

SAMPADA

Your Window to UVCE

VisionUVCE
Rejig to Reform
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Volume: 10 | Issue: 4
April 2019



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EDITORIAL

You We See Entrepreneurs

“Startup”, is the buzz word in the industry and more so impact it has on our daily lives and the numerous instances of wealth creation of unseen proportions. Much like the software and IT boom in the last century, many people find ‘Entrepreneurship’ a very attractive proposition to try their ideas and create wealth. Startups have captured the attention of every young engineer and many aspire to be one.



How do the budding engineers of UVCE look at entrepreneurship? Do they take any steps during their student life to explore? Have many UVCE Alumnus been successful in making a dent on the universe? How can we re-engineer the UVCE DNA to get successful entrepreneurs? I have been pondering on these and working on some of these myself.

It's very interesting the team SAMPADA took up this theme to being visibility to all UVCE Entrepreneurs and showcase their successes. One of the main intents being to inspire several students and alumni to take this path. Please take your time to read the articles on the successful UVCE'ans and learn from their journey and make your plans.

Personally, I have been involved with several activities over the years at UVCE to trigger entrepreneurship. We started a student E-Cell which brought a lot of speakers and workshops to create a basic awareness, skills, tools and the network to foster ideas and innovations. Though there was an early success, I noticed that students preferred job safety with a secured placement offer over their innovations. Though this is not unique to UVCE, the mindset was more fixed. One of the main learning here was that most preferred the safety net than take the riskier path and the fear of failure loomed larger.

One of my advices to many students is to join Startups as interns to learn the skills and have an appreciation of the associated risks. Many students hesitate and look again towards the large corporations and the now attractive stipends. I still strongly urge all to be open and take this limited chance to get your mind open for ideas. I also see this challenge with alumnus working in large companies too, the same safety net denies our UVCE'ans a chance to build a Unicorn right in India.

As we move forward, the excellent work done by Vision UVCE and team Sampada will create a good repository of all success from alumnus and in turn provide a network of successful entrepreneurs to all UVCE'eans. I urge all readers to make the best of this information and network to get your confidence. I completely echo what Suri from Ideaspring Capital said, “ UVCE is the best place to learn and execute innovations , we learn to achieve so much with so little with best use of available resources”

Lets have a dream, of at least one UVCE Unicorn in the next decade.

- Ravikiran A, Batch of 1995 ECE

Ravikiran Annaswamy is currently the CEO and Founder of Innohabit Technologies as well as the CEO of Numocity Technologies. He has over 23 years of business experience as Entrepreneur and as Business Leader at Nokia Siemens Networks and Siemens AG.

Team Sampada would like to sincerely thank Ravikiran Sir for accepting our request and being the Guest Editor for this edition on “Entrepreneurship”.

UVCE GRADUATES ASSOCIATION

UVCE Graduates Association is an alumni body formed to revive and strengthen the alumni group of UVCE by bringing them together, creating a strong tether between the students, alumni and the college. It is an association that gathers like-minded people who want to contribute and help their alma mater in any way possible that benefits the students and the college. They drive the mission to reach and engage UVCE Graduates, faculty and students; to provide goodwill and support to achieve the institution's goals and spread the spirit of unity and



loyalty among UVCE community. The alumni of UVCE spread across the globe have always been a great addition to the institution's reputation and have lead the way to many growing engineers to pursue a career in variant fields. With the alumni working alongside the authorities to make the institution a premier one institution is their duty as well as general motto of the alumni community. With the existence of many alumni institutions extremely well within the limits, there always has been a need to form an umbrella organization that combines all these forces to jointly work towards the development and wellbeing of this organization.

The initial thought was born during the 2012 mega reunion which set out to create a ripple for future activities. The momentum was already there and soon a lot of alumni started to pitch in and in 2018-19 alone, around 30+ lakh worth Scholarships are given to UVCE students by UVCE foundation and Vision UVCE and some individual batches combined. Adding to the glory was all the UVCE centenary celebrations organized by the alumni community alone Be it 5k Centenary Marathon, release of Centenary Souvenirs like Avalokana and Avalokana2, Organizing UVCE Payana. The results of these combined forces who put together so many wonderful celebration made us realize how much more can be achieved with a much larger alumni group and a democratic and viable functioning platform like an Association can do and how an institution like UVCE could benefit from these joined masses. That is the main driving force to form this new association, UVCE Graduates Association. A compelling adhoc committee with members representing all batches 60s, 70s, 80s, 90s, 2000s, and 2010 onwards was formed initially to help govern and organize the association's initial activities. The alumni group has begun branching out reaching 40+ members who joined UVCE Graduated Association by submitting their application forms at the Website- www.uvcega.org. Online membership will also start once the bank account is successfully created in next couple of weeks.

The association aim fostering the pride of being a part of UVCE in every graduating student by becoming member of the UVCE Graduates Association and engage UVCE graduates, faculty and students for achieving the mission of the Association. The association strives to provide a sustaining system that would disseminate transparency in all matters pertaining to finance, accounts and administration of the Association. To achieve all this, one key essential is the combined support from the college, alumni and students who can definitely reinforce a change in our college and uphold the glory of this century old institution.



UVCE GRADUATES ASSOCIATION

SMART START - APPA RAO (1978 MECH)

Apparao (Rao) V Mallavarapu founded Centum Electronics in the year 1993. Under his able leadership Centum has grown to become one of the largest electronics companies in India. He has initiated and successfully managed joint ventures with several MULTI-NATIONAL COMPANIES. Prior to founding Centum, he served at Wipro and Rao Insulating Company (RIC). He was a recipient of the Ford foundation scholarship and Engineering research Scholarship toward his academic pursuits in Canada.

Team Sampada: *The most memorable memories from your college days that you reminisce even today.*

Appa Rao Sir: The most memorable memories that I reminisce and cherish are the friendships I built in those 5 years. Some of us still meet often and of course the bonds have become stronger but what is amazing is when I meet some of my batch-mates after 20 or 30 years, it feels like it was just yesterday when we were all together, sitting under the tree near the canteen, joking and having fun. There are too many memories and the wonderful thing is all of them are beautiful and I long for those days to come back, knowing very well they never will.



Team Sampada: *How was the faculty who taught you? Any favourites that you had?*

Appa Rao Sir: The faculty that taught us were amazing. There are so many professors that come to my mind who moulded us not just to be the engineers we are but the citizens and people that we have turned out to be today. One of my favourite professors was Prof Dhakishna Murthy, who was the guide for my project in the final year as was Prof Govindraju.

