

Advanc'edge®

November 2018

Mastering Business Acumen

Mumbai | Volume XV | Issue 4

Specialisation Issue #1

All you need to know about

customers analysis research
 brand strategy
 product analytics
 target strategy teamwork leads

MARKETING



INSIDE

Cover Story: All you need to know about marketing
MBA Buzz: MBA helps at every step: A real life story

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from the editor

Think about this. Right now, you're a marketer. Think of yourself as studying, living, breathing marketing. Because ultimately, getting into a business school is all about marketing.

With less than a month left to go for the CAT, you're studying hard, in your last stage of prep, working on your mocks and test taking strategies. That's you working on your market research, playing with data and trying to find the right model and strategy.

Then, on November 25, you will take the CAT. That's you actually going to the market, launching your product.

Later, when your results are in, you'll be going through the next stage of admissions, the most important of which is the personal interview round. Naturally, this is where you'll be trying to convince the B-school to give you an admit, which is you using your marketing pitch (what you say during your interview) to sell your product – you!

At the end of the day, the B-school is your customer, and it is how you position yourself through your tests and resume and interview that will convince them to purchase, or in other words, select you!

Forgive me, this is a rather crude way of putting it. But this is true of almost every aspect of your life. Everything you see and use every day is the result of a careful marketing strategy designed to deliver the product / service into your hands. It might be a car or the TV, the phone or the laptop, or even this magazine you're reading right now. And this issue is dedicated to explaining to you, dear reader, what Marketing is all about.

The next few issues of Advanc'edge MBA will be dedicated to exploring the various MBA fields – Finance, HR, IT, etc. I believe they will help you understand what to expect of these fields, so that you're better prepared as you face that interview panel.

And of course, as far as the CAT is concerned, it is the first hurdle, and not the most difficult one. Keep your cool, stay composed, remember everything you've done until now, and you'll find that cracking the CAT isn't too much of an uphill task.

All the best.

Aditya Prakash Iengar

Editor

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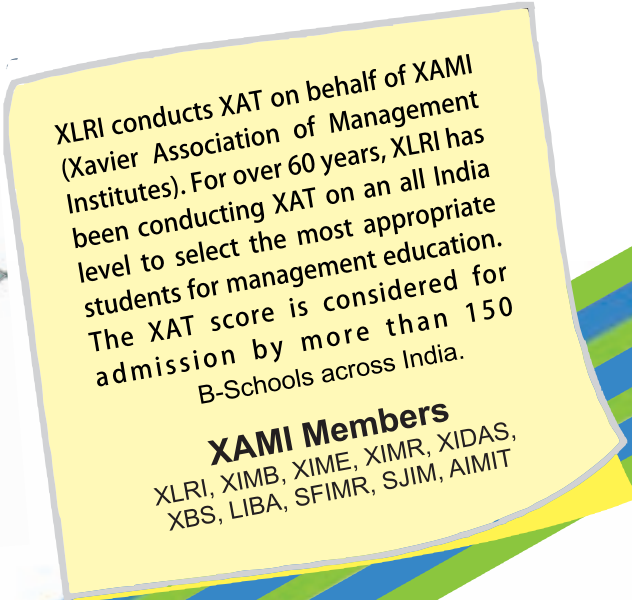


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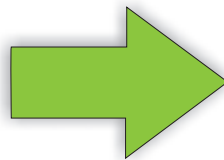
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What is Marketing, & why is it important?

For any organisation, Marketing is one of the most important business functions, if not the most critical. Broadly speaking, Marketing helps companies communicate with customers, but it is much, much more. In this article, we explore what exactly is meant by Marketing, and what it entails.

Amarendra V Singh

Mentor, IMS

Business Head, www.goFYI.in

There has probably never been a time when effective marketing has been more important than at present for businesses and enterprises. The role that marketing plays in guiding corporate strategies is crucial, and yet, it still remains the weak link for many companies in how they connect with customers.

The value of marketing

As an MBA aspirant, you must surely have gathered the basics of the primary business functions, e.g. Marketing, Finance, Operations, Accounting, Supply Chain & Logistics, and other business functions. All these business functions apart from Marketing won't really matter without sufficient demand (to be able to drive profits) for a company's products or services. To put it simply, there must be revenue for there to be a profit! Therefore, a firm's financial success often depends on its marketing acumen.

The value of marketing also extends to society as a whole

– it helps introduce products that ease and/or enrich people's lives. Successful marketing builds demand for such products and services, which, in turn, creates jobs. By contributing to the bottom line, successful marketing also allows firms to more fully engage in socially responsible activities.

important business function), or with a classical business naïveté of giving consumers what they want. To many others, it is about 'advertising and promotions', laced with the new-age terms such as digital or social media marketing. Then there are several others who think of marketing as market research, or the process

How marketing benefits businesses

- It builds strong brands
- It creates loyal customers
- It protects from competition
- It increases negotiating power
- And in doing all of these, it increase profits!

