

The in-house magazine of Bharti Enterprises

# bharti TODAY

Vol. 14, Issue 1, 2010



**comviva**

Transforming lives through Excellence, Innovation and Partnership

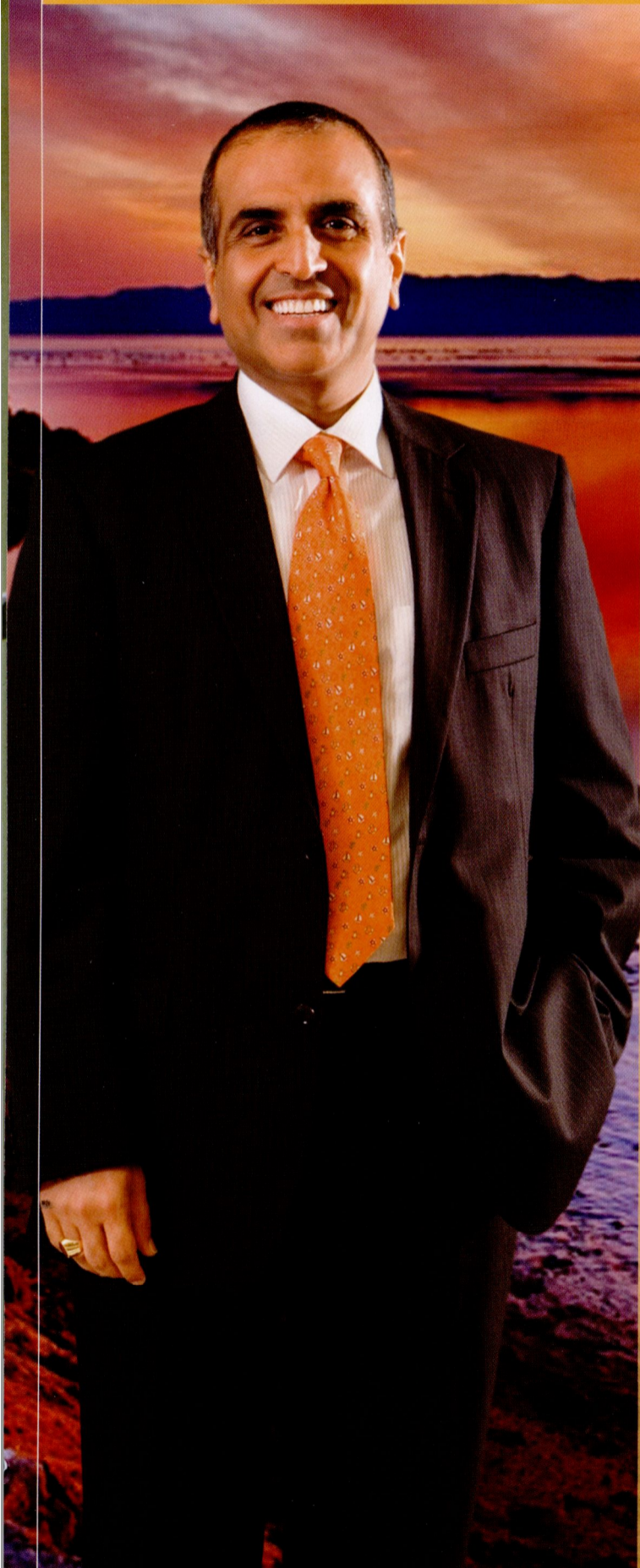
Read on for more...

The Business of Relationships

Green Towers

Design for Giving

## CHAIRMAN'S NOTES



*Dear colleagues,*

**D**espite the challenging economic environment induced by the global slowdown, we had another year of continued growth across the group companies. Even as we consolidated our leadership position in telecom, other areas of business too expanded through innovative offerings in their respective domains.

Bharti Airtel has expanded its international footprint with the acquisition of Warid Telecom in neighbouring Bangladesh, one of the few remaining large growth markets in Asia. Coming after our successful launch in Sri Lanka in 2009, this deal has further consolidated our position in the South Asian market. In the domestic market too, Bharti Airtel had another robust year in terms of customer additions, despite the intense competition resulting from the entry of several new operators. As the Government prepares to roll out the auction process for 3G licenses, we see a clear opportunity to fortify our leadership by bringing in high end services to our valued customers.

In retail, we have scaled up operations significantly with new store openings in different formats. Bharti Retail now has a footprint across four states in North India. Bharti AXA ventures too continue to strengthen their position in India's fast expanding insurance market with innovative service offerings for urban and rural customers both in life and general insurance.

Bharti Foundation extended its Satya Bharti School Programme to West Bengal recently, thus widening its footprint to six states in the country. It's heartening to learn that through innovative programmes like Design for Giving, which drives students to actively participate in eradication of social evils in their communities, the schools are making a discernible impact on society.

As we move into the new financial year, we will continue to be in search of transformational opportunities both in business and in social initiatives.

Sunil Bharti Mittal

## AWARDS & RECOGNITIONS



▲ Hon'ble President Smt. Pratibha Devisingh Patil presenting the award to Shri Sunil Bharti Mittal

### Lal Bahadur Shastri National Award

Sunil Bharti Mittal conferred with the Lal Bahadur Shastri National Award for Excellence in Public Administration, Academics and Management.

