

AGENTS OF CHANGE: DINESH AGARWAL

At a time when the Indian dotcom industry was going through a bad phase with many dotcom companies shutting shop in 1999, IndiaMART, the three year old venture of computer science engineer Dinesh Agarwal, was the single profit-making dotcom in the country. IndiaMART.com has grown into one of the five largest online B2B marketplaces in the world bringing together Indian suppliers and global buyers.

Dinesh founded IndiaMART.com, India's first B2B marketplace in 1996 to provide Indian businesses a platform to market their products globally. India's small and medium enterprises (SMEs) were not exposed to the business benefits of the Internet and therefore business usage of internet was miniscule that time. To rope in SME businesses across the big and small cities, Dinesh introduced the concept of Free-Listing and Query Forwarding through his online marketplace. This concept enabled Indian businesses to reap the benefits of global reach of internet without even having an email or access to internet.

IndiaMART InterMESH Limited started with a team of 4 people in a 100 sq. ft. room in 1996, and broke-even within the first six months of its operations and within two years it had more than 100-clients. Although, it took about four years before the company reached \$2.2 million (Rs.1 crore) revenue mark. Once the IndiaMART online B2B directory was populated, he went on educating the SMEs and encouraging them to graduate to building their online catalogs and start using email based interaction with their customers across the globe.

IndiaMART not only offers information on 350,000 member businesses but also hosts over 15,000 catalogs, millions of trade offers, along with nearly a hundred niche portals service specific industries. It attracts more than 15 million visitors contributing 80 million page-views a month. It has crossed the mark of 12,000 clients, and claims to have initiated more than \$2 billion worth of business so far through its portal. The company has also ventured into web-consulting and online payment gateway, and has grown into a team of more than 850 professionals.



Dinesh Agarwal

Founder CEO, IndiaMART InterMESH Ltd (IIL)

Professional Profile:

- 1990: Started his career with CMC Limited, an end-to-end IT solutions provider and a Tata Group company, India's largest diversified conglomerate
- 1991-1992: Worked for Center for Development of Telematics (C-DoT), the Telecom Technology development centre of the Government of India
- 1992: Joined HCL America Inc., a subsidiary of India's fifth largest IT services company, HCL Technologies Ltd as a network consultant
- April 1996: Founded IndiaMART InterMESH Ltd. and launched IndiaMART.com
- 1997-98: Started Travel.indiamart.com, one of the largest travel portals of India
- 2004-05: Started an online payment gateway ABCPayments.com

Academic Profile:

- B.Tech degree from Harcourt Butler Technological Institute (HBTI), Kanpur, a city in the north Indian state of Uttar Pradesh
- Schooling from Agrawal Inter Collage, Lucknow, the capital city of the Indian state of Uttar Pradesh

Personal Profile:

- Age: 38 Years
- Lives in Noida (near the national capital of India, New Delhi) with his wife and 2 kids