How marketing benefits society

- It helps build strong companies, thereby creating new jobs
- It increases innovation and competition, which enhance people's lives
- It informs and protects consumers

But, really, what IS marketing?

Marketing, as a business function, has been misinterpreted and over-simplified in the past and continues to be as such. In fact, very often, marketing is confused to be merely a fancy word for 'selling' (which in itself is a very

of finding out what the customers really want.

Unfortunately, such misinterpretations and over-simplifications cause a lot of confusion about marketing as a business function and its importance to businesses, and

The American Marketing Association (AMA), a professional association for marketing professionals, defines Marketing as, “Marketing is the activity, set of institutions, and processes for creating, communicating, delivering, and exchanging offerings that have value for customers, clients, partners, and society at large.” (approved on July 2013)

Marketing is not only:

Selling

Advertising and Promotion

Shopping

Something sassy

Cost center with little or no direct impact

Theoretical

English! [Au contraire, marketing practice is derived from observation of experience and theorisation about cause and effect in commercial exchange process. In that aspect, marketing is extremely analytical]

Digital Marketing, International Marketing, etc. In addition to the classroom and practicum, several B-schools have student-driven marketing clubs, which take up short-term projects that apply marketing principals.

Potential career paths

There can be various career paths for Marketing MBA graduates. While the titles may differ from what have been listed here, the roles and responsibilities will remain the same -

Brand Manager or **Marketing Manager** or **Product Manager** at the highest level supervises the marketing function for a company’s specific brand. Based on their roles and responsibilities, the Brand Managers often are like small business owners within a company. It is their responsibility to refine a brand’s essence, map out their direct and indirect competitors, identify marketing opportunities, and be able to effectively communicate the unique benefits of that product or service.

.....

As a **Marketing MBA** student, you may be interested in either **Business-to-Business (B2B)** or **Business-to-Consumer (B2C)** marketing.

.....

Sales Manager or **Business Development Manager** is responsible for implementing business development plans for either an organisation or a particular division within that organisation. They attempt to determine business level objectives and identify opportunities based on market analysis and research, and execute approved business plans and lead their implementation. Usually, the primary objective of a Sales Manager or a Business Development Manager is to

increase a company’s market share in the target categories. In that sense, they develop and execute marketing and business plans to support products and services, and also look for new business opportunities.

Market Research Manager is responsible for the marketing intelligence function of the marketing organisation. To support marketing actions, they collect, analyse and interpret data from the marketplace, and look at the trends and consumer behaviours. With data and analyses, they develop new concepts or ideas for company’s products, services, or business direction in general. They may also provide support in various other decision-making activities (such as new projects by the company) by analysing the project scope and proposal, and determine whether the expected benefits from these projects justify expenditures.

Internet / Online Marketing Manager is responsible for exploiting a range of Internet-based avenues such as social media, pay-per-click marketing, search engine optimisation and website content, etc, to create awareness about a company’s products and services. Increasingly, they collaborate with other roles described above by sharing data and insights to help them. **A**

The writer holds an MBA from Kelley Business School with a double major in Marketing and Finance specialisations. He has worked with companies like Cummins, BHEL and Wells Fargo. He is currently a Business Head and Mentor at IMS.

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'Be consistent, don't lose momentum'



...says **APAN KALRA**, a second year MBA student at MDI Gurgaon. In conversation with **Kalyani Majumdar**, Apan talks about his decision to pursue an MBA in Marketing and how consistency helps in cracking the CAT.

Q. Was doing MBA always on your mind?

I graduated with a B.Tech in Computer Science and Engineering from SVNIT, Surat, and I started working for Mu Sigma Business Solutions, an analytics firm in Bangalore. While working there, I felt the first trigger to pursue an MBA. I would work on a project where I had to do simple analyses and give the results to the client, and they would take business decisions such as deciding on pricing, offers, and how to increase sales and optimise them. I was really excited to see the process of a business decision based on my analysis, and I felt that an MBA would provide me a good career path, as it would help me understand the business aspect of an industry.

Q. Why did you choose an MBA in Marketing?

Right from when I decided to pursue an MBA degree, I knew I wanted to do it in Marketing, as I felt that there were certain skill sets that I already had, like networking and interacting with people, asking the right questions to know them better, understanding their needs and behaviour. Also, back in college, I'd been part of a marketing event during our fest, where I had to promote the event, and I enjoyed driving and successfully launching the event. I knew then that I could hone these skills at a good B-school, and I could definitely see myself studying marketing as my field of specialisation.