Team Sampada: *How was your journey as an engineer when compared to the times now where there are more industry opportunities and technological advancements?*

Appa Rao Sir: The opportunities we had back then as compared to now were obviously very limited but that is progress. Today, there are so many avenues for young graduates to show their skills, knowledge and passion and it is important that they use all these opportunities for their own progress and for the progress of our society and country.

Team Sampada: *Share your thoughts and advice on how can students following their engineering passion mould their learning journey?*

Appa Rao Sir: One big difference between the world we live in today compared to the past is how the technologies have developed. Everything today is interdisciplinary. The interaction of various branches of engineering to produce a product or technology is very intense and so the lines between various branches of engineering gets blurred and the engineers today have to be more versatile than in the past.

I actually do not worry about the students as I know they will change and adapt very quickly. My concern and worry centres about how fast and quickly will the Indian universities bring the change required such that the programs are interdisciplinary, flexible and such that syllabi are current while being in step with the fast-changing real world.

UVCE has produced some of the greatest engineers, scientists, academicians, business leaders, industrialists of this country. I hope and wish that this trend continues. For this to happen, I urge the students, professors and staff to work hard and I am sure with their commitment and passion they will take UVCE to even greater heights in the years to come. Good luck & God bless.

(This interview is borrowed from Avalokana-2. Centum Electronics was Platinum Sponsors for UVCE Payana)

SMART START - RANDHIR HEBBAR (2001 CSE)

Randhir Hebbar is the co-founder and VP of Client Engagement for Convergytics. Along with two partners he started Convergytics with sole vision of enabling & empowering companies to get the bigger picture of their businesses through big data. Through the company, he has collaborated with large MNCs across the globe to deliver innovative solutions to complex business problems.

Team Sampada: *What inspired you to start your own business? Tell us more about your company?*

Randhir: I've always wanted to be an entrepreneur. Post my Engineering, I got into Infosys and while Infosys by then had started to lose its sheen, it still was and is the most successful story to come out of India of first-generation entrepreneurs starting something and scaling it up to a Billion Dollars in Revenue. Being part of that inspirational story, it was always something that I wanted to follow-thru with. After spending 5-6 years of working there, I went in for an MBA in Finance with a specialization in Entrepreneurship at HKUST and a Term at London Business School. This helped me bring out my innate desire to start a business, generate 100s of jobs, shape careers of youngsters and make an impact on society. During my MBA too, I tried a couple of startup ideas and learnt a lot from it - one of it being start a venture in an area where you have some core expertise. After that experience, got into the Analytics domain and spent 4-5 years in companies like Mu Sigma and Dell. Leveraging that experience, I and two other friends got together and started Convergytics in the middle of 2013.



Convergytics is a 5 year old big data and analytics consulting setup with 75+ employees and 50+ clients both in India as well as countries such as US, UK, CA, Australia, Middle-East and SE Asia. We provide a range of solutions and services including areas such as Data Warehousing, Data Platform Modernization, Business Intelligence, Predictive Modeling and Machine Learning and Artificial Intelligence. We are also now investing heavily into converting 2-3 of our core offerings into a solution / product as well to help scale up the enterprise from a \$3M entity to \$10M by 2022.

Team Sampada: *What major challenges did you face?*

Randhir: Getting our first few clients was a challenge. While we did do several small projects on and off, getting a retainer from one of the clients we had worked with was a big first step and that took us almost a year of persistence as we worked in the garage of our house. In that sense, we were a true Indian Silicon Valley Garage startup.

Once we got over that hurdle, the next big challenge came when we lost one of our major clients when we were around 15 people. This client generated 60% of our revenue at the time. This meant 4-5months of belt tightening and while we were tempted to let go of some employees, we stuck to the team and slowly clawed our way back.

The next big challenge once we had gotten over this hurdle was scaling up the enterprise and while we have not yet got all the answers, today we are well on our way to reaching our goals by growing our revenue by over 100% YoY and achieving consistent QoQ growth of over 20% each quarter for the last 6 quarters. We hope to sustain this as we scale up the enterprise and our investments in products is a step towards making this sustainable.

Team Sampada: *What role did UVCE play in your life? What are your most fond memories of UVCE?*

Randhir: I met some great friends at UVCE and many of them we are in touch even to this day. Thru the alumni network, I have been able to connect to a few mentors and advisors who've helped me in small ways. I would love for us to make this much stronger and I know there are several efforts going on to improve this. Last but not the least, the constraints that we went thru at UVCE during the late 90s and the struggle we went thru with campus placements and post placement cancellations made us stronger as individuals.

Some of the fond memories of UVCE are: Sitting in the courtyard with friends, chatting and discussing all sorts of ideas and last but not the least, the annual fest each year and how we prepared for it and came up with interesting but controversial shows.

Team Sampada: *It takes huge courage and confidence to start your own business and develop it. What is your piece of advice to students who are looking to become entrepreneur with their ideas?*

Randhir: I know there are several startups coming out of colleges directly. I would advise against doing something like that. I suggest that you go and join a startup and while we probably don't qualify for a startup, I welcome people to reach out to me if you are interested. We have Engineering, Analytics, Marketing and Business Development Roles and while being an Engineer, you might wonder why I am mentioning Marketing and Business Development roles, I strongly believe that engineering is about problem solving and the biggest part of a successful entrepreneur is selling. So, look at interesting Sales & BD roles at startups as well as engineering roles and spend some time sharpening your skills and you'll know when you are ready to start something on your own.

SMART START - SATISH SEETHARAM (1989 CSE)

Satish Seetharam is a Senior General Manager at Robert BOSCH and Entrepreneur Advisor at Reyoccto. For Reyoccto, he was instrumental in establishing the Automotive Embedded Services as part of the start up, with a unique and efficient model. He has also been a part of building up one of the best Global Innovation Centres in the Indian market for Electronic Control Units.

Team Sampada: *Share some information about your career & how you started your venture with our readers*

Satish: I passed out from Electronics in 1989 and joined L&T (Campus). I was in the Group XI Electronics Division at Mysore for 5 years. Being a new unit started for Data products and Telecommunication equipment, we had the opportunity and challenge to work on all aspects of the products - right from design to prototype development, debugging, testing, production, sales and service support. This gave a hands-on experience and confidence to take up any electronics related development in most phases of the product lifecycle.



