

THE ECONOMIC TIMES

BPOs CUT DOWN ON GRAVEYARD SHIFTS

CAREER & BUSINESS LIFE: PAGE 8

MEET INDIA INC'S NEW CHANAKYAS

COMPANIES DESIGNED

LITTLE DETAILS KEEP SMALL RETAILERS GOING

SHOPPING LIFE: PAGE 17

Printing his own success saga

Leena Mulchandani

A Rs 19,000 per month salary at a leading media company was not enough for Nandakumar Hendre. A zeal to be his own boss drove him to start his own business.

He acquired a diploma in Printing Technology from Bhavan's College while working. In 1988, Print House India started off with an investment of Rs 5,000 with which he bought a small shed in Ghatkopar. At that time it was only one machine and two people — Nandakumar and his brother Pramod. They themselves went out in the market and procured orders, printed them and supplied them as well. Nandakumar's good contacts from his job helped them get initial business. The turnover in the first year was Rs 36,000.

After their initial success they realised the potential in this industry. They obtained a loan of Rs 50,000 and moved to a bigger place in Bhandup. With very little financial backing Print House India had to re-invest everything that it earned. "It was not easy in the beginning, we worked for 16-18 hours a day for the first 10 years," says Pramod Hendre, CEO, Print House India. Another challenge was training employees — a challenge which they cherish. Today, Print House India takes every measure to thoroughly train all its employees in new and latest technology. If finding skilled people is a problem then their solution is to train them right and get the results.

Although retaining skilled staff is not an easy task for them, as the well-trained people are always in search of greener pastures. Mr Hendre says, "We faced many problems along the way but we learned how to find a solution within the problem itself." In spite of all challenges Print House India has managed to sustain a growth rate within the range of 25%-40%, since the very beginning.

The printing industry being capital as well as skill-intensive, requires the right kind of knowledge and training but printing runs in the Hendre blood. Their father was also an employee with the prepress department at a large media company. India is a big hub for the printing business. The per annum consumption of an average Indian is 6.7 kg of printed material. This is expected to rise to 14.8 kg in 2008 and further to 17 kg by 2009. This makes it a very vibrant industry with ample competition from players

such as Tata and Thompson.

Mr Hendre's expertise in the printing industry is what sets Print House apart from their competition. An in-depth understanding of the market helps them offer supreme quality and tailor-made services. Mr Hendre says, "The printing business is dynamic and consumer demands change often. We do intensive market research to understand what the consumer needs and then find a way to offer them those services." They also pay a lot of attention to technology as it is an important aspect in this industry. All their machinery comes in from Germany and they upgrade frequently to measure up to customer demands and industry standards.

Today, the turnover is almost Rs 100 crore and they have branched out into a number of areas such as commercial printing, packaging, financial printing and also export to many overseas markets. They have recently started offering variable data printing solutions to their clients. Variable data printing is customised printing, the kind that is used for bills and bank statements. They are also RBI secured printers which allows them to handle printing of bank statements and recharge cards. Along with printing they also design the printing material on the brief of the customer, making them a one-stop print solution provider.

Print House India's client list includes many mutual fund companies, publications, FMCGs and pharmaceutical companies. "Our clients have stuck by us at all times. In fact our clients, suppliers, bankers and employees are the four pegs that support this company," says Mr Hendre. Today, they have evolved from the 250 sq ft shed to over 3.5 lakh sq ft of space in Bhandup and New Bombay.

A company that started out with printing visiting cards now offers over 350 items for export and domestic consumption. Currently, growing at 40% they expect to reach a turnover of Rs 400 crore over the next few years. They are also looking to set up manufacturing plants in the northern and southern regions of India and also expand into other areas such as hospitality. They have already opened two branches of a speciality restaurant called Saffron Spice in the Mumbai suburbs.

(If you are an entrepreneur with a successful business model, write to us at starship@timesgroup.com and may be Starship Enterprise will become your cruise ship to success.)

Nandakumar Hendre set up his company in 1988, with an investment of just Rs 5,000. Today, with a Rs 100 cr turnover, the sky is the limit for this entrepreneur



Pramod Hendre
CEO, Print House India

**starship
ENTERPRISE**