Q. Why did you select MDI Gurgaon as your MBA destination?

I was very clear about pursuing MBA in Marketing. When I weighed my options, choosing MDI was easy, as the institute's USP has always been Marketing. Also, its location advantage was a great factor, since the Delhi NCR region is a hub for all big corporate firms. I

also liked that they take fewer students in each batch as compared to other B-schools, so the faculty can give more personalised attention to each student.

Q. Did your work experience help you in handling the tests and personal interviews?

Yes, it did. My work experience helped me handle the pressure. Working at Mu Sigma prepared me to handle hectic schedules, and the constant pressure to finish a task within a given deadline helped me immensely while taking the CAT, as it had a time constraint. Managing the time is always tricky, but it was a familiar feeling and I knew how to cope with it.

Q. Did you adopt any strategy to crack the CAT? Were there any hurdles in your preparation?

I took around 6 months to prepare for the CAT, while holding down a job. I started with the basic Quant, Verbal books. Initially, I planned to study everyday for 2 hours at least. But because of work pressure, I couldn't follow through with my plan, and when I sat for SimCATs, I realised that my basics were still not quite in place. It was then that I realised that I had to be consistent with my test preparations. At least for the CAT, you cannot follow a strategy to sit for 10 hours one day and then neglect it for the next three days.

Q. Do you think sitting for mock tests really helped you?

I was regularly taking mock tests and analysing them, and they really helped me find my bearing. I realised that reading comprehension and verbal was my problem area. So I used the mock tests and my analysis of them to identify and work on my problem areas.

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Q. What is your take on group studies?

For me, group studies really worked out well as I was weak in verbal. I discussed with friends who were strong in verbal and tried to improve in that area. As you practise more, you subconsciously develop and understand the concept, and that is a major advantage of group study. In DI-LR and Quant, we had to figure out new ways to solve problems, and sometimes there would be questions I had not solved yet, but someone in the group had, and vice versa, so we would share notes. Also, there were questions that I was taking longer to solve, so we would discuss it in the group and find a quicker way to solve it.

Q. How did you approach the CAT on D-day?

On the day of the exam, I woke up had a good breakfast and got into a taxi. I did not study or even think about the exam. On my way to the test center, I listened to two of my favourite songs that inspire me a lot. This helped me clear the clutter in my mind and stay focused during the exam.

Q. Tell us about your group discussion and personal interview experiences at MDI.

I found out about the process at MDI beforehand, and so, just two days before my GD and PI rounds, I practised writing on multiple topics within the word count and time constraint that they usually ask you to. This really helped me on the day of the GD. After they tell you to write on a particular topic, they conduct a GD on the same topic, and my GD went very well.

But my favourite part in the selection process was the PI. It was a 10-minute interview, and they asked me to talk about myself. I told them about my education, my two key projects at Mu Sigma and about my hobbies. They picked up on my Mu Sigma projects and asked me questions regarding them. And it really helped that I had given mock interviews before. So I was well prepared.

Q. What are the important points one must remember before going for a PI?

Be conversational and friendly. This really improves your chances of getting selected. Be very thorough with your answers and your resume, and most importantly, you must be thorough about yourself. Answering about yourself must become second nature to you. Try to figure out the brownie points on your resume that they might ask you about. Circle points that you would like to be asked questions on and then build stories around them. Also, you must know about the B-school whose interview you're sitting for. What does the institute stand for? Why do you want to be

in that B-school?

Q. Any suggestions for those that are preparing for the CAT?

Prepare and work hard. Returns from this hard work will be very high. Put continuous effort, and try not to lose momentum at any point of time. Keep giving mocks and keep analysing them, and you will see everything else will fall into place.

Q. What according to you are some of the benefits of studying at MDI?

The first three months are very hectic, of course. However, after a point, MDI gives you liberty and space to develop your skills and work on yourself. It lets you pick your own pace. You will get ample opportunities to pursue your interests. I feel it is very important to get that space, as it helps you understand yourself and develop into a mature individual who can take their own decisions and decide what is best for him/her. You have an opportunity to be part of different activities pertaining to academics, dramatics and so on. I personally love Table Tennis, and I play that outside the curriculum. The faculty are extremely helpful and approachable. The campus is very nicely designed with lot of green area and is a peaceful place.

Q. What are your personal learnings after joining a B-school?

I am more industry ready than ever before. I know what works for me and what doesn't. I understand how exactly I can contribute to a project. In the first three months, I learned a lot of new things as we interacted with some of the various industry stalwarts who came to the campus. Also, you learn how to conduct yourself in all situations. I pursue my hobbies and I have become far more disciplined. I have a better understanding of myself, and that is very important.

