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NEWS, EVENTS, PROMOTIONS + IDEAS

FASTEST GROWING
COMPANIES
FAMILY
BUSINESSES

Dr. Raghavpat
Singhania

(MD, JK Cement Ltd)

Madhavkrishna
Singhania

Deputy MD and CEO, JK Cement Ltd.



OVERVIEW OF EDITION

Individuals who rose to be leaders

Every journey is of the soul, and is sole — the two define the purpose of individuals who set out with their singular dreams. Rumi says, “It is your road and yours alone. Others may walk it with you, but no one can walk it for you.” Experiences shaped them and sometimes beat them into becoming larger than life. And thus came about the fruition of their dreams — their companies and products. For these leaders, their organizations are not about profits alone. At heart and in deeds, they are philanthropists who want to make a difference to the world with what they hold in their hands. Businesses are organic entities for them, deeply reflecting the character of the ones in charge.

We bring to you entities who may essentially stand alone but walk together with their people. These are leaders who have given the industry valuable products, but above it all, they have given back to society — by way of their services which variously improve life, or by wealth creation which they fairly and honestly share.

The common thread perhaps is also their method to battle the pandemic, wherein they have stood in support of their employees and the immediate communities, steering the society to safety as best possible. While the world grappled to come to terms with the unprecedented life conditions — the visions and bold thinking of these leaders made them rise to the occasion, adapt and value add. These visionaries are unstoppable and believe that the game has just begun.

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In 2019, over one-third of family businesses worldwide targeted and achieved a double-digit growth rate as compared to one-quarter of non-family businesses. In rapidly emerging markets like India, this number is closer to a whopping 70%, as family - owned businesses are more likely to prioritize entering into new overseas markets and /or creating newer opportunities for themselves.

“Across the world, middle-market companies are grasping the upside of disruption, expanding their borders and creating new business opportunities. But we also see family businesses using the advantage of greater agility and streamlined decision-making to move faster than their non-family business peers.”

- MARNIX VAN RIJ

Ernst & Young's Global Family Business Leader.

An increasing number of small, medium and big family-owned businesses have demonstrated explosive growth over the last few years. One such player to capture a large share in the Indian market is JK Cement Ltd.

With a humble beginning in May 1975, at the flagship cement manufacturing unit at Nimbahera, Rajasthan, today JK Cement Ltd. is one of India's leading manufacturers of Grey Cement and the third largest White Cement manufacturer in the world. Over four decades, the Company has partnered India's multi-sectoral infrastructure needs on the strength of product excellence, customer orientation and technology leadership.



The Company has an installed Grey Cement capacity of 14.7 MnTPA as on date, making it one of the top cement manufacturers in the Country. JKCL is also the No. 1 manufacturer of Wall Putty in the world, with a total white cement capacity of 1.20 MnTPA and wall putty capacity of 1.2MnTPA. JK White Cement is sold across 43 countries and the Company has a strong international presence with two subsidiaries, JK Cement Works Fujairah FZC and JK White Cement (Africa) Ltd.

JKCement is steadily enhancing capacity, diversifying its range of products, ushering in advanced technologies and enhancing quality assurance, while at the same time, expanding its presence nationally and internationally. The various brands of JK Cement continue to enjoy the trust of millions of consumers for the high quality and innovation benchmarks that they have attained over time.

Their value-driven culture has enabled them to be the preferred manufacturer of cement and other value-added building materials that partners in nation-building, engages with its community and deals transparently and fairly with all its stakeholders. A customer oriented approach and track record of delivering unsurpassed value has earned the cement brand salience and loyalty over the last four decades, making it the preferred brand across categories.

JKCement's vision is a re-enforcement of Founder MD, Late Shri Yadupati Singhania's commitment towards building a strong Nation. He led JKCement on the path of continued growth with his inspirational vision and unwavering commitment. His values reflect in everything, from the company's core ethos, to their ongoing mission of transformation.

A true visionary and a champion of change, he taught his successors to be 'first into the future'. Inspired by him, the new generation leaders of JKCement are determined to keep the company's growth trajectory going, to be reckoned as one of the fastest growing cement companies in the country. After receiving their business training and guidance under the industry stalwart, Late Shri Yadupati Singhania, the young next-gen leaders, Dr. Raghavpat Singhania – MD, JKCement and Mr. Madhavkrishna Singhania – Dy. MD & CEO, JKCement gathered their expertise and soon began helping the Company's transformational journey. The duo has been instrumental in charting JKCement's strategic roadmap, thus helping the organisation be ready for the future.

DR. RAGHAVPAT SINGHANIA

Managing Director, JK Cement Ltd.

A businessman par excellence at only 36 years, Dr Raghavpat Singhania is amongst the youngest managing directors of India across the manufacturing sector. Exuding compelling and rich experience, Raghavpat is a seasoned professional in the grey and white cement industry. An avid researcher in the domain of new building products and materials, he is a gentleman brimming with youthful energy and wisdom.

Starting at JK Cement Ltd (JKCL) in 2007 as a special executive, Raghavpat received training under industry stalwart, late Shri Yadupati Singhania. As years passed, he learnt the expertise of the trade and was soon helping the company's transformation journey.

The milestones that JKCL has achieved under Raghavpat are phenomenal. In pursuit of the company's aspirations to expand and grow, it has ramped up its installed grey cement capacity to 14.7 MnTPA — making it one of the top most cement manufacturers in the country. JKCL is the foremost manufacturer of wall putty globally and the international third-largest manufacturer of white cement. He has spearheaded the company's foray into international markets with the setting up of the subsidiaries — JKCement Works (Fujairah) FZC and JK White Cement (Africa) Ltd.



JK Cement Ltd.

Raghavpat is a man known for his passion to explore new possibilities arising out of consumer insights and need gaps— thus leading the diversification and augmentation of the company's product portfolio comprising innovative building material solutions.

He believes in the strength of building strong and enduring brands, a testament to which are the marquee brands of JKC WhiteMaxX and JKC WallMaxX achieving the coveted title of Superbrand for two years, consecutively.

According to him, people are an organisation's strongest asset and form the foundation of a company's growth and development. Such values and the organisation's culture of trust, meritocracy and empathy have earned JKCement the



Great Place to Work certification, two years in a row.

Raghavpat is dedicated towards establishing the company's vision and commitment and in taking it ahead by ensuring that its values and ethics are always upheld and propagated. Conscious of the responsibilities owed to society, he deems that quality education and vocational training for youth are an integral part of nation building. He holds youth and their future close to heart and some institutions giving shape to his vision are Yadupati Singhanian Vocational Education Foundation, Sir Padampat Singhanian University, LK Singhanian Education Centre, LK Singhanian Public School and LA Education Centre.