I moved back to Bangalore due to parent's health and I joined Bosch in the Automotive Software development team situated inside MICO. There was hardly any development which happened in India at

that time and most of the work was done on-site. We were expected to learn, understand the project and get work offshore. We faced several challenges - a new domain, new language and culture and setting up the infrastructure in India - recruitment, training, project management, establishing processes, team motivation, customer satisfaction, etc. which I handled in various roles from a Member to Executive Management over 25 years.

Team Sampada: *What major challenges did you face and since you have seen both sides of the coin (working in a company and working on your own), what are your thoughts?*

Satish: In a start up environment, everyday is a challenge. In big corporates, there are departments and processes established to take care of common functions whereas in a start-up, it is not economically viable to have separate persons handling each one of them and we have to be prepared to do it ourselves. Some multi skilling will definitely help - perhaps what we learnt in UVCE and my initial days on product development helped me. Admin jobs are a major part of my portfolio now. We do not have processes laid out for everything and any new task done would mean creating the process for it and communicating to the others and training the new persons. This is more or less handled separately in big corporates and the job is sometimes limited to a slice, where it is difficult to get an overview of the whole task.

Working in a start-up definitely adds more skills in a very short span of time, especially for Engineers who are curious and want to do more. The biggest impact was the positive change from seeking employment for myself, to providing employment, although in a small way. The current business environment in India is also supportive. In my personal opinion, the start-ups are going to challenge the big corporates and give a run for their money.

Team Sampada: What role did UVCE play in developing skills and facing the issues?

Satish: The most important aspect of becoming an Engineer from UVCE for me personally is the breadth of knowledge we were exposed to – especially the hands on sessions in the workshop and labs. The exposure we got in the different sections and labs including SOM, Hydraulics gives the multiple possibilities and tools which can be used to find solutions to daily work problems. The long project work (almost a year) at C-DOT which also included designing and wiring up a PCB and making it work gave the necessary skills for handling electronics and firmware related projects and taking problems head-on.

Team Sampada : It takes huge courage and confidence to start your own business and develop it. What is your piece of advice to students who are looking to become entrepreneur with their ideas?

Satish: Thanks to the long stint earlier and a saving habit, I was fairly independent financially and had built a small buffer to sustain the family for sometime. Efforts can be invested whereas capital may not be always be possible without external financial support.

Therefore, working out on a lean model which minimized the capital contribution to a bare minimum, helped in establishing the ODC. I preferred to start the ODC in an already existing product start-up company, the Directors who were also my colleagues in the automotive domain, helped in quickly focussing on the customer tasks on hand and not spending efforts and time on establishing the start-up itself. The high expertise and competence of the initial team helped in creating a good first impression with our customers.

Product development is capital and resource /competence intensive, but a service set up does not demand as much capital. My suggestion to young entrepreneurs who want to do it completely on their own, would be to have a mix of both so that there is small revenue stream coming in to sustain the long cycles of bringing out a successful product in the market. It is very important to start with a strong need (coming as a request or identified in the market) that can be addressed by putting together the resources that can be accessed through one's own network. The unique strengths and competencies which one has or can be assimilated would be key.

Keeping everything simple, lean, transparent and result focussed is very essential. The customer has to feel the value addition all along. The power of small steps to expand the scope and growth should not be ignored. Starting small is low risk.

SPREAD THE ROOTS OF UVCE



It's that time of the year for KCET results to be out and the engineering college rush begins. In a time like this, we request the alumni to spread the word about namma UVCE to your family and friends who have younger family members who are prepped with KCET 2019 to pursue B.E. The gratification and pride that we hold in us being a part of UVCE and studying in this magnanimous institution as such can only be passed on through the channel of UVCE. We endeavour to spread the word amongst our relatives and friends and encourage them to consider UVCE as a valuable option for furthering their education. The privileges of learning in this organization are tremendous, with great inter-branch student culture,

placements and the opportunity to pursue research alongside the studies and share the pride of studying in the oldest college of Karnataka.

SMART START—BHAKTHA KESHAVACHAR (1989 ECE)

Bhaktha Keshavachar is currently the Founder and CTO of Ezetap, a startup that delivers mobile payment solutions. He has over 18 years of experience with patents in micro-processors, wireless systems & security protocols. Prior to Ezetap, he started Antargata Technologies in 2009, a company that focused on hardware level security. He has worked at Intel Corp as Engineering Manager for Product Group.

Team Sampada: *What inspired you to start your own business? Tell us more about your company and the major challenges you faced?*

Bhaktha: There are several reasons people start their own business, apart from the usual reasons of being rich and famous. There has to be a deeper reason to sail you thru the tough journey of entrepreneurship. For me personally these were the three reasons:

- Product companies are rare in India, India is generally known for their services delivery strength especially in the IT sector. I had and still have a burning and an irrational desire to put "Made in India" on a product conceived, architected, designed, manufactured and deployed in India and elsewhere. That's what we did exactly in Ezetap. We have built this India's first and only POS system designed and manufactured in India and deployed more than a quarter million instances and now in a couple of countries outside India too. Yes, with "Made in India" embossed proudly on it.
- Giving back to the society by creating employment opportunities and a platform to learn to build, deploy and support a complex product. A few hundred people have been employees of Ezetap and they have inculcated the same vision and drive that we had at the beginning. We hope that some of them will do the same thing that we did in Ezetap, we see that already happening.
- I strongly believe this century will be the Asian century with India rightfully earning its status in the league of nations. In some sense to borrow a phrase, India is the land of opportunities now. Wanted to ride the wave and strengthen the trend in my own little way.



Team Sampada: *What role did UVCE play in your life and in your entrepreneurial journey? What would your suggestion be for the alumni community for UVCE to reclaim its legacy?*

Bhaktha: When one builds a product and a business around it, everything from engineering, to product development to sales has to be done using first principles. There is nobody above or below you to pass the buck. One needs strong fundamentals, desire/ability to learn, scrappiness to do a lot with a few resources and discipline. The time I studied in UVCE there were a few great lecturers who taught us the fundamentals well. UVCE was the topmost college at that time, the best and the brightest from our state would end up in college, I still remember there were a few single digit CET rank holders in our class, learnt a lot from them too. Also in a somewhat bizarre way, because our lab infrastructure was not up to the mark, we learnt to do a lot with little. Most importantly our distinguished alumni in good positions always helped us. The name and prestige of UVCE was always an ice-breaker in important meetings.

