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IES MCRC
VALUE ADDITION THROUGH EDUCATION

INSTITUTION'S INNOVATION COUNCIL
(Ministry of Education Initiative)

IDEA XCELERATE

"Where Ideas Meet Action"

IdeaXcelerate inspires, informs, and ignites the entrepreneurial mindset of IES MCRC students—where ideas meet action.

ENTREPRENEURSHIP
Magazine by students

IdeaXcelerate

ENTREPRENEURSHIP MAGAZINE · BY STUDENTS

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"From the Desk of the Director" 🖊️

Dear Readers,
It gives me immense pleasure to present IdeaXcelerate, our student-driven entrepreneurship magazine that celebrates innovation, creativity, and the entrepreneurial spirit.

Entrepreneurship is more than launching a business, it is a mindset that embraces curiosity, resilience, critical thinking, and the courage to transform ideas into meaningful solutions. In today's rapidly evolving global landscape, successful leaders are those who identify opportunities, adapt to change, and create value for society.

IdeaXcelerate reflects the passion and initiative of our students, who have come together to explore emerging business trends, showcase entrepreneurial success stories, share innovative ideas, and inspire others to think beyond conventional boundaries. This magazine is a testament to the vibrant entrepreneurial ecosystem that we strive to nurture at our institute.

At our management institute, we believe that education must empower students not only to become competent managers but also visionary entrepreneurs and responsible leaders. Through experiential learning, industry interactions, incubation support, research, and innovation, we encourage our students to develop an entrepreneurial mind set that contributes to sustainable economic and social development.

I congratulate the Editorial Team, faculty mentors, and every student who has contributed to making this publication a reality. May IdeaXcelerate continue to inspire bold ideas, meaningful collaborations, and ventures that create lasting impact.

I wish this initiative great success and hope that every edition motivates our students to dream bigger, innovate fearlessly, and lead with purpose.

Best Wishes,
Dr. Sapna Modi
Director
IES Management College and Research Centre

From Ideas to Impact: An Editorial Note

Innovation begins with curiosity. Entrepreneurship begins with courage. Together, they have the power to transform not only businesses but also societies, communities, and lives.

It is with immense pride and excitement that the Entrepreneurship Cell of IES's Management College and Research Centre (IESMCRC) presents the inaugural issue of **IdeaXcelerate -** a magazine conceived by students, created for students, and dedicated to the spirit of innovation, creativity, and entrepreneurship.

We live in an era where ideas are no longer confined to classrooms, boardrooms, or laboratories. A student with a laptop, a smartphone, and a vision can build solutions that impact millions. Across India and the world, young innovators are challenging conventions, solving pressing problems, and creating opportunities where none existed before. At IESMCRC, we believe that every entrepreneurial journey begins with a single idea one that deserves to be nurtured, shared, and accelerated.

That belief inspired the creation of **IdeaXcelerate**.

More than just an e-magazine, **IdeaXcelerate** is a platform that celebrates entrepreneurial thinking in all its forms. It seeks to bridge the gap between aspiration and action by bringing together inspiring start-up stories, emerging trends, student innovations, expert insights, and campus initiatives. Through its pages, we aim not only to showcase successful ventures but also to demystify the entrepreneurial journey-the challenges, failures, pivots, perseverance, and resilience that ultimately shape success.

In this inaugural edition, we feature remarkable stories from diverse sectors including finance, health tech, software, mobility, and food entrepreneurship. These ventures demonstrate that innovation can emerge from anywhere a college dormitory, a home kitchen, a personal struggle, or a bold vision to challenge industry norms. Each story reinforces an important lesson: entrepreneurship is not reserved for a select few; it is accessible to anyone willing to learn, experiment, and persist.

This issue also highlights the vibrant entrepreneurial ecosystem being nurtured at IESMCRC. Through industry collaborations, start-up engagements, innovation challenges, design thinking initiatives, mentorship programs, and student-led projects, our campus continues to cultivate a culture that encourages ideas to grow into meaningful ventures. The magazine serves as a window through which the larger community can witness the entrepreneurial energy and achievements emerging from our institution.

We are especially proud that **IdeaXcelerate** provides a stage for students to express themselves not only as aspiring entrepreneurs but also as thinkers, writers, innovators, and changemakers. Whether through articles, start-up concepts, interviews, reflections, or creative contributions, this magazine belongs to every student who believes that ideas can create impact.

As you explore these pages, we invite you to look beyond the stories themselves and focus on the possibilities they represent. Perhaps you will discover a new perspective, identify a problem worth solving, connect with a fellow innovator, or find the confidence to pursue an idea you have been holding onto.

The future belongs to those who dare to imagine it and work relentlessly to build it.
We hope that somewhere within this issue, you find inspiration. More importantly, we hope you find the courage to take the first step from idea to action.

Welcome to the first edition of IdeaXcelerate.
Let the journey of innovation begin.

Editorial Team
IdeaXcelerate
Entrepreneurship Cell, IESMCRC

A Story on The 1% Club - Making money sense social

By Divya Gupta

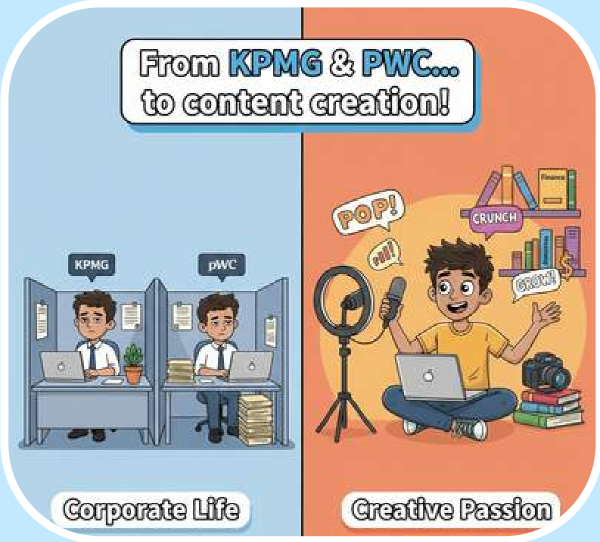
If I had to describe The 1% Club in a single sentence, I would say it merges social media with genuine financial advice, aiming to help everyday individuals transition from "I hope my savings grow" to "I manage my money like the top 1%." The primary objective is straightforward: to educate and empower ordinary Indians towards financial independence by leveraging community-led education alongside practical advisory services.