Q. Anything you would like to share with future MBA aspirants?

The first hurdle is the CAT, and so, prepare well in advance. In the last one or two days before the exam, just relax. The best way to perform well in your exams is to not be bogged down by pressure. If you are worried about whether to choose marketing, finance or HR, don't fret. You will get the opportunity to explore all the fields for one year before you make that decision. After giving a lot of mock interviews, you have a good reading of yourself and your personality, it gets easier to choose a field. **A**

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Top Marketing B-Schools: Global

Stanford Graduate School of Business, Stanford University

City / State / Country	Stanford, California, USA
Program Name	MBA
FT Global MBA Ranking 2018	1
% Students placed in Marketing functions	22%
Average Salary (Marketing)	\$ 1,28,500
Median Salary (Marketing)	\$ 1,28,750
Average Salary (Overall)	\$ 1,44,455
Median Salary (Overall)	\$ 1,40,000

Harvard Business School, Harvard University

City / State / Country	Boston, Massachusetts, USA
Program Name	MBA
FT Global MBA Ranking 2018	5
% Students placed in Marketing functions	18%
Average Salary (Marketing)	NA
Median Salary (Marketing)	\$ 1,25,000
Average Salary (Overall)	NA
Median Salary (Overall)	\$ 1,35,000

Kellogg School of Management, Northwestern University

City / State / Country	Evanston, Illinois, USA
Program Name	MBA
FT Global MBA Ranking 2018	12
% Students placed in Marketing functions	19%
Average Salary (Marketing)	\$ 1,14,865
Median Salary (Marketing)	\$ 1,15,000
Average Salary (Overall)	\$ 1,29,529
Median Salary (Overall)	\$ 1,27,000

Tuck School of Business, Dartmouth College

City / State / Country	Hanover, New Hampshire, USA
Program Name	MBA
FT Global MBA Ranking 2018	16
% Students placed in Marketing functions	21%
Average Salary (Marketing)	\$ 1,14,766
Median Salary (Marketing)	\$ 1,16,000
Average Salary (Overall)	\$ 1,27,986
Median Salary (Overall)	\$ 1,25,000

Haas School of Business, University of California Berkeley

City / State / Country	Berkeley, California, USA
Program Name	MBA
FT Global MBA Ranking 2018	10
% Students placed in Marketing functions	27%
Average Salary (Marketing)	\$ 1,21,895
Median Salary (Marketing)	\$ 1,21,000
Average Salary (Overall)	\$ 1,25,573
Median Salary (Overall)	\$ 1,25,000

Stephen M. Ross School of Business, University of Michigan

City / State / Country	Ann Arbor, Michigan, USA
Program Name	MBA
FT Global MBA Ranking 2018	26
% Students placed in Marketing functions	20%
Average Salary (Marketing)	\$ 1,16,509
Median Salary (Marketing)	\$ 1,15,000
Average Salary (Overall)	\$ 1,24,702
Median Salary (Overall)	\$ 1,23,000

**NYU Leonard N. Stern School of Business,
New York University**

City / State / Country	New York, New York, USA
Program Name	MBA
FT Global MBA Ranking 2018	23
% Students placed in Marketing functions	19%
Average Salary (Marketing)	\$ 1,11,255
Median Salary (Marketing)	\$ 1,10,000
Average Salary (Overall)	\$ 1,22,125
Median Salary (Overall)	\$ 1,25,000

**McCombs School of Business,
University of Texas at Austin**

City / State / Country	Austin, Texas, USA
Program Name	MBA
FT Global MBA Ranking 2018	44
% Students placed in Marketing functions	26%
Average Salary (Marketing)	\$ 1,18,176
Median Salary (Marketing)	NA
Average Salary (Overall)	\$ 1,21,431
Median Salary (Overall)	\$ 1,25,000

**Anderson School of Management,
University of California Los Angeles**

City / State / Country	Los Angeles, California, USA
Program Name	MBA
FT Global MBA Ranking 2018	25
% Students placed in Marketing functions	22%
Average Salary (Marketing)	\$ 1,15,757
Median Salary (Marketing)	\$ 1,20,000
Average Salary (Overall)	\$ 1,19,964
Median Salary (Overall)	\$ 1,23,000

**Goizueta Business School,
Emory University**

City / State / Country	Atlanta, Georgia, USA
Program Name	MBA
FT Global MBA Ranking 2018	47
% Students placed in Marketing functions	19%
Average Salary (Marketing)	NA
Median Salary (Marketing)	\$ 1,07,000
Average Salary (Overall)	\$ 1,19,665
Median Salary (Overall)	\$ 1,20,000

**Tepper School of Business,
Carnegie Mellon University**

City / State / Country	Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, USA
Program Name	MBA
FT Global MBA Ranking 2018	40
% Students placed in Marketing functions	25%
Average Salary (Marketing)	\$ 1,14,036
Median Salary (Marketing)	\$ 1,15,000
Average Salary (Overall)	\$ 1,19,050
Median Salary (Overall)	\$ 1,20,000

