Newspaper Clips
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Largest batch at IIM-L

IIM Lucknow has inducted the largest batch of students, 419, to this year's postgraduate programme in management. Neha Arora reports.

The programme lays maximum emphasis on the absorption of knowledge.

140 students out of 400 have less than 12 months of work experience.

- Rudranil, a first-year student, PGP, says, "With an engineering background, I have a fascination towards managing firms. With this aim, I enrolled into the course. The mode of teaching is altogether a different experience. To impart effective learning, a healthy student-teacher ratio is maintained. More emphasis is laid on case-based learning and theoretical aspects. Regular assignments, presentations, live and simulated projects, with periodic evaluations will help us grow in our subject day by day." Students learn theory in class and apply the knowledge through various projects and class assignments.

However, there has been a significant dip in engineering students opting for the PGP course this year. Though majority of the students still have an engineering background (93%), their percentage has come down considerably from what it was in the previous year (98%). Explaining it as an admission policy, Mukhopadhyay says, "We wanted students from various disciplines such as commerce, science, medical, etc. There are about 36 students from commerce, eight from science, four from architecture, 11 from medical and seven from other varied disciplines."

The total cost for the two-year programme is about Rs 12 lakhs. Besides, IIM-L also extends scholarships on the basis of merit to deserving students.

www.iiml.ac.in
TCS: Indian IT's New Bellwether

India's No. 1 software exporter threatens to usurp Infosys as industry's top brand on strong numbers

RANUL SACHITANAND & TV MAHALINGAM
MUMBAI

Besides being based on its numbers by larger rival TCS, India's No. 2 software exporter, Infosys also appears to be losing the tag that perhaps covets the most—that of being India's most admired IT brand. Even as it struggles to re-invent itself to tackle recяснent rivals, the Bangalore-based firm maybe losing out to India's largest firm—until recently considered the least brand-concerned of India's top-outsiders.

For long, Infosys has consistently been recognised as India's most admired IT company by business consultancies and media in India and abroad. It has, for instance, been ranked as India's most admired company by Wall Street Journal Asia for nine consecutive years.

"Infosys hasn't done what it should have (financially and strategically) and this has affected its brand," says Jesse Paul, Founder of Paul Writers, a strategic marketing advisory and former marketing chief of Wipro Technologies.

She adds that TCS' brand has also benefitted from being the largest Indian information technology company. "The number two and three players have suffered from confused strategies," she explains. "TCS has muddled into the vacuum their mistakes have created."

Infosys and TCS declined to comment.

Deepak Kohli, sales and marketing head for NPE, thinks that financial performance is the biggest contributor to building a company's brand. TCS is expected to grow the revenue gap between itself and Infosys to nearly $0 billion by the end of this fiscal and its profits are growing faster too. Infosys' revenues had nearly matched TCS around four years ago, but the latter has since pulled away. "No branding is better than strong financial performance," says Kohli.

Street analysts believe that TCS is ready to usurp the low-profile profit that Infosys has owned for nearly two decades bellwether. "Till about a year ago, Infosys used to be the benchmark for IT. But ever since TCS started outperforming Infosys regularly, we look to TCS as the leader of the pack," says Srabanti Anand, IT research analyst Angel Broking.

INFOSYS LOSES STEAM

Infosys, which was once the benchmark employer for thousands of wannabe software engineers has fallen on that scale too, as attrition levels have risen. For the last quarter, Infosys' attrition was over 20% while TCS was just over 16%.

"Infosys doesn't enjoy the same premium on campus or among internal hires anymore," says the CEO of a HR consultancy in Bangalore, who requested anonymity.

Some marketers actually argue that TCS always had a fairly backhanded approach to brand building and only its strong financial performance alone may have helped its cause.

"The contours for brand TCS and Infosys are quite blurred," says R Shritha, a CEO and business coach and former chairman of OglivyOne Worldwide, Mumbai. "Financial performance is not the only metric."

More intangible benefits such as innovation programmes need to be added to the mix before deciding on TCS rise (or Infosys' fall) in the brand sweepstakes.

YLR Mookerji, a professor of marketing at IIM, Bangalore, thinks TCS has always had the edge over Infosys by being older and a pioneer in the assembly line delivery of software code. "But, Infosys has built a much stronger brand for years, despite being a relatively smaller firm," he contends.