The issue they seek to tackle is all too common. Many Indians are earning more than ever, yet a majority lack organised financial knowledge, such as how to create a portfolio, handle taxes, safeguard wealth, or strategise for the future. This knowledge gap makes individuals susceptible to poor advice, enticing stock recommendations, and unsuitable product selections. Sharan Hegde, a finance content creator known as “Finance with Sharan,” along with Raghav Gupta, a co-founder and head of operations, intervened to translate social media interactions into tangible financial outcomes for their members.

They started on a small scale. Sharan was already breaking down concepts on video, including budgeting and basic investment strategies. People frequently requested step-by-step support. The concept of a “club”, a membership community offering curated lessons, templates, model portfolios, and accountability, emerged organically. Initially, they operated like any start-up: developing structured modules, conducting webinars, organizing community calls, and generating revenue through paid memberships. However, converting content into reliable advice necessitated the establishment of processes, compliance, and a team to assist members beyond mere recorded videos.

They faced challenges in three main phases. First, credibility: finance influencers often gain popularity for quick tips but are frequently discredited for in-depth, regulated financial guidance. Second, the distinction between scale and service: educating 10,000 members is one challenge, but delivering ongoing advisory and personalised planning is another entirely. Third, regulatory risk: India’s financial regulatory authority (SEBI) increased its oversight of influencers providing investment advice. All three challenges highlighted a common truth: if The 1% Club aspired to be more than just a popular platform, it needed to formalise its advisory services.

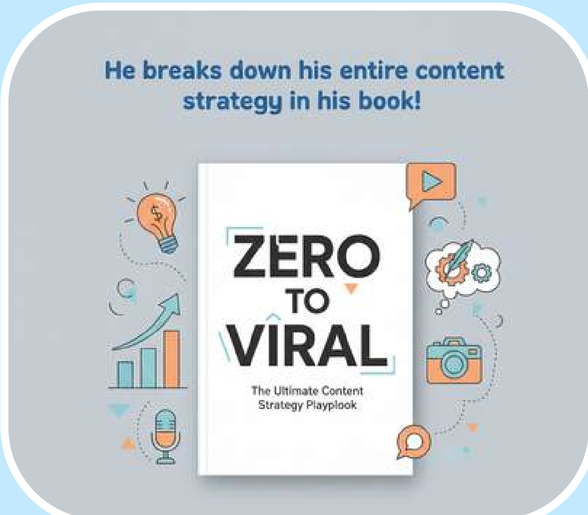
The approach taken was strategic. The 1% Club augmented its educational community by introducing courses, boot camps, and cohort-based learning, while also establishing a Personal CFO division, a team dedicated to offering paid, regulated advisory services. They secured start-up funding, including a ₹10 crore pre-Series A round led by Gruhas, with support from investor Nikhil Kamath, to hire talent, enhance technology, and scale operations. This blend of community engagement and paid advisory services enabled them to monetize memberships while offering enhanced financial planning to select clients.



Their achievements came swiftly and visibly. Membership numbers surged into the tens of thousands, their social media presence expanded, and media outlets began to recognize The 1% Club as more than just a finance influencer initiative. A defining moment occurred when they obtained a SEBI Registered Investment Adviser (RIA) license, an official endorsement that enabled the company's Personal CFO division to legally offer financial planning and manage client assets. With this license, The 1% Club announced it was managing approximately ₹750 crore in assets under advisory, a definitive indicator of trust and a robust market fit for advisory services. This regulatory milestone converted social fame into institutional credibility and paved the way for even more lucrative opportunities.

Nevertheless, the journey wasn't entirely smooth. The expansion of service delivery surfaced operational hurdles: recruiting qualified advisors, ensuring the consistency of advice quality, and accommodating the diverse expertise levels among members. The team encountered trade-offs between swiftly growing membership and upholding high advisory standards. Additionally, public scrutiny surrounding finance influencers meant that every suggestion was subject to examination on online platforms; managing reputational risk required constant vigilance. The team learned to strike a balance between enthusiasm and necessary disclaimers, along with establishing systematic processes and compliance checks.

From a financial perspective, the company combined various revenue streams: membership dues, fees for cohorts and courses, and advisory fees from the Personal CFO service. Investor funding supported the development of products, the implementation of on-boarding systems, and the establishment of compliance frameworks necessary for Registered Investment Advisor (RIA) operations. The progression, from providing content to fostering community and establishing regulated advisory services, serves as a blueprint for monetizing trust: first capturing attention, then converting some users to paying customers, and ultimately upselling premium advisory services.



Currently, The 1% Club stands at a pivotal moment. It regularly claims tens of thousands of members, has venture capital investment, and possesses a regulatory license while asserting management of hundreds of crores in advisory assets. The brand is expanding its ambitions, exploring fintech solutions, tailored investment products, and enhanced personal finance services. The business model appears robust: multiple revenue streams from educational content and advisory services, along with a clear trajectory to recurring revenue as advisory engagements increase and customer retention improves.

Looking to the future, two potential outcomes seem probable. On the optimistic front, The 1% Club could transform into a regulated digital wealth management platform: leveraging a large member base for educational purposes while offering a premium advisory track that successfully converts a considerable share into long-term clients, thus generating managed assets, subscription income, and opportunities for cross-selling services such as insurance and specialized funds.

