

XTRAVAGATE

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“Education can be the answer to your question. But culture is an essential part of Being Human...”

- Dr. J.Jayalalitha



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“The way to get started is to quit talking and begin doing “

- Walt Disney

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Why Tamil Nadu needs a new Capital ?

Taking into consideration the effect of Vardha storm, I think it would be a wise decision on the government’s part, to make Trichy or Madurai or Coimbatore as the capital of Tamil Nadu. As we all know, Chennai is still recovering from the onslaught of Vardha – the cyclone and the loss of property is still being calculated.

Chennai is always prone to the mood swings of Mother Nature. On December 2105, Chennai received a historical rainfall which caused a loss in property worth 14,602 crores to 50,000+ crores. Also, since Chennai is located on the eastern coastal region it is prone to natural calamities such as Tsunami too. In the event of such calamities the government machinery comes to a total halt. This is one of the reasons why other cities in Tamil Nadu should be given a chance to be made as the capital.

As far as development of industries and other associated factors is concerned, Chennai is fully developed and has reached a saturation point. Cities like Trichy, Madurai and Coimbatore still have room for development.

Here, I would like to explain the strategy adopted by Japan. Before world war, to make all the cities of Japan grow equally, the government would make a particular city as the capital for some time and then after few years, make another city as the capital. Thus, the government of Japan ensured every city in the island nation grew industrially and economically.

Comparing the three mentioned cities, Trichy is, geographically speaking, the heart of Tamil Nadu and has better roadways, railways and airways connectivity. This is also one of the reasons why the then Tamil Nadu chief minister, late M. G. Ramachandran aka M.G.R wanted to make Trichy as the capital. Coimbatore is also almost fully developed compared to Trichy and Madurai. Therefore making Trichy as capital will lead to the development of Trichy. I would also like to point out here that Trichy was awarded the second cleanest city in India. Hence, taking all these into consideration, among these three cities, Trichy is a better option for making it as the capital of Tamil Nadu.

The Content Paranoia

There's this saying about Advertising, calling it 'the tool of the Devil', mainly due to its close association with temptation. Today, this is becoming more relevant, with Ads offering a lot more in the devil's favor. One such component which is very relevant in the present day is Native Advertising.

If you know about what Native Advertising is, chances are that you already know why there's a focus on that topic in this context (Statistics state that 51% of people who know about native Advertising are always skeptical about any content they come across). If you don't, in simple terms, instead of you going about asking people to buy your cupcakes, a hungry guy asks your friend (a foodie) for suggestions and your friend talks about how amazing your cupcakes are, that's Native Advertising!

There's hardly a place where one can't find a form of Native Advertising these days. A few years back, we wouldn't have thought of movies using television programmes as a medium of promotion. Now, we can easily find actors as guest judges for reality shows and even playing guest roles in TV serials. It is a form of subliminal marketing where the idea just gets into the viewer's mind without their knowledge.

We can see that this is becoming an integral part of most content based websites. This is saddening because the sites which we look up for facts (especially news websites), have inserted information that alter our perception about a certain brand without our knowledge, just because it is paid for. What about the consumers? Sites like Buzzfeed and Forbes do mention if a particular article is posted by a Brand or if it is an Ad. But, do readers have the time to notice all of that? They're mostly there to scan for a particular piece of information or to just skim through it to know what's going on. A small icon or text mentioning that it is a sponsored article would hardly get noticed.

The Federal Trade Commission is considering implementing regulatory measures on brands using native ads to promote their products, and the FTC has also indicated it may monitor the market closely to ensure that native advertising is being used in a manner that benefits consumers. The American Society of Magazine Editors has also called for greater transparency and oversight when it comes to native advertising.

We can see that though these kinds of actions are being proposed, it is definitely going to be a huge task to handle. One feasible solution for this paranoia among readers is for entrepreneurs to make use of Data Analytics and Machine learning tools to cash in on this situation and deliver reliable and quality content to the consumers. It's definitely high time we think about ways to build a more trustworthy digital space.