Some of this brand bell may have come from initiatives such as the Indiipen, a student internship program at Infosys, which saw American students with near-perfect academic scores earn an opportunity to work at its Bangalore campus and interact with NR Narayana Murthy.

Over three decades, Infosys has been at the vanguard of disclosures to investors and analysts with the "when in doubt, disclose" dictum coined by co-founder N R Narayana Murthy. Co-founder Nandan Nilekani has rebooted the company's image by quitting at the top, opting to kick-start the unique ID project now called Aadhar.

"When you want to create a bellwether, you need to have people who go out there and talk... and over time they themselves become brands," says Anand Halve, co-founder of Chorophyll, a brand consultancy. "As these people like Nilekani and Pai have stepped away the Infosys brand which has been linked with these individuals has suffered," he adds.

RENEWAL OF TCS

TCS, on the other hand, has gone through a renaming of sorts starting with a restructuring exercise in 2008. TCS recognised itself along 2 independent business units, each of which has its own P&L responsibilities - a move that helped TCS weather the recession better. TCS also went through a top management change as N Chandrasekaran took over as MD & CEO in 2008.

Unlike his predecessors who preferred to maintain low profile, Chandra - who is now chief executive of TCS - is a lot more visible, which has also helped the brand in India.

"TCS has perhaps realised that being invisible is not a great idea," says Halve.

TCS battle on the branding front though has just begun. "Early on, TCS bet on a long-term strategy and that is paying off dividends now," says Khetia of NPE. "Their competition is now IBM and Accenture."

Even as it surges away from the rest of the pack at home, Brand TCS may have a much tougher role to play on the global stage.
We always improve our systems from whatever we learn, says ISRO Chairman

Interview

Madanmittu D.S.
Bangalore, July 17

Post-Febuary this year, the Indian Space Research Organisation was jolted out of its repose as integrity and transparency were clouded by allegations of corruption and nepotism. The space agency has, however, underlined its commitment to the pursuit of space science.
In a class of its own

Technology-enabled learning has ‘clicked’ with students, says companies in the online tutoring space.

T.E. RAJAN SIMMAN

You are an IIT-aspirant living in a remote corner of India and you want access to quality teachers, lectures and learning tools. Or your kid missed the Algebra class this morning and she wishes to make up.

With granted, at the click of a mouse.

Years ago, this might have been just a dream. Not any more. Technology-enabled learning or virtual learning has provided an environment where teacher and student do not have to be in the same place at the same time, in order to interact.

Thanks to better connectivity and an array of solutions in the market, nearly 10 million students have logged into online classrooms in India now by the likes of Edsolv Ltd, Educomp Solutions Ltd and Pearson Education. Not surprisingly, these companies have been quick to tap the online learning opportunity and have come up with a slew of offers to woo students.

THE OPPORTUNITY SIZE

Given the vast numbers of students and challenges of delivery, the Indian education landscape is well placed to adopt technology-enabled learning. With 671 million 660 per cent of the population below 20 years of age (median age 25 years), the sector has immense potential. From $248 billion today, the Indian education sector is projected to grow to $470 billion over five-six years.

Citing the immense growth in this sector, Pearson points to how private educational institutions have proliferated rapidly over the past decade with the advent of radio classes.

The other side to IT

Virtual education is fine but nothing like meeting eye-to-eye with the students, says V. Greenhouse, founder of the Chennai-based Bharatik Institute, which trains students to become chartered accountants, cost and works accountants and company secretaries.

The seven-year-old institute teaches around 1,000 students every year.

Virtual education can be a complement but not substitute personal classroom teaching. In virtual education, we do not know whether the student understood what we taught. A student views the mentor while the teacher looks into the camera. We cannot understand the body language through a screen. A touch is missing, who is a Chartered Accountant by profession and teacher by passion.

The real issue is lack of quality teachers. About which is a lack of virtual education, he says, adding, “we would never look at venturing into virtual education.”

The CBSE has advised all its affiliated schools to set up at least one ICT-enabled classroom for each grade, from I through XII.

Tutoring at $6 billion. Out of one million existing schools, around 78,000 are privately run.

The digital opportunity is incredible. In a big boost to tech initiatives, the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) is encouraging schools to use “Digital Content Material” in classroom teaching.

The CBSE has advised all its affiliated schools to setup at least one ICT-enabled classroom for each grade from I through XII. Further, schools are encouraged to progressively increase the number of classrooms with digital content and move towards enabling every single classroom with such learning infrastructure. Tulsiram Prasad, founder and CEO, Educomp Solutions Ltd, said in a recent conference call with analysts.