Conversely, on the cautious side, rising competition and increased regulatory scrutiny could pressure profit margins: competing platforms may replicate this model, and scaling high-quality advisory services typically demands significant talent resources. The essential factor will be whether they can maintain the conversion of social trust into enduring advisory relationships.

If you were to ask me what the key takeaway for leadership is, I would say this: creating content generates interest, but establishing systems is what builds a business. Sharan's ability to tell stories and Raghav's focus on operations built a brand and community. Obtaining the SEBI license and launching the Personal CFO division shifted the community into a legitimate business framework. For anyone examining storytelling as a valuable skill, The 1% Club exemplifies this well: a captivating narrative draws people in, but credibility and effective execution keep them involved.

HEALTHIFYME: The Human Story Behind India's Digital Health Revolution

By
Amruta Pokharkar
Pranjal Sankhe
Trupti Poojary
Chirag Gosavi

"From a small experiment of living on ₹100 a day to a digital companion changing millions of lives, HealthifyMe is proof that when curiosity meets courage, vision meets persistence, and technology meets empathy, a revolution can happen."

Once upon a time, in the chaotic streets of Mumbai, a young man named Tushar Vashisht faced a question that kept him awake at night: Why is staying healthy in India so hard? It wasn't just about losing a few kilograms. People were suffering silently - battling obesity, diabetes, high stress, and unhealthy lifestyles - without guidance that truly fit their culture. Western fitness apps suggested salads, smoothies, and oats, but what about dal, roti, biryani, and poha? Tushar felt the problem in his bones. He knew something had to change.

One day, as part of a personal experiment, Tushar decided to live on ₹100 a day. It was grueling. Some days he survived on bland lentils, other days he skipped meals, counting every calorie, jotting down every bite. The hunger was real, the frustration palpable. But the experiment taught him a lesson he couldn't ignore: staying healthy in India wasn't just about willpower it was about guidance, knowledge, and the right tools. He thought, If I am struggling, millions must be struggling too.

Tushar shared this idea with his friends, Mathew Cherian and Sachin Shenoy, over long nights of coffee, whiteboard scribbles, and endless debates. They imagined a solution that could become more than an app - a digital friend that would understand Indian food, Indian lifestyles, and Indian health struggles. They dreamed of creating something that would hold people's hands, guide them, and cheer them on.

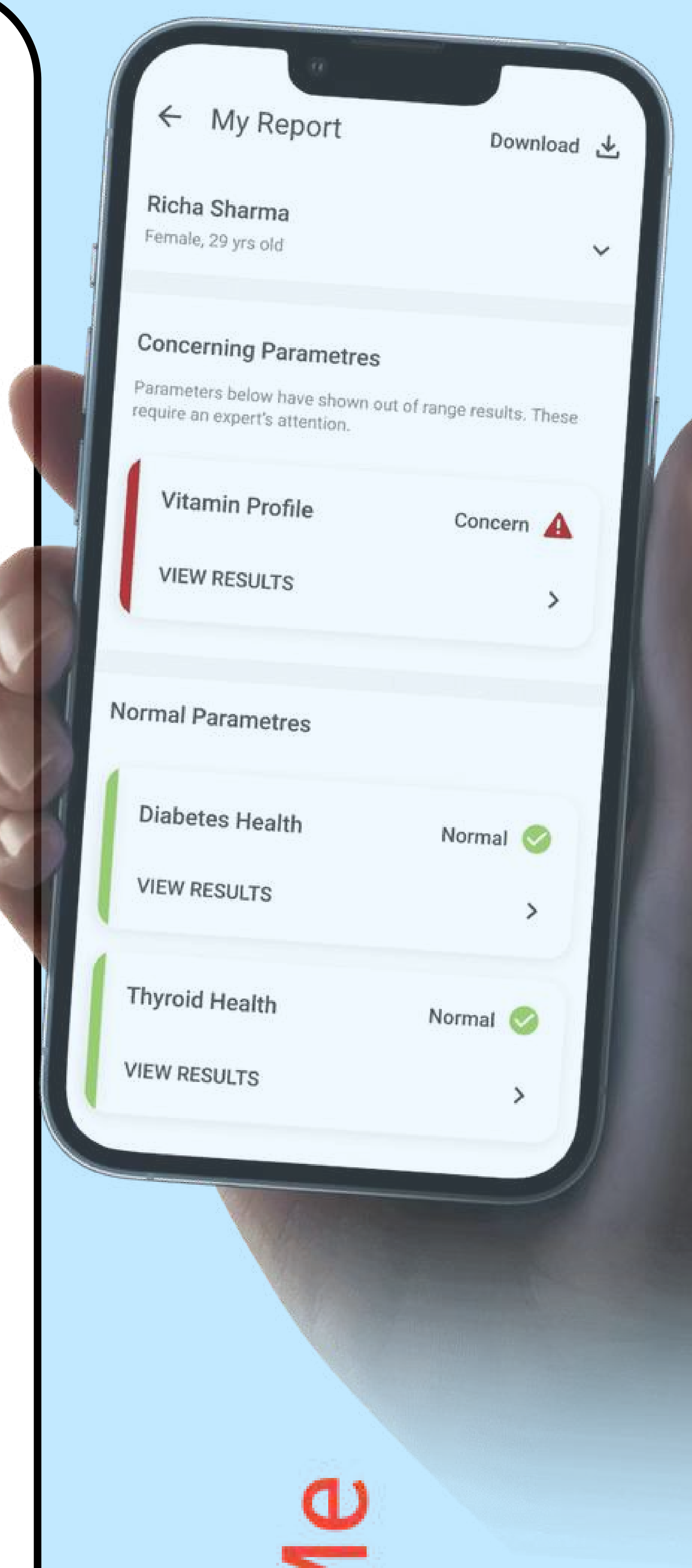
And so, HealthifyMe was born not in a glamorous office, but in cramped rooms, with founders full of determination. The first version of the app was rough, buggy, and incomplete. Many nights, it crashed while they were testing, erasing hours of work. Investors were sceptical. "Why would Indians pay for nutrition coaching? Apps won't work here," they said. It was discouraging. There were moments when the founders wondered if they were chasing a dream too big to catch.