We all have to pitch in and bring back the glory days of UVCE and make it a world class institution. In my opinion we have to make UVCE an independent entity with a powerful board of influential alumni and rebuild the college.

Team Sampada: *There are many young alumni and students who want to venture into their own startups. What is your piece of advice to them?*

Bhaktha: Entrepreneurship is a wonderful journey that youngsters should undertake. It is an opportunity for self discovery, winning the accolades of peers, a great way to give back to the society and truly be a part of nation building activity. I strongly encourage everyone to try this once at the least, but please do remember the ride is rough and the probability of success is abysmally low but the rewards once you make it are immense. For more gyan on this please do watch my TedX talk at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jd75KxnsLXw>

SMART START—KRISHNA A G (2001 ECE)

Krishna A G is the Co-Founder of Light Metrics, a company that focuses on leveraging machine learning and Artificial Intelligence to provide video telematics and real-time coaching to their fleet customers as well as improve productivity of mobility enterprises. Krishna heads the product marketing and strategy function for the company. He has been granted 18 patents in the US and also has been an inventor or co-inventor in over 45 patent applications.

Team Sampada: What inspired you to start your own business? Tell us more about your company?

Krishna: When I graduated from UVCE or later from IISc, I definitely did not have any such plans to be honest. As I gained more professional experience, I realized that the success of a company is not defined by technology alone, there are so many other aspects to it - including product, marketing, sales, support, etc. This motivated me to learn more about how companies are run, and what is it that makes a company successful. I started reading books about founder journeys and this may have planted a thought somewhere deep in my mind.

Finally, when we did decide to start, I honestly didn't think much since my co founders were not just colleagues but very good friends having worked with them for so long.

LightMetrics (LM) works in the area of computer vision and machine learning, was co-founded by six people who had earlier worked together for over 5 years in Nokia Research. LM makes driving safer - for fleets, for auto insurance companies and others. We analyze video in real-time using ML and computer vision and are able to quantify driving behavior by 'seeing' how one drives. For this, LM provides a cross-platform software solution that extracts insights from dash cam video in real-time on the edge. Voice notifications help the driver avoid accidents & stay safe. Upon detecting non-compliances such as speeding, distracted driving, stop violation, tailgating, etc., a report is created for the event that includes a short video snippet. This is uploaded to the cloud. Analytics and event videos for the driver and fleet manager/owner are available through REST APIs. You can find out more at <https://lightmetrics.co>



Team Sampada: What major challenges did you face while starting on your own and take it forward?

Krishna: It is kind of scary to leave the security of a regular pay cheque, but when you decide to go for it, you just go for it. And once you do start up, what do you do is a hard question. We knew our skills in computer vision, camera tech and machine learning/AI had a lot of applications - exactly what we should do and more importantly, how do we do it is a different beast altogether. We had the luxury of knowing several entrepreneurs and venture capitalists through our network, and they were extremely helpful in the early days.

Finding the problem to solve, who is the buyer, how will they know about your solution, how will they buy your solution - these were super important questions. Being in India, we started out trying to sell for the Indian market. It was a huge challenge. After a year or so, we pivoted from a market point of view and focused only on the North American market.

Team Sampada: What role did UVCE play in your life? If you get an opportunity to address the current students about what are the things they should not miss during the college days which will help them in future, what would you tell them?

Krishna: UVCE has been hugely instrumental in tangible and intangible ways. The college provided the freedom to think for oneself and learn to be independent, and as a result, I believe most people graduating from UVCE are better prepared for the real world. My classmates are all hugely successful in their chosen profession, and a lot of them have helped me hugely with LightMetrics, especially when we decided that our market focus would be North America. The network you get from a hallowed institution like UVCE is amazing, you talk to very senior people in most companies, you always find someone from UVCE - that establishes an instant connection.

For the students, I would tell them to try a lot of things to figure out their calling. This is the time! You should do a lot of internships, keep yourself busy, try stuff out. Not only do you learn a lot, make great connections that will be crucial later on, but it will also add a lot of heft to your resume - whether you want to go for grad studies or work. You should of course have a lot of fun too. When you graduate, that is a good time to take some risks - not be reckless but carefully considered risks like working for a smaller company for e.g. If the company grows, you grow with it and there is also the financial upside. If the company does not work out, you gain a ton of experience no big company can give and in any case, early on in your career, the lost opportunity cost is the lowest it will ever be. I would really emphasize the last point heavily.

ENTREPRENEURSHIP CELL - UVCE

With a vision to be a recognized centre of excellence for entrepreneurship and to create successful entrepreneurs, E_Cell UVCE believes that the world needs more innovations that can provide comfort and service to the mankind. Everyone has an idea that can be a potential business and serve a particular cause, if treated the right way, E_Cell UVCE is trying to emphasize the importance of such ideas and slowly build on it right from the university level.

The club aims to achieve it's vision by educating the importance of ideas and give example based inputs by entrepreneurs through monthly interaction sessions regarding real time challenges faced by any entrepreneur, this shall add values and experience to the members. The club plans to create a professional platform where an individual is filled with every detail needed to setup any business professionally.

E_cell not only wants to create entrepreneurs but to educate students on the importance of any business such that the inculcated values during our programs in college would be a valuable addition in one's professional and personal life. We are also working on the aspect to provide internship which will try to bring in a sense of professionalism during their time as a student and also as an employee.

Since it's initiation in 2014, E_Cell UVCE itself had a rough journey similar to a start-up..! After a couple of doomed years, E_cell is filled with life again. The new team has been highly active and had organized BULL MARKET 1.0 & 2.0 which is a Virtual Marketing Game, educating about how stock market works, Eureka - The flagship event of E_cell UVCE where students were provided a platform to exhibit there idea and showcase it as a full fledged business model and in recent days we had successfully hosted innovation challenge in collaboration with SCHNEIDER ELECTRIC.

In future we aim to establish ourselves an incubation centre to create a wider platform and collaborate with many other organizations, thereby providing abundant opportunity and guidance to students in order to be a successful entrepreneur and also to be an epicenter of innovation for the budding students in UVCE.