Raghavpat attended the executive leadership programme at INSEAD, Fontainebleau, and is a graduate of the Sheffield Hallam University, United Kingdom. He served as a member of the CII Delhi State Council, President of Rotary and is also a trustee of many charitable organisations. He has been honoured with the honorary doctor of philosophy by the department of Neurosciences, School of Advanced Medical Sciences and Technologies, Iran.

He is also the managing director of JKCement Works, (Fujairah) FZC, which is a subsidiary of JK Cement Ltd in the UAE.

A person true to his ideals and gifted with astute business acumen, Raghavpat is a leader to watch out for.

A portrait of Mr. Madhavkrishna Singhania, a man with short dark hair, wearing a white shirt and a dark blue Nehru-style vest with a yellow pocket square. He is standing against a dark background.

Mr. Madhavkrishna Singhania

Deputy Managing Director & CEO, JK Cement Ltd.

Madhavkrishna is a dynamic leader and at 32, is among the youngest CEOs of India. He holds a bachelor's degree in electrical and computer engineering from Carnegie Mellon University, the USA, and a diploma in family business management from IMD Lausanne, Switzerland.

Madhavkrishna has rich and incisive experience in the cement industry encompassing various aspects of the business — including strategy, manufacturing, and technology enablement. Having a Keen Interest in the latest Technological development in the Building Material Space, and a big proponent of automating processes, he has put JK Cement on a journey of becoming a paperless company, using various IT tools and programs to move towards a zero paper transaction company in next one year. Having tripled the company's market cap from 1 billion USD to 3 billion USD over the last three years, he has been feted widely and has led JKCement's growth agenda from the front.

Aligned with the growth aspirations of the Company, Madhavkrishna has led the new capacity expansion projects which have doubled the grey cement manufacturing capacity from 7.5 MTPA in 2010 to 15 MTPA in 2021 using state of the art technology. Over the last decade, JKCement has set up five green-field plants and undertaken a major brown-field expansion, strengthening their presence and reach in the south, west, and north of India. The juggernaut continues with 3 more new greenfield plants already under various stages of design and construction.

Under his leadership, JKCement has been on an award-winning spree, receiving accolades and recognition in the domains of sustainability, safety, energy efficiency, and green manufacturing.

He has also been instrumental in the establishment of the company's maiden overseas plant in Fujairah, UAE, and is the deputy MD of JKCement Works (Fujairah), FZC.

Holding various important positions, he is currently the Vice-Chairman of CII (Confederation of Indian Industry) Delhi State and is on the CII Northern Region Council. He was the Chairman of Young Indians (Yi), Delhi youth wing of the CII, and is now serving as the Sherpa for Yi at the G20 Young Entrepreneurs Alliance.

JK Cement Ltd.

Madhavkrishna has served on the board of governors for the National Council for Cement and Building Materials and as the President of the Rotary Club of Kanpur Gaurav. He has represented India in the Australia India Youth Dialogue between the two countries in 2018 and is currently on its steering committee.

Driven by a passion for excellence, the dynamic leaders have already taken great strides in transforming JKCement into a modern, multinational organization whose roots are seeped in a rich history and proud legacy. Ushering in a new era of leadership and innovation for the brand, they have also introduced a new and vibrant corporate identity, which is not only a tribute to their mentor, Late Yadupati Singhania's values and legacy but also a reflection of the Organisation's vision for the future.

While most of the industry analysts were preparing estimates as to the extent of business losses and the ambiguous roadmap to recovery owing to the pandemic, JK Cement Ltd. adopted a proactive approach and rolled out an aggressive drive to cover the white spaces and untapped markets, powering through tough conditions on the back of strong foundation of business fundamentals built over the years. Under the leadership of these new-generation leaders, the employees at JKCement were able to galvanize themselves, work together as a cohesive unit and achieve stellar results in business, together emerging stronger than ever. The Company reported unprecedented growth despite the challenges while ensuring the safety and well-being of all the employees and workers.

Beating the industry estimates, JKCement achieved some key milestones

- Their Market Capitalization increased by 3 times in the last fiscal to reach USD 3 billion.
- They reported their highest ever EBITDA in Q3 & Q4 FY21.
- JKCement made a big leap from the 'Medium' to 'Large' category and has been recognized as the 2nd fastest growing company at the 4th Indian Cement Review Awards
- Awarded the prestigious "Great Place to Work" for two years consecutively.
- JKCement has retained and strengthened their position of being one of the Global leaders in White Cement and the largest producer of Wall Putty worldwide.
- The Company's two iconic brands, JKC WhiteMaxX and JKC WallMaxX have been recognized as SUPERBRANDS for two years consecutively.
- Announced the setting up of a green-field integrated Grey Cement plant with a split grinding unit, having the capacity of 4 MnTPA in Panna, Madhya Pradesh with a total investment of ` 2970 Crs
- JKCement has also launched a new and vibrant corporate brand identity.

Late Yadupati Singhania truly nurtured JKCement into an organization that not only continues to grow but gives selflessly to society. The Singhania brothers recall "One of the favourite mantras of Yadupatiji was that you are only as good as the good that you are doing for your customers and for society as a whole. Continue to strive for perfection

and put in your best efforts and leave the rest to the almighty (Lord Dwarkadeesh)". Inspired by their mentor, they have been striving to build an organization that is not only successful but a responsible and conscientious one too.

Sustainability has been an integral part of their business vision since inception. Striving to achieve growth that is profitable and sustainable, JKCement consistently works towards reducing its carbon footprint and has also made a shift to green-technology with focus on alternate fuels and raw materials and setting up of more solar, wind and waste heat recovery sources of energy generation.

Led by the young successors, JKCement has been on a journey of transformation that reflects in its focus on developing people, building strong and enduring brands, creating value for all stakeholders, diversification and digitization.

Raghavpat Singhania and Madhavkrishna Singhania are carrying forward on their strong and able shoulders, Late Yadupati Singhania's legacy of excellence and humility, with the resolve to further strengthen the company's solid legacy of trust and keep the banner of JK Cement flying ever high.



LANDMARK GROUP

RENUKA
JAGTIANI

CEO & Chairwoman



“At Landmark Group, gender is not a differentiator. We have a 40 per cent women representation at the senior-most level and close to 50 percent of our retail store staff are women. The last few years have been very positive for women in the region with the government supporting and driving initiatives to support women at work and in entrepreneurship – especially in Saudi Arabia,”

says Jagtiani, who has been at the helm for more than 20 years.

Renuka Jagtiani

CEO and chairwoman Landmark Group

"Keeping pace with the changing times has been key for retail heavyweight Landmark Group even as it continues to expand, reveals its CEO and chairwoman Renuka Jagtiani"

When Landmark Group launched in the GCC in 1973, the retail landscape was wholly different – not just in the region, but also globally.

Shopping meant brick-and-mortar, with e-commerce still a futuristic concept as the internet was non-existent. In fact, 1973 was also the year that Federal Express (now FedEx) was created, paving the way for the logistics supply chain that now forms an integral part of the online shopping experience.

