahoo.com.



TWITTER AS A MARKETING TOOL

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marketing tweets.

Though Twitter is not designed as an advertising tool, it has grown to become one of the most cost-effective and powerful advertising platforms for businesses, individuals and brands. The platform is emerging as an inevitable means of communication in today's business scenario. With more innovations, Twitter is likely to become accessible to all - even those without an Internet connection.

Tweeting Trouble

It seems users of Twitter are not fully aware of the consequences it can bring to their image. At least some

of the recent instances prove so. As the popularity of the Twitter rises, it emerges as a weapon for political parties, community groups, and rivals. If you think you can tweet whatever you want because you have a million followers to support you, you are wrong. Remember there can be an enemy tweeter for you and you should be prepared to face millions of axes from the other side.

In India, a popular politician - a fan of Twitter - enjoyed tweeting inside stories of his ministry as well as those out of his area of business. He fell victim to his 'popular' act. He tweeted, and in response, his rival also tweeted, following which a flood of sharp swords was exchanged, and the result: Both of them are out of their seats now.

The tweet conversation, however, brought thousands of fans for the minister from within and outside the country. He was quoted as the next-generation minister. However, his followers are a bit disappointed now that he's no more a minister.

Whom to blame? ^(A-P)

TECHNOLOGY RECOVERY in 2010



BY ANURADHA SHUKLA

A Asian stocks have started showing an upward climb with the MSCI Asia Pacific Index rising with news of Toyota Motor Corp. and Canon Inc. gaining from the global market recovery.

Toyota, the world's largest car manufacturer, managed to overcome the loss it forecast and ended up making an operating profit.

Canon, a manufacturer of cameras whose market is mostly outside Japan, has made a quick climb in sales with the U.S. dollar showing recovery. Also, Korean firm Samsung Electronics Co. experienced a rise of 20 percent in sale from America.

"The world's economy is more resilient than has been thought, and investors are more inclined to put their money in stocks. With the current foreign-exchange level, investors are confident in the corporate earnings outlook," said Yoshinori Nagano, a senior strategist at Tokyo-based Daiwa Asset Management Co.

The MSCI Asia Pacific Index in Tokyo and Nikkei stocks are showing an upward trend. Other indices like Hong Kong's Hang Seng Index, Taiwan's Taiex index and South Korea's Kospi Index have all advanced more than 1 percent.

Economy Revives with Technology Demand

The remarkable growth can be attributed to fast recovery in the technology field. This is confirmed by the fact that South Korea's economy accelerated, owing to the increase in global demand for cars and electronic gadgets, according to a Bloomberg survey.

Honda Motor Co. also showed similar growth in its car sales with demand increasing in North America. LG Innotek, a manufacturer of electronics parts in South Ko-

rea, shared similar a story.

The remarkable recovery in Asian markets does not depend only on technology, it also encompasses the oil, copper and petroleum industries. China's Jiangxi Copper Co. a copper supplier, PetroChina an oil producer in China and Inpex Corp. an oil explorer in Japan also showed recovery signs. Philippines based Petron Corp. showed profits for the first time since 2007.

Technology stocks are rising with higher expected demand for computers. Toshiba is preparing for high volume production as demand for integrated circuits or microprocessors is expected to increase, according to Intel estimates.

The steady increase in technology-related stocks in the Asia-Pacific region has brought cheers to the markets. With demand increasing for computers and other technology-related items, the Asian market could witness a fast recovery in 2010, said analysts.

Taiwan's Powerchip Semiconductor Corp. and Taiwan Semiconductor Manufacturing Co. are also among the beneficiaries.

IDC and Microsoft research announced last October that the global economic recovery will be powered by IT in Asia. The IT industry in Asia drives GDP, creates more jobs in the IT industry and software sector, results in the launch of new companies, increases in local IT spending besides contributing to the nation's coffers in tax revenues.

Figures show that IT spend in 2009 in Asia was in the \$300 billion range, which is 21 percent of the global IT spending. There will be a rise in employment rates in 2010 owing to the IT industry besides the creation of 32,000 new businesses by 2013.