What's on offer

Edsolv's WizIQ – a web learning platform – offers a virtual classroom equipped with live audio, video, whiteboard and chat elements. It even facilitates payment for the teaching and tutoring services.

Edsolv offers products from Create to Career on a single web portal, www.lampguf.com. From pre-school to Engineering exam support and preparing for CAT, Edsolv has a range of offerings for every age group. Students can access the educational products that the company offers, at starting prices of Rs 199. Once they exhaust the number of hours fixed for the category, they will have to top-up and recharge.

Edcals says by way of Engineering exam support – electrical, electronics, mechanical, civil and IT – all semester courses are available online. There are four IITs engineering students in Tamil Nadu, of whom 40 per cent have appeared for JEE mains to clear. Edcals helps them clear these ‘re- mains’ through online classes. At the point of time there are about 20,000 students on board the virtual classroom, says G. Girishkumar, CEO of Edcals.

Also, be it entrance exam for IIFT-M, AIEEE, CAE, CAT, or Law, online support is offered through live and recorded video sessions. An IIFT aspirant based in Tamil Nadu or Digdolg (in Tamil Nadu) or any other IIFT aspirant can access Edcals's content on lampguf.com. Other offers include test preparation, model papers, reference materials, live tuition and pre-recorded sessions.

Edcals follows a student pay model in its virtual and technology-enabled learning solutions (V-TELS) division. Students pay to access content to listen to lectures by best teachers from 15 institutes in Chennai to remote locations, including Evens. They are e-presentations, audio and video content, notes to communicate, engage and interact with students.

Evans, through VITEL, also connects to colleges and retail centres offering skill development and job-oriented programmes. With VITELE (every small spe- tual terminal) technology, a single cooker can teach thousands of students across the country.

Also using VITELE Technology platform in Pearson Education Services, Meena Ganesh, CEO of Pearson India, says, “Our technology enables companies to reach out to the most remote locations of India. For small towns, this platform replicates a real campus learning environment and enables two-way, audio-video interactions.

Meanwhile, Pearson’s DigClass solution empowers teachers to transform traditional blackboard-and-chalk classrooms into interactive sessions. The multi-media content enables teachers to better explain complex concepts.

The DigClass solution is based on the philosophy of Cognitive Learning Approach. According to this, there is a close relationship between “what we know” and “what we need to learn.”

By associating new material with something familiar, students can better understand and retain new information. DigClass' multi-media content – including 2D/3D images, videos, demonstrations, simulations, graphs, arrows, activity charts – helps teachers establish this link better, says Meena Ganesh.

The online advantage

The online players claim that one advantage over physical classrooms is the quality of teachers that the virtual forum offers. According to Edsolv, its tutors are selected through a rigorous interview process. “We check their credentials and students also continuously rate them. There is a team working on this to monitor the quality of the online tutors. We record all the online tuition sessions and have a recap model for students whereby they are able to do self-assessment,” Edsolv’s Girishkumar says.

The online players also hold out affordability and flexibility that gives digital learning model an edge. While you may shell out nearly Rs 14,000 a year for an hour of algebra classes for a class X student in a city like Delhi, you could get an online tutorial for a year for Rs 2,000, says a Delhi-based parent who uses one such service – Topper Learning.

And there are flexible pricing options as well. In the case of Edsolv, while live online tuition could cost Rs 30 per hour, recorded e-learning sessions could cost Rs 3 per hour. “Everyday, we see newer students registering on lampguf.com from tier-II/III towns,” says Girishkumar.

But for technology, these students in remote places could have deprived of quality tutoring, he notes.

GROWING ONLINE LEARNERS

The digital learning finally picking up in India? At least the numbers seem to suggest so. Edsolv’s WizIQ today has 1.2 million students and over 1 lakh teachers registered on the platform. “Clearly WizIQ is on a roll,” Prasad told analysts recently.

Edsolv’s web platform lampguf.com has a student base of one lakh. Edsolv provides online tests almost everyday. There are over 500 tests that are available every single day, between 5 p.m. and 11 p.m. The company wants to expand online tuition sessions to 800 batches every day over a period of time.

Pearson’s DigClass reaches out to more than 70 lakh students every day. The company’s assessment and testing programmes help to educate more than 500 million people worldwide. “We combine content and technology and offer cus- tomed, learning experiences,” Pearson says.

