



# Insight

Volume 1 | Issue 2



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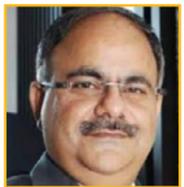
**Shashank ND**  
Founder & CEO, Practo

**Building a Global  
Digital Healthcare  
Platform**

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# Editorial



### Dear Friends,

We are excited to bring to you the second edition of eMavericks Insight which features conversations with the Founders, CXOs and

Investors of online commerce companies as well perspectives on this industry. eMavericks is a CIO Association of India initiative, powered by Dell; the first company in the world to record a million dollars in online sales in 1997. There is so much innovation and acceleration happening in the e-commerce space right now that it is not easy to keep pace with it.

Let's take the big news of Paytm winning the title sponsorship rights for Indian cricket for four years. Online companies are now not only big spenders in TV and print (especially newspapers) advertising, but also outdoor media and celebrity endorsements. The likes of Flipkart and Amazon are the biggest takers of office space, overtaking IT/ITES companies for the first time. The first half of the year has also witnessed more than double the M&A activity (34 deals) as compared to the same period in 2014 (11 deals). Since January 2014, close to 40 companies have raised subsequent rounds of funding almost within six months – case in point being Practo – they are also our cover story for this edition of the newsletter.

After startups, Indian business conglomerates will drive the next set of euphoria in e-commerce. Dr. Nirmalya

Kumar (former Professor of Marketing, London Business School), a member of the Group Executive Council Tata Sons is spearheading the group's e-commerce strategy. Tata will have an e-commerce play in lifestyle products, health, and wellness categories. In the exact words of Mr. Mukesh Ambani, "This year will bring about a disruptive shopping experience for consumers as they embrace technology and get access to anytime-anywhere shopping. With the advanced internet infrastructure built by R-Jio, and a robust physical retail business built by Reliance Retail, we will create a differentiated e-commerce model for India". Mahindra has appointed Mr. Jaspreet Bindra, former CEO of Askme.com, as Group Senior Vice President for Digital Innovation and e-commerce. Their online play could be in auto division, two-wheelers, and other businesses. Aditya Birla, which is merging Pantaloons and Madura to create an INR 5290 crore lifestyle company, is gearing up a team under Aditya Birla Online Fashion to focus on e-commerce. Stay tuned for bigger and bolder forays into e-commerce by established companies.

We start this newsletter edition by sharing the key takeaways from the first eMavericks Google Hangout which include valuable insights on how Pizza Hut went digital in India, how Explara was built as India's first DIY event management platform, what technology trends are driving the rise of e-commerce in the Asia Pacific, and how to leverage customer data for competitive advantage. We then have a discerning conversation with Founder and CEO of Practo, Mr. Shashank ND. Practo is in a unique position of having a globally respected strong B2B software product (Practo

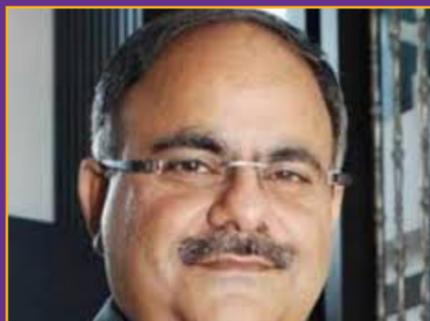
Ray) that is tightly integrated with its much-loved consumer offering (Practo Search) – creating the world's first and only healthcare hyperloop connecting the entire healthcare ecosystem and helping millions of consumers make better healthcare decisions. Over the past six months, Practo has grown over six times to become one of the fastest growing healthcare platforms in the world with nearly 200,000 healthcare practitioners on it and over 10 million monthly searches by consumers looking to make the right healthcare choices. In total, they have raised \$125 million in venture funding – one of the largest in the world of Digital Health. We found Mr. Raghav Bahl's blog (in his personal capacity) 'Winning the Marketplace' intriguing. He takes a contrarian view on first focusing on getting the Supply side on the platform instead of the Demand side; if you're still not convinced, jump to his article, which is our next item.

MakeMyTrip is one of India's initial online commerce success stories with an envious founding team, which subsequently got listed on NASDAQ and went public. It has grown both organically and via acquisitions, and was an early mover to focus on mobile technologies to serve customers better. In order to maintain its market position as the leading online travel service in India, they partnered with Dell when MakeMyTrip.com needed to consolidate its data center on a high performance infrastructure. This is shared in-depth as a case study for you to take more informed technology decisions.