- Team E_CELL UVCE



SMART START - SHARJEEL AHMED (2003 CSE)

Sharjeel Ahmed is the Co-Founder and CTO of Pazo, a B2B SaaS company that has an operational excellence software for retail chains, malls and large facilities. Sharjeel has over 15 years of total experience in the software industry with previous experience working with various multinational companies like Microsoft, Adobe etc. He is a serial entrepreneur having done a lot of work with NFC based products.

Team Sampada: *Share some information about your career and how you started your venture with our readers.*

Sharjeel: My career took off at a great pace thanks to the Campus Placements at UVCE, it had a big role to play in the way my career was shaped. I was the first person to be placed from our batch and into a software Product company, this helped my career path as being in a product company would mean I got the work with some of the dream companies of the world like Adobe and Microsoft.

With the experience I gained working, looking at their culture, their vision, etc, made it relatively easy to start a product company of my own. While at Microsoft I used my time to read and learn about the various innovations happening in my industry,

there I learnt about NFC and realized that it has great potential. This made me quit and startup, as they say, there is never a perfect time to start anything, don't wait for it, go for it when you feel confident.



Team Sampada: *What do you think about the difference between working for a company and starting your own company, since you have seen both sides of the coin?*

Sharjeel: There is a sea of difference between working for a company and starting your own, for starters, working for a company would mean that you need to focus on the task at hand only, you have a feature to work on and everything you do revolves around that feature, you are a part of a big jigsaw puzzle and you fit in the missing piece.

Team Sampada: *What role did UVCE play in developing skills and facing the issues?*

Sharjeel: UVCE played a pivot role in developing skills of students, there was a lot of emphasis on practical applications of the things we learn at UVCE. Practical classes were given utmost importance apart from theoretical concepts. The good part about UVCE is that you have stiff healthy competition from peers as most get their admission purely on merit, this makes you push your barriers further.

Team Sampada: *Brief about your startup and what are the major challenges did you face with your startup?*

Sharjeel: PAZO is a software platform that helps organizations in managing their daily routine operations in an effective way. It empowers the teams by a better reporting tool which ensures that the right data is communicated to the right individual from the right place and time. In a nutshell it digitizes all the operations that are driven through manual methods of reporting from the front line and back office. We were selected as a part of Techstars, which is one of the biggest accelerators in the world.

Running a startup is a great experience, we tend to face a lot of challenges due to the lack of knowledge on the nuances of running a startup. Initially we were not focused on one thing, we were all over the place. Slowly as we learnt the hard way, focus is key to running a startup, we have limited resources, exhausting them by doing everything stretches ourselves thin thereby not developing our core. As we grew we learnt that team is everything, we always need to put people first. Things like hiring the right people is also a challenge due to the financial limitations.

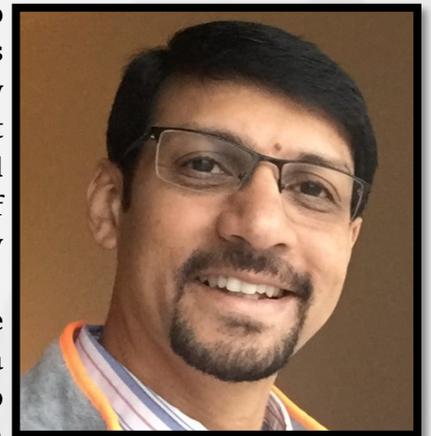
Team Sampada: It takes huge courage and confidence to start your own business and develop it. What is your piece of advice to students who are looking to become entrepreneur with their ideas?

Sharjeel: My advice would be get some experience in the corporate world, that would be helpful to understand certain nitty gritty of a company. Ideas are not everything, you may have the greatest idea on earth but without the proper execution, those ideas mean nothing. Once you get down to execution, your ideas will change with time, you will pivot your idea in some cases, understanding the market need is very important, learn to listen to your customer. Focus is the key to success in the startup world.

THE ENTREPRENEURIAL DREAM

Shesh Vasudev Murthy is the Chief Product Officer of Lemnisk. He has 21 years of Strategy Consulting, Product Management & Product Marketing and Engineering experience. He was a part of the Board of Mentors for Entrepreneurship Cell for IIT Kanpur. He is an alumnus of 1996 ECE. Here is him sharing his story and journey of success with us.

After my BE (ECE '96) from UVCE, I moved to the US to pursue my MS (CSE) at University of Texas. With my campus placement, made my first entry to the Silicon Valley at Ericsson Bay area campus. During this 2 year stint, my interest in Product Strategy, Entrepreneurship and Marketing grew and got attracted towards the Valley startups. I joined as an early employee of Andiamo Systems, a venture backed in 2001 and later acquired by Cisco in 2004 for \$1.2B.



My passion towards B-School degree motivated me to choose Evening MBA program at Leavey School of Business, Santa Clara University. As it is obvious by now, I majored in Entrepreneurship and Marketing and the knowledge gained there helped me to take a leap of faith from Corporate Product Management roles into starting Strategy Consulting firm and finally Co-founding the angel funded startup, Xervmon Inc in 2012.

During my time in B-School (2005-08), I was introduced to The IndUs Entrepreneur (TiE), during one of Guest Lectures on Campus, by my guide and a good friend - Mr. Vish Mishra, who also got elected as President, TiE SV the following year. I immediately became a TiE member and started volunteering for annual summit - TiECon. I consider really fortunate to be part of the Organizing team that put a Panel Discussion on "Profits at the Bottom of Pyramid" in line with the inspiring book by Prof C. K Prahalad. Mr. M.R Rangaswamy also motivated me to actively participate in the NASSCOM Product Conclave (NPC), an annual meet in Bangalore, for Product startups.

I have to take this moment to mention my long association with an accomplished UVCE Alum, Mr. B.V Jagadeesh, Co-founder, Exodus and Managing Partner, KAAJ Ventures, Chairman of UVCE Foundation and Chairman of OSAAT. He has been a very good friend and a guide, personally and professionally. I have had opportunities to moderate two Panels where Mr. Jagadeesh was a distinguished panelist. One - part of Entrepreneurs' Club at Leavey School of Business on " Social Entrepreneurship and role of MBAs". Second - as part of UVCE Alumni Meet on "Entrepreneurs and UVCE Alums - a path to success".