"Innovation in technology will play a vital role in enabling new business opportunities and employment growth throughout Asia. IT will be a catalyst for the wider economic recovery, as companies take advantage of technology solutions to improve their cost base and service outcomes," said Microsoft's president of Asia Pacific, Emilio Umeoka.

Asia's strong points remain with hardware manufacturing and software development expertise. The IDC study also found that cloud computing was being adopted in a big way in Asia. Companies are able to reduce

capital spending as they can leverage Internet-based services including data warehousing and storage. Although in the starting stages, cloud computing and other new technologies will help Asian companies realise greater profit margins.

This tremendous growth in the technology sector in the Asia-Pacific region was expected and the leaders of the nations in this region were proactive in drawing up a regional economic integration (REI) pact to look beyond recovery. At the APEC meeting in Singapore last November, the leaders of 21 APEC nations pledged to strive for a strong, sustainable and balanced growth initiative.

Recovery of Green Tech

It is no doubt that Asia is leading the economic recovery for the world with China and India in the lead. In the post economic downturn scenario, Asia is looking at green recovery options to further spearhead the recovery process besides trying to make it sustainable.

In April 2010, political and business leaders gathered in China's Hainan province at the Boao Forum for Asia annual conference to discuss how to make this global economic recovery sustainable so that a future downfall can be avoided. Trying to learn from past mistakes, which led to the financial crisis, the Asian nations have tried to chalk out a roadmap for a green recovery process.

Chinese Vice President Xi Jinping said: "We must further improve the development model, and seek a path of green and sus-

tainable development."

This year's session adopted the theme, "Green Recovery: Asia's Realistic Choice for Sustainable Growth," which focused on arriving at political solutions for enhancing living standards of people in a safe way. Low-carbon technology development, adoption of energy efficient technologies and more usage of renewable energy sources in a country's energy mix were promoted during the conference.

Technology recovery in Asia will result in a spurt of new industries etc. but the initiatives should be green in nature, said attending leaders. Already, Asia is seen as a large emitter of greenhouse gases, although per-capita emissions are much less than the U.S. or European countries.

It was decided that Asian countries will strive to keep emissions under check and eliminate reliance on conventional and unsustainable development patterns in order to keep the technology revival going in the right direction.

"Nations should strive to achieve green recovery, no matter how painful the economic transformation is," said Fidel Ramos, former Filipino president and outgoing chairman of BFA's board of directors.

Multiple technologies, instead of just one or two technological developments, are needed to address energy use in complex systems including housing, urban development, transportation and agriculture added Ramos in an official publication for the BFA's annual meeting. The BFA is considered an Asian equivalent to the World Economic Forum which takes place in Davos, Switzerland.

Even nations like Mongolia have

pledged to take the technology recovery in the green direction, although Mongolia depends a lot on fossil fuels. Environment friendly technologies will be given a boost here, said Mongolian Prime Minister Sukhbaataryn Batbold.

Sustainability of Technology Recovery

Hitachi Data Systems released a report early this year that stated that chiefs of many companies expected the economy to recover in 2010. The report cautions chiefs and IT professionals in a company to leverage the strategic business value made available by IT. A resilient IT framework should be deployed so as to benefit optimally from the technology recovery scenario. Companies need to align IT and business goals by employing technologies such as virtualization and dynamic provisioning to automate performance and also increase utilisation.

With fast recovery signals in the Asian region, global trade will shift to high technology and knowledge-based industries. The nations here have to implement new policies to promote technology exports and imports. Technology import policies should consider the fact that such technology imports are an investment for the future export of technology-based goods and services. Asian countries used to import technology by entering into joint ventures or by means of direct purchases of technology. Now that investment has borne fruit and has made the region the chief exporter of all kinds of electronics, automobiles, software and business processes. [A-P](#)

LEVERAGING IP COMMUNICATIONS TO ENHANCE BUSINESS

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though that these companies leverage convergence in their IP communications for a more successful venture or undertaking in the region.