**Marshall School of Business,
University of Southern California**

City / State / Country	Los Angeles, California, USA
Program Name	MBA
FT Global MBA Ranking 2018	59
% Students placed in Marketing functions	23%
Average Salary (Marketing)	\$ 1,14,839
Median Salary (Marketing)	\$ 1,15,000
Average Salary (Overall)	\$ 1,15,309
Median Salary (Overall)	\$ 1,15,000



**Kenan-Flagler Business School,
University of North Carolina**

City / State / Country	Chapel Hill, North Carolina, USA
Program Name	MBA
FT Global MBA Ranking 2018	37
% Students placed in Marketing functions	21%
Average Salary (Marketing)	NA
Median Salary (Marketing)	\$ 1,00,000
Average Salary (Overall)	\$ 1,11,082
Median Salary (Overall)	\$ 1,10,000

**Kelley School of Business,
Indiana University**

City / State / Country	Bloomington, Indiana, USA
Program Name	MBA
FT Global MBA Ranking 2018	57
% Students placed in Marketing functions	34%
Average Salary (Marketing)	NA
Median Salary (Marketing)	\$ 1,05,500
Average Salary (Overall)	\$ 1,10,000
Median Salary (Overall)	\$ 1,05,500

**Olin Business School,
Washington University at St Louis**

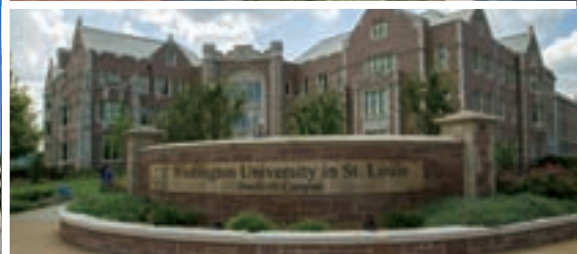
City / State / Country	St. Louis, Missouri, USA
Program Name	MBA
FT Global MBA Ranking 2018	81
% Students placed in Marketing functions	20%
Average Salary (Marketing)	\$ 1,09,900
Median Salary (Marketing)	\$ 1,06,000
Average Salary (Overall)	\$ 1,07,600
Median Salary (Overall)	\$ 1,08,000

**SDA Bocconi School of Management,
Bocconi University**

City / State / Country	Milan [□] , [□] Lombardy [□] , Italy
Program Name	MBA
FT Global MBA Ranking 2018	29
% Students placed in Marketing functions	25%
Average Salary (Marketing)	NA
Median Salary (Marketing)	NA
Average Salary (Overall)	NA
Median Salary (Overall)	€ 80,628

**ESADE,
Ramon Llull University**

City / State / Country	Barcelona, Catalonia, Spain
Program Name	MBA
FT Global MBA Ranking 2018	20
% Students placed in Marketing functions	31%
Average Salary (Marketing)	€ 82,807
Median Salary (Marketing)	NA
Average Salary (Overall)	€ 94,261
Median Salary (Overall)	NA





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LAST DATE

PG programs-Dec 07, 2018

PhD program-Feb 28, 2019

UG programs-May 31, 2019



Top Marketing B-Schools: India

Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad	
City / State / Country	Ahmedabad, Gujarat
Program Name	PGP
NIRF Rank 2018	1
% Students placed in Marketing functions	24%
Average Salary (Marketing) [LPA]	15.81
Average Salary (Overall) [LPA]	22.57
Median Salary (Overall) [LPA]	22
Top Marketing Companies Hiring - Hindustan Unilever, CK Birla, P&G, Nestle, RPG Group, Wipro Consumer Care, Reckitt Benckiser, Airtel, Aditya Birla Group	

SP Jain Institute of Management Research, Mumbai	
City / State / Country	Mumbai, Maharashtra
Program Name	PGDM
NIRF Rank 2018	19
% Students placed in Marketing functions	23%
Average Salary (Marketing) [LPA]	NA
Average Salary (Overall) [LPA]	22.24
Median Salary (Overall) [LPA]	21.25
Top Marketing Companies Hiring - Asian Paints, Pidilite, L'Oréal, Colgate-Palmolive, GSK CH, GSK Pharma, Johnson & Johnson, HUL, P&G, Mondelez, Marico, Reckitt Benckiser, General Mills, Nestlé and Samsung	

Faculty of Management Studies, University of Delhi, New Delhi	
City / State / Country	New Delhi, Delhi
Program Name	MBA
NIRF Rank 2018	-
% Students placed in Marketing functions	33%
Average Salary (Marketing) [LPA]	NA
Average Salary (Overall) [LPA]	21.1
Median Salary (Overall) [LPA]	20.5
Top Marketing Companies Hiring - AkzoNobel, Asian Paints, Bajaj Auto, Bennett Coleman & Co., Cipla, Coca Cola, Dr. Reddy's, GAIL, Godrej, GSK, Himalaya, HindustanUnilever Ltd., IOCL, ITC, Mondelēz, Nestlé, Novartis, Pepsi Co., Philips, Tata Steel, TCS, Wipro	