We hope you will enjoy reading this newsletter as much as we enjoyed putting it together for you. Keep writing to us at [amarinder@ciindia.org](mailto:amarinder@ciindia.org)

# Customer Centric Digital Business Transformation

Key takeaways from the 'eMavericks Expert Talk' on 'Customer Centric Digital Business Transformation'. It was conducted as a Google hangout on 16 July, 2015. The link to this online event including the video for the full session is here. You can also see it on Youtube here.



**Hitesh Arora, Delhi**  
CIO (Indian Subcontinent), Yum! Brands (KFC, Pizza Hut and Taco Bell), CIO Perspective

technology platforms, i.e., different point of sale systems for each franchise partner. Hence, the biggest challenge was how to integrate all. Secondly, while working across India there is always a challenge on getting persistent connectivity in category B,C, and D cities. We have to ensure that order gets dispatched on time and reaches on time. The pizza business is based on a 30 minutes delivery guarantee; this gives just a couple of seconds for tech communication. Lastly, for each store there is a defined trade area. We had to ensure that for consumers ordering online – the order gets placed and fulfilled from the respective trade area store only. Our competition was way ahead. They had started much earlier. We were late entrants and had to cover a lot of ground.



**Chris Kelly, Singapore**  
ED, Strategy & Transformation, Dell Asia Pacific & Japan, Technology Leader Perspective

**Online commerce is extremely hot right now in China and India. What are you**

## hearing from your customers across the Asia Pacific and Japan Region?

There are new trends and buzzwords in the industry today: Cloud, Big Data, Mobility, and Web Scale. The force behind these is the Digital Transformation of Business Process and Business Models. The e-commerce market is right at the epicenter of Digitisation of Business Processes. Markets are becoming competitive and geographies are becoming irrelevant. Businesses need to be agile. Large global players can enter any markets; 'well-positioned' small Asian companies can look outside their host countries for growth via innovation and agility. Online commerce giants are setting the trend with IT adoption and are raising the technology bar for smaller e-commerce companies.

- Technology has to become the competitive advantage: key value proposition and go-to market.
- Concept of time to market: How quickly can you introduce a new feature; how quickly can you add a new capability to your platform? How responsive are you to customer behavior change?
- There is a strong need for the business to not only understand their market and their customer, but also equally their own capability and positioning. There is a need for real-time rapid analytics.

## You spoke about Big Data; do you see the need of Data scientists sitting inside a marketing organization in the future to generate market intelligence?

That's a great question. Data scientist as a role is very niche. A natural progression of IT is to take on the complex and make it simple. I don't see Data Scientist being required in the Marketing Department but I do see the need of sophisticated analytical tools required by Marketing. A natural evolution of the role of a Marketing professional will be to become good with data mining and analytics.



**Santosh Panda, Bangalore**  
Founder & CEO of Explara, Entrepreneur Perspective

## How Explara continues to be a customer centric company; taking a platform approach and creating compelling value for both Event Organisers and Event Participants?

Essentially we have put in years of focus primarily on Customer Support. We have been building the platform from scratch, ground up since 2009. At that time, India had no platform to manage the events. The organisers were using paper, excel, and email to invite guests and collect payments from them. We are the first DIY Event Platform in India. The events industry is growing. Startups can have a global play if they are able to identify the customer pain point and keep iterating

on their solution. Explara is built as a platform, focusing on both sides and helping event organizers monetize. Event organisers can either make money by sponsorship or by ticketing. We lay a lot of emphasis on ticketing and engaging with the attendees early on. Explara was used for 10000 events last year; 35000 events this year Across the globe.

## What innovations do you expect in the events personalization space in the near future?

From the year 2000 to 2006, lots of folks used Upcoming (which was later on acquired by Yahoo); then came the era of event listing companies but the user engagement was really not there. Today is the era of Personalisation. The platform/service needs to be very specific to a user so that he/she gets (almost) no noise. We are currently focusing on event day activities such as collecting feedback online. We are trying to go green and save paper all throughout the event management workflow.



**Ranjit Metrani, Bangalore**  
Director & Southern Geo Head, Dell India, Technology Evangelist Perspective

## Data is integral to all businesses. How can you extract the maximum value from your customer data?

Everyone wants to serve the Customer. Data is all about the Customer. We

should be aware of where the Data resides to take real advantage of it. Today, Data is in Apps, Data in Chatter (social media), Data at Rest (enterprise systems), and Data in Motion (email, phone). Driving value from Data is a long journey. Different companies are using data differently; some only for Reporting, some for Diagnostics. Online companies are most matured in using data for their businesses. The two prime reasons why e-commerce is doing so well in India – one is technology adoption and second is they are innovating, and customer data is the key. Businesses have to be clear on what challenge they are resolving while using data.