BUY NOW

Hence the fact that Landmark is still here today – and has not just survived but also thrived to become one of the largest retail organisations in the Middle East and India, has meant the group has had to constantly reinvent itself and its offerings. "We started with a single store in 1973 in Bahrain and now have over 2,200 outlets across the region with a strong online offering across all our brands," explains Renuka Jagtiani, CEO and chairwoman of Landmark Group.

"My husband Micky Jagtiani started Landmark Group with a belief that listening to our customers across the region and constantly adapting to answer their needs would always keep our brands relevant. We stay true to his vision by focusing on bringing value to customers and reinventing our offering with the times – by scaling up our technology, logistics and digital initiatives and ensuring better customer experience in-store and online," she says.

The company's brands include the likes of Centrepunkt, Babyshop, Splash, Shoemart, Lifestyle, Max, Home Centre, Home Box, Emax and discount outlet Viva. The group has also diversified into the leisure, food and hospitality segments with Citymax Hotels, Fitness First and restaurant division Foodmark.

More recently, Landmark also ventured into pure-play e-commerce with a new brand called Styli, focusing primarily on the Saudi market. Offering over 30 brands

including private labels and external sports brands such as Nike, Puma and Under Armour, Styli targets the kingdom's burgeoning youth segment, and has served more than 375,000 customers since its launch in November 2019.

"We observed how fashion-forward the Saudi youth was with an online-first consumer behaviour," says Jagtiani.

Roughly 70 per cent of Styli's customer base is under the age of 25, with women's clothing the best performing category in its first year of operations. In line with that, the entire Styli customer service team in Riyadh is staffed with Saudi women.

ALL IN A CLICK

While e-commerce was already on an upward trajectory, Covid-19 provided a massive boost. The e-commerce sector in the GCC is set to reach \$50bn by 2025, a recent report by Kearney Middle East found, with a strong growth of 20 per cent CAGR forecast between 2020 and 2022, reducing to a CAGR of 14 per cent until 2025.

The same growth that was expected to occur prior to the pandemic has now accelerated, and consumers, who have adapted to online marketplaces, will associate this as the new normal during and postCovid, the report stated.

"In our last e-commerce outlook for the GCC in 2017, we forecasted growth of 35 per cent CAGR, which was essentially more than a four-fold jump in value for the sector between 2015 and 2020," said Adel Belcaid, partner at Kearney Middle East.

"By the end of 2019, it was worth just short of \$18bn, with signs of maturing growth and intense market competition. However, Covid-19 caused an unforeseen push and gave a new, accelerated lease of life to the sector, in line with what we have seen in global markets. This is due to a rapid change in consumer behaviour, with unprecedented adoption of e-commerce by all population segments, spurred, to a large extent by the new normal of social distancing, lockdowns and reduced capacity in physical stores," he added.

The retail sector in the region has navigated and responded to new regulations and guidelines, states Jagtiani.

"Our investment in technology, supply chain and e-commerce for the past few years had a significant positive impact in allowing us to rapidly change our ways of operating to stay aligned with our customers new needs and behavioural shifts," she explains.

Styli specifically received an impetus during the lockdown last year, when most consumers were forced to shop online. "Styli grew exponentially during 2020. But it also put tremendous pressure on supply chains – both in sourcing products from our vendors as well as in delivering orders to customers," states Jagtiani, adding that the group's infrastructure and its ability to leverage economies of scale helped them keep pace with demand.

To keep up with its growing e-commerce and omni-channel capabilities, Landmark also opened a massive Dh\$1bn fully-automated logistics and distribution hub at JAFZA in Dubai in November 2019. Claimed to be the MENA region's largest such privately-owned facility, it operates under the brand name of Omega Logistics and features advanced technology and processes.


"Our solid logistics and infrastructure capabilities allows our brands to scale up and respond with speed," says Jagtiani.

Looking ahead, the company will continue to expand brands like Styli while also growing its reach geographically.

"While it is Saudi-focused, Styli has now expanded to serve customers in the UAE and Kuwait. The group is very committed to making Styli bigger and in 2021, we will expand our presence to Oman, Bahrain, Iraq, Lebanon, Jordan and Egypt," says Jagtiani.

"2020 has taught us to adapt better and to make decisions faster. In 2021 we will continue to focus on e-commerce, growing our business in South-East Asian markets and strengthening our supply chain infrastructure," she adds.

As the regional retail landscape evolves rapidly, the chairwoman and CEO is making sure that the group remains relevant – for now and the future.



"Our customers are from the bottom of the pyramid to the top."

Agrawal adds,

"In the end, we are a home company of Nepal that thrives to build better lives all across Nepal."

Arpit Agrawal

Vishal Group:

Veteran Values x Innovative Ideas

A near century ago in Nepal, a young Gordhan Das Agrawal started a textile shop in the Nepali city of Dharan. He was a well-travelled Indian immigrant who bet that Nepal was on a track to exponentialize its private consumerism. He was right.

Over the next few decades, this small business would expand relentlessly, navigating through the country's tumultuous political journey, which would include transitioning from a feudal system and a kingdom into a federal structure through multiple civil wars and revolutions. On their expansion through such political turmoil, VG's Chairman, Jagdish Prasad Agrawal maintains, "Companies are made of people and people give back what you put in. Integrity, honesty, transparency, trust—all of these have been our driving moral compass, the foundation of an accountable ecosystem."

While honing veteran values is fairly common practice of a family business in the 20th century, few legacy businesses, particularly in Asia, have evolved to further integrate values such as accountability into modern and sustainable business practices for the 21st century.

According to the Harvard Business Review, 70% of family-owned businesses fail or are sold before the second generation gets a chance to take over. Since its origins from a textile store, VG has expanded to Manufacturing, Financial Services, Distribution, Infrastructure, Education, Real Estate, Hydro, Hospitality and Automobiles. Today the conglomerate employs over 10,000 Nepalese people and has a clientele that boasts presence in 80% of households of the country. So how has Vishal Group, not just sustained itself through such political turmoil, but, rather, thrived?

Arpit Agrawal, whose leadership marks Vishal Group's entrance to the fourth generation, offers, "It's about marrying veteran values with innovative ideation in ways that support one another."

VG has an acute focus on R&D as a driver of growth and innovation. Arpit Agrawal developed and implemented tech integration in their platform management to spearhead the Vishal Group's FMCG vertical and digitize accountability. Most customers will never realize this behind-the-scenes technology, but investing in such cyclical innovation is precisely what continues to give Vishal Group an edge in the business sphere.

Mr. Arpit Agrawal believes the sizable investment made with a calculated risk (given the tech literacy and infrastructural status of Nepal) was a bold one that has paid back well. According to VG, the investment has improved its performance and helped the FMCG vertical grow by three times from 2014 to 2021.