#### India's Best Enterprise Connectivity Provider

Bharti Airtel rated as India's 'Best Enterprise Connectivity Provider' for 2009 at the Annual Users' Choice Awards instituted by PC Quest.

#### Best Global Wholesale Carrier

Bharti Airtel has been recognized as the 'Best Global Wholesale Carrier' for 2009 at the Telecoms World Awards Middle East by Terrapin.

#### Strongest Brand

Airtel was rated as the 'Strongest Brand' in the Economic Times Brand Finance Brand Power Rating 2009. It is the only Corporate Brand to be awarded the AAA rating.

#### AfricaCom Awards, 2009

Comviva won the 'Best New Service' and 'Telecom Innovation of the Year' awards at the AfricaCom Awards, 2009 for its Virtual SIM solution and its pioneering work in the field of virtual mobile telephony.



▲ Sangeet Chowfla, Chief Strategy Officer, Comviva receiving the award from Mr Bill Hearmon, Chairman of the African CDMA Forum

#### Brand Equity Most Trusted Brand Survey

Airtel ranked second in the 'Economic Times-Brand Equity Most Trusted Brand Survey', 2009.

#### Emerging Distributor of the Year

Beetel Teletech recognized as the 'Emerging Distributor of the Year' at VARIndia Starnite Award, 2009.

#### Most Admired Retail Launch of the Year

Bharti Retail bagged the 'Most Admired Retail Launch of the Year' award at the Images Retail Awards, 2009.

#### Excellence in Training

Centum Learning received Gold Award for 'Excellence in Training' at the World HRD Congress, 2010.

#### BT 500 – India's Most Valuable Companies

Bharti Airtel ranked India's second 'Most Valuable Company', by Business Today in 2009.

#### Forbes Asia's Fabulous 50 Companies

Bharti Airtel listed in 'Forbes Asia's Fabulous 50 companies', 2009 on number sixth position.



▲ (Left to right) Christopher Forbes, VC, Forbes, Simon Galpin, Director - GIP, Rajan Swaroop, ED - Enterprise Services, Bharti Airtel, Frank Slevin, MD, Head of Global Banking Asia-Pacific, HSBC

COVER  
STORY



**comviva**

Defining

# m-experience

Changing Lives Across the Globe

**W**hile enjoying the benefits of the numerous value added services (VAS) starting from the ring back tones (RBTs) to the M-Commerce on your mobile not many of you would ever have spared a thought for their creator. In quite a few cases you will find Comviva, a Bharti Group company, driving these cutting edge innovative services not just for Bharti Airtel but more than 100 mobile operators across the globe.

## Rapid growth

Mobile telephony was still in its infancy in India in 1999 when Comviva, formerly known as Bharti Telesoft started its ambitious journey in the mobile software solutions space. After starting out as

primarily focused on the domestic telecom market, Comviva has rapidly branched out overseas during the last decade. The company has grown quickly both organically and inorganically. In 2002, Comviva acquired CellCloud Technologies. In 2005, it attracted major

investments from Sequoia Capital and Cisco Systems which further augmented growth. In late 2007, Comviva acquired Jataayu Software, a leading player in the mobile Internet space.

## Historical Timeline

• Comviva founded (formerly Bharti Telesoft)

1999

• Introduce PreTUPS prepaid solution at Vodafone – now installed in 25 operator sites globally  
• Introduce Adagium unified business support solution – now installed in over 10 operator sites

2002

• Acquire CellCloud Technologies

2003

• Deloitte Technology Awards: Fast 50 India Company – 2005 & 2006; Fast 500 Asia Company – consecutively from 2005 till 2009  
• Sequoia Capital and Cisco invest in Comviva

2004

• Launch CRBT at Airtel. Now installed by 14 operators and used by over 13 million subscribers globally

2005

2006

• 50 customers in 35 countries  
• Cross 500 employees

2007

• Launch mobiquity mBanking services; Golden Peacock Innovation Award 2007 for mobiquity mBanking  
• Acquire Jataayu Software

2008

• mobiquity and VAS solutions shortlisted for GSMA, WCA and AfricaCOM Awards  
• Win Golden Peacock Award - mobiquity Monet Hub

2009

• Customers in over 80 countries  
• Golden Peacock Innovation Award for Hub Solutions  
• Golden Peacock Innovation Award for Virtual SIM  
• AfricaCom "Best New Service" & "Telecom Innovation of the Year" Awards for Virtual SIM  
• mobiquity mBanking shortlisted for Best Mobile Money solution by GSMA Global Mobile Awards  
• Win Airtel Best VAS solution in 2004 and VAS Partner of the Year in 2006 & 2008

## COVER STORY



▲ Leadership Team at Comviva

### Global foot print - 100 operators, 80 countries

Comviva has grown rapidly to achieve stature and scale across the Middle East, Africa and South East Asia, besides its home market. With a specific focus on serving customers in emerging markets the company has deployed mobile VAS services for over 100 operators in more than 80 countries, which will in turn provide services to over 500 million

mobile subscribers. Today, Comviva enjoys strong relationships with the entire gamut of carriers across the globe.