Building the app was like navigating a jungle. They needed a database of Indian foods, which didn't exist anywhere. They called local cooks, measured calories manually, visited markets to check ingredients, and experimented endlessly. Some recipes were tricky - a pinch of ghee here, a dash of sugar there and every small miscalculation could throw off their calculations. The nights were long, the stress high, and the money almost ran out. Yet, small victories kept them going. One early user lost 3 kg in a month and sent a message: "I never thought an app could make me feel this motivated." Another diabetic user wrote: "I finally feel in control of my sugar levels." These messages were like fuel to the founders fire. They realized that Indians didn't just want a calorie counter; they wanted a companion who could motivate them, understand their culture, and guide them like a friend.

The real turning point came with Ria, an AI-powered nutritionist that could analyze meals, predict patterns, and give personalized advice instantly. With human coaches supporting it, HealthifyMe transformed from a simple tracking tool into a full-fledged health companion. People could now log their meals, track steps, measure progress, and receive encouragement all in one place. Turning this vision into a sustainable business wasn't easy. They introduced subscriptions for personalized coaching, partnered with corporates for employee wellness, and expanded cautiously to new cities. Every feature was tested relentlessly. Some worked, others failed spectacularly. Servers crashed during peak hours, AI predictions initially had errors, and users sometimes left frustrated. Each failure was a hard lesson, but it pushed the team to innovate, improve, and persevere.

Tushar felt despair watching users drop off. There were tears of frustration when months of coding went in vain. But there were also tears of joy - reading stories of people regaining confidence, reversing prediabetes, or simply feeling happier in their bodies. The human connection became the heart of HealthifyMe. Today, HealthifyMe is more than an app. It is a story of persistence, resilience, and empathy. Millions of users, thousands of coaches, and a thriving community stand as testimony to its success. Mothers have reversed prediabetes, office workers have lost weight and gained confidence, teenagers have learned discipline through step challenges. These are not just statistics; they are human lives transformed.

Looking ahead, the future is as ambitious as the journey that birthed HealthifyMe. The company is exploring preventive healthcare, predictive analytics, integration with wearable devices, and personalized wellness programs for different age groups. Their vision is not merely tracking health but predicting and preventing problems before they arise, shaping healthier lives one individual at a time. From a small experiment of living on ₹100 a day to a digital companion changing millions of lives, HealthifyMe is proof that when curiosity meets courage, vision meets persistence, and technology meets empathy, a revolution can happen. The founders began with a simple question, "Why?", and that question continues to guide them - lighting the path for healthier India, one story at a time.



HealthifyMe

The 40-Year Plan - Sridhar Vembu's Vision

By Kimaya Kubal

Imagine quitting a comfortable position in Silicon Valley to go back to India, not only to launch a business but also to address a significant economic gap. That is the main goal of Sridhar Vembu's business, Zoho Corporation (Zoho). In the mid-1990s, Vembu, who was born into a farming family and has a PhD in Electrical Engineering, saw a critical issue with the Indian IT scene: although the country had great talent, it generated very little software and instead concentrated on services. Along with his brothers Kumar and Sekar, Vembu's initial goal was to generate money, but more significantly, he wanted to improve the lives of those back home in Chennai. His long-term goal of bringing "Silicon Valley to the village" was motivated by this desire. He understood that India needed to do difficult tasks in order to progress economically, and he felt ready for the challenges this would present.

He quit his job as a wireless systems engineer at Qualcomm in 1996 to create Vembu Software in a modest Chennai flat with his siblings and three friends, including Tony Thomas. WebNMS, an end-to-end network management system, was the company's initial product. The business embraced the idea of "absolute bootstrapping" from the beginning, relying solely on its own resources and not looking for outside funding. He said that reaching his objectives would require 30 or 40 years rather than just five, indicating that he was mentally ready for the long haul. They saw early success, landing important customers like Cisco Systems, Inc. and selling software to businesses in Silicon Valley and Japan. However, this time of expansion was put to the test in 2001 when networking companies saw a significant decline due to the Dotcom bubble crash, which resulted in Vembu Software losing a number of clients.

Vembu became CEO in 2001, with that he saw an entirely new opportunity, the move to cloud-based technologies, instead of giving in to the crisis. He immediately made the decision to broaden the company's product line and gave idle engineers instructions to create a line of cloud-based solutions. The company underwent significant changes during this time, changing its name to AdventNet in 2005 and then Zoho Corporation in 2009.

Zoho's use of the Software as a Service (SaaS) model was its real breakthrough. They introduced a wide range of cloud-based productivity solutions, mostly aimed at individuals and small enterprises, including as email, accounting, and CRM. Offering apps at costs much lower than competitors, like Salesforce gave Zoho a competitive advantage. Their approach was to create products that were remarkably similar to Google's or Microsoft's profitable offerings while significantly lowering the price, making them very useful for small businesses. Vembu resisted the demand for Venture Capital (VC) funding during the course of the trip. In 2000, he notably turned down a $200 million term sheet that had a condition forcing the company to list within eight years. He put profits back into the company because he thought that venture capitalists who want to exit quickly don't build long-lasting businesses.

A constant talent shortage was one of Zoho's biggest challenges. In order to address this, Vembu established Zoho University (ZU), which is currently known as Zoho Schools of Learning, in 2005. They found and shaped underutilized potential through ZU, hiring bright recent high school graduates and developing them into skilled software developers who were paid on par with engineering grads. Currently, ZU grads make up between 15% to 20 % of Zoho's engineering talent.