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“The Pessimist see’s difficulty in every opportunity. The optimist sees opportunity in every difficulty “

- Winston Churchill

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“Knowing is not enough: we must apply; Wishing is not enough: we must do “

- Johann Wolfgang

ALUMNI SPEAKS

Expert opinion on Demonetization, Analytics and Automation!

Q. How has demonetization affected the service industry?

There is an overall slump in the market. However companies that are in the outsourcing business and have Fortune 500 clients continue to see no slump. I do not see demonetization affecting the "outsourcing" analytics companies. However I believe the slow economy has affected the Indian start-ups. The start-ups have been badly hit in 2016. This got aggravated with demonetization. Hope 2017 will bring some respite.

Q. How can analytics help with black money issue?

Analytics can help detect money laundering and there are analytical models which can figure out certain systematic deposits. Banks in USA have been using them to detect money laundering. Analytics is a very powerful tool in detecting black money and digital payments can be a big step. But the big question is - the impact on economy in the interim as we move towards digital payments and cashless payments. Unfortunately whole demonetization seems to be following Heisenberg's uncertainty principle. Once the money is getting tracked it is also apparently killing the circulation of money and the economy seems to slump further.

Q. What is the latest trends in the world of big data analytics?

The biggest trend has been a paradigm shift from data assisting companies to data being the core of the company and the rest of the strategy aligning to the core data proposition. You can of course see these in the big data companies like Google, Facebook, Twitter, Whatsapp etc. All the company were only built with the data and consumer strategy and the business model happened as a matter of fact.

When I started working in the industry, we used to see why we need data. Now we are answering questions like how we missed collecting "the data".

Q. Let's talk about "automation" which is the buzz word these days. How is analytics helping in this sector?

Automation is kind of converting an existing human driven process to a machine driven process with very less or practically no human intervention. But analytics starts after the automation is done. It instruments data, crunches data, builds models, predicts patterns and makes the original process more efficient.

Let's take an example - There are ideas and prototypes on machine building houses. And assume a machine is able to build it. Now how does Analytics become an integral part of it

- Analytics figures out where "the machine" deviates from the plan

ALUMNI SPEAKS

- It could send a set of signals back to "the machine" to auto correct it
- It could help in procuring "just in time" raw materials
- It could also give feedback to the process of "plan itself".
- Having built the structure with machines, we could also instrument for faults in the construction like "leakages", "overall temperature", "sunlight intensity" in the building. These things, when regularly instrumented can be made part of the plans to make better buildings
- On the consumer side, - you could make it smart by embedding the plumbing and electrical fittings with data capture mechanisms. For example a faulty plumbing line could auto maintain or call for human assistance at a certain level of criticality.

Q. The last time you were in the NIT Trichy campus you spoke about this exciting new project you are working on i.e. voice recognition IVRS - could you divulge more details?

I think you mean IVR. I am part of making the everyday hassle of calling customer care just better.

So in a traditional IVR - example a Telco company where you have a billing issue. You will at least be with the IVR for 5 minutes and would have pressed 20 buttons and missed pressing the right button some 5 times before you get into a wait line for the phone representative. The waiting line could be horrendously long - take another 37 minutes!

This is what we are trying to change. We are creating a world in which you just speak what you got in your mind. In fact, you can say things like "Hey I am not happy with the statement this month" and the IVR automatically understands it's your bill issue and that you have had international roaming charges added extra in your bill based on what your last bill was and able to provide an answer "Hey there I see you have international roaming charges of Rs1000 in your bill. Would you like to turn off roaming?"

This involves speech recognition, text mining and the real time capability of understanding of what the customer wants and how the message should be delivered him (which involves user interaction design)

Q. Thank you so much for shedding light on these issues! We wish you a productive and prosperous year ahead!

Thank you and Happy New Year !

Interviewer : Fayha Abdul Kareem
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“Do what you can, with all you have, wherever you are “

- Theodore Roosevelt

“Creativity is intelligence having fun “

- Albert Einstein

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“People who are crazy enough to think they can change the world, are the ones who do...”