In 2012, I joined two of my Co-founders and we found the unmet need for a vendor agnostic SaaS solution to manage Cloud infrastructure and catered to the price points of small and medium businesses. This led to genesis of Xervmon, a bootstrapped startup based out of Houston and had Engineering out of Bangalore. We raised our first round from Silicon Valley Angels and were the only certified APAC Ecosystem partner for HP Private Cloud for spend management and billing solution. Due to market dynamics, though HP Partnership and a few marquee accounts in BETA got us very close to signing term sheets, unfortunately, we failed raising our Series A funding.

The SaaS product offering we built enabled us to acquire customers and generate sustainable revenue but lack of Series A funds slowed down product innovation. My Co-founders instead chose services route to keep the business running while I moved to Advisory role and finally exited.

On moving away from the operational role of Xervmon, I had a brief stint in Strategy Consulting at Confianzys before joining Corporate role as Director and GM at Groupon APAC. I worked with India Development Centers of MNCs and early and mid-stage startups with primary focus on helping senior and mid-level leadership on product thinking.

In 2015, I was invited by E-Cell student committee to be on the Board of Mentors at Entrepreneurs Cell, IIT Kanpur. This involved helping startup teams from IITK and across India, who participate in the annual eSummit. Before the eSummit, I help these teams hone their pitches, refine Business plans and Product strategy. In 2018, I moderated a panel on "Analytics in New Ventures" at IIMB annual Entrepreneurship Summit, Eximus '18. Recently in Feb 2019, I conducted a Product Thinking workshop at Global Entrepreneurship Summit - GES 2019 and instilled 'Voice First Thinking' among the 250+ attendees that comprised of students, faculty and entrepreneurs.

As an Angel investor, I served on the Board of iTrans Technologies Pvt Ltd, a Bangalore based startup in the Connected Car and Usage Based Insurance segment. This is now merged into a Singapore entity. I am an Advisor to Founders of YumiGo, a New Delhi based FinTech startup in Travel and Forex segment, since their early days, helping them raise their Series A (USD 300K) and later on as an Advisor helping with defining strategy for Product and Partnership.

Currently I am Chief Product Officer of Lemnisk, a VC backed Growth Marketing startup with its Enterprise SaaS platform focused on AI driven Orchestration for Banking, Financial Services and Insurance firms across India, Middle East and South East Asian regions.

- Shesh Vasudevurthy, Batch of 1996 ECE

UVCE BEST CLASS COMPETITION 2019

UVCE Best Class Competition 2019, an initiative started in January 2019 by Team VisionUVCE has successfully concluded. The competition saw a close-knit battle for the winner position by the 14 participating classes. Over 12 weeks, students of these classes ideated and implemented an array of initiatives with respect to academics, extra curriculars, betterment of UVCE, their self-development and class team dynamics.

The competition was neck to neck and week after week, the innovation, creativity and sincerity shown by students only saw an increase. We had a scoring system in place that ensured judgement by the mentors, Team VisionUVCE and self-evaluation by class coordinators itself.

With everything in place, the final results as shown. The competition winner was 2nd Year ECE.

We had a successful run with this competition and we hope to soon return with the next edition. More details of the competition to follow in upcoming editions.

Class	Position	Final Score
2nd yr ECE	1	11274.5
2nd yr ARCH	2	11202.6
2nd yr ISE	3	10982.3
1st yr ARCH	4	10628.63
1st yr MECH	5	8920.15
1st yr ECE	6	8321.6
2nd yr CIV A	7	7710
1st yr EEE	8	7570.5
1st yr CIV	9	7302.09
2nd yr MECH	10	6562
2nd yr CIV B	11	3625
1st yr ISE	12	3160.83
2nd yr CSE	13	2505
1st yr CSE	14	2045

CONGRATULATIONS to ALL!

UVCEIAN'S TRAIL OF SUCCESS

G Venkatesh is the founder of GLOBETEK, a company that represents world-class manufacturers of test and measurement systems in India. For the past 25 years, Globetek specializes in providing state-of-the-art solutions for test and measurement needs in India. Globetek represents companies across USA, Europe and Japan.

I was the first engineer in our family. And also first to think of becoming an entrepreneur or business person. It was indeed a bold decision to make under the circumstances, especially from the poor financial background I was born into. Approaching banks and other financial institutions for financial assistance without seed capital, perfect project reports and immovable assets as security was out of question.



I had to choose a path which did not required big capital, big working space or running to big financial risk if something went wrong. There was no margin for errors. I knew my greatest strength was in innovation and could work very hard, without time constraints. One such field I found to my taste was emerging electronics. Using the newly available operational amplifiers and digital integrated devices, I could design innovative circuits to the existing industries looking for implementing automation and processes control in their operations. Even this idea to work, it required a small working capital and marketing efforts to look for such potential customers. As such, I decided to work for 3-4 years, save some capital before venturing on my own. Fortunately for me, my position in our joint family was such that there was no big compulsion for me to earn for the family or to take care of any immediate liability. A nominal monthly contribution from my side would have been sufficient. That was one big advantage to be in a joint family with all the caring and affectionate elders around.

I chanced to find a job at a small scale electronics industry in Bangalore Industrial area through a good friend of mine. Though the salary they could offer was very small, it turned out to be my dream come true environment. The company was engaged in providing innovative solutions to the existing industries. I was appointed as design and development engineer with free hand to design and implement my ideas to their customer's process control and measurement of various physical parameters such as Force, Pressure, Displacement, Temperature and Flow etc.

It was here I made in-depth self-study on the latest discrete and integrated semiconductor devices for industrial and laboratory applications. My job was to visit the customers, understand their requirements, sell our ideas how we would address their requirements and problems. Once the plan was mutually agreed upon, I would design the prototype, test it and take it to the customer's site and install it. Most of the time it used to be the prototype that would end up as the final product at the customer's place. Since it was always planned and constructed to be so to minimise the overall costs and increase the profits.

This job gave me good exposure to the various industries such as fertiliser, petrochemicals, cement, heavy electricals, material handling, Defence, and R&D laboratories across the country. As planned, I resigned exactly 4 years after serving in this company with a small pocket of savings to peruse my dreams. It was also the time that the company I worked had grown very big and was planning to go public. I did not wanted to get anchored there permanently with complacence, because of attractive remunerations they might offer to retain me along with my other senior colleagues.