Vembu's shift as a social entrepreneur became permanent in 2019 when he moved to Mathalamparai from the San Francisco Bay Area. Over half of Zoho employees expressed interest in working closer to their hometowns as a result of this change. In response, Zoho hired local workers and opened more than 30 satellite offices in rural and non-urban parts of the world. This village workplace style was beneficial during the Covid-19 pandemic, giving workers a better work-life balance away from heavy traffic and pollution. With almost 40 apps, it was the industry leader in cloud-based CRM solutions by 2019. Financial media acknowledged Vembu's success: Zoho was the first software product unicorn in India. In 2019, Forbes estimated that Vembu and his family had a $1.83 billion investment. According to Vembu, Zoho's income per employee was around $100,000, which is twice as much as that of conventional software service providers. In 2021, Zoho celebrated its 25th anniversary.

Vembu continues to avoid external investors, stating, “No need for it. We are profitable and can invest from internal accruals”. Zoho intends to grow both internationally and throughout India.

CRM

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Bigin

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Sign

Digital signature app for businesses.

POS

Modern retail POS to sell better, manage your entire business, and join the digital revolution.

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Live chat app to engage and convert website visitors.

Forms

Build online forms for every business need.

Bookings

Appointment scheduling app for consultations with customers.

“He understood that India needed to do difficult tasks in order to progress economically, and he felt ready for the challenges this would present.”

Thrive

Loyalty platform to reward, retain, and grow your customer base.

Social

All-in-one social media management software.

Campaigns

Create, send, and track targeted email campaigns that drive sales.

The Silent Roar: How Ather Energy Recharged India's Ride

By Rohit Mandaliya

If you lived in an Indian city in the early 2010s, you were surrounded by a persistent grey haze. The air was thick with emissions from millions of noisy, stuttering petrol scooters, the indispensable workhorses of the nation. For years, the only "electric scooters" available were sluggish, poorly designed, and offered a range so pathetic they only added to the anxiety of the daily commute. The problem wasn't just pollution; it was a fundamental compromise. Consumers had to choose performance and style with petrol or weak sustainability with substandard electric. There seemed to be no path toward an electric vehicle (EV) that was, objectively, simply better than its fossil-fueled counterpart.

This compromise was intolerable to two young IIT Madras graduates, Tarun Mehta and Swapnil Jain. Tarun, an engineer driven by first principles, and Swapnil, a pragmatic leader, weren't satisfied with importing cheap Chinese components and slapping them together. Their core purpose was to eliminate the compromise. They decided to build an electric scooter from the ground up-one that was superior in performance, design, intelligence, and entirely Made in India. They weren't just building a vehicle; they were building a blueprint for India's EV future.

The Blueprint of Audacity

Imagine you and your best friend are fresh out of college, looking at the same old traffic jam, but seeing a radical solution. This was the scene for Tarun and Swapnil. Their journey began in 2013 with a tiny, windowless room and an idea that first centered only on creating a superior lithium-ion battery pack. But they quickly realised the absurdity of putting their premium battery into a chassis not designed for it. The only way to guarantee a truly excellent experience was to control the entire machine. They made the crucial pivot that they would build the scooter itself.

The first hurdle was staggering. Creating high-performance components domestically was a nightmare. Quality was inconsistent, and costs were astronomical. Early prototypes of their flagship scooter, the Ather S340 (which became the 450), cost nearly ₹5 lakh to build, while the realistic market price was barely a quarter of that. This significant negative margin was a profound challenge-a true moment of potential failure. They had the technology, but could they make it commercially viable? Their breakthrough was the commitment to build a smart vehicle: the team engineered AtherStack, the software platform, and integrated a seven-inch touchscreen dashboard. This was not just transportation; it was a connected device that received constant Over-The-Air updates for its performance and features. They were building a two-wheeler with the soul of a smartphone, offering features unheard of in the Indian market.

The Commercial Circuit

The toughest part wasn't to design the scooter but to convert that brave blueprint into a viable business. To drive down the production cost and achieve commercial viability, Ather pursued aggressive localization. They worked relentlessly with local suppliers to meet their uncompromising quality standards, sometimes even helping suppliers upgrade their own facilities and processes. This deep partnership enabled them to finally establish a state-of-the-art manufacturing factory in Hosur. This phase was the epitome of grit, requiring significant investment from critical partners like Hero MotoCorp, who recognized Ather's potential.

Their vision was always full-stack. They knew a great scooter was useless if you couldn't charge it conveniently. This necessity led to the creation of the Ather Grid-India's dedicated fast-charging network. This proved to be quite a challenge: deploying proprietary, reliable charging points in new cities, more often than not running into a lot of logistical and regulatory roadblocks. In solving range anxiety head-on, they proved they were serious about the EV ecosystem, not just the vehicle. For a premium, unknown brand in the midst of low-cost rivals, these were strong headwinds. Initial slow growth was discouraging, but the company did not compromise on quality and performance. They won customers one at a time, riding on word-of-mouth about Ather's unmatched acceleration and ride quality. In fact, they proved very convincingly that consumers were ready to pay a premium if the product could deliver a truly superior experience.

The Road Ahead

Today, Ather Energy is an Indian Unicorn (valued over $1 Billion), standing tall as a testament to the founders' uncompromising vision. Growth has been explosive, first through the Ather 450X and latterly through the family-focused Rizta. They have established themselves as the benchmark for premium EV scooters in India. Their success isn't about the sales themselves; it's more about encouraging an entire generation of Indian start-ups to bring in innovations within the homeland, targeting global standards. The likely future of Ather would revolve around scaling their already proven model-continuously innovating software, aggressively expanding the Ather Grid, and further vertical integration with a view to maintaining cost efficiency and quality control. This journey was a clear example that a homegrown start-up can take on industry giants, create a complex product and infrastructure completely from scratch, and in the process accelerate the transition to a cleaner, smarter future. Ather's story is a powerful lesson: when you start with a strong "WHY," failure is simply a feedback loop, and audacious vision is the most powerful fuel.

From the Stands to the Field The Jay Kapoor Story

How one MBA student turned passion into purpose - and a career that changes lives

The interview was conducted by Rishita Jamnani, Abhishek Girish, and Vaibhav Gupta.