Intermittently, introducing new technology is also what encourages corporate culture to open up to learning, nurturing and evolving new values around existing foundational legacy values. Agarwal emphasizes that maintaining corporate culture and managing human resources is crucial during such transitional periods.

"As long as we've involved employees in the decision making process, they've understood the need to adapt to new technology as a necessary means to meet demand, improve efficiency and drive growth—and that has made all the difference. In the end, it's about the people," asserts Arpit Agrawal, echoing his grandfather. "We avail employees tangible tracks of growth and respect employees' autonomy in performing tasks we delegate to them. We communicate clear expectations and provide necessary resources. My job is simply to create a space that is comfortable to ideate and innovate in and provide constructive feedback where necessary."

A portrait of Chahat Aggarwal, a woman with long, dark, wavy hair, wearing a pink button-down shirt. She is standing with her hands on her hips against a black background.

CHAHAT AGGARWAL
Founder & CEO

Impact Study Biz

Impact Study Biz

Chahat Aggarwal, founder, and CEO of Impact Study Biz, always brings her A-game to the table and the year 2020 was no exception.

She was awarded 'Business Woman of the Year' by Business View Magazine, and 'Most Promising Woman Entrepreneur of the Year 2020' by Aspiring She, besides being one of the 'Top 10 Women Entrepreneurs in India' as per Forbes.

But not one to get distracted with so many laurels coming her way, Chahat was busy imagining the new patterns of consumption that will remain even post the pandemic.

Although everything last year was an unceasing avalanche of marvels, each more baffling than the one before, Chahat managed to make some sense of it for her strategy consultancy Impact Study Biz, focussed exclusively on startups.

She shared with us her fresh ideas on Brand building and also spilled some beans on Carebyte, managing the brand of a new revolutionary venture as a co-founder.

Dropping a truth bomb from the get-go, Chahat mentions how startups are paying "Brand Tax". While explaining further, she says it is essentially giving a large percent of your capital to Google or Facebook for paid ads for the sake of building recall value.

But unfortunately, it is not as straightforward as that. These ads do not yield the desired results. Effective Branding does.

But does brand building remain the same as what it used to be? Chahat tells it to be both a Yes and a No. While the basics and the objectives will always remain the same, just like in any discipline, the mediums of application have changed immensely. Thus, we work with a branding philosophy with Digital Community Building and Artificial Intelligence as the nucleus at Impact Study Biz.

Giving the example of Glossier, Chahat continues to expound on how fervent communities can make successful businesses from something as simple as a blog.

But she also warns to not mistake an audience for a community. A community is a cheerleader for your products. Building the same is a chaotic chasm to navigate.

But backed by data and scientific decision-making, Chahat and her team at Impact Study Biz claim to have cracked the method to this madness. Telling more on the subject, she says, "We create a community of fanatic advocates both online as well as offline, for the startups we choose to engage with."

Chahat also had a candid conversation about the major trends in the startup space in general. The one that she shone an exceptional light on was 'Ecosystem Building'. The intense competition from both domestic and international startups, commoditized every business model. Hence, locking in customers via upselling or cross-selling value-added services is the way.

And drawing from this very philosophy, the talented woman has dived into another venture Carebyte in the health tech space. Carebyte is built with the mission to address the healthcare woes of Indians with quality healthcare services. But first, it wishes to cultivate a community that understands the

importance of preventive first healthcare over Prescriptive first. And to this community of theirs, it wishes to present a subscription-based platform with every service one could possibly need to keep one healthy.

The astute lady has chosen to dream boldly, talks substance, and just wants to make magic happen. We really hope she continues on this upward trajectory of hers.

On being questioned about where Artificial Intelligence plays a role? Every step of the way, she says.

"It is the underlying tool kit. AI helps us decode consumer motivations and refine our interactions accordingly. The mechanism helps us eliminate touchpoints that do not really help convert. Thus, boosting the Return on Investment (ROI) for the startups that choose to trust us."

Top Indian Business Leaders In THE MIDDLE EAST 2021

The business relationship between India and the Arab world goes back centuries. Some gulf countries even used the Indian rupee as currency before they gained independence. Today the Indian diaspora is the largest expat population in the Middle East.

With so many Indians employed in the region, some have started their own businesses, and a few have made it big. There are eight billionaires of Indian origin based in the Middle East. Some of the largest homegrown brands in the region were started by Indian expats, including Lulu Hypermarket, which is owned by billionaire Yusuff Ali. Fellow Indian billionaire Ravi Pillai's RP Group claims to employ 100,000 people, making it one of the largest private employers in the Middle East.

To highlight their achievements, here is a list of 10 business leaders of Indian origin who have achieved great success in business in the Middle East.



Basheer



Naresh-Bhawnani



PNC-Menon-min



Pradeep-Handa-Mmin



Renuka



Rizwan-Sajan



Sunil-Vaswani



Sunny-Varkey



Thumbay-Moideen



Yusuff-Ali

Virender Sehwag's athleisure brand goes online, eyes Rs 100 crore revenue in 3 years

Cricket legend counts on ecommerce and his own brand equity to go pan-India through tier 1 and 2 cities

Cricketer Virender Sehwag

Cricket legend Virender Sehwag's athleisure line VS by Sehwag has announced its online foray with an eye on 5 million customers by 2026 and Rs 100 crore revenue through multi-channel retail in the next three years. At present, the brand has four exclusive outlets — three in Ahmedabad and one in Vadodara — and six distributors.

According to a recent report by Redseer, a management consultancy firm, the online market is expected to log a 45 percent jump in overall sales, its biggest year-on-year growth, up to a gross merchandise value (GMV) of \$55 billion from \$38 billion last year.

While VS by Sehwag was launched last year with 50 SKUs, the online rollout will see 35 to 40 SKUs, focussing on the quality of the products. VS wear — a collection of track pants, T-shirts, jackets and shorts — and cricketing gear, including bats, gloves and pads, will be aimed at the mass segment, with affordable pricing as its USP. "When you buy gear and equipment, you would want to buy the best one, but it is usually out of your reach. That's why I started the brand, with the idea of providing international-level quality at a lesser price," adds the former opening batter.

VS's range of garments, available in six solid colours, has been priced between Rs 499 and Rs 1,099, while the cricketing equipment is placed in a slightly higher price bracket, with the cost of a bat between Rs 10,000 and Rs 15,000. The brand is present on mobile web and desktop, and will integrate with leading ecommerce platforms over the next three months.

India's first triple-centurion in Test cricket believes his credibility and equity will help his brand stand out in a crowded and competitive athleisure retail market. "Because I played cricket for India for at least 15 years, people can trust me and, subsequently, the brand, and I will deliver the quality," says Sehwag.