## Dell has itself been a pioneer in the e-commerce space, even before it was known as e-commerce. How have you been leveraging data within Dell for competitive advantage?

Dell started using Data in the form of phone directories, direct mailers, phone orders, and supply chain data for JIT inventory even before the Internet. Dell was the first company in the world to start selling 'build to order'. We then migrated the offline customers online for them to make a better choice. We tracked customer behavior on Social Media and Dell.com. We launched IdeaStorm – inputs from all our customers on how they find Dell products and Solutions. We started using Analytics to enhance Customer Experience using Net Promoter Score (NPS), improved our Supply Chain, and used Marketing Data effectively. Dell has the best Supply Chain in the world. Dell effectively used data and integrated it with our other system that is important. Today, Dell is one of the biggest users on Analytics globally. We love to track how customers respond to any Dell product launch.

# Building a Global Digital Healthcare Platform



**Shashank ND**  
Founder & CEO, Practo

## 1. Traditionally doctors and patients have not been very IT savvy; how did you acquire the initial set of users (during 2009-10)?

I think this is a little unfair. It is not that doctors are averse to adopting technology; I think it is technology that has hitherto failed to solve their problems in any meaningful way. When we launched Practo Ray in 2009, there was virtually no solution available that would help them manage their practice in an efficient way. Doctors who were brave enough to use software had to put up with clunky, buggy software that was made in the proverbial dark ages. They had to manage their IT too, with hardware, software updates, data backups – the works. And the brave ones who put up with all this got to use pretty crappy software that was badly designed and was not very helpful. This obviously put them off.

It was this insight that led to us to build Practo Ray as a cloud based SAAS offering as that allowed the doctor to

focus on running his practice while we took care of all the IT complexity. And of course, Ray was beautifully designed from the ground up to enable them to embrace digital healthcare. We are seeing great adoption with over 40,000 doctors already using Practo Ray to manage 10-12M patients and generating over 30M healthcare records a year!

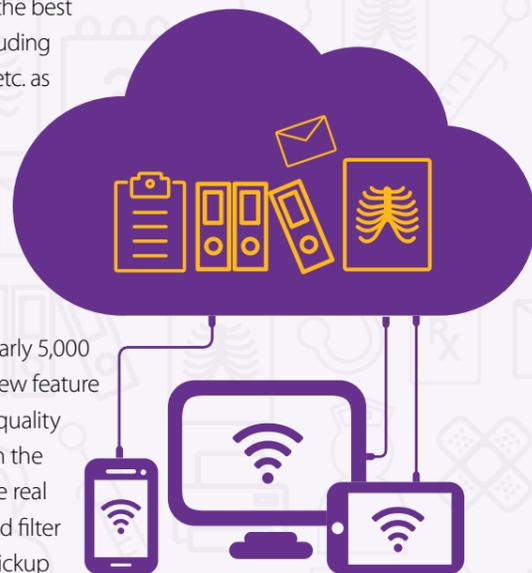
## 2. How did Practo Ray (SAAS solution for Doctors / Healthcare Providers) build up a business case for Practo.com: Consumer facing doctor discovery portal? As an organisation how do you balance the two?

Actually, we never look at products from a business case perspective. I firmly believe that first you must solve a meaningful problem. The monetisation can always be figured out. Our mission is to help mankind live healthier, longer lives and we want to build products that help us achieve that. Practo.com was a natural fit here as healthier living starts with making more informed healthcare decisions. Currently, we offer consumers the ability to find the best doctors, read their details including degrees, years of experience etc. as well as read patient feedback before selecting a doctor and booking an instant appointment with him.

Practo launched the diagnostic segment and at present, it has onboarded nearly 5,000 labs across eight cities. The new feature will allow users to check the quality of the lab by reading through the accreditation information, see real high-quality photographs and filter results by proximity, home-pickup

facility as well as price. Consumers can also filter to see which labs offer a digital report. In the near future, Practo will enable consumers to get their reports on the Practo app automatically instead of having to collect it from the center or get it via email.

Practo is currently the largest doctor search engine in Asia and this launch is a part of Practo's strategy to become the single health window for consumers across curative, preventive, fitness and wellness segments. We will also be launching the patient health account that will aggregate all your healthcare data into a secure place accessible only to the patient. Going forward, having both Practo Ray and Practo.com enables us to build a set of products that no one else can offer. For example, a consumer could go to a doctor using Practo Ray. When the doctor creates a digital prescription, we can send the consumer automated alerts at the time he has to take his medication. Another service we could



offer is that when you get a diagnostic test done, the report from the lab automatically flows into your health account and you could share it with your doctor with one click and get his opinion on the phone. These are all game-changing services that we could offer since we have Practo Ray and Practo.com. We believe the interplay of the two is where the magic will happen to truly transform digital health as we know it.