Meanwhile, Pearson’s Pearson’s DigClass solution empowers teachers to transform traditional blackboard-and-chalk classrooms into interactive sessions. The multi-media content enables teachers to better explain complex concepts.

Evans reaches out to over three million students through VITEL. Revenue for Evans, through VI- TEL (increased by nearly 60 per cent to Rs 214 crore in 2010-11) compared with Rs 146 crore in the previous year. It reported total revenue of Rs 302 crore in first quarter (Jan-Mar) this year, according to the company’s 2010-11 annual report.

With a growing number of students clicking in to e-learning portals, the virtual classrooms are finally coming alive in India.
Outsourcing with confidence

The Indian space agency is looking to outsource complex aerospace systems and design services to private suppliers, reasoning that this is the best way to speed up rocket development and to save money.

Cut to present day ISRO is in an oversubscribed phase and has already launched three satellites this year. It is four more spacecraft are getting ready for launch by March next year. In addition, it has already bagged orders to launch 12 foreign satellites on board its polar satellite launch vehicle (PSLV) missions. So far, it has launched 38 foreign satellites by the home-grown PSLV. These satellites were mainly Canadian, German, and Indonesian, including a 400 kg spacecraft—environment monitoring satellites—given by DEF Germany.

Meanwhile, the development work on GSAT-MKIII is progressing for the first experimental launch during 2013. The GSAT-MKIII is conceived and designed to make ISRO fully self-reliant in launching heavier communication satellites of INSPAT-4 with a weight 4,500 to 5,000 kg. The vehicle envisages a multi-mission launch capability for GTO, LEO, Polar, and intermediate circular orbits. GSAT-MKIII is designed to be a three-stage vehicle with a lift off mass of 400 tonnes. The booster stage comprises two identical S-200 large solid boosters with 200 tonnes of solid propellants that are strapped on to the L-110 core liquid stage. The upper stage is the GS cryogenic stage.

A study for undertaking human space flight to carry human beings to low earth orbit and ensure their safety returns has also been made by ISRO. The space agency has initiated pre-project activities to study technical and managerial issues related to undertaking manned mission with an aim to build and demonstrate the country’s capability. The programme envisages the development of a fully autonomous or autonomously operated crewed spacecraft members to about 800 km low earth orbit and their safe return. With private companies maturing, it is obvious that they will be getting more critical work from ISRO in future.
आईआईटी में पाठें और डॉक्टर बनाएं

पूरा होगा सपना

- आईआईटी खड़गपुर में मेडिकल स्कूल के लिए काजों गोणा आईआईटी अधिनियम में जोड़ी संस्थान
- युवाओं के मुलाखितक वह संस्थान विद्येयक संस्थान के मानसुद्र सत्र में पेश होने की उम्मीद

यह तथ्यात्मक संस्थान में मेडिकल स्कूल की स्थापना का एग्जाम सफा हो जाएगा। आईआईटी के मुख्य मेडिकल स्कूल की स्थापना हमारी 20 प्राधिकृतता वाली सूची में शामिल है।

देश के शीर्ष प्रौढ़ीकों के संस्थान आईआईटी का संचालन भारत सरकार के मानव संसाधन विकास मंत्रालय (एमएचआरडी) द्वारा आईआईटी अधिनियम के तहत किया जाता है। विकासवाद यह अधिनियम आईआईटी को चिकित्सा स्थल जैसे क्षेत्र में उत्पर्य की अनुपस्थता नहीं देता है। ऐसा सामान्य है जब आईआईटी अधिनियम इसके लिए यथार्थ संस्थान किया जाए तो।

- उन्होंने कहा कि इस संबंध में आईआईटी का आवेदन अब तक मानव संसाधन विकास मंत्रालय में लटका है। इसका कारण यह है कि आईआईटी में मेडिकल स्कूल खोले जाने की अवसर एचआरडी मंत्रालय और स्वास्थ्य मंत्रालय आमन-आपने है।

- देश में स्वास्थ्य विश्वास संस्थान के संबंधित संस्थानों का नियमन भारतीय चिकित्सा परिषद (एमएसआई) द्वारा किया जाता है। स्वास्थ्य मंत्रालय का नियमन है कि चूँकि मेडिकल स्कूल की स्थापना स्वास्थ्य शिक्षा से संबंधित है ऐसे में यह मामला एमसीआई के अधिकार क्षेत्र में आता है।