Comviva delivers content, commerce and community-focused services for operators. This enables mobile users to interact and access information and entertainment services easily. Its product suites enable service providers to reduce customer churn and increase Average Revenue per User (ARPU), driving revenue growth .

### Comviva: Communication is life

Originally conceived as Bharti Telesoft, the company changed its name in early 2009. The spirit of Comviva is 'communication is life.' This adds to the company's vision which is to enrich the lives of over a billion people with mobile solutions beyond VAS.



## COVER STORY



▲ Comviva at the Barcelona Mobile World Conference 2010

### Changing Lives, Improving Lifestyles

Comviva has always had an innovative spirit, introducing e-recharge to the Indian market in 2003. Its PreTUPS solution made mobile communications affordable, easy-to-use and more readily available. Comviva is also pioneer in the music space, having launched Ringback Tone (RBT) for the first time in India, in 2004. Over the years the company has followed its RBT success with a range of highly popular music-based and other entertainment products, helping transform mobile experience for customers across the globe.

Besides seeking to enhance lifestyles with different infotainment offerings, Comviva also aims to enrich lives with offerings that improve people's daily lives. Development

of its mCommerce suite was a major milestone in this regard, bringing in mobile money transfer and remittance services as well as payment and banking services to both banked and unbanked segments in different markets.

Comviva's innovations have been a critical contributor in the social communication space as well. Its services enable communities to come closer with solutions that enable friends and families to arrange group calls and share call costs. 'Interest'-driven calls that unite like-minded individuals and mobile internet solutions too have been instrumental in making a difference to lives of mobile customers.

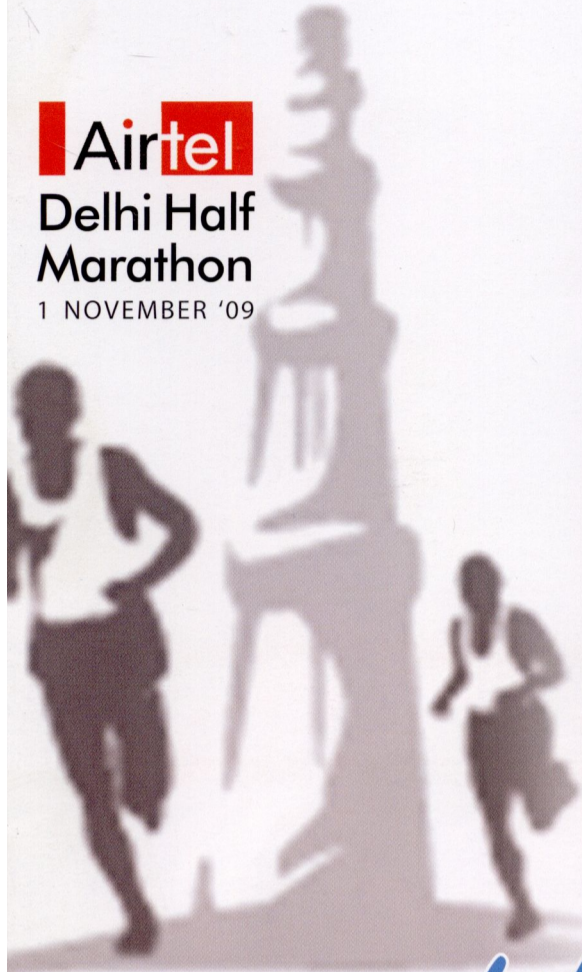
Virtual SIM remains another defining innovation from Comviva, which enables low income customers to enjoy the benefits of mobile telephony without

owning either a SIM or a handset. Virtual Phone, which has already received three prestigious awards, is expected to have a major impact on the uptake of mobile communications among the Base of Pyramid segments in Asia and Africa. A major first that Comviva partnered on was the move to a Managed VAS Services model with Bharti Airtel, first in Sri Lanka and more recently in India, where Comviva is managing the operator's 2,000+ VAS nodes.

Comviva celebrated its tenth anniversary in 2009. Through this decade, it has made a difference to the lives of millions of mobile customers and struck productive partnerships with operators across the world. Today, the intent is clear – Comviva aims to be the No.1 provider of VAS solutions in its chosen markets, based on a foundation of excellence, innovation and partnerships. ■