## 3. After initial success in India, you launched Practo in Singapore and then many other countries. What have been your key learnings in doing overseas launches and building traction there?

Launching in Singapore was one of the best decisions we made. It really helped us benchmark our product at a global level and helped us understand the demands that some of the more advanced markets could place on our systems. In many ways this helped us improve the product for everyone. The other really surprising thing we learnt was just how badly underserved these markets are in terms of doctor discovery as well as a great homegrown clinic management solution. So, we are excited about going to many more markets this year across South East Asia, Middle East, Africa and Latin America.

## 4. What were the main technology and operational challenges faced by Practo and how did you overcome them?

When disrupting an industry, the challenges are many. But therein lies the fun! When we started building Practo Ray, the biggest challenge (apart from gathering insights about what would be useful to doctors) was how to build a hyper responsive product in a market where internet penetration was low and speeds not as good as what we see in many other markets. We literally counted (and still do) our performance in milliseconds to see how responsive and fast our product is and how quickly it can provide the relevant information to the user. When building Practo.com, the biggest challenge was how do you get reliable information about doctors and clinics.

We want information to be 100% reliable and accurate so we decided to build our own healthcare map of the world. We have an on-ground team that literally goes street by street, city by city, to capture doctor and clinic information which is then put through a rigorous verification system to ensure we only have genuine doctors with absolutely accurate details. Scaling this to traverse all of India and of course globally is complex but we believe the effort is worth it because we want our

customers to be able to trust and rely on the information we provide. Third challenge we face is building the right infrastructure to scale our product. We're growing at an extremely fast pace, in fact we're still growing 50-100% a quarter. We currently list over 2,00,000 healthcare practitioners across 35 cities in 3 countries including Singapore and Philippines. So obviously, the infrastructure, servers etc. have to keep up while at the same time maintaining the highest levels of security and encryption. So we keep a dedicated team that ensures our service is always available and is hyper responsive.

## 5. You have been willing to try new ideas like Practo Tab. Please share more about it.

Practo Tab brings the clinic experience to the 21<sup>st</sup> century. It helps doctors and patients interact seamlessly by allowing patients to easily register/check-in when they arrive at the clinic – it links that information to the patient records already available with the clinic and provides a comprehensive view to the doctor before the patient even walks into his chamber. Further, it also allows the patient to provide feedback on his experience right there before he even leaves the clinic. This creates a healthy feedback loop in the system that helps improve healthcare delivery overall.

Practo Tab also has a secondary role as it helps doctors view records in offline mode as well so their work doesn't need to stop even if their internet does!

## 6. How would healthcare providers engage with patients in future? What further role can technology play in this interaction?

Healthcare is one of the last industries to be completely transformed by technology. In an era where I can book movie tickets without getting out of bed, I have to jump through hoops to

find myself a doctor. In the age of the internet, I have billions of spam emails but getting my health records digitally is a task worthy of Hercules. All this is going to change as technology permeates every aspect of healthcare and makes it digital.

I imagine a world where all your health records are digital, where test reports and fitness stats flow into this account automatically. You can consult with a doctor, any doctor, anywhere in the world by sharing your records with one click. A world where you live healthier, and longer because technology helps you make better healthcare decisions. That is the world we're trying to build at Practo.

### 7. What advice would you like to give others who are starting to either build an online business ground up or taking their brick and mortar businesses online?

Over the last 7 years that I have been building Practo, there are a few things I've learned. First, always optimise for the vision. Articulate the vision continuously and ensure each step you take is towards this. Vision helps align the entire team behind a common purpose.

Second, usage is king. Focus more on the usage of the product than how much the users are paying for it. Usage is the single most important metric to determine product value. Pay close attention to what your customers tell you. Product insights will come through interpretation of customer feedback.

Third, solve hard problems. At the start, try picking the tough problems to solve. These are usually the ones no one else would have tried solving. Ask yourself, 'Why hasn't anyone done this before?' Logically, due to technology advancements, problems that



were harder to solve so far, would become easier now.

Fourth, hire A players only. That should be one of your top priorities.

Only get the best of the best. They can give you exponential growth. Ensure they buy into the vision of the company and focus equally hard on retaining them. One of the keys to retention is to build a great culture from day one. It will remain through the life of the company.

Fifth, think global. One of the best things we did was launch in Singapore. The market there really stress-tested our product and helped us improve by leaps and bounds which was instrumental in us getting such a high market share so quickly.

Sixth, get advisors & consultants. There are many industry experts out there. Take advantage of their expertise, it's faster. Don't try to do everything on your own.