The brand launched its first exclusive store in Ahmedabad in March 2020, five days before the national lockdown was announced. It now has four outlets and, in the next month and a half, will come up with six stores across tier 1 and 2 cities. "We are targeting a pan-India audience, hence online is the right way to go for us. Now everyone has a smart phone," adds Sehwag. "In the future we will open in the metros, and Delhi, Mumbai, Kolkata, and Bengaluru will have a store each, but at the moment it's easy to go pan-India through tier 1 and 2 cities."

VS By Sehwag is a joint venture between Sehwag-owned World of Viru Pvt Ltd and Stitched Textiles Pvt Ltd, an apparel retailing company.

"We are launching vsshop.in due to the expansion of digital and ecommerce during the pandemic. We want to expand our stores to other cities as well, hence we opened online to acquire more customers."

VIRENDER SEHWAG

GUJARAT LAW SOCIETY & GLS UNIVERSITY NATIONAL DESIGN COUNCIL PRESIDENT, WICCI

ADV. CHANDNI KAPADIA

Executive Director
Gujarat Law Society & GLS University



Adv. Chandni Kapadia

Executive Director, Gujarat Law Society & GLS University

NATIONAL DESIGN COUNCIL PRESIDENT, WICCI

Adv. Chandni Kapadia started her career very young, when she was just 16, and dared to venture out on her own in an unknown country when even the thought of studying abroad was a novelty.

She went to pursue Fashion Merchandising from FIT, New York & later went on to pursue Master in Business Administration from London School of Economics. She holds a degree in Psychology and Philosophy as well.

She played an instrumental role in the pricing Strategy of the world's largest coffee brand Starbucks in their Indian foray & training of staff & organizing its first Store launch in India at Mumbai in 2012.

She walked her way up the ladder of success with companies like Earls Trading UK, Delta Trade International, Debenhams PLC. She has excelled in her roles as Country Head, Business Head and Asia Pacific Head in companies like NEXT, Accessorize & Calvin Klein.

Ms. Kapadia who is currently also working as an independent brand consultant for various International brands; has profitably run businesses, built Brands with a clear recognition in this challenging environment whilst providing impetus to strategic planning. She has over 20 years of experience of the International Market along with the Indian scenario. She has established networks, built a strong dependable team which is the key to any successful business & its smooth execution.

She always says "Age or gender is never a barrier in fulfilling your

dreams. You can achieve whatever you want if you set your mind to it." She has always hustled hard and that is why she expects her team and subordinates to keep hustling to achieve their dreams and is always available to guide and support them. She is a great leader and believes in collective brainstorming to achieve desired results.

Ms. Kapadia has recently graced the position of National Design Council President at WICCI (Women's Indian Chamber of Commerce & Industry). She has been recently conferred with Women Entrepreneur 2020-21 Award by National Achievers' Recognition Forum. She has also been conferred with World Women Leadership Congress Award on Feb, 2019 for her immense contribution to fashion industry and was recently the recipient of Award of Iconic Women Creating a Better World For All on July, 2020 by Women Economic Forum, All Ladies League. She has also been recently conferred with the Black Swan Award for Women Empowerment by AsiaOne in support of UN Global Compact Network & Government of India. Her list of achievements does not end here. She was also conferred with CEO of the Year Award by Indian Achievers' Forum in September, 2020 and along with this Ms. Kapadia has also featured in Forbes List of Top 10 Women Entrepreneurs of India.

Ms. Chandni Kapadia's association with Education has been more than a decade old where she was first associated as a consultant for international and professional education and is now the Executive Director at Gujarat Law Society and GLS University wherein she looks upon International Collaborations

with different Universities across the globe, marketing and promotions of GLS University and plays a main role in Top Management Level Decisions.

Doing different things at the same time is always something that she has loved. Being a multitasker, she also is currently pursuing her PhD in management when she already holds a law degree with 11 Gold Medals from Gujarat University.

Her association with the field of education and law from design and brand management since the last decade comes with the noble thought of giving back to the society as education has played a very important role in her life and she has always loved challenging roles as a leader.

Ms. Kapadia has always believed in supporting women and their causes. She says "Women should support each other more, so that men support & respect women more. We, as women, should ensure that our crowns don't fall and protect each others crown as well."

She is giving back to the society as the National Council President of WICCI & Director of Rotary Club of Visionaries of Mumbai where she works for the welfare of women, their businesses and the welfare of children.

Ms. Kapadia is also an ardent lover of animals and is an advocate of preventing of street dogs against animal cruelty

A YEAR AFTER LOCKDOWN

MUTHOOT MICROFIN LTD CONTINUES TO DRIVE
INCLUSION THROUGH TECHNOLOGY & TRUST

When the going gets tough, the
tough gets going,
is a proverb we are all
aware of. The adage found an
exemplar in
Muthoot Microfin Ltd

Thomas Muthoot

Responsibility towards the society has always transcended business priorities, for this NBFC, that features amongst the top 5 MFIs in the country. The pandemic gave the country a flavour of their unchanging commitments during the changing times.

On an operational front, the organisation announced zero lay-offs. They introduced emergency loans and Covid covers to help their workforce feel at ease. "A considerable effort went into assuring our employees that their jobs were safe. I think once people were at peace, they were motivated to do wonders," adds Sadaf Sayeed, Chief Executive Officer, Muthoot Microfin Ltd, while speaking to Great Manager Institute as part of its profiling of great people leaders.

On the business front, the organization believes in the transformative power of doing good. Be it financing gold loans through Swarnavarsham, for a customer group that only understands 'gold' as a form of investment or being responsible lenders, the organization has always proven to be a trustworthy partner to its customers. During a time when the microfinance industry faced repayment stress, the company continued to penetrate deeper into underserved geographies and to borrowers at the bottom of the economic pyramid. This has helped them add to their consistently growing customer base.



SADAF - SAYEED



On being recognized amongst the Top 30 'Best places to work in BFSI Industry' in India by the Great Place to Work® Institute, **Mr. Thomas Muthoot, Managing Director**, believes:

"The achievement acknowledges our commitment to foster a culture of pride, trust, reliability, teamwork, and credibility amongst our employees. This certification is recognition for our employees, and I would like to thank every employee for reposing their faith in the organization. It strengthens our brand in the microfinance industry and beyond, and we now consider it as an instrument to help us improve and measure our progress."

When probed on how they have managed to maintain the common thread of 'social responsibility' amongst their employees - spread across 17 states and 750+ branches, Sayeed mentions hiring people based on "genuine need for a job", preferably from the bottom of the pyramid. These employees therefore empathise with the customers, put customers' needs first and strive to provide them with the best possible service, with a smile. The robust on-the-job training and a mandatory, month long field experience is what the management believes makes their fresh recruits' bond with customers stronger.