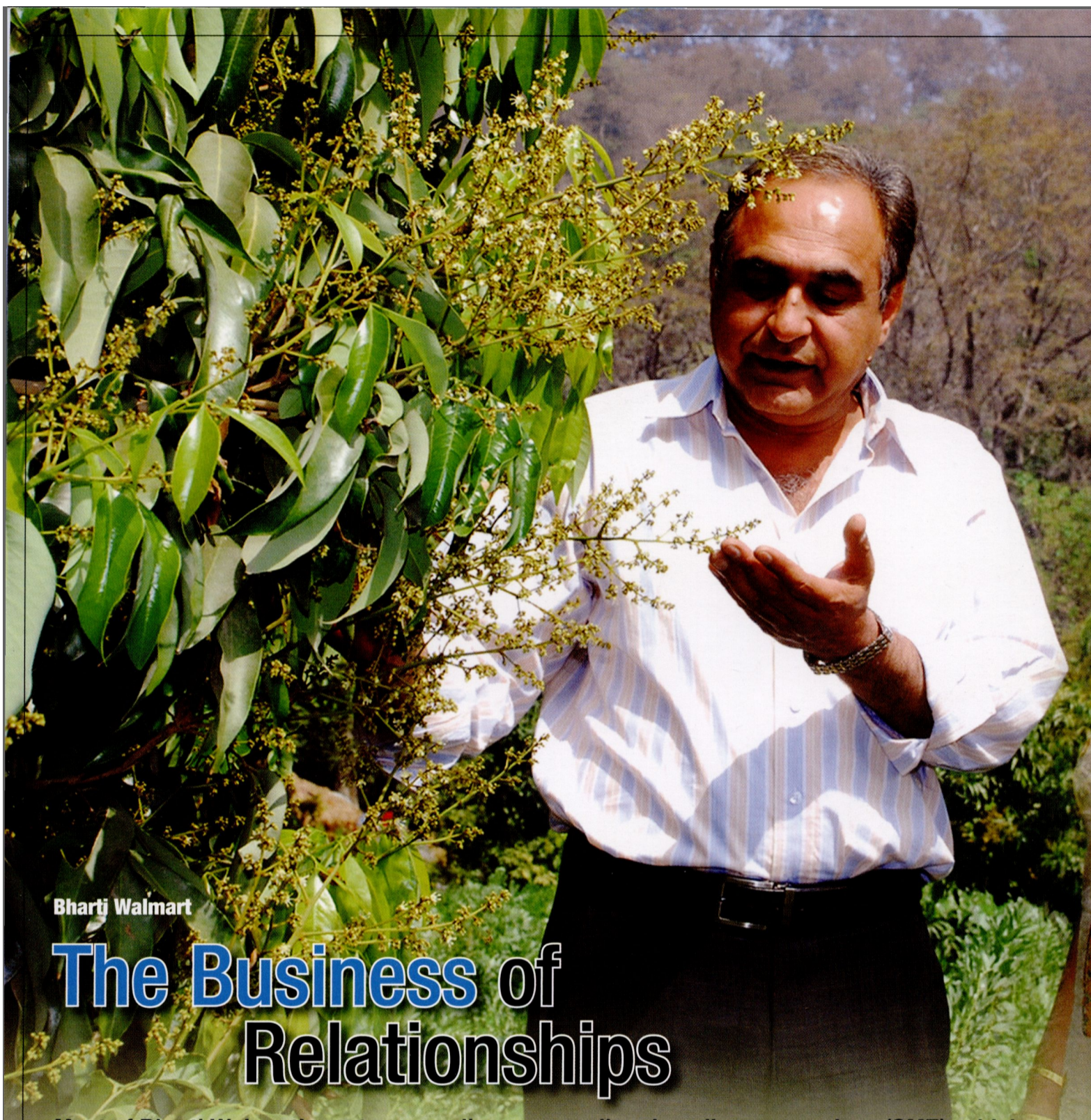
AIRTEL

**Airtel**  
Delhi Half  
Marathon  
1 NOVEMBER '09



*different moods...*





Bharti Walmart

## The Business of Relationships

Most of Bharti Walmart's partner suppliers are small and medium enterprises (SME), which produce quality products but could do well with some expert advice and support. A dedicated development team at Bharti Walmart works with the production processes of these suppliers and helps them upgrade themselves to global standards. We met two such suppliers who talked about life, growth and partnerships with Bharti Walmart.

### Jamming all the way

Among the scenic environs of Ramnagar, Nainital, Alka and Deepak Puri have made it their business to turn the choicest gifts of nature on to our dining tables. Mr. Puri's first love however was not food processing. Thirty years back he was busy being part of Bollywood, directing the likes of Padmini Kolhapuri and Raj Kumar in *Bulandi* and *Thodi Si Bewafai*. Even as he dreamed of

the Filmfare awards, destiny had carved out another path for him.

In the year 1986 Deepak Puri bid adieu to the tinsel world with *Love 86*. When asked what brought him back from the City of Dreams, Mr. Puri says, a faraway look in his eyes, "Father was not keeping well. I was needed at home - for him and

for our business." Deepak's father at the time looked after the family horticulture business, growing fruits and selling them in the surrounding markets as well as to wholesalers who further distributed these in various parts of the country. "Father had brought up those farms. I had to be there to keep them flourishing. I made a choice, and I am happy I did." Two years later, Alka

## PEOPLE



▲ Alka and Deepak Puri – waiting for harvest

joined Deepak in life and in business. She discontinued her career as a banker and instead brought her financial expertise to the family business. Lady luck smiled on the Puris in 2003, with Uttarakhand being declared an Agri Export Zone. The couple then set up Delicia Foods turning their farm produce into savory jams and marmalades. Slowly they started bagging deals with big names like Mother's Recipe and Dabur. Delicia was raring to go. All it needed was something more than just a professional contract.

"We started doing business with Bharti Walmart in 2008, supplying jams and marmalades to them. We were getting a lot of orders at the time and keeping

up was turning out to be difficult. Bharti Walmart helped install mechanical production equipment in our plant, which led to increased efficiency and easier production," says Mrs. Alka Puri, Director, Delicia Foods.