XLRI - Xavier School of Management, Jamshedpur	
City / State / Country	Jamshedpur, Jharkhand
Program Name	PGDM
NIRF Rank 2018	10
% Students placed in Marketing functions	23%
Average Salary (Marketing) [LPA]	NA
Average Salary (Overall) [LPA]	20.1
Median Salary (Overall) [LPA]	20
Top Marketing Companies Hiring - P&G, Colgate Pamolive, Hindustan Unilever Limited, Nestle, RB Johnson & Johnson, Mondelez, ITC India, AB InBev, and Heinz	





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 Shaista Qudus	 Revathy V.K.	 Shubham Bansal	 K.J. Kennet Rajan

Disclaimer: Past record is no guarantee of future job prospects

**Indian Institute of Management,
Lucknow**

City / State / Country	Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh
Program Name	PGP
NIRF Rank 2018	4
% Students placed in Marketing functions	24%
Average Salary (Marketing) [LPA]	NA
Average Salary (Overall) [LPA]	NA
Median Salary (Overall) [LPA]	18.45 [2017]
Top Marketing Companies Hiring - Function-wise recruiter data not available	

Indian Institute of Foreign Trade

City / State / Country	New Delhi & Kolkata
Program Name	MBA - IB
NIRF Rank 2018	23
% Students placed in Marketing functions	35%
Average Salary (Marketing) [LPA]	NA
Average Salary (Overall) [LPA]	19.23
Median Salary (Overall) [LPA]	17
Top Marketing Companies Hiring - ITC, Marico, Dabur, Britannia, Tata Steel, Google, Axis Bank, Shell, Maruti Suzuki India Ltd., BMW, Mother Dairy, PepsiCo, Sterlite Power, Volvo-Eicher Commercial Vehicles, Hero Motor Corp., Tata Motors, TVS	

**Management Development Institute,
Gurgaon**

City / State / Country	Gurgaon, Haryana
Program Name	PGPM & PGP-IM
NIRF Rank 2018	12
% Students placed in Marketing functions	32%
Average Salary (Marketing) [LPA]	NA
Average Salary (Overall) [LPA]	19.23
Median Salary (Overall) [LPA]	17
Top Marketing Companies Hiring - AB InBev, Abbott, ABFRL, Airtel, AkzoNobel, Asian Paints, Bajaj Auto, Bennett Coleman & Co. Ltd., BMW, Cipla, Coca-Cola, Crompton Greaves, Dabur, GlaxoSmithKline Pharma, Godrej Industries	

**Indian Institute of Management,
Indore**

City / State / Country	Indore, Madhya Pradesh
Program Name	PGP
NIRF Rank 2018	11
% Students placed in Marketing functions	22%
Average Salary (Marketing) [LPA]	NA
Average Salary (Overall) [LPA]	18.17
Median Salary (Overall) [LPA]	NA
Top Marketing Companies Hiring - Asian Paints, Dabur, Godrej & Boyce, GroupM, GSK Pharma, Hindustan Coca-Cola Beverages, Hindustan Unilever, ITC, L'Oréal, Marico, Maruti Suzuki, Mother Dairy, Panasonic, PepsiCo, Pidilite, Tata Steel, Vodafone	

**Indian Institute of Management,
Kozhikode**

City / State / Country	Kozhikode, Kerala
Program Name	PGP
NIRF Rank 2018	6
% Students placed in Marketing functions	25%
Average Salary (Marketing) [LPA]	17.2
Average Salary (Overall) [LPA]	17.8
Median Salary (Overall) [LPA]	16
Top Marketing Companies Hiring - Hindustan Unilever, Reckitt Benckiser, Colgate Palmolive, ITC & Samsung. PSUs such as BPCL and IOCL	

**SVKM's Narsee Monjee Institute of
Management Studies, Mumbai**

City / State / Country	Mumbai, Maharashtra
Program Name	MBA
NIRF Rank 2018	24
% Students placed in Marketing functions	NA
Average Salary (Marketing) [LPA]	NA
Average Salary (Overall) [LPA]	17.6
Median Salary (Overall) [LPA]	NA
Top Marketing Companies Hiring - Asian Paints, ITC, Marico, Dabur, HUL, L'Oréal, Givaudan, Britannia, Pidilite, Raymond, Amazon, Paytm and Shopclues	



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**Indian Institute of Technology,
Delhi**