Seventh, growth is the only oxygen for a startup. Continuously focus on the growth %. Take risks and do everything possible to grow fast.

Eighth, build great products. Never ever ship a subpar product. Customers have an innate sense to detect carelessness. They will penalise you by moving away.

Ninth, choose the right investors. Don't optimise for valuations, optimise for building a great product or service that people love. Investors will see value in that. Optimise more for who is investing in you than how much. Investors can be great partners in helping you grow so they must share your medium and long term vision and their goals should be aligned to that.

Tenth, focus. You have limited resources and time. Don't spend too much time attending conferences, networking events etc. Focus all energy on ensuring there is progress. In our earlier days, we used the mantra of 'Code & Sell', everything else is useless. And finally, have fun. You will spend long hours doing this so make sure you love doing it and are excited by it. There is no room for half-heartedness.

### 8. List of Funding Received and Acquisitions so far

\$4M Series A (Sequoia Capital, July 2012)

\$30M Series B (Sequoia Capital, Matrix Partners, February 2015)

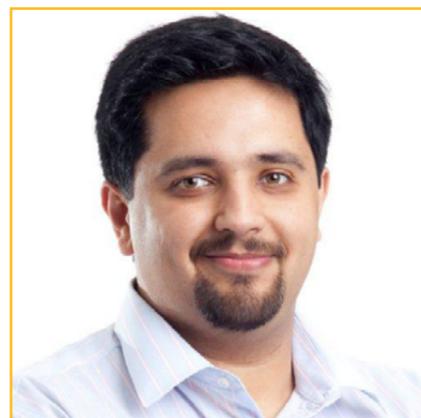
\$90M Series C (Tencent, Sofina, Sequoia India, Google Capital, Altimeter Capital, Matrix Partners, Sequoia Capital Global Equities and Yuri Milner, August 2015)

Acquisitions: Fitho and Genii

# Winning the Online Marketplace – Part I 'Importance of the Supply Side'

Raghav Bahl, Vice President, Bessemer Venture Partners

Disclaimer: The views expressed here are solely those of the author in his private capacity and do not in any way represent the views of the organization: Bessemer Venture Partners.



Raghav Bahl  
Vice President,  
Bessemer Venture Partners

Over the last 4 years as a venture investor, some of the most exciting moments include interactions with entrepreneurs hustling to launch & scale disruptive marketplace businesses. Each of these meetings have fundamentally revolved around two important questions for the entrepreneur – <sup>(1)</sup>The 'Chicken & Egg' problem, which is essentially asking the question – what to onboard first – 'demand' side or 'supply' side? <sup>(2)</sup>How to achieve 'liquidity' in the marketplace in the shortest period of time? Following is a summary of some of the key learnings from funding and watching closely some of the leading marketplace businesses.

Before we step into the answers, I would take a step back to define certain terms and relate to the importance of these questions.

**Marketplace** – marketplaces facilitate dealings between two sets of users (often segregated as 'demand' & 'supply' side based on their roles in the marketplace) by providing a platform that in turn sets appropriate rules and regulations. The

broader aim of these regulations is to reduce gap / friction that have hindered the users' dealings primarily due to a poor transaction experience – for example lack of trust in transacting online with a stranger which ebay solved for or lack of information to decide which restaurant to go to which Yelp solved for.

**Network effect** – the new experience provided by the marketplace results in massive adoption on both, demand & supply, sides. This rapid adoption is then self-perpetuating as both sides value the access to a bigger network of users (read 'more choice', 'higher probability of finding a match') coupled with the improved transaction experience. This self-perpetuating nature of these platform businesses is called 'Network effects'.

**Liquidity** – It takes time for network effects (the self-perpetuating mechanism) to kick-in as this is a direct function of two things – (1) a threshold population on both sides of the marketplace (2) the number of successful transactions. A marketplace is said to be liquid when it has crossed the critical number on both aspects and the marketplace is in self-perpetuating mode.

With the definitions out of the way, let's talk a bit about the significance of these questions – as a startup you have limited resources and hence, focusing on certain vital aspects of the business is key to success during this stage – i.e. knowing which side of the marketplace to focus on is crucial (and I believe provides for competitive advantage in the long run). In terms of importance of 'liquidity', the first marketplace to achieve liquidity assumes leadership position and is most likely the winner! And hence, it's important for the

entrepreneur how to achieve liquidity much ahead of competition.

<sup>(1)</sup>The 'Chicken & Egg' problem, which is essentially asking the question – what to onboard first 'demand' side or 'supply' side?