Walmart also arranged for an Accelerated Shelf-life Test for products and advised Delicia to start the process leading to an ISO 22000 certification, an international food safety management system. Mr. Puri puts it candidly, "When you are dealing with the pressure of a growing company, any mention of processes scares you. You are already struggling to put in place production processes, HR processes and so on. The benefits of a certification are

not easily understood then. The team from Bharti Walmart kept up the drive for the ISO 22000 certification till we finally gave in. Bharti Walmart's consistent support has a lot to do with where we are today."

After subsequent training, Delicia is now certified for ISO 22000, an international food safety management system. The company does business both in India and abroad with an annual turnover of approximately Rs. 2 crore. It has moved beyond just jams now, also producing canned fruits, baby corns and ready to eat vegetable curries. Bharti Walmart now also sources canned fruits and baby corn from Delicia.

"Had father been alive today, he would have been very happy," says a satisfied Mr. Puri with a calm smile. As they say, sometimes a smile can speak volumes.

### Mrs. Bakshi's Spicy Treats

Satinder Kaur vividly remembers the day she was invited to lunch at Sangeeta Bakshi's home. "There was mango pickle. I ate more pickle than sabzi... and packed some for home." Still not satisfied, Satinder also asked Sangeeta to make a jarful of pickle for her. "She was my shagun (lucky charm)," says Mrs. Sangeeta Bakshi, Managing Director, Astra Agro Foods, pointing to a beaming Ms. Kaur. Mrs. Bakshi has come a long way from that first jar of pickle.

Having taken to pickle making early on, Sangeeta was more than happy to oblige friendly requests from neighbours. But as requests started mounting, she had an idea. Colonel Bakshi seconded his daughter-in-law and Sangeeta who had been a home maker for six years, started on the path of entrepreneurship. She started production at home and later went on to set up a factory as business expanded, transforming into a businesswoman and a local celebrity!

When Bharti Walmart approached this budding entrepreneur, it encouraged her to upgrade her older equipment to high-grade stainless steel and improve production





▲ Taste Factory

***Bharti Walmart has always supported us in our growth. It's not business with Bharti Walmart, it's a relationship***



▲ Partners in growth: Jaspreet and Sangeeta Bakshi

hygiene in order to comply with international food safety standards. Bharti Walmart also led and encouraged Mrs. Bakshi to take up the GFSI (Global Food safety Initiative) processes which are now well underway. Today Astra Agro supplies mango, mixed, lime, and red and green chili pickles to Bharti Walmart for its private label.

"We entered into a partnership with Bharti Walmart in 2008. Before this we had been doing business with a lot of big names like Markfed and Safal, but the experience with Bharti Walmart has been very different. The team visits us every couple of months, interacts with our employees and gives suggestions. It's not business with Bharti Walmart; it's a relationship", says Mr. Jaspreet Bakshi, Sangeeta's husband and business partner.

Recalling a specific occasion, Mr. Bakshi says, "Bharti Walmart wanted the women to remove any glass accessories while at work. This was important to prevent any mishap and maintain hygiene, but this was easier said than done. Most of our employees are women for whom wearing bangles and mangalsutras holds immense cultural importance. Implicating a 'No glass' policy in such a scenario is not an easy job. But the team from Bharti Walmart was understanding and patient and finally we reached a solution." Employees now wear gloves and bibs to prevent their glass jewellery from accidentally breaking, or otherwise coming into contact with the pickles.

Astra today has an annual turnover of Rs. 3 - 4 Crore producing 2-3 tons of pickles and sauces daily. "The GFSI certificate, when it comes, will open international markets for us. We have achieved the quality standards for further expansion of business while maintaining product quality", said the pickle queen, when asked what secret formula she uses to rule the taste buds.

Way to go Mrs. Bakshi and three cheers to the Astra Agro - Bharti Walmart partnership!

# Tweeting on Airtel

Airtel brings Twitter to millions of mobiles



**B**harti Airtel, has signed an agreement with Twitter, the latest trend in Social Networking; allowing subscribers to send and receive SMS tweets. Airtel customers can now send and receive text messages via SMS to a short code, which will directly connect them on Twitter. Users will also be able to access links included in SMS tweets. Signing up is a simple process via SMS. The service is compatible with all handsets. This is the first for Twitter services to be provided other than on a web or a WAP site, adding a new feather to Airtel's cap.

There are already above 10 million tweets on the Airtel network.



# Bharti Airtel Expands International Footprint

Makes largest ever investment in Bangladesh

**B**harti Airtel Limited has stepped foot in Bangladesh, one of the few remaining large growth markets in Asia, with a 70% stake in Warid Telecom.