There are people who watch sport, people who play sport — and then there are people who build it from the inside. Jay Kapoor belongs to the third kind. But that wasn't always clear, even to him.

Growing up with a love for sports, Jay never imagined it could become a career. Sport was passion, not profession. That's the story most of us are told. But during his graduation years, a single person changed that narrative — his college sports director. This man didn't just run tournaments; he pushed Jay to organise events, to lead, to manage. And in those quiet moments of logistics and coordination, Jay discovered something he hadn't expected: he was good at this, and he loved it.

The realisation hit him like a well-timed pass. It wasn't just the passion for sport that drove him — it was the possibility of building a life around it. So when the time came to choose between a conventional MBA and Sports Management, Jay made a call most people around him didn't quite understand. He chose sport.

At the time, Sports Management in India was barely a field. There were one or two institutes offering it. Most companies still preferred candidates who had done general MBAs, giving a premium to those who had studied sports management abroad. The ecosystem was thin. The scepticism was thick. Jay went in anyway.

What gave him confidence was a clarity that few his age possessed. He understood that sport is not separate from business — it is business. Finance, marketing, HR, operations — every pillar of a general MBA finds its mirror inside the world of sport. The IPL has entire finance teams working behind the scenes. Every major sporting campaign is a marketing operation. Every franchise builds its workforce like any corporate organisation. The only difference was that people hadn't yet connected those dots in India. Jay saw the connection clearly, and he built his career on it.

He completed his Master's in Sports Management and returned not just with a degree, but with something more valuable: a perspective. He had also embraced something deeply Indian about how things get done — what he calls the “Jugaadu” spirit. In India, if you are not resourceful, adaptive, and willing to improvise, you cannot survive in any field. And sport, with its last-minute crises, sudden weather changes, and overnight decisions, rewards that spirit more than almost anything else. Jay had it in abundance.

He deliberately chose to build in India. Not because it was the easier path, but because he believed India was where the future of sport was going to be written. The 2020 Olympics had already signalled a shift. India was waking up to sport. And Jay wanted to be inside that story, not watching it from abroad.

His early days were anything but glamorous. He began as a part-time sports photographer for a friend who had founded the Willepal Premier League — one of Maharashtra's earliest football leagues. Behind the camera, in the dust and noise of the ground, he was absorbing everything: how events ran, how people communicated, what made the difference between chaos and control.

After completing his Master's, he returned to his friend's growing venture - Sporko - and when the opportunity came to work with the MTABA Defenders, a franchisee in the Prime Volleyball League, he joined as an intern. He had a volleyball background. He knew the sport. He understood the environment. And he was ready to work.

In 2020, when most people were grabbing corporate placements, Jay joined Sporko full-time. It was a conscious choice. His philosophy was simple but powerful: stay flexible. In sports, he believed, the more you lock yourself into one role, the more opportunities you miss. Flexibility was not indecision — it was strategy.

"The more flexible you are in sports, the more opportunities you can grab."

— Jay Kapoor

And he worked. Hard. Events from setup to teardown. Nights spent coordinating vendors. Days spent on the phone with ground-level workers who made events actually happen. This is where Jay developed one of his most important beliefs - that success in sports management doesn't come from the top of the pyramid. It comes from the bottom. The vendors, the groundsmen, the technicians, the suppliers - these are the people who make or break every event.

He learned to treat those relationships with the same respect he would give to sponsors or franchise owners. Even when events didn't go as planned - even when money was tight - he made sure to communicate, to stay honest, to pay on time wherever possible. And when he couldn't, he told them why and made a promise he kept. That trust, built quietly over years, became one of his most important professional assets.

"**Even if your event goes for a loss**", he says, "**if you pay your people on time and keep them in the loop, they will show up for you every single time. But if you ignore their calls, the relationship is gone - and so is your next event**."

By 2023, Jay's career took a turn that would give it an entirely new dimension. The owner of MTABA Defenders was also the General Secretary of Special Olympics Bharat, an organisation dedicated to athletes with intellectual disabilities. Jay was brought on to lead operations - and what he saw there transformed him.
He travelled to Berlin for the 2023 World Summer Games. He watched athletes with intellectual disabilities step onto a world stage, compete with everything they had, and then celebrate - not just the gold medals, but every podium. They danced at the airport when they came home. They radiated a joy so pure and so complete that Jay found himself asking a question he couldn't shake:

That question reset his priorities. He realised that sport was not merely a business opportunity - it was a vehicle for transformation. And the scale of that transformation needed in India was staggering. According to the last census, India has over 42 lakh individuals with intellectual disabilities. Special Olympics Bharat has currently reached barely 1 to 2% of them, constrained by infrastructure, resources, and connectivity gaps.

"If these guys can be so happy, what are we doing?"
— Jay Kapoor, after the 2023 World Summer Games, Berlin

Jay is now part of closing that gap. In December 2022, he was involved in a nationwide health screening that reached over 1,30,000 individuals with intellectual disabilities across 140 locations - all on a single day. The goal: identify and reconnect with individuals who had slipped off the radar during COVID. The ambition: open sports centres in every one of India's 750 districts. Currently around 80 centres are active, with a target to build 250 truly sustainable ones. It is a long road. Jay is walking it with full intent.

Ask him what the real skill of sports management is, and he will tell you it is mostly operations - and most of operations is human. Networks matter. But relationships matter more. The person who keeps the groundsheet dry, the vendor who delivers the banners at midnight, the technician who fixes the sound system thirty minutes before kickoff these are the people who decide whether your event lives or dies.

He is also deeply honest about the misconception that draws many young people to the field and then disappoints them. Sports management, he says, is not a backstage pass to celebrity. The people doing real work on the ground rarely get photographs with the players or the Bollywood stars. What they get instead is something harder to put on Instagram but infinitely more meaningful: the experience of building something, of watching an athlete rise, of knowing that your work made that stage possible.