In short – always start with the SUPPLY side (Counterintuitive? – please read on)

In the context of a B2C (business to consumer) marketplace, securing & retaining high quality SUPPLY is key to the success of the marketplace. To take one step further, I would say that the single most important factor that decides the strength of a marketplace is the barrier for the supply side to be present on multiple marketplaces. If the barrier is high, the market will lend itself well to a 'winner takes all' scenario, while if the barrier is low, the market will remain fragmented with multiple similar sized players emerging. As an entrepreneur, you want to be in a 'Winner takes All' scenario which in simpler terms means a disproportionately high market share for the leader and an obnoxious valuation multiple! (Salivating already...) In order to achieve this, you want to doggedly work towards creating & strengthening the barrier for the supply side to be present on multiple competing marketplaces. So what can you do to nurture supply side loyalty?

<sup>(1)</sup>Start by building the 'best in market' supply side tool

(yes you heard that right! – This might be counterintuitive as most entrepreneurs concentrate on building the best demand side product. However, as I argue below, building the best in market supply side tool is one of the most important factors in ramping up supply, retaining it, attracting

demand side and hence, achieving liquidity earlier than competition).

Life on the supply side can be complicated – these businesses are either sitting on product inventory which they need to liquidate for profits and cash, or they are idling with perishable inventory (services businesses) which needs to be put to work. Each aspect of their business has some complexity and given their small size and lack of resources they do not have the hands to manage them all. For example, a travel agent needs to acquire leads, sort them, keep track of the progress on the right ones and finally close them out. Post sales, they need to be able to handle customer trip alteration requests / grievances. In this frenzy, their productivity is compromised and the core value proposition of offering a customized holiday is diluted! Travel Triangle (TT), a leading marketplace for customized leisure travel (Full disclosure – Bessemer is an investor and I a member of the board of directors of the company) built a deep travel agent product which the agents just love (& vouch for) simply because the product does most of their non-core work and hence has a multifold multiplier effect on their productivity. The product enables TT to further understand supply side behavior (at scale) and do a much better job of matching demand and supply and hence, control the customer experience. Uber has a great driver application which enables them to accurately pinpoint the location of the customer while Google offers both advertisers and publishers some of the best in class tools.

Accordingly, key advantages of the a strong supply side tool is as follows –

- **Supply side takes notice as the supply side product brings much needed credibility for your startup** - the supply side understands that you are serious about this business and are offering something tangible (rather than just a verbal promise) that will have

a direct effect on their bottom line. An easy to use, high quality product that solves for their chronic productivity challenge handed over for free is just the right way to kick off this relationship.

- **Enables rapid scale up on the supply side** - The supply side is often a small world and the word can spread rather quickly! Assuming the product usage patterns for the product are growing to the top right of the chart, you should look to employ a scalable sales model to reach, train and onboard the supply side as quickly as possible. If you are a good negotiator (or just plain lucky) you could buy some exclusivity from the supply side for a period of time in return for the free product.
- **Improved supplier retention** - Most SMBs are relatively poor adopters of technology. While they can take some time to adopt the product, once trained and used to the product they won't be ready to switch to a competitor product that easily. Allowing you ample time to upgrade the product or improve business to further strengthen barriers to adopt another platform.
- **Read it this way** – if you on-board and retain the best quality supply in the market, what option does the demand side have? Also, if you don't build a supply side product or rather put in a feeble effort, you will actually leave the business open to competition.

In summary, if you have built a rockstar supply side product for your marketplace business, please do give me a shout!

<sup>(2)</sup> **Incentivize supply side (incentives work well, actually work really well, but are a double edged sword)**

Look to incentivize the supply side to use the product (A/B test with multiple forms of incentives and understand

how long does it take for the product to become a way of life for the suppliers sans the incentives). Any incentive needs to be linked to a contra-incentive and in this case link these incentives to consumer experience (better the experience, higher the incentives and the promise for more business in the future). Publish the results! Make sure the supply side understands the importance and impact of the incentives. Incentives work well (actually work really well!) but is a double-edged sword. It takes little or nothing for competition to replicate/ better the incentive offer. If in such a situation, accept the fact that having deep pockets is the only way to survival and market leadership – raise capital quickly and ensure that you have deep pocketed investors around the table to fight and ward off any competition that replicates your incentive model!

<sup>(3)</sup> **Build consumer experience & brand**

This is obvious and a long term goal for your marketplace startup. Consumer is King and a brilliant experience is key for building consumer life time value. In a marketplace model, the consumer experience is dependent on the supply



side (pretty much out of control of the platform). Money spent on brand building can only go a certain distance if the quality (& retention) of the supply side is not the best in the industry (which again

leads me to the first two points). Finally, curate the marketplace through a strong feedback loop which allows you to cut on poor quality supply. Investing in training the supply side & setting up processes

and systems for consumer interaction play an important role in improving consumer experience. In Summary keep the following 'Marketplace Liquidity Map' in perspective –



This article originally appeared in Raghav Bahl's blog at The Network Effect and is reproduced with permission from the author.