- Rob Siltanen

XTRAVAGATE

Companies want Intrapreneuers but won't hire Entrepreneurs

Firstly, a bit of introduction about myself - I am an Entrepreneur (Edupreneur, being more specific), not a big one but who surely wants to be BIG one day! I have been working on my projects for the last one and a half year. I have always wanted to start my own business and then during my MBA I got a chance to present my idea for the first time. I was one of the winners of *Startup Weekend Trichy powered by Google for Entrepreneurs* and this gave an extra touch of confidence in me, that I can bring some change in the Education system of India.

I worked hard on "School Counsellor", my first startup, but couldn't do well and shut it down due to lack of resources. *School Counsellor* was an idea to bring awareness of the academic scope present in the world among students living in rural and suburban areas as well as to provide both offline and online mentoring to students, teachers and parents. This was a big project and required a lot of financial support plus human resource which I lacked at that time. Then a few months back I once again started to work on a new idea and I'm still working to make it big, "MyLivPro". *MyLivPro* is an idea to fill the gap between colleges and industries by providing college students (currently MBAs and BTechs) with case studies, live projects and virtual internships in a single mobile application. Along with this, MyLivPro will also provide guidelines on personality development and job skill requirement.

Now, I am in the final year of MBA and the placement season has already begun. *Here comes the main stuff*- from my personal experience in interviews, I found a very interesting inference or maybe I should say that I created a very interesting hypothesis. Then, I researched a bit and went through a few articles (Would be providing a link to a few of them at the end of this article).

The articles say, Intrapreneurs are required and are an asset to the companies! I was rejected from my final interview rounds, for writing "ENTREPRENEURSHIP" in my *Areas of Interest* column! Entrepreneurship doesn't just mean that the employee will work for 2 weeks and then will start his/her business. An entrepreneur can bring innovations to the companies' processes as well. *"An intrapreneur is an inside entrepreneur, or an entrepreneur within a large firm, who uses entrepreneurial skills without incurring the risks associated with those activities - investopedia."* I understand that companies do not want Entrepreneurs as they are risky for long terms but what they miss is that when they strike out an Entrepreneur, they are striking out an employee with Entrepreneurial spirit. With such a large number of entrepreneurs in India (approx 90% of which fail in the first three years because of lack of resources), where will they find a job?

What should we conclude then? Should people not try to startup when they are in their college? Should Entrepreneurship be only in books as a subject and practical knowledge can lead the student nowhere? Or, should they only go towards a single direction (either job or entrepreneurship) and not experiment to find out their interest? Considering my case, I am not that good with my financial background and cannot establish a company right now, but would surely start something after 5-10 years of my job! But will I get a job, since I have wasted/invested my 2year MBA course in starting up something new? This is a big question which frightens not only me but lakhs of students who are trying to be innovative in India!!

If you are reading this line, thanks for reading the whole article!

The articles which I was talking about are:

[Why Companies Want You To Become An Intrapreneur](#)

[Big Companies That Embrace Intrapreneurship Will Thrive](#)

[5 Reasons Why Employers Should Hire Entrepreneurs](#)

Was the Government prepared for demonetization?

Demonetization has been termed as the “Surgical strike on black money”. Does this statement really hold true? India had just been looking to settle the score with Pakistan owing to its long run unrest at the LOC by many tactics and a surgical strike on 8th of October 2016, which then became a hot topic of debate between the two countries. In the heat of this discussion and the aggression shown by both the countries there comes the surgical strike on black money by the Honourable Prime Minister of India, Mr Narendra Modi. The move to make Rs 500 and Rs 1000 notes an illegal tender has been backed by many as a good move to curve out the rotating black money in the country. Although, many have opposed this decision as well by saying “people with no black money will be affected the most”. So far the above saying has been quite right because until now the common people had to queue up outside the banks, ATMs, post offices, etc. for them to exchange the old currency for the new ones. Since the demonetization, there has been a shortage of cash in the country with new currency printing and circulation taking time more than what was expected.

So far everyone is giving their opinion about the move to declare Rs 500 and Rs 1000 as illegal tender. There has been both positive and negative feedback about the decision taken by the government. All the opinions stand good on their side. Right now the main victims of this decision are the common people who had to toil hard to get their own hard earned money, small and medium-sized businesses are getting affected due to this, the main sectors which have been affected by this move are real estate, small & medium scale businesses, etc.