- हालांकि एचआरडी मंत्रालय में मामले में जुड़े अधिकारी का बयान उल्लम्बित नहीं हो पाया।

- आईआईटी खड़गपुर के उप निदेशक ए के मनुष्य डॉक्टर को कहा है, ‘भारत में स्वास्थ्य शिक्षा से संबंधित किसी भी प्रकार की डिग्री के लिए एमसीआई से अनुपस्थित लेने को जरूरत होती है। हम एमएसआई द्वारा उठाए जा रहे संयोजन और चिकित्सा का जबाब देने के लिए तैयार हैं। तरीके हैं कि आईआईटी अधिनियम में संशोधन विद्येयक संस्थान की पाठिता हो जाएगा।

- इसके बाद इस तरह से जोड़े चिकित्सा का स्वास्थ्य समाधान हो जाएगा। देश के सबसे सुरक्षित इस प्रौढ़ीकों के संस्थान में मेडिकल स्कूल खोले जाने को लेकर पिछले दशक से ही जमीन तैयार का जा रहा है। इससे वर्ष 2001 में ही चिकित्सा विज्ञान और प्रौढ़ीकों की स्थापना की थी। आईआईटी खड़गपुर का स्थापना वर्ष 1951 में हुई थी।

- मनुष्य ने कहा, ‘चिकित्सा विज्ञान और प्रौढ़ीकों के शीर्ष में हम पहले ही बहुत कम का चुके हैं। शुरुआत में हम पहले प्रेग्नेंट बाल देखने की प्रक्रिया समाप्त कर दे। अंतर्राष्ट्रीय स्तर के अनुसंधान के लिए एमवीएस डॉक्टर को प्रशिक्षित किया जाता है।'
जीमेट छात्रों की संख्या होगी दोगुनी

ग्रेज्यूएट मैनेजमेंट एडमिशन काउंसिल (जीएमएसी) का मानना है कि भारत के बिजनेस स्कूलों द्वारा नामांकन प्रक्रिया में जीमेट फॉर्म मान्यता में जीमेट छात्रों की संख्या में भारी इजाफा होने वाला है। अगले 4 साल में इसकी संख्या दोगुनी हो जाने का अनुमान है। जीएमएसी के अध्यक्ष और सीईओ डेविड ए विल्सन ने भारत में इसके विकास के संबंध में प्रवीण बोस और प्रदीप चंदन से बातचीत की। यहां प्रस्तुत है उनसे बातचीत का प्रमुख अंश...

भारतीय बाजार में तेजी को आप किस रूप में देखते हैं?
भारत में जीएमएसी के लिए पिछले पांच साल बेहद महत्वपूर्ण रहे हैं। इस दौरान इसमें काफी बदलाव भी आए हैं। वर्ष 2006 से तक 2010 तक बिजनेस स्कूलों के लिए प्रवेश परीक्षा में सम्मिलित होने वाले छात्रों की संख्या दोगुनी से भी ज्यादा बढ़ी है। वर्ष 2011 के पहले चार महीने में ही पिछले साल इसी अवधि की तुलना में 10 फीसदी ज्यादा छात्रों ने इसमें हिस्सा लिया।

यहां तक कि पिछले पांच साल के दौरान जीमेट में शामिल होने वाले भारतीय छात्रों की संख्या एशिया भर में सबसे ज्यादा है।

भारत में जीमेट में सम्मिलित होने वाले छात्रों की दिन प्रति दिन बढ़ती संख्या के पीछे आप क्या कारण मानते हैं?
छात्रों की संख्या बढ़ने के पीछे तीन मुख्य कारक हैं। भारत की मूल्य व संकृति ऐसी रही है कि जो यहां के लोगों को उच्च शिक्षा, तकनीक, अत्यधुनिक तकनीक के संचालन और उद्यमी बनने के लिए प्रेरित करती है। इसके अलावा यह भी देखा जा रहा है कि यहां के लोगों में उच्च स्तरीय अध्ययन की प्रवृत्ति विकसित हो रही है। यही कारण है कि यहां भारी संख्या में अच्छे बिजनेस स्कूल मौजूद है। जीएमएसी छात्रों को वैश्विक स्तर के बिजनेस स्कूलों में दाखिला के लिए एक अच्छा मांच उपलब्ध कराता है। जीमेट छात्रों को इसी प्रकार विकसित देता है।