India, Jay points out, is on the cusp of a sporting revolution. The country is planning to host major international events, including potentially the Commonwealth Games and the Olympics. IIMs are launching sports management programmes. The government and private sector are both investing at a scale that would have seemed impossible a decade ago. The people sitting at the top of sports companies today are largely general MBA graduates who figured out the connection between business and sport. The sports management graduates of Jay's generation are the ones who will replace them five to ten years from now.

The wave is building. Jay has been paddling out to meet it for years. When asked what he would tell every young person sitting in an MBA classroom wondering whether sports management is for them, he gives not a speech but a provocation: keep talking to people. Go find out why a pigeon disrupted an international badminton match in Delhi. Ask what it means for India's infrastructure ambitions. Follow your curiosity from the headline to the back story to the solution. Because in sports as in entrepreneurship, the ones who ask the right questions are the ones who eventually build the right answers.

Jay Kapoor started behind a camera on the sidelines of a football league. He is now shaping the sporting futures of thousands of individuals with intellectual disabilities, building infrastructure for India's growing sports ecosystem, and mentoring the next generation, all before forty.

"If you can change a lifestyle from A to Z, you are actually doing something. That is what keeps me going."
— Jay Kapoor

That is what it looks like when an MBA graduate decides not just to play the game but to change it!

Tartist's Epic Journey: From a Late-Night Craving to a Start-up Revolution

By Rishita & Abhishek

In the bustling chaos of college life, where late night study sessions collide with street food temptations, three friends dared to rewrite the rules of indulgence. Ranjana, Bharat, and Nitai weren't just students, they were athletes, dreamers, and problem solvers with a shared fire. Their story isn't about overnight fame or large funding rounds. It's a raw, motivating saga of turning a personal itch into a thriving brand called Tartist, starting with just ₹3,000 and a home kitchen.

The Spark: A Craving That Refused to Fade

Every groundbreaking venture begins with a problem that hits home. For Ranjana, a national-level Power Yoga champion with a pharma background, that problem was chaat, India's spiciest, most addictive street food. Picture this: crispy puris stuffed with tangy potatoes, chutneys, and sev, all deep-fried in oil and loaded with maida (refined flour). For health-conscious folks like her, it was a forbidden delight, clashing with strict diets and fitness goals.

Post-COVID, the world had shifted. People craved healthier options without sacrificing flavour. Ranjana wasn't about to surrender her chaat cravings. "The spiciest thing is chaat—so why not innovate?" she thought. The solution? Ditch the oily puri for a multi-grain tart: crunchy on the outside, customizable inside, zero maida, zero oil, gluten-free, and even Jain-friendly (no onion or garlic). These weren't just snacks; they were edible canvases where customers could layer their favourite toppings—sweet, savoury, or spicy and become "Tart Artists" themselves.

Bonded by years of friendship—Ranjana and Bharat through NCC adventures, Nitai joining in college this trio combined their expertise. Ranjana led product innovation, drawing from her athlete's intuition and nutritional knowledge. Bharat, a finance whiz with a track record in shot put, discus, kabaddi, and athletics, handled the numbers with military precision. Nitai, the marketing maestro with district-level football, cricket, kabaddi, and powerlifting creds, shaped the brand's voice. Together, they covered product, finance, and market a perfect storm no investor could manufacture.

The Name: Where Art Meets Ambition

Naming a brand is tough, but genius struck fast. "Tart" + "Artist" = Tartist. With a desi twist on the 'T' for cultural roots, it screamed creativity. You're not just buying a tart; you're co-creating a masterpiece. Global vibe, Indian soul—this philosophy turned customers into collaborators, fueling viral potential.

Bootstrap Beginnings: ₹3,000 and Endless Grit

No fancy office, no investors, no high-tech ovens. Just ₹3,000 scraped together, home kitchens at Bharat's or Ranjana's, and pure hustle. They baked batches late into the night, hand-packed every piece, and hit the markets. Vendors became mentors; one grizzled businessman drilled in a golden rule: "Be stingy in business. Save every rupee." They listened, reinvesting every sale, quietly scaling capital to over ₹10,000. Quality was non-negotiable: temperature checks, colour inspections, individual tastings rigorous enough for a pro bakery.

These midnight marathons forged unbreakable bonds. Laughter mixed with exhaustion, ideas sparked amid flour dust. It wasn't glamorous, but it was theirs.

The Pivot That Propelled Them: Creative Clash Chaos

Fate loves drama. One day before their college's Creative Clash competition, a high-stakes pitch fest, a teammate bailed. No prototype ready, zero prep time. Most would've quit. Not Tartist. "Something is better than nothing," they declared. Overnight, they crafted a pitch: product demo (freshly baked tarts), market analysis, financial projections. Judges, including Navy finance pros and a German entrepreneur pioneering ragi edible spoons, were hooked. They won not just a trophy, but validation, visibility, and a mentorship offer.

That night proved their mantra: Show up imperfectly, and the universe conspires. From plastic recycling flops to this chaat breakthrough, they learned serendipity favours the bold.

Crafting the Perfect Product

Tartist's tart isn't snack food; it's a revolution. Multi-grain base holds infinite combos: spicy, savoury, sweet, or fusion experiments. Pilot tests thrilled health nuts, gym-goers, and elders (after tweaks for softer texture). Feedback was gold—one group noted it was "slightly hard" for 45+ folks, so they iterated, balancing crunch with chewiness. Limitations? Scaling ultra-thin tarts needed pro facilities, but commitment burned bright.

This adaptability—listening, refining, owning flaws sets winners apart.

T**he Pause: Real Life's Reality Check**

Student life isn't a start-up simulator. Placement season hit like a freight train: interviews, GPAs, family pressures. Production paused, not stopped. Orders trickled from corporate gigs, and fans hooked on samples. "After placements, we'll run it in parallel," they vowed. Honesty over hype. This pause wasn't defeat; it was strategy, buying time to graduate strong while demand simmered.