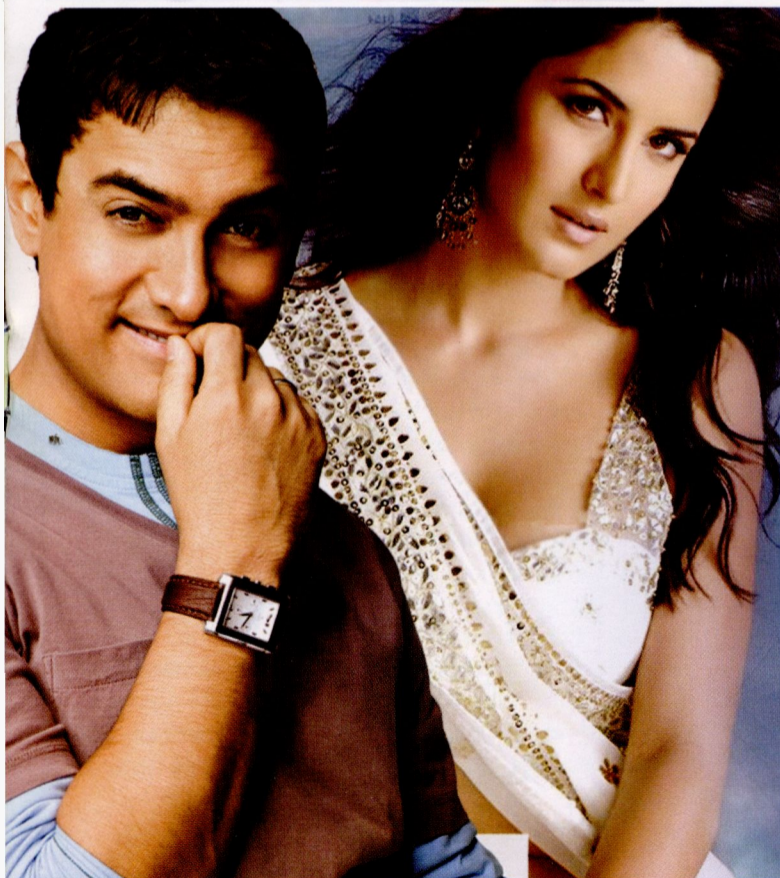
Warid Telecom, Bangladesh, currently a wholly owned subsidiary of the Dhabi group offers mobile services across all 64 districts of Bangladesh and has a total customer base of over 2.9 million. In this second international operation, Bharti Airtel will make a fresh investment of USD 300 million

to rapidly expand the operations and introduce innovative products and services. Dhabi group will continue as a strategic partner.

Bangladesh, with a population of over 160 million and tele-density of 32% is a very promising market for telecom services. Bharti has keenly set upon to contribute towards achieving the vision of a Digital Bangladesh even sooner than 2021.



▲ Sheikh Mahmood Nahayan, Dhabi Group with Manoj Kohli, CEO, IBG, Bharti Airtel



# Mobitude

India's First Mobile Phone Usage Survey

**T**hrough the first Bharti Airtel Mobile Phone Usage Survey-Mobitude, Bharti has captured the preference and choice of over 120 million Indian mobile users, spreading across different parameters. The mobile phone has increasingly become an intrinsic part of our daily lives, fulfilling both social and entertainment needs. Based on a compilation of data covering over 220 million downloads by Airtel mobile users, Airtel Mobitude captures mobile trends across India highlighting interesting and surprising choices.

- Katrina Kaif and Aamir Khan come across as being the most downloaded celebrities, beating the likes of Kareena Kapoor and Shahrukh Khan.
- The most celebrated occasions over a mobile phone were New Year followed by Diwali, Dusshera and interestingly Friendship Day.
- The study reflected that maximum music was downloaded in Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Tamil Nadu, Maharastra and Punjab, regional music being as popular as bollywood numbers.



## GROUP NEWS

**Bharti AXA General Insurance**

# Insuring Rural India

To tap the relatively unexplored rural market, Bharti AXA General Insurance has tied up with the Confederation of NGOs of Rural India (CNRI) UP Chapter, to bring customised insurance solutions to rural UP. CNRI will act as the Group Administrator for the products being offered to its members. The products are competitively priced, with unique covers aimed at livelihood sustenance, children's education fund and marriage fund for girl children. To ensure fast and hassle-free settlements, Bharti AXA GI will also be organising workshops for individuals and NGO's affiliated to CNRI- UP Chapter, covering training on products and processes.

For the urban user, the company has come up with the Smart Health-High Deductibles Insurance Policy, which protects buyer against unexpected long hospitalization where the medical expenses incurred exceed the benefits provided by his/her current mediclaim policy. The "top up" product is available with reasonable deductible options, making it more flexible for buyers.

**Beetel Teletech**

## Strengthening Portfolio



Beetel Teletech is strengthening its distribution business to further augment its reach and position in the enterprise communication market. Earlier, the company announced a distribution partnership with RAD Data Communications, a major international manufacturer of backhaul equipment for data communications and telecommunications applications. As part of this partnership, Bharti Teletech will market a complete range of RAD's patented, standards-compliant Next Generation network (NGN) solutions for Carrier Ethernet access, cellular backhaul, multiservice access, voice optimization and compression and VoIP for Indian customers. The company has also tied up with Avaya International Sales Limited to sell and distribute the entire portfolio of Avaya's Unified Communications and Contact Centers solutions and services across India.

**Fieldfresh Foods**

## Tasty Tie-up

The past year has seen Del Monte become a preferred choice among consumers and industrial users alike. Market leaders in the food and beverages segment have put their trust in the brand while catering to their customers. Millions of people get a taste of Del Monte's products whenever they frequent their favourite airline, hotel, restaurant or fast-food outlet. Café Coffee Day, Domino's, Subway, Barista and Indigo Airlines are some of the leading players in their respective categories who have chosen to join hands with Del Monte for reaching the hearts of their customers through their palettes. In the last quarter, Del Monte has entered new markets like Punjab, and added new products and packages to its range as well. With its increased distribution reach and expanding product range, Del Monte is clearly poised to reach new heights.