The establishment and deployment of IP-based NGNs or Next Generation Networks just shows the global trend of IP communications as the mainstream telecommunications infrastructure. Aside from that, the growing public clamor for wider broadband capabilities as well as more

efficient mobile capabilities should be taken into account when establishing telecommunications facilities that only IP communications can provide. Such direction will provide new and emerging businesses an alternative and effective cost model that would eventually enhance their core businesses.

Every business, from small enterprises to large conglomerations, is striving to enhance their core competencies for better customer communications that would play a significant part in growth. Leveraging IP communications to enhance the business in this area is a cost effective strategy that would bring out the desired results and expectations that the business needs to take it to the next level and in preparation for the future. [A-P](#)

CULTURE RULES!

OPEN CULTURE

BY ARPAN BANERJEE

A friend and I were strolling one holiday evening through a Park Street neighborhood, looking for a place to dine. My friend suggested Muglai cuisine.

I took notice of the parking attendant's smile and greeting when he said "chust Urdu." The doorkeeper opened the door and mumbled something in Urdu that sounded like a nice greeting, too. As we were about to take a seat, a couple of helpers arrive from nowhere and help us settle down.

The waitress arrives nicely dressed up and proceeds to explain the cuisines, advising us on our menu selections. As the Sultan's advisor left with the order, a musician duo approached us and asked us if we would like to listen to a short version of Darbari Kanada Thumri while we wait for our dinner. The food was out of this world and I must admit that I just loved the experience. A manager approached us as we were waiting for our bill and chatted on the service and the cooking in general and explained that his restaurant is always striving to find new ways of customer satisfaction.

Sound familiar? I am sure all of us must have faced similar experiences when someone elevates customer satisfaction to a new level. What does it take to make it happen? Customer satisfaction is as simple as doing things for customers in a way that satisfies his needs and exceeds his expectations.

As the all-mush-Sultan's Darbari attendant was opening the door for us, I read something on the wall. It said: "We care for our customer and we do it by practice!"

The word "practice" hit me. Something that we believe in and do by practice over and over again becomes something deeply rooted in us. Not only does it become a habit, but it also becomes our way of doing things. It becomes so ingrained and so obvious one day that even an outsider can see it. This "it" is what I call the "culture."

Every organization has a life of its own. Over the years, it becomes like a living organism. It can be personified in the way it communicates and behaves. It is culture that makes an organization stand out. Its culture makes the difference in its becoming a good organization or a great organization.

If you look at IBM's website, there is a printed "Culture statement:"

IBM has a performance-based culture that talented people find very attractive. Employees share a real sense of community. We work in a culture that prizes intelligence and innovation. You will find that you really are working with some of the brightest and the best people around in a company that has complete trust in you and your capabilities.

I was in IBM for three years from 1998 to 2001 and experienced a lot of the above mentioned cultural traits along with other hidden traits, which only an employee would know. The traits differ slightly from city to city and country to country. I traveled to various offices of IBM, my base offices in Bangalore and others in Chennai, Mumbai and Delhi. I also noticed zonal cultural variations when I closely interacted with IBM-ers of Australia, Singapore, Thailand, the U.S. and Great Britain.