To start with, my bed room was my work place. A table of 2'X2', a tool kit, a soldering iron, a multi meter, a drawing board and a second hand scooter to run around, were all the assets I had along with a small bank balance as my working capital. In order to refresh my knowledge on the state-of-the-art technology of rapidly changing electronics, I became a student once again in parallel to running my own small enterprise. I got admission at the prestigious Indian Institute of Science for a PG diploma in Electronics Design Technology. This course at the Institute, was designed and offered under Swiss collaboration to help Indian companies. It introduced me to the latest design techniques and practices both in theory and practical classes.

I would generate orders, especially for the import substation items. Because some of them were out of production at the original source or too expensive for imports. I would design and outsource the circuit boards, transformers and enclosure boxes. Assemble them on my work table, test and supply them to my customers. There were not many competitors for me in this dominie as it was both challenging and risky for the regular production units who had their own products and problems to bother about. Since I had no typewriter, I would get all my correspondence from job typists at Majestic circle. I would get quotations against tenders, invoices and all other letters typed from them. I would use PCO's and Telegraph/Telephone offices for all my local, trunk calls, TELEX and telegrams. Everything went very well as planned. The only hard ship I was facing was delayed payments from most of the big time customers and Government undertakings. Even confirmed orders and supply bills were not sufficient for banks to provide any financial assistances. They always insisted and believed only on security.

I used to purchase all my electronic devices from a shop called Universal Electronics across the Silver Jubilee Park Road. They were generous enough to grant me credit on the purchases even up to Rs.50, 000/- for as long as 60 days, without ever seeing my work place. I always remember them even today for their great help. They did what our banks could not do. It mitigated most of my financial needs to execute the orders I had on my hand. I promptly paid their bills first as soon as my payments were realised. In order to supplement my financial requirements, I took consultancy assignments from companies handling imported Hi-tech electronics systems and instrumentations from USA and Europe. These assignments grew very rapidly over the time, I felt that it is was time to integrate all the activities under one roof.

Thus, on April 1992, I started a new company called GLOBETEK, (meaning 'Technology across the Globe'). We gradually increased our work force with qualified and talented youngsters to carry on my mission to design and supply custom designed electronics instruments and systems. Additionally, represent overseas companies manufacturing hi-tech electronics. We provide both technical and commercial support to our customers throughout the country. We have completed a glorious 26 years so far. Celebrated the Silvery jubilee year in 2017. Our young, energetic and dedicated staff, including my son, are sure to take Globetek to its Golden jubilee year in the years to come.

In conclusion, this has been my story since UVCE to being successfully where I am today. To all the students at UVCE who are preparing to step out and build a career for themselves, here are some tested golden rules I suggest to follow:

- Recognise your true strengths and nurture them and work on it.
- Be realistic with respect to space and time in taking important decisions.
- Implement always Quality in thinking and deeds.
- There are no shortcuts, gambling and speculations, in achieving your set goals
- Have maximum clarity on what you are working on.
- Hardships on the way are just like passing clouds, let it not dishearten you.
- Always work within the frame work of business Ethics.

MILAGRO 2019

On the 26th of April, all roads led to UVCE. The excitement among the students was palpable. Why you ask? Because it was time for 'MILAGRO 2K19!' But this year was a little different. With the careful and supportive assistance of UVCE cultural body, "ADHAMYA", we had an amazing theme of superhero vibes spreading all over with a catchy tagline - To Infinity and Beyond. All these promised us a day of fun and laughter.



The day began on a very auspicious note with the invocation of god's blessing followed by the official inauguration of the fest by our principal Sir. HN Ramesh, and the chief guest Mr. Vinayak Joshi followed by Mr. Vasistha Simha. They enthralled the audience with their words. The college cultural team participated in the myriad of events that were on offer. The 8GB Ram, an outstanding UVCE band performed on the day 1 whose singing skills earned them a standing ovation from the crowd! All in all it was a wonderful learning curve. As far as the off stage events were concerned, quiz, creative writing, rangoli competition and painting events catalysed in bringing the best out of our talented students. Avid gamers were given a chance to prove their mettle with the gaming events. But as always, the best was saved for the last. The fashion show! A very well-choreographed team going up against each other was a real treat! The perfect icing on the cake was the DJ night! The students danced like there's no one watching and brought down the curtains on a very successful Milagro 2019. But the fun and frolic didn't end there. The Day 2 Milagro 2019 was the next big cultural event day. The students eagerly looked forward to this day. It was held on the 27th of April. It was a very colourful day with the students and faculties dazzling everywhere. It was a day filled with selfies and photo sessions! Day 2 was truly celebrated in its spirit. Shri. Shree Raj, Shri. Saurav Babu (Batch of 1994) Shri. Rehman, prominent actors of Sandalwood had represented the team of Sandalwood movie "Gara" and joined us in the fun. Next event on stage was the solo singing event where enthusiastic participants sang to their heart's content in the bid to win a prize. Then came the dance event! Urged on by the crowd, the dancers gave their best shot and it turned out to be pure entertainment.



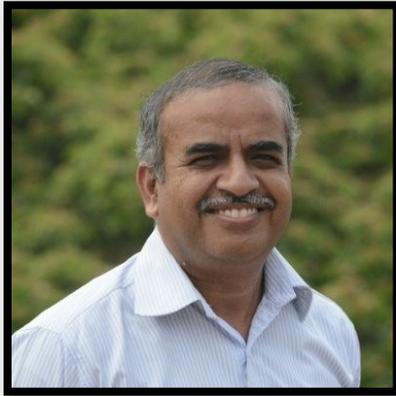
Although academics are important, it doesn't hurt once in a while to go out and have fun and discover new things and learn outside the classroom. These cultural events gave us the opportunities to exactly do so. It's high time to express gratitude to Volunteers, Event Organisers, Student Coordinators, Seniors, Alumni, Guests and all audience you have made this Milagro a memorable one. I would like to mention all the faculty who in their busy schedule have contributed for the success of Milagro 2k19 Prof. H N Ramesh (Principal-UVCE), Dr. K P Guruswami (Dept. of EEE), Dr. Shantaraja M (Dept. of Mechanical Engineering), Dr. P Deepa Shenoy and Dr. Kiran K (Dept. of CSE), Dr. Chetan K (Dept. of Civil Engineering) and Dr. Pawan (Dept. of Architectures). A big thank you has to be said to all the faculty and other silent heroes who cooperated and helped us in realising our hidden talents. At the end of the day we do believe that 'All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy'.