## GROUP NEWS

### Bharti Realty

## Expanding Horizons



**B**harti Realty is the proud owner of approx two million sq.ft. of quality office space in major Indian cities. This is expected to rise to three million sq.ft. by 2011, with the completion of the projects in the pipeline. Currently, the company is in the process of acquiring land parcels in the top seven cities of the country. This acquisition will also expand the company's retail horizons as it continues with commitment, on the path of infrastructural development in India.

Recently, Bharti Realty has purchased two and a half acres of land in the heart of Ludhiana city for developing a Mega Multiplex Mall, which is expected to be completed within two years. The company has also acquired four acres of land at Rajarhat, Kolkata - an area being developed as the IT/ITES hub of eastern India.

◀ Sigma Centre, IT/ITes facility at Infocity, Sector 34 Gurgaon

### Bharti AXA Life Insurance

## Innovating Term Insurance

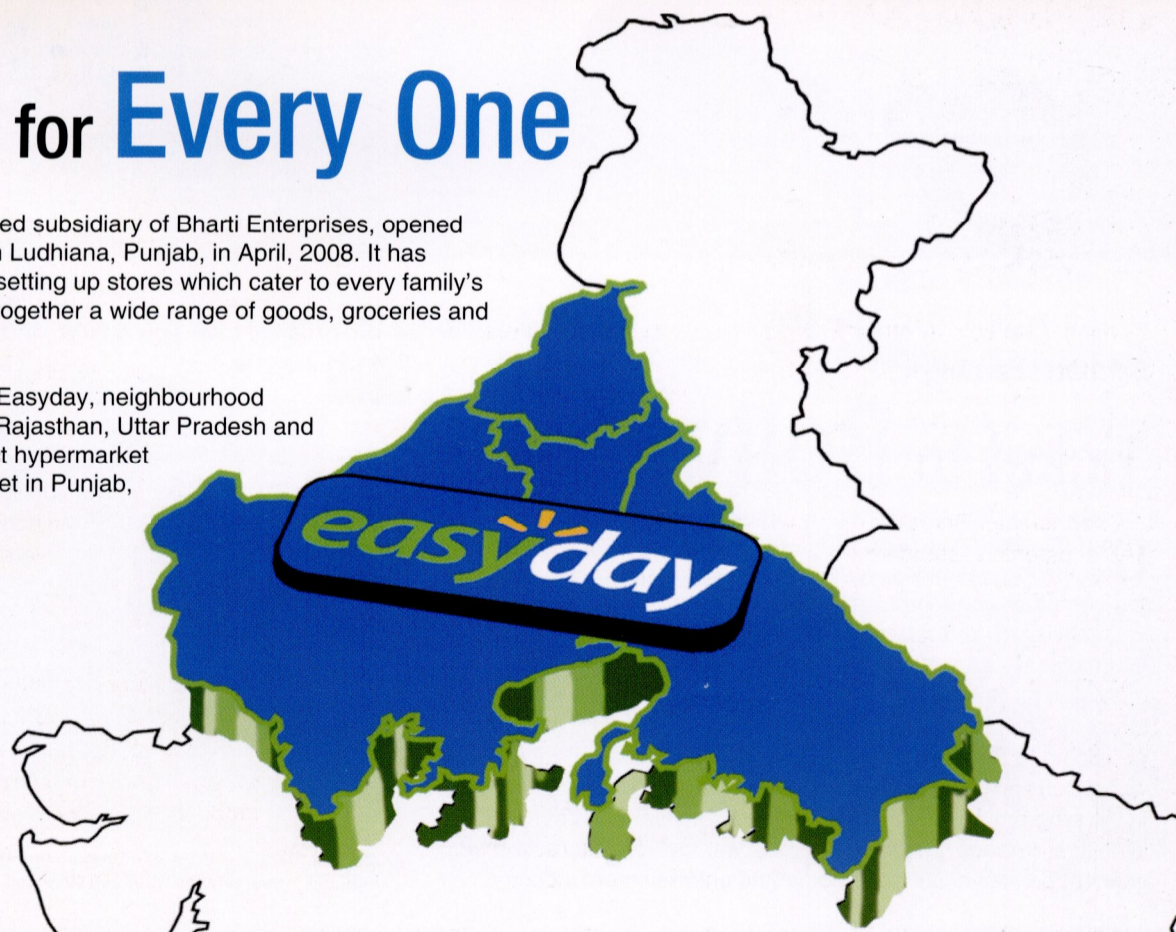
**B**harti AXA Life has a new reason for everyone to live life to the fullest with Elite Secure - the latest product to be added to the suite of life insurance solutions offered by the company. Elite Secure is more than just an innovative pure protection product. It is a truly long term protection plan and an industry first, which covers the policyholder up to the age of 75 years at industry-best rates!

### Bharti Retail

## Easy Days for Every One

**B**harti Retail a wholly owned subsidiary of Bharti Enterprises, opened the first Easyday store in Ludhiana, Punjab, in April, 2008. It has come long way since then, setting up stores which cater to every family's day to day needs, bringing together a wide range of goods, groceries and food products.