Analysts predicted the rising of this action, as more than 85% of the Indian currency was in the form of 500 and 1000 rupee note. After demonetization, some of the *kirana* shops and small businessman took advantage of the cash crunch and have been into the practice of accepting the old currency with a commission of about 30%. This has given rise to the parallel economy which is going to be there until this currency exchange window is opened. So common people, who don't have the time to stand in long queues, had to pay the price for it, by giving extra charge to those people who accept old currency for a lower value.

Many of the Indians are pretty much optimistic about this decision and are thoughtful that this move will bring down the people with handful of black money and as promised by the Modi government “Acche Din Ayyenge”. The decision has been able to carve out much of the black money. All tight measures and searches are going on throughout the country to find out people with huge black money stock. Many raids have been carried out by the income tax department and police to catch hold of these black money holders. Many higher officials of RBI and many big bank officials like Axis bank have come under the scanner due to illegally exchanging black money for new currencies. So these efforts of the government have really shown that the decision had delivered what it had promised.

The decision of demonetization was well planned and prior to this move, there have been many decisions taken by the government to facilitate demonetization. The government had helped all the poor and farmers to create bank account in accordance to its “Jan Dhan Yojna”, which was a success. The government also gave ample time for the black money holders to surrender their black money and pay the tax and get exempted from all the actions against illegal income. After all these steps the demonetization decision came and hence it was spared much of the chaos and protest that would have occurred if the poor would not have been able to deposit all its belongings and earnings into their bank account prior to this decision.

From the above after effects and opinions of many analysts we can say that Indian economy is really going to take a hit in the short term but it will have a huge impact in its long run. Talking more on the effect of demonetization on the economy, it has had a huge effect in settling the long unrest which was prevailing in the valley of Kashmir, the violence and protests have all gone down and now the valley is living in peace. Apart from this many of the Maoists have surrendered and the crime rate has gone down due to this move. Indian online banking and payments have risen by almost 30-40% which is a huge step for India as the government's vision is to make India cashless and digital. Indian citizen should be patient as this short term pain will definitely provide them with long term comfort and benefit not only economically but socially as well.

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“Its not whether you get knocked down, it's whether you get up.....”

- Vince Lombardi



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The Plight of the Cruiser Bike Market in India

India is often regarded as a developing country. But with a GDP of 2073.54 Billion USD in 2015, the variety of needs of the Indian consumers varies to a great extent. This variation is found in the niche market of cruiser bikes in India.

A cruiser motorcycle typically has its handlebar raised to a higher position than the seat where the passenger sits. These bikes are mostly used for recreation purposes instead of sports or regular rides. The Indian cruiser bike market has been slowly growing ever since the advent of The Royal Enfield Bullet back in 1955. The competition in this niche field was scarce but it slowly grew with the advent of the Bajaj Avenger back in 2005. The market has been ever growing since with the advent of the few foreign manufacturers starting exports to India. These include the likes of Harley Davidson, Suzuki and Honda to name a few.

Typically, the cruiser bikes start at a price of around 1 lakh Indian Rupees. They extend up to 25 lakhs and can go even beyond with customizations ordered by the customers. Currently the cruiser bikes in India are targeted at a specific audience with high needs of specific requirements pertaining to the styling, price as well as performance of the bikes. This has resulted in several marketing gimmicks coming into the foray by the manufacturers. A good example is the series of advertisements by Bajaj Avenger. The advertisements try to target the psyche of the niche audience. The competitiveness of this market has also forced innovative ideas among the advertisements. Coming again to Bajaj, it created an advertisement to show that Royal Enfield is its brother. These new techniques target the potential buyer's psyche.

The motorcycle companies typically price the bikes way higher and try to maximize profits by following the principle of recovering more money by selling less high priced products. Companies like Harley-Davidson try to sell its products as a luxury product as well as a niche product. Though this market was started long ago, it is still in an evolving stage and will continue to grow in India in the near future.

***“Instant gratification
takes too long...”***

- Carrie Fisher

THE TEAM



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**We DoMS NITT Family Wishes
A Very Happy & Prosperous
New Year 2017**



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