# Indian Online Travel Company Meets Growing Consumer Demand

*MakeMyTrip.com consolidates on virtualized infrastructure to improve its e-commerce site performance by 30 percent while reducing management time in half*

## Customer Profile



**Company** MakeMyTrip.com  
**Industry** Travel, Hospitality & Tourism  
**Country** India  
**Employees** 1,300  
**Website** www.makemytrip.com

### Business need

To maintain its market position as the leading online travel service in India, **MakeMyTrip.com** needed to consolidate its data center on a high-performance infrastructure.

### Solution

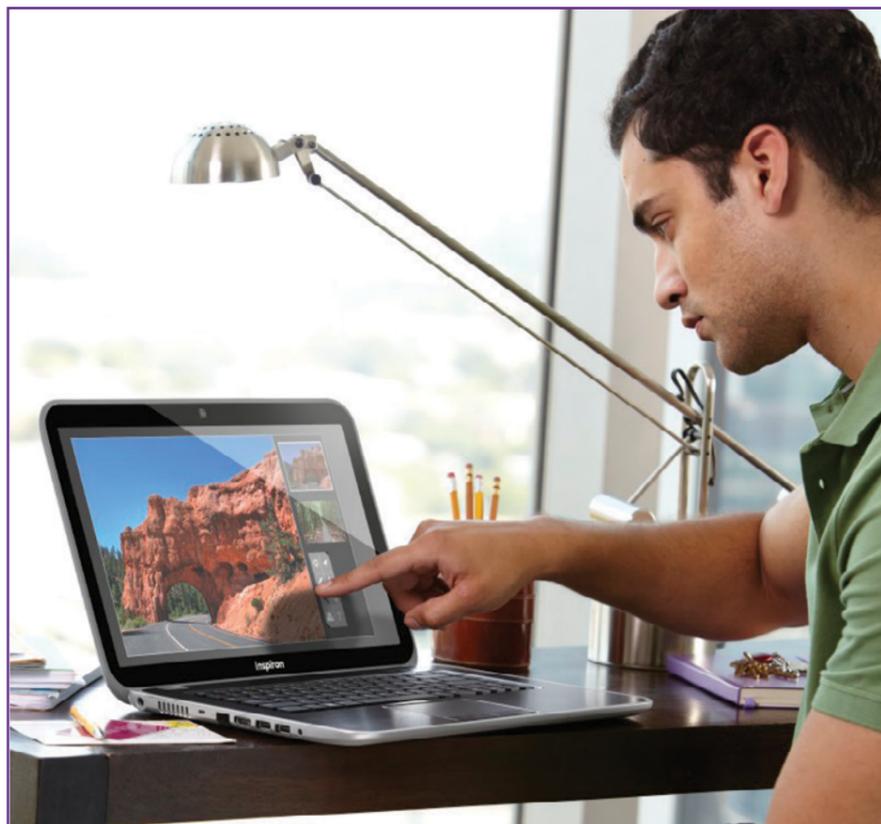
The travel company partnered with Dell to deploy Dell™ PowerEdge 12<sup>th</sup> generation servers and Dell Power Vault storage to deliver improved performance and high availability for its e-commerce site.

### Benefits

- Travel site delivers 30 percent improved performance on 12<sup>th</sup> generation servers
- Operational efficiency improves due to 20 percent reduction in energy and space requirements
- Site supports 1.3 times the number of end-user connections due to improved performance
- Management reduces by 50 percent through centralized view of the data center

### Solutions featured

- Data Center Virtualization
- Data Center Consolidation
- Support Services



*“When customers are searching for a particular travel package, they want highly targeted, quick results or they will simply go elsewhere. With high-performance hardware from Dell, our infrastructure is delivering 30 percent better performance to our site when compared with the existing hardware, which means we can serve our customers faster.”*

**Sanjay Kharb,**  
*Vice President of IT,  
 MakeMyTrip.com*

*As India’s largest online travel company, MakeMyTrip.com (MakeMyTrip) offers travel services that allow travelers to research and plan trips, and book airline tickets, hotels, packages, rail and bus tickets, rental cars and travel insurance. Founded in 2000, the company wanted to consolidate its data center on high-performance servers to outpace market growth within the expanding online travel sector in India.*

Within the highly competitive travel industry, having the flexibility to innovate is critical to meeting the growing demands of consumers moving online to research and purchase travel products. The speed at which the technology behind the e-commerce site can integrate inventory from thousands of travel suppliers in response to specific search inquiries, and then enable customers to pay quickly, all help to improve consumer conversion rates.