- Shreya Uday, 8th Sem ISE



SMART START - SURYAPRAKASH K (1988 CSE)

Suryaprakash Konanuru is an entrepreneur and technologist. He is currently the CTO at Ideaspring Capital, a venture investing in startups fostering innovative technologies. Suryaprakash has been part of the Indian Startup eco-system for about 18 years now, as entrepreneur, mentor, advisor and investor. He has track record of working in diverse domains such as Compilers, Network Management, Cable OSS and Health care IT, Education Technology.



Team Sampada: What are your most fond memories of UVCE? What role did UVCE play in your life?

Suryaprakash: Some of my fond memories at UVCE are definitely the Classes of Dr. HNS and Dr. Virupaksha as well our Chemistry lab (in spite of the rotten egg smell and fear of titration going awry). Further, our breaks in canteen and Hotel Trupti (once a week), debugging our first FORTRAN program standing 3 feet away from the computer are definitely a part of the collection too. UVCE taught us how we can achieve what we want in spite of odds that stand against you. It taught us how to operate in the best possible manner irrespective of low/no resources. UVCE is like a startup in itself. It

gets the best out of you with limited resources.

Team Sampada: What inspired you to start your own business? Tell us more about your company?

Suryaprakash: I am an accidental entrepreneur. After being part of Wipro Infotech R&D for almost 10 years, some of us decided to take a plunge at entrepreneurship (in 1999 start-up word wasn't well-known, so basically we started a company called Alopa Networks). My main inspiration was to try something new and build products from concepts. Alopa was acquired in 2004 and I continued to work there till 2006. As you all know, start up is like an addiction. Once you have tasted it, it's not easy to leave it. So, I continued this passion and co-founded a healthcare startup, Yos Technologies in 2006 and funtoot, an education startup in 2010, which are still being run by my co-founders. After experiences of being part of 3 startups, I wanted to move on to an enabler role to work with multiple startups at the same time and therefore to fulfil that desire I took up the role of CTO at Ideaspring Capital, where we fund early stage b2b startups and work with them closely to foster their development.

Team Sampada: What major challenges did you face and since you have seen both sides of the coin (working in a company and working on your own), what are your thoughts?

Suryaprakash: There are no major challenges if you are self-motivated. Actually startups gave me the freedom (with associated responsibility) to build products from concept stage. It allowed me to work on all aspects of product journey viz : product management, development, testing, deployment, support, marketing/pre-sales. Working in startups makes you innovative as you have to maximise output under high resource constraints. One of the major benefits is you can interact with your customers and get direct feedback on how you have done.

Team Sampada: What cue should UVCE take from other organizations in building the startup community within the campus?

Suryaprakash: I strongly feel that we should encourage students of UVCE to join startups and learn in the initial years before starting their own entrepreneurial journey. I recommend this greatly as many of the UVCE students (including parents) may not be financially ready to take the high risk (high reward too) of entrepreneurial journey when they graduate. It takes huge courage and confidence to start your own business and develop it.

Team Sampada: What is your piece of advice to students who are looking to become entrepreneur with their ideas?

Suryaprakash: Ensure you are very passionate about the idea. It helps get through when chips are down. Validate your idea by talking to as many "prospective users" (not friends and family as they are usually supportive) as possible and getting feedback including the opinion if they will pay for it. This ensures it's a great business idea before plunging to execute it.

Team Sampada: How would you want to contribute for UVCE to build startup ecosystem?

Suryaprakash: With alumni of UVCE being part of the startup eco system in multiple roles such as entrepreneurs, mentors, investors and also part of many MNCs helping/partnering with startups, we should be able to help in building a mini-startup ecosystem to help out UVCE students to become future entrepreneurs.

FARMER IN THE CITY



The early morning sun lights up several shades of green at SLV Krishivihaar, BK Bhavya's expansive organic farm. She is caressing the tender stalks, as if waking them up gently. Shaking off the morning dew from a bunch of freshly-plucked leaves, Bhavya holds out the four kinds of greens that she grows in 12 huge patches in her two-acre field at Nettigere, off Kanakapura Main Road.

"I grow palak, coriander, methi and amaranth and my farm is completely organic. I dug the land two feet deep and filled it with new red soil, coco peat, and pure sheep and cow manure

before I began the first round of planting," she explains. The water is sourced from her bore well. She delivers the produce to apartments within an hour of harvesting. "It's been a dream come true for me to have this community service for busy urbanites who want to savour organic greens," says Bhavya, who enjoys her 32-kilometre journey from the field with 100 bundles brought in her car (250 grams each) to be delivered personally at two apartment gates on Kanakapura Road. "It encourages me to see my customers going gaga over these tender 'soppu (greens) straight from thota'," she says.

Bhavya quit a career in civil engineering to take up organic farming. "I chased my love for life sciences by growing greens!" she says. The 36-year-old completed her civil engineering from UVCE in 2005 and was part of her family's industrial-projects business for a short while. "Plants and biology interested me but I did a professional course only to please my father," she says.

Bhavya adds that her interest in growing greens was to see them grow naturally. "I was also disturbed that in many parts of Bengaluru, greens were grown using water from the Vrishabhavati that carries toxic industrial and domestic waste. It pushed me to take up this endeavour and provide something clean." She started by leasing a farm at Harohalli and had a poly house where ornamentals and indoor plants were grown. Soppu was initially grown in pots. "I used to sell greens grown only with coco-peat in pots. It helped people get 150 grams of greens that they could use any time in a week. It stayed garden fresh, as there was no soil. They could use them and return the pot to me," says Bhavya. But 150 grams that a pot can hold (for INR 20) wasn't enough for even a nuclear family. Hence, Bhavya stopped the 'pot greens' and set up her farm at Nettigere (from where she operates right now). For six months she learnt the best methods of green farming and the combination for her soil-cocopeat-manure media from professional agriculturists. "While one part of my two acres is reserved for greens, I also have them under a shade to save them from the scorching sun. It's back-breaking and energy squeezing to have the 'green babies' grow to perfection, especially in summer," says Bhavya. She now supplies 300 kilograms of greens in a month to two apartments. The one dark cloud on her horizon is buyers who think her pricing of INR25 for a 250 gram bundle is overpriced. She says, "I just want people to know that the produce is without anything artificial and brought to each one's doorstep after hours of work at the fields."

(Source: The Hindu <https://www.thehindu.com/life-and-style/bk-bhavyas-organic-trails/article26841444.ece>)