Taking pride in their strong foundation of goodwill, Sayeed recounts an incident when a group of seven women from a village close to Trivandrum, running a creche facility approached the field officers. They were looking to launch their own tiffin service. Apart from financing loans worth 20,000 INR to each one of them, the organization went a step ahead to provide entrepreneurship education to the women. This helped them gain skills required to successfully run a business. Their tiffin service has been flourishing with time, making them one of the favourite success stories at Muthoot Microfin.

The community initiatives undertaken by the organization complement their financial inclusion agenda. By committing to causes such as no-cost cleft-lip surgeries, Kerala flood relief initiatives, cancer detection camps & low cost dental treatments, the organization has made a meaningful difference to the lives of the less privileged.

Speaking about their roadmap for the future, the organization aspires to be the 'Number 1' microfinance company by 2025, managing best portfolio quality, highest level of customer satisfaction and the highest wallet share among the customers. This, Sayeed believes, shall happen through a collective display of a high-trust, high-performance culture, apart from creating value for customers.

Sharing his 'mantra' for all the budding people managers, he encourages them to pick up a sport, and play it dedicatedly. "One has to constantly improve, if you wish to be on the top. Sports make you innovative and disciplined, apart from keeping you fit. These are some must-haves for a great career and life", adds Sayeed with a smile.

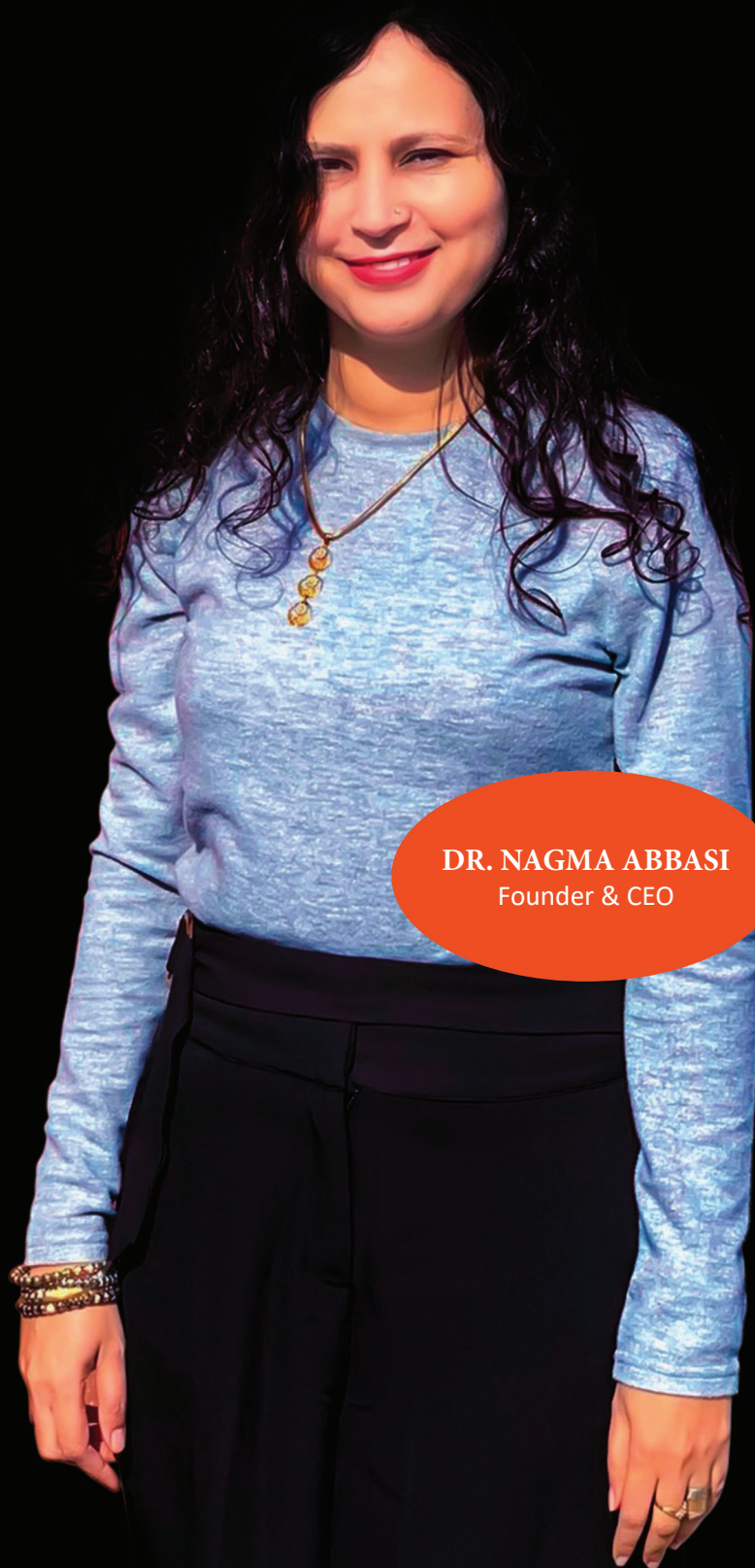
The **SUCCESS STORY** of an Influential Entrepreneur

The dedicated efforts of renowned scientist and business woman, Dr. Nagma Abbasi, has resulted in the foundation and evolution of NextGen Life Sciences Private Limited, an organisation that bridges the gap between the needs and the pains of the researchers of the Life Sciences/ Biotech Industry and assist the scientists to gain insight on the recent innovation and technologies, assuring a sound knowledge of the subject matter. It is through her fierce determination and altruistic approach that NextGen is set to shape the trends in the field of life sciences.

NextGen Life Sciences was established by Dr. Nagma Abbasi, Founder & CEO, an enthusiastic entrepreneur and a dynamic leader, in 2014. The company stands for innovation and progress, and is devoted to taking the realm of biotechnology and healthcare forward. It is a single source facility catering to the research needs of scientists in the field of Molecular Biology, Cell Biology, Immunology, Healthcare and Drug Development.

The company offers products for Cell Analysis, Cell Culture & Transfection, Cloning, DNA & RNA Purification, Gene Expression Analysis & Genotyping, PCR, Protein Expression & Analysis, Real-Time PCR, RNAi, Sequencing, Synthetic Biology, Cancer Research, Stem Cell Research, drug discovery and development, plant sciences, Epigenetics and services for Sequencing and Next Generation Sequencing.

NextGen is associated with some of the leading multinational brands as a distributor of Innovative technologies, manufacturing and Research & Development. It works closely with the customers and aims to gain recognition, success and growth with a focus on scientists' research needs. The team at NextGen follows three principles: value, service and support. The company's ultimate focus is to provide high quality innovative products and services at competitive prices in a timely fashion to its customers.



