

First-of-its-kind in Odisha, Swagat Kar made his entrepreneurial debut with Bookticketnow

E-RETAILER OF FILM TICKETS



Swagat Kar

KASTURI RAY | BHUBANESWAR

Much before he was armed with an engineering degree (2011) in computer science from NMIET, Bhubaneswar, Swagat Kar had already become an entrepreneur. In his third year, when most of his batchmates were gearing up for campus recruitment, he was conceptualising *www.bookticketnow.com*, an e-retailer of movie and event tickets. Swagat had already chosen to tread a different path — become an entrepreneur like his father, a dream he had been nurturing since his childhood.

What began as a college project took definite shape when Swagat realised the problems that youngsters faced while booking film and event tickets. “The concept of booking tickets online was prevalent in other parts of the country but nobody in Odisha had thought of starting such a venture. So I thought why not develop the site and see the response,” explains Swagat.

He started the website, a first-of-its-kind in the state under W3Craft, his own company, and began bookings with just two employees — now he employs five people. An initial investment of ₹2 lakh is fetching Swagat a turnover of more than ₹1 crore annually. “The concept was non-existent, so it was difficult for me to convince theatre owners. It took me four months to get my proposal through and once it started, I got overwhelming response — I sold 400 tickets on day one. Money was never

a concern since such startups don’t require huge amounts. I got a lot of support from my father, who was initially skeptical about my decision to start a business than take a job. Once he was convinced, I had no other issues to deal with,” says Swagat, who considers his father as his role model. From business decisions to tips, he gets it all from him.

“His success has opened my eyes about the potential youngsters have these days.

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It is beyond my expectation and the time has come when I look up to him for help in my business,” says Biren Kumar Kar, Swagat’s father. Bookticketnow is operating in five major towns in Odisha, Uttar Pradesh and Assam. “We are selling 2,000 tickets a day,” he says.

The 23-year-old has many ‘to-do’ lists. “I would try to expand the functionality of the website to other states and towns. I also want to start an online supermarket and get into bus ticketing. Online booking of bus tickets is already there but it has not been a regulated thing and I would give it a disciplined approach through my site. I am also into film distributorship and we are achieving good results. I am trying to add more events to my online ticketing calendar but there are not many in Odisha,” he explains.

Marketing is largely on Facebook. Swagat also relies on word-of-mouth to rake in customers. “Online promotion spreads like wildfire and I have achieved the response that I had always desired,” he asserts. Swagat loves watching movies and *Hum Dil De Chuke Sanam* is his favourite. He completed Class X in 2005 from DAV School, Chandrasekharpur, and Class XII from Times College, Bhubaneswar, in 2007. Swagat speaks with measured precision when he is not contemplating, which is very rare in someone of his age.

— kasturi@newindianexpress.com



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FRIENDLY COACH

R KALPANA

CHENNAI

She is the founder of The Academy for Communication and Learning



COMMUNICATION BLOCK

Kavita just came back from a meeting and sat at her work station feeling shattered and disappointed. She wonders why she fears to speak and didn’t have the courage to get her ideas across in the meeting. Kavita was amazed at how her other colleagues, Dilip and Veena, were able to present their ideas and thoughts so effortlessly, when she was totally speechless at all the opportunities that were given. She feels she went unnoticed.

HER BACKGROUND

Kavita hails from a small town near Bangalore. After finishing two months of orientation with a multinational company after being recruited from a reputed management college, she was placed at the Bangalore division office along with 100 people. She always had difficulty in communicating effectively and putting forward her ideas clearly as she feared she may be wrong or may be ridiculed. She didn’t know how to organise her thoughts or put thoughts into words.

MY TWO CENTS

With my experience in human resource, I have found that youngsters and even experienced professionals have a long way to go in terms of communication skills. Academically, they may be brilliant — they understand and are able to clear the aptitude tests, selection process, etc. But unfortunately, after joining work, they are not able to emerge as successful professionals or make a special place for themselves in their organisation. I would like to tell all of them the following:

Listening, questioning, body language, pacing, selection of correct words, written communication — all these are essential ingredients for effective communication. The majority think it is necessary to speak in English, but we are mistaken. We need to make an impact in whatever language we speak. Language skills enhance communication — communication by itself is a very critical skill and we need to nurture and develop certain fine elements in communication which can add a lot of value to the final output. Students and working professionals have to get rid of the fear and start communicating without inhibitions. Not all of us are born as great communicators, we need to acquire the skill. Please remember that communication and presentation skills are important for a successful personal and professional life.

— kalpana@acl-india.com