City / State / Country	New Delhi, Delhi
Program Name	MBA
NIRF Rank 2018	8
% Students placed in Marketing functions	30%
Average Salary (Marketing) [LPA]	NA
Average Salary (Overall) [LPA]	16.54
Median Salary (Overall) [LPA]	NA
Top Marketing Companies Hiring - Function-wise recruiter data not available	

**Indian Institute of Management,
Ranchi**

City / State / Country	Ranchi, Jharkhand
Program Name	PGDM
NIRF Rank 2018	40
% Students placed in Marketing functions	39%
Average Salary (Marketing) [LPA]	15
Average Salary (Overall) [LPA]	16.07
Median Salary (Overall) [LPA]	14.75
Top Marketing Companies Hiring - Berger Paints, Cadila Pharmaceuticals, Emami, Google, Hindware, HP, ICICI Lombard, Maruti Suzuki, Samsung R&D, Sony Pictures Network, Wipro Consumer care & Lighting	

**Indian Institute of Management,
Trichy**

City / State / Country	Tiruchirapalli, Tamil Nadu
Program Name	PGP
NIRF Rank 2018	-
% Students placed in Marketing functions	30%
Average Salary (Marketing) [LPA]	NA
Average Salary (Overall) [LPA]	14.28
Median Salary (Overall) [LPA]	NA
Top Marketing Companies Hiring - Function-wise recruiter data not available	

**Symbiosis Institute of Business
Management, Pune**

City / State / Country	Pune, Maharashtra
Program Name	MBA
NIRF Rank 2018	18
% Students placed in Marketing functions	20%
Average Salary (Marketing) [LPA]	NA
Average Salary (Overall) [LPA]	16.23
Median Salary (Overall) [LPA]	NA
Top Marketing Companies Hiring - GE, Aditya Birla Group, Abbott India Limited, Asian Paints Limited, Crompton Greaves Consumer Electricals Ltd., Dell EMC, GlaxoSmithKline Consumer Healthcare Ltd., Henkel Adhesives Technologies India Pvt. Ltd., L'Oréal India, Mother Dairy, Nestle, Nivea, Pidilite, Saint-Gobain India, Wipro Consumer Care & Lighting	

**Indian Institute of Management,
Shillong**

City / State / Country	Shillong, Meghalaya
Program Name	PGP
NIRF Rank 2018	26
% Students placed in Marketing functions	36%
Average Salary (Marketing) [LPA]	NA
Average Salary (Overall) [LPA]	15.5
Median Salary (Overall) [LPA]	NA
Top Marketing Companies Hiring - Amazon, Berger Paints, IOCL, Kohler, Piramal, Tata Motors, Tata Steel, Nivea, BPCL, Dell, ITC, Value Labs, BPCL, IOCL and Tata Steel	

**Symbiosis Centre for Management and Human
Resource Development, Pune**

City / State / Country	Pune, Maharashtra
Program Name	MBA
NIRF Rank 2018	-
% Students placed in Marketing functions	28%
Average Salary (Marketing) [LPA]	15.26
Average Salary (Overall) [LPA]	14.04
Median Salary (Overall) [LPA]	NA
Top Marketing Companies Hiring - Colgate Palmolive, ITC, GCPL, Philips Lighting, Pidilite, Titan, GSK-CH, Indigo Paints	



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Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad

City / State / Country	Ahmedabad, Gujarat
Program Name	PGP-FABM
NIRF Rank 2018	-
% Students placed in Marketing functions	60%
Average Salary (Marketing) [LPA]	13.07
Average Salary (Overall) [LPA]	13.88
Median Salary (Overall) [LPA]	13.82
Top Marketing Companies Hiring - ADM, TGI, Pioneering Ventures, General Mills, KPMG, ITC Agri, Walmart, Godrej Group of Companies	

Indian Institute of Management, Udaipur

City / State / Country	Udaipur, Rajasthan
Program Name	PGP
NIRF Rank 2018	13
% Students placed in Marketing functions	32%
Average Salary (Marketing) [LPA]	NA
Average Salary (Overall) [LPA]	13.16
Median Salary (Overall) [LPA]	NA
Top Marketing Companies Hiring - Amul, Beverely Hills, Polo Club, Bluestar, Bombay Shaving Company, Deezeno, Jaipur Rugs, Landmark, Paayas Milk, Panasonic, Titan, VF Corp, VKL Spices	

Xavier Institute of Management, Xavier University, Bhubaneswar

City / State / Country	Bhubaneswar, Odisha
Program Name	MBA
NIRF Rank 2018	36
% Students placed in Marketing functions	29%
Average Salary (Marketing) [LPA]	NA
Average Salary (Overall) [LPA]	12.91
Median Salary (Overall) [LPA]	12.76
Top Marketing Companies Hiring - L'Oréal, Godrej, Emami, Nestle, Tata Steel, Wildcraft, Hindware, Maruti Suzuki	

