



## Tales from the other side (of the globe)

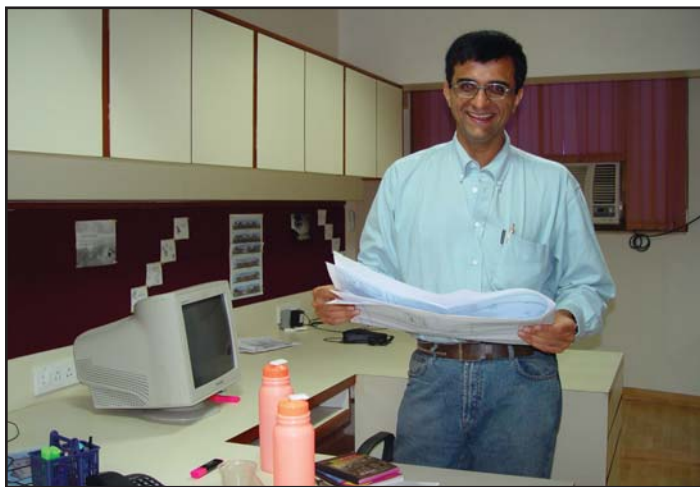
### *An interview with Suresh Ramani*

by Beatrice Mulzer

During the December, 2006 trip to Mumbai, India, I had the pleasure of meeting many industrious Microsoft Partners and learning heaps of business and other etiquette that proved the tourism slogan "Incredible India" more than true. Many of you have heard the term "outsourcing," and most likely you picture an American behemoth computer company using a call center in India, staffed with three shifts of low-wage, cubicle dwelling, just-out-of-school personnel, to provide hardware, tech, or other support functions.

I got to meet Suresh Ramani during the SMB Nation-sponsored "Networking Party" on a perfect Mumbai evening on the outdoor patio of the H<sub>2</sub>O club, overlooking one of the busy and colorful intersections in the Bandra district. Ramani is the chief consultant of Techgyan ([www.techgyan.com](http://www.techgyan.com)), an Information Technology Services Company based in Mumbai. Techgyan focuses on providing solutions to small and medium businesses using Microsoft Technologies, primarily Windows Small Business Server, Windows Terminal Services and MS Exchange.

Ramani describes details about his business, his HP server, backup batteries office setup and the services Techgyan provides to its customers. He also mentions providing CAD (computer aided design) services to an American company.



*Suresh Ramani reviewing a CAD design that his team is currently working on.*

### How it got started

Now how would a Small Business Specialist in India end up being the outsourcing source for an Arizona, US firm? Ramani explains, "I knew a person who was working

as a Project Architect with a mid-sized Architectural firm in the USA. Sometime in the second half of 2003, I discussed with him the idea of offshoring of CAD services. For a few months, every Sunday evening from 10 p.m. to 11 p.m. India time we would chat using MSN. He discussed this with his management, and so the idea was born."

Starting in March, 2004, the initial work involved CAD plans which were "red-lined" for changes. Ramani would receive the red-lined input files in jpeg format, as well as the drawing file where changes had to be incorporated. He would complete the assignment by making the changes and then uploading them for retrieval in the US.

"What started as picking up of basic red lines," says Ramani, "Has reached a stage where we are doing complex work like construction of elevations, changing xref files, and so forth." Ramani's plan is to provide dedicated resources for the customer. Therefore, a CAD operator allocated for a customer will only work for that specific customer. This ensures consistency in output and also confidentiality. Today, in December, 2006, this has now grown to a dedicated team of five CAD operators working with one customer.

### Benefits to the Customer

Ramani quickly sums up six benefits of this type of business model.

1. Due to the 12-hour time gap, when the US office is about to close, files are uploaded and available at daybreak in India. These are worked on by the India Team and urgent files completed and delivered at the end of the India day, which is then early morning in the US. Now that is 24-hour service!
2. There is a cost advantage to the customer. Typical India cost-per-person, including overhead, is about 25% of the US cost. (In general I have found though that the more a company works with US companies, the more closely fees are aligned to the American market price.)
3. Every firm needs to have some extra capacity available to handle peak work load. So the US Customer can invest in the extra capacity in India, which costs him much less compared to paying overtime in the US.
4. The quality of work is as good as in the US, or training will be implemented to achieve the level of quality that is available in the US.
5. The dollars saved in CAD work can be invested in

Project Managers based in the US, thus increasing profitability.

6. Bids for new projects can become more competitive, and thus business can be increased without affecting Gross Margins.

### What the future holds

Having had success with this business model, Techgyan looks forward to continuing to set up dedicated teams for other customers. At this point Ramani is actively looking for partners in the US who can interface between customers and Techgyan to get the operation on its feet.

As far as I am concerned, this will result in a win-win situation for everyone. The effects of globalization are not reserved for large enterprise businesses only, but will also benefit small- and medium-sized businesses that think quickly on their feet.

Suresh Ramani can be reached at [sramani@techgyan.com](mailto:sramani@techgyan.com) ■

### Stay tuned

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