Scaling Smart: The Road Ahead

FSSAI start-up license? Check. Trademark and IPR? In progress. Go-to-market? Precision-planned. Target premium spots: high-end dry fruit shops, cafe chains, weekend branded stalls (not chaat carts, but Tartist experiences). Free shelf trials build buzz. Shared "star kitchens" via Idea Bus handle scaling sans factory costs. Food fests like Kala Ghoda? On the radar. Every move screams discipline: start smart, grow steady.

Lessons That Light Your Fire

Ranjana, Bharat, and Nitai aren't unicorns. They're final-year students juggling exams, friendships, and futures —just like you. Key takeaways?

- Trust Your Gut, Back It with Research: Ignore trends; solve real cravings.
- Build a Bulletproof Team: Skills matter, but proven trust (seven years strong) wins.
- Embrace Frugality: ₹3,000 to ₹10,000? Stingy reinvestment.
- Show Up Anyway: Creative Clash magic happened despite disaster.
- Patience Pays: Pauses aren't failures; they're pivots.
- Iterate Relentlessly: Feedback fuelled perfection.

"You can't predict business," they say. "When success hits, when luck turns—just do it." From kitchen experiments to competition glory, Tartist turned "impossible" into "I'm possible."

Your Call to Create

Reader, what's your chaat? That problem nagging at 2 AM? Pool ₹3,000 (or whatever you've got), rally your ride-or-dies, bake through the night. Face the Creative Clashes of life head-on. Pause if needed, but never quit. Tartist grew from a diet dilemma into a brand redefining healthy indulgence proof students can build empires.

The world craves more Tartists. Your canvas awaits. Grab the tart. Become the artist. Accelerate now.

Share Plate: Turning Surplus Food into Shared Meals

Team:
Poulami Samanta
Rishika Upadhyay
Sonam Yadav
Shivangi Mishra

As part of Creative Clash 2.0, a national-level business plan and innovation competition organised by IES MCRC and IES COA, our team explored a pressing urban issue – food waste from restaurants, cafés, bakeries, and sweet shops.

The idea for Share Plate emerged after observing that large amounts of perfectly edible food are discarded daily, often simply because there is no reliable system to redistribute it quickly. To understand the problem better, we conducted interviews with restaurant owners and managers, where we discovered that most businesses are willing to donate excess food but hesitate due to logistical challenges, food safety concerns, and the fear of reputational risk.

One of the most striking insights came from a sweet shop owner who shared that they had previously donated leftover food through volunteers. However, when some recipients later reported stomach discomfort, the blame fell on the shop, affecting its reputation. As a result, they stopped donating food entirely and chose disposal instead. This highlighted that the issue is not a lack of willingness to help, but a lack of trust, traceability, and coordination.

To address this gap, our team proposed Share Plate, a platform designed to connect restaurants and NGOs in real time. Through this system, food outlets can quickly notify nearby NGOs about surplus food, enabling timely collection while maintaining basic quality checks and accountability

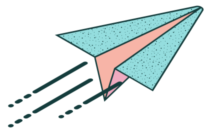
Through this project, we learned that sustainable solutions require understanding the concerns of all stakeholders involved. What initially seemed like a simple problem of food waste turned out to involve deeper issues such as timing, safety, logistics, and trust. Creative Clash 2.0 gave us the opportunity to apply research, teamwork, and innovative thinking to design a solution that aims to create both social and environmental impact.

“Share Plate represents our small step towards a future where less food is wasted and more meals are shared.”

OR

“Because when surplus food finds the right plate, waste turns into nourishment and impact.”

QUIZ



1. Which concept emphasizes starting with available resources rather than a fixed goal?
   A. Causation
   B. Effectuation
   C. Bootstrapping
   D. Lean Planning

2. A start-up achieving valuation above $1 billion is called?
   A. Decacorn
   B. Unicorn
   C. Centaur
   D. Pegasus

3. What is the main purpose of an MVP (Minimum Viable Product)?
   A. Maximize profit
   B. Attract investors
   C. Test product with minimal features
   D. Reduce costs

4. Which strategy focuses on creating uncontested market space?
   A. Red Ocean Strategy
   B. Blue Ocean Strategy
   C. Competitive Strategy
   D. Cost Leadership

5. “Runway” in start-up terminology refers to?
   A. Marketing duration
   B. Time before funds run out
   C. Product launch timeline
   D. Hiring cycle

6. A company growing rapidly without focusing on profitability is following?
   A. Bootstrapping
   B. Lean start-up
   C. Blitzscaling
   D. Franchising

7. When a start-up changes its business model based on feedback, it is called?
   A. Exit Strategy
   B. Pivot
   C. Diversification
   D. Scaling

8. Which of the following is NOT a typical source of start-up funding?
   A. Angel Investors
   B. Venture Capital
   C. Retained Earnings
   D. IPO

9. What is Product-Market Fit?
   A. Matching product price with cost
   B. Satisfies strong market demand
   C. Hiring the right employees
   D. Entering international markets

10. Bootstrapping means ?
   A. Raising funds from venture capitalists
   B. Using personal funds to grow business
   C. Borrowing from banks
   D. Government funding

ANSWERS :- **B**. Effectuation **B**. Unicorn **C**. Test product with minimal features **B**. Blue Ocean Strategy **B**. Time before funds run out **C**. Blitzscaling **B**. Pivot **D**. IPO **B**. Satisfies strong market demand **B**. Using personal funds to grow business

PGDM

The PGDM Program at IES MCRC is a rigorously designed, industry-oriented management program that equips students with holistic business knowledge and leadership skills. Approved by AICTE, accredited by NBA, and recognized as MBA-equivalent by AIU, the two-year full-time course spans six intensive terms focused on real-world application. With a strong emphasis on innovation, strategic thinking, and entrepreneurial competencies, the PGDM program prepares students to navigate dynamic business landscapes and transform ideas into sustainable ventures.

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