DR. NAGMA ABBASI
Founder & CEO

NextGen Life Sciences

Dr. Nagma Abbasi: An Inspiring Entrepreneur

A scientist herself, Dr. Nagma has an inside-out view of the needs of the upcoming scientists and the specific issues that they often face. Through her enterprise, she responds to these needs and offers innovative solutions that carry forward the ever-growing field of biotechnology. NextGen helps scientists in keeping up to date with recent technological advancements in the area, and provides a unique insight to them regarding the subject matter and its vast scope of knowledge. With its augmented spectrum of products and solutions, it enables them in empowering the mounting realm of complex analytical challenges.

Dr. Nagma started out with studying at IMT Ghaziabad, A.M.U., Aligarh and Indian Agricultural Research Institute, Delhi for her studies in Business Administration, Doctoral studies in Molecular Genetics and Post Doctoral Studies in Molecular Biology. Her career spans over a decade working with esteemed research institutes and leading multinational companies in the Life Sciences and Biotech industry across various verticals like product management, customer segmentation, brand management, and strategic marketing.

Having been taught to become an independent woman since the beginning, Dr. Nagma never held back when working to transform her dreams into reality. We are proud of who we are, what we do, and how we do it. We are many, working as one, across functions, across companies, and the world," she states. Her measure of her company's success is marked by different scales like conversations with clients, ROI, conversion rate, customer satisfaction, and with parameters like referrals from existing clients, growth, and profit from the revenue, conversion rate, sales target and a number of other organization's benefit factors.

The company prides itself on its capabilities to develop the most-suited, innovative solutions for its clients based on the market needs. They maintain long lasting relationships with their customers through their superior quality deliverables and unmatched product inventories. Owing to Dr. Nagma's expertise in the field, the company understands the scientific needs of its clients and brings to the table the best possible customized solutions in allocated budgets.

Dr. Nagma has gained recognition and distinction as a leader and entrepreneur in the startup industry as a result of her relentless work ethic and determination. Some of the awards she has been showered with in her years as an entrepreneur include:

- Received Indian Achievers' Award 2021 "Entrepreneur of the year" by prestigious Indian Achievers Forum.
- Featured as One of the "Top Inspiring Business Leaders making difference in 2021" by GlobalTech Outlook Magazine March 2021.
- Received Women of the Year Award 2021 by DigiLive.
- Featured as Top 10 Women Entrepreneurs 2020 by Forbes India
- Selected as India's Inspirational Leader 2020 by WCRC
- Selected and featured as Decisive Women Leaders 2020 by Business APAC
- Featured amongst 30 Most Influential CEOs by CIO Bulletin
- Selected as Winner of India 500 CEO Awards 2020

- Entrepreneur of the Year Biotechnology and Healthcare Industry 2020 by Power Brands
- Listed as India's Most influential CEO of the Year 2020 - Life Sciences by Corporate Vision Magazine, UK
- Entrepreneur of the Year in Trading Business "MSMECCII Genentech Asia Awards 2020"

NextGen has reached this zenith of success through facing every challenge that came its way head on. In the initial days of NextGen Life Sciences, Dr. Nagma had to wade through tough waters of uncertainties and manage capital investments, assembling a quality team, building a customer base, and forming good relationships. Never the one to fall behind, Dr. Nagma worked to transform hurdles into opportunities and ploughed through to tap into the unbridled potential of the biotech industry.

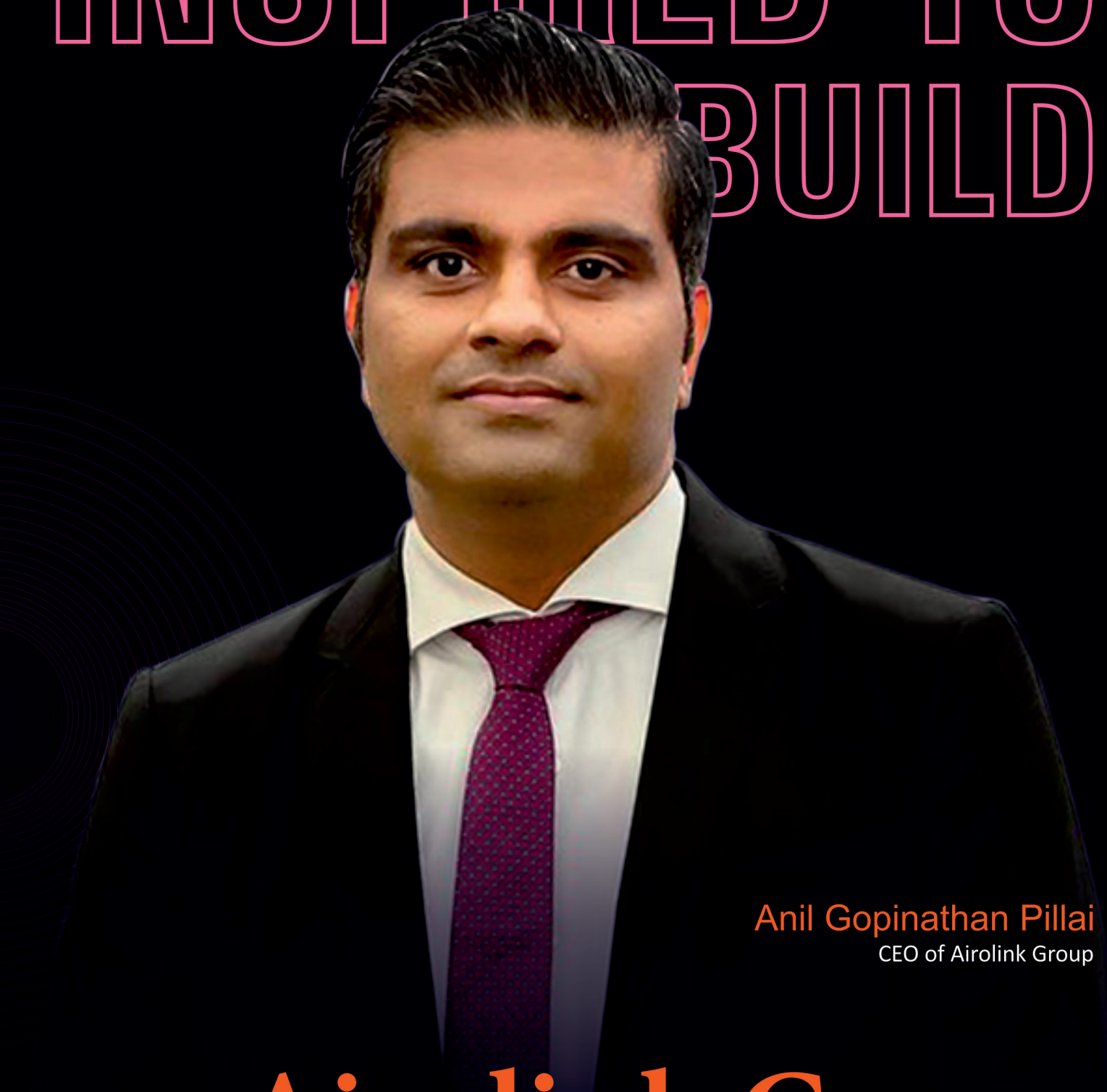
"Today, with hard work and determination of mine and my team, we deliver the best of services and solutions which are smart and futuristic and NextGen Life Sciences Pvt. Ltd. has become the most preferred brand for clients," states Dr. Nagma. The key achievement for NextGen has been the consistent growth for the last six years in terms of revenue and profitability. The company has been successful in attaining customer trust in a short period by providing excellent services in the industry.