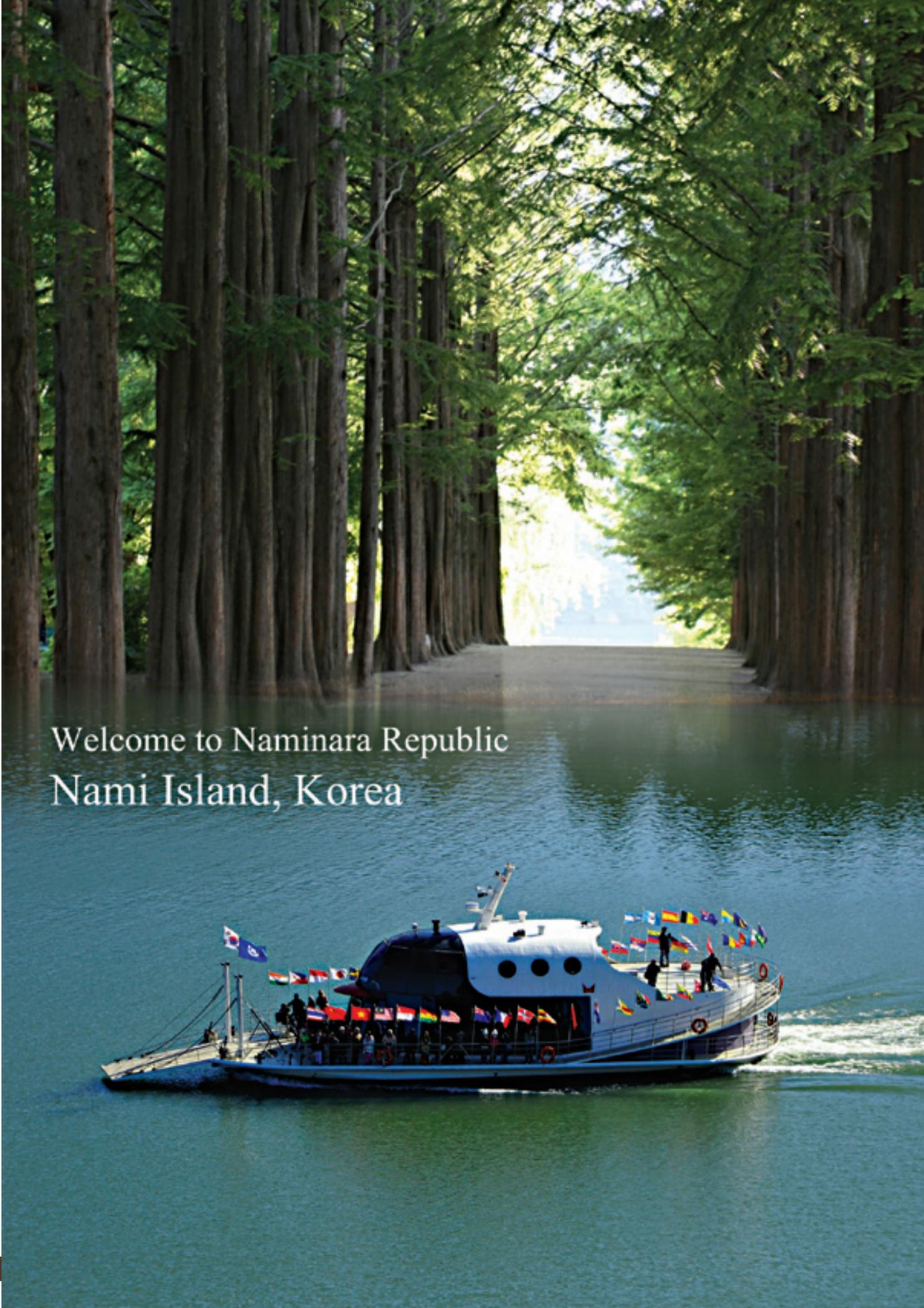
Something that struck me in most of the conversations, particularly with senior IBM pros, is that they are all very business-like. Something that I termed as extremely lifeless during my early days in IBM, particularly as I was coming from a very vibrant, young and lively atmosphere of Tata Consultancy Services. I used to find the IBM characteristics almost robotic.

But the success of a giant depends on a mature culture — and these traits were even visible in the processes of IBM. In my first week of joining IBM as a Business Partner program manager, I was sitting at the round table of Services strategy discussions, accompanying my first boss in IBM, as her sidekick, and other department heads with The IBM India president. The IBM president was one of the big shots in the IT industry.

Desperate to create an impression in my first meeting, I had an extremely valid point to make. I looked at the president and started enthusiastically with "Sir, I think ... " a few words and he nodded kindly at me, mentioned his first name and looked at my boss. She was quick to explain that I had just joined and told me later that in IBM everyone is called by their first name.

This points to an open culture, which is partially true in IBM with standard red tape arrangements as in any other giant organization. Open culture is something which lot of companies preach and practice — but in IBM, as I found out through my experiences, it also talks about a western concept of "human value" — that whether you are young or old, experienced or not, a GM or a trainee — you are respected as a human being first and everyone is equal in that respect.

A very simple point — so simple that we almost overlook it. A-P



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