With fluctuations in travel prices from suppliers impacting revenue, MakeMyTrip needs to maximize its margins by running efficient infrastructure. Sanjay Kharb, Vice President of IT, MakeMyTrip.com, says, “Our cloud infrastructure runs applications that are resource hungry, so adding physical servers means the energy cost and space requirements for our three data centers keep growing. We need servers that deliver higher performance and can take more load without increasing density or energy consumption.”

### Travel site delivers 30 percent improved performance on 12<sup>th</sup> generation servers

After careful selection, the travel company deployed Dell PowerEdge 12th generation servers to consolidate its data center infrastructure running the company’s private cloud. Improving conversion rates relies on a high-performance e-commerce site that provides the flexibility and responsiveness needed to make it easy

for consumers to search, plan and book travel online. “When customers are searching for a particular travel package, they want highly targeted, quick results or they will simply go elsewhere. With high-performance hardware from Dell, our infrastructure is delivering 30 percent better performance to our site when compared with the existing hardware, which means we can serve our customers faster,” says Kharb.

*“We can now deliver to 1.3 times the number of end-user connections, due to better throughput of the various algorithms that power MakeMyTrip’s websites. We have experienced higher throughput and application performance as well as greater stability through deploying the Dell PowerEdge servers and Dell PowerVault storage.”*

**Sanjay Kharb,**  
*Vice President of IT,  
 MakeMyTrip.com*

### Site supports 1.3 times concurrent users due to improved performance

The volume of traffic that the site can now support has increased, enabling the company to proactively pursue new customers. The company uses Dell PowerVault MD3220i storage arrays to provide additional storage for its database and server needs, and is used as network storage when data must be shared across the LAN environment. “We

can now deliver to 1.3 times the number of end-user connections, due to better throughput of the various algorithms that power MakeMyTrip’s websites. We have experienced higher throughput and application performance as well as greater stability through deploying the Dell PowerEdge servers and Dell PowerVault storage,” says Kharb.

### Operational efficiency improves due to 20 percent reduction in energy and space requirements

The company requires fast processing for its business facing applications. Business critical applications powering the company’s e-commerce site are running Dell PowerEdge R620 servers featuring Intel® Xeon® E5-2600 series processors. “In assessing our requirements and considering various server and processor combinations, we found that the performance needed was only met by Intel processors. As a result, the number of virtual machines per core has improved by 15 percent,” says Kharb.

MakeMyTrip is realizing significant energy efficiencies and space savings through maximizing its compute power on Dell PowerEdge R910 and R610 servers, which contributes to the bottom line. Kharb says, “We can run 30 percent more virtual machines on the Dell servers, while achieving 20 percent savings in power consumption and rack space within the data center.”

### Management reduces by 50 percent through centralized view of the data center

With three data centers located across India responsible for running MakeMyTrip’s e-commerce site, visibility and automation are improving Kharb and his team’s ability to innovate the online travel business. The company is using Dell OpenManage Essentials systems management console to provide discovery, inventory and management

services for the Dell PowerEdge servers. Kharb says, "With a single view of all three data centers and centralized inventory management, I know the exact status of each piece of equipment and so do the Dell engineers. Through automating management with Dell OpenManage

Essentials, the maintenance effort has reduced by 50 percent."

To ensure the e-commerce site remains highly available and provides a consistently reliable user experience, the company selected Dell ProSupport with

Mission Critical 4-Hour Onsite Response. "Dell has been very open to our business initiatives and has demonstrated a real willingness to help us. In moments of urgent need, Dell has been efficient in providing the support we need," concludes Kharb.

*"With a single view of all three data centers and centralized inventory management, I know the exact status of each piece of equipment and so do the Dell engineers. Through automating management with Dell OpenManage Essentials, the maintenance effort has reduced by 50 percent."*

**Sanjay Kharb,**  
Vice President of IT,  
MakeMyTrip.com

### Technology at work

#### Services

**Dell Support Services** – Dell ProSupport with Mission Critical 4-Hour Onsite Response

#### Hardware

Dell PowerEdge R620 servers featuring Intel® Xeon® E5-2600 series processors

Dell PowerEdge R910 servers featuring Intel Xeon 7500 series processors

Dell PowerEdge R610 servers featuring Intel Xeon 5500 series processors

Dell PowerVault MD3220i storage

#### Software

Dell OpenManage Essentials



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