Among the list of notable obstacles that NextGen faced is, of course, the pandemic. The research institutes shut down during the lockdown, and the Life Science Research aspect of NextGen suffered the consequences of it. Dr. Nagma and her team, however, soon started working on new opportunities. They started working with clients recommended by the ICMR for Covid testing and VTM manufacturers. With most businesses temporarily shut down, their deliveries and payments got stuck. The team got personally involved, applying for e-pass and moving products themselves from airports to client sites. Even though they had a tough time recovering money from the market, they kept on assisting the clients to the best of their abilities.

Belonging to the healthcare industry and being able to provide services in times of dire need helped them gain the confidence of their customers. They went above and beyond to help their customers as well, giving credit as required and delivering much-needed products within given timelines. NextGen's devotion to its customers and its leader's never-back-down approach helped it regain its foothold and move forward with its plan for the future. The company is currently looking forward to processing futuristic innovations in Biotechnology like Next Generation Sequencing (NGS) in clinical laboratories, NGS Data analysis, and interpretation of unknown genetic variants. With its presence in North India, it is planning to expand its network in West and South India as well.

Dr. Nagma is enthusiastic about the new technology and its application-CRISPR. CRISPR technology is a simple yet powerful tool for editing genomes. NextGen Life Sciences is keen on transforming the modus operandi of research and future need for scientific discoveries and innovations. "Our company's mission is to discover, delineate, and deliver high-quality products and excellent services that enable millions of lives to live a healthy and better life," says Dr. Nagma.

INSPIRED TO BUILD



Anil Gopinathan Pillai
CEO of Airolink Group

Airolink Group

Anil Gopinathan Pillai

CEO of Airolink Group

Can you tell us about the work you do at Airolink International Construction LLC and the types of clients you work with?

The Airolink group of companies was established in the Republic of Ireland and has offices in Dublin, the U.A.E. and India. We are one of the leading civil contractors in the U.A.E. We specialize in residential, commercial and educational institutions offering a complete package from land acquisition, design and construction through to completion (turnkey). Our expert team offers every project the benefits of quality, cost competitiveness and the experience of a proven contractor. We make every effort to meet all the cost, schedule and performance requirements for every contract we have been awarded, and because of this we undertake a lot of projects with repeat clients.

What is your approach when undertaking a new client or project?

We follow a systematic approach for project management, and spend lot of time effectively planning from day one. Beginning at the conceptual stage, all possibilities are taken into consideration and the technological, financial and economic feasibility of each alternative is assessed and compared in order to select the best alternative that meets the needs of all stakeholders. Once the project scope is clearly defined and understood, a detailed engineering design will serve as a blueprint for construction, and a definitive cost estimate will serve as the baseline for cost control.

Procurement activities are carried out in a very systematic manner, ensuring the smooth delivery of materials on site during execution. Post construction, there is a brief DLP period that takes care of any snags, after which we handover the completed project.

Anil Gopinathan Pillai, CEO of Airolink Group, tells us about the company's philosophy and future plans, as well as his own inspiration.

What are your thoughts on the state of your industry currently?

The engineering and construction industries are known for their slow adoption of new technologies compared to other global sectors, even though it accounts for more than 6% of global GDP. In developing countries such as India, this accounts for more than 8%. The sector consumes around 50% of steel produced globally and 3 billion tonnes of other raw materials, so any improvement in productivity through the adoption of modern engineering technologies will have a huge impact.

We are currently in a transformation stage of embracing world class and innovative technological opportunities, which we see as a path to a more productive and socially responsible future. This includes adopting advanced building and finishing materials, using modularized and prefabricated components, semi-automated equipment, the use of sustainable products with optimum life-cycle value and industry collaborations.

What attributes do you believe are essential to achieving success in your industry and what is one of the major challenges?

To succeed you need total dedication and focus in delivering quality and cost-effective services to clients while meeting deadlines consistently. But a lack of liquidity is a challenge faced by many. Although bank finances are available, success is only for those contractors that have a strong legacy with project deliveries. One of the major challenges faced by contractors is financial discipline, or the lack of it.

What challenges and opportunities have you faced and how have they affected your role?

There are always challenges in any business. Some are rewarding, some are harsh, but nevertheless they all teach you a lesson. With every challenge I face I do not falter, because I know the solutions are within my understanding too. The biggest challenges I ever faced were in early stage of my career in Ireland when I had started my company. It was the time of recession and there was severe labour unrest. Handling those challenges professionally especially as a budding entrepreneur was the biggest challenge. It took some time, but I successfully handled the situation and overcame it.

What role do your staff play in the success of your firm?

Our people are our strength—it is crucial to have the right people at the right jobs. We currently have over 6,000 employees representing more than 18 nationalities and we plan to expand this to 10,000 in the near future. Our employees are encouraged to actively take part in the decision-making process in the company. Employees are trained frequently to address various gaps arising from demographic changes, technological and process advances, authority and regulatory requirements etc.



What future developments you foresee and how will you adapt? According to experts, multiple mega-trends will shape the future of construction. For instance, more than 30% of global greenhouse gas emissions are attributed to buildings. This and issues like it require an adequate response from the industry as a whole. Improvements need to be made in the way the industry operates to provide substantial benefits to society, which we all are a part of.

Can you tell us about your future plans?

We have a portfolio of projects worth \$5.2 billion with a capability of \$12 billion more by the end of this year. We have ongoing works in hospitality, retail and education, with more than 25,000 students actively engaged within school facilities built by Airolink.

Two particularly interesting projects are the Seven Hotel & Apartments on The Palm Dubai, with a connecting high-level steel bridge comprising an infinity pool and outdoor restaurant deck facilities, all structurally engineered to exacting standards, and the Al Mamzar Hotel, which is a four-star, design and construct hotel collaboration.

What inspires you?

The U.A.E.'s journey itself is inspiring; the way it overcame the financial crisis was enough to boost my morale and serve as one of my biggest aspirations. I strongly believe in the principles of the great visionary leaders of the U.A.E. and the philosophy that they bring in the governance of this land.

Inspired by this and to honour the Year of Tolerance, we pledge to outsource our divisions to seasoned experts in the market, as an effort towards creating more job opportunities, thereby contributing to striking a balance in the construction industry's system and economy as a whole, of which we are all a part.



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