The Company operates 59 Easyday, neighbourhood stores in Punjab, Haryana, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh and Delhi NCR. It has 5 compact hypermarket stores called Easyday Market in Punjab, Uttar Pradesh and NCR.



## GROUP NEWS

Bharti Infratel

# Green Towers

The Telecom sector is one of the top energy consumers in India. For Bharti Infratel, approximately 85% of energy consumption is for running the mobile network on thousands of Base Telecom Stations (BTS), popularly known as telecom towers. Uninterrupted and adequate supply of power is crucial to the smooth running of these towers, which is rendered impossible by the inaccessibility and frequent power cuts of grid power. Inefficient energy consumption in a tower results in increased emission of green house gases, thus contributing to global warming.

Bharti Infratel, as part of its P7 project, has taken a pioneering approach towards the adoption of cleaner technologies for power generation and energy efficiency in telecom towers through the Solar Photo Voltaic. 500 towers are targeted in

the first phase of the project, out of which 280 have already completed installation.

The Solar Photo Voltaic uses sunlight from the atmosphere to generate electricity thus eliminating dependency on grid power. This is a stand alone system which can be installed on site. The installation process is easy and once installed the equipment needs almost zero maintenance, keeping operating costs at a minimum. Its life span of 25 years provides the site with a stable and permanent source of power, minus noise pollution or toxic emissions. Bharti Infratel is on its way to green power!

Centum Learning

# Ticket to Bollywood

Centum Learning has taken another step forward in their commitment towards world class quality in education. Recently the company announced the launch of specialized programmes in creative arts and sciences, in association with Whistling Woods International - an Institute for Film, TV Animation and Media Arts - promoted by Subhash Ghai's and Mukta Arts Limited, and Filmcity Mumbai. The programme aims at honing relevant skills in students, pertaining to the ever changing Media and Entertainment industry with a focus on overall personal development. Students participating in the program will get a joint certificate from Centum Learning and Whistling Woods. The programmes will include interaction with eminent professionals from media and entertainment industry.



▲ Sanjeev Duggal, CEO & ED, Centum and Ravi Gupta, ED, Whistling Woods sign the agreement, as Subhash Ghai and Rakesh Bharti Mittal watch on



# Schools With A Difference

**Satya Bharti Students working as Agents of Change in their local communities**

At Satya Bharti Schools children are encouraged to participate in various community development programmes to better appreciate their environment. Recently, the schools participated in the Design for Giving School contest, a Give India Foundation initiative. As part of the contest students identified one major problem affecting their village and worked towards its eradication. Three schools

featured among the top 20 participants. Five schools found a place in the Changemakers award category.

Students from Bagga Khurd, Ludhiana identified water stagnation as a serious issue affecting the village. Students went door to door cleaning every house while shouting slogans. Students from Dholeria Jagir, Jodhpur countered superstitious dependence on the local tantriks

by performing tricks which these tantriks used, explaining the scientific reasons behind these 'miracles'. Students from Kolila, Neemrana took up road safety measures as their issue acting upon the 100 deaths that have occurred in the past four years. Students from Belwa Ranaji cleaned the premises of historical monuments within their village while Kolila, Neemrana took up road safety measures. ■



**Special Jury Award goes to students of Lordi Dejgara, Jodhpur, Rajasthan!**

Lordi undertook a campaign against child marriage. Having seen a number of their friends getting married or engaged at an early age, students identified this as a serious peril affecting their community. Children performed role-plays against child marriage and talked with senior community members about the issue. Results were evident as parents of eleven students came forward to sign a pledge against marrying their children at an early age.

# Wings of Confidence

21st March 2010.

“Never had I thought that I would finally learn English through my mobile. But today I feel very proud that I can speak and write in English. Back home in Khairthal, those who spoke English were looked upon as a completely different species. My father was a school teacher, but even he could not speak English; no one could in our village. We kids always wanted to learn English, but that dream came true for me only last month.

I heard from someone in office that you can learn English on your mobile. Airtel has this course which has been adapted from BBC. It has something called “English plus” course but Airtel has specially converted this to suit Indian users and our typical situations.

Since I had an Airtel connection I enrolled. First they taught me the basics. Then the lessons were based on real life situations such as making a friend, making a sale call and attending an interview. Soon I was able to talk quite fluently and express myself in English.

After taking this course I am respected in office. They no longer have to dictate each and every word to me. In fact the other day I actually pointed out a spelling error! Last week my boss gave me a special award for being the ‘Best Data Entry Operator.’

And you know what? I found out that English is not the only language you can learn. There are nine languages - Hindi, Bengali, Marathi, Punjabi, Gujarati, Telugu, Tamil, Kannada, and Malayalam. I think I will start learning Gujarati now, or maybe Bengali.



Newfound confidence – Kapish Sharma ▶

Address your contributions, thoughts and suggestions to:  
Corporate Communications, Bharti Enterprises Limited  
Bharti Crescent, 1, Nelson Mandela Road, Vasant Kunj, Phase II, New Delhi - 110070. E-mail: [corporate.communication@bharti.in](mailto:corporate.communication@bharti.in)