Indian Institute of Management, Raipur

City / State / Country	Raipur, Chhattisgarh
Program Name	PGP
NIRF Rank 2018	21
% Students placed in Marketing functions	32%
Average Salary (Marketing) [LPA]	NA
Average Salary (Overall) [LPA]	12.45
Median Salary (Overall) [LPA]	NA
Top Marketing Companies Hiring - Artius Interiors, Berger Paints, Bharat Forge, Birla Gold, Chai Point, Coffee Day Beverages, DCM Sriram, Decorazzi, DS Group, Godrej, TAFE, Tata Steel, Ultratech, ValueLabs	

MICA - The School of Ideas, Ahmedabad

City / State / Country	Ahmedabad, Gujarat
Program Name	PGDM
NIRF Rank 2018	-
% Students placed in Marketing functions	49%
Average Salary (Marketing) [LPA]	10.17
Average Salary (Overall) [LPA]	12.3
Median Salary (Overall) [LPA]	NA
Top Marketing Companies Hiring - Nivea (Beiersdorf), L'Oreal, Amul, RedBull, Bajaj, Wallmart, Future Group	

Indian Institute of Management, Kashipur

City / State / Country	Kashipur, Uttarakhand
Program Name	PGP
NIRF Rank 2018	20
% Students placed in Marketing functions	32%
Average Salary (Marketing) [LPA]	NA
Average Salary (Overall) [LPA]	12.19
Median Salary (Overall) [LPA]	NA
Top Marketing Companies Hiring - Azure Power, BPCL, CINT, CL Educate, CUMI, GMR, Havells, HDFC Bank, Hero Motocorp, Muthoot Fincorp, Value Labs, VKL Spices and MECL	

Great Lakes Institute of Management, Chennai

City / State / Country	Ahmedabad, Gujarat
Program Name	PGDM
NIRF Rank 2018	-
% Students placed in Marketing functions	49%
Average Salary (Marketing) [LPA]	10.17
Average Salary (Overall) [LPA]	12.3
Median Salary (Overall) [LPA]	NA
Top Marketing Companies Hiring - Function-wise recruiter data not available	

Indian Institute of Management, Visakhapatnam

City / State / Country	Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh
Program Name	PGP
NIRF Rank 2018	-
% Students placed in Marketing functions	44%
Average Salary (Marketing) [LPA]	NA
Average Salary (Overall) [LPA]	12.07
Median Salary (Overall) [LPA]	11.7
Top Marketing Companies Hiring - ICICI Lombard, HDFC Bank, Amul, Click Labs etc.	

Indian Institute of Management, Nagpur

City / State / Country	Nagpur, Maharashtra
Program Name	PGP
NIRF Rank 2018	-
% Students placed in Marketing functions	42%
Average Salary (Marketing) [LPA]	11.72
Average Salary (Overall) [LPA]	12.05
Median Salary (Overall) [LPA]	12
Top Marketing Companies Hiring - Function-wise recruiter data not available	

Indian Institute of Management, Amritsar

City / State / Country	Amritsar, Punjab
Program Name	PGP
NIRF Rank 2018	-
% Students placed in Marketing functions	44%
Average Salary (Marketing) [LPA]	NA
Average Salary (Overall) [LPA]	11.93
Median Salary (Overall) [LPA]	10.5
Top Marketing Companies Hiring - Function-wise recruiter data not available	

Indian Institute of Management, Rohtak

City / State / Country	Rohtak, Haryana
Program Name	PGP
NIRF Rank 2018	27
% Students placed in Marketing functions	29%
Average Salary (Marketing) [LPA]	NA
Average Salary (Overall) [LPA]	11.7
Median Salary (Overall) [LPA]	NA
Top Marketing Companies Hiring - Yes Bank, Dabur, Amazon, BPCL, Maruti Suzuki, Tata Steel, JK Group, IndiaMart, Cushman & Wakefield	

Institute of Rural Management, Anand

City / State / Country	Anand, Gujarat
Program Name	PGDM
NIRF Rank 2018	43
% Students placed in Marketing functions	23%
Average Salary (Marketing) [LPA]	NA
Average Salary (Overall) [LPA]	11.39
Median Salary (Overall) [LPA]	10
Top Marketing Companies Hiring - Amul, Tolaram, Afriventures, Cummins, Cargill, ITC, Zuari, Mars International, ADM, Godrej Agro, Kancor, Mapro	



**Great Lakes Institute of Management,
Gurgaon**

City / State / Country	Gurgaon, Haryana
Program Name	PGPM
NIRF Rank 2018	-
% Students placed in Marketing functions	33%
Average Salary (Marketing) [LPA]	NA
Average Salary (Overall) [LPA]	11.14
Median Salary (Overall) [LPA]	10.5
Top Marketing Companies Hiring - Function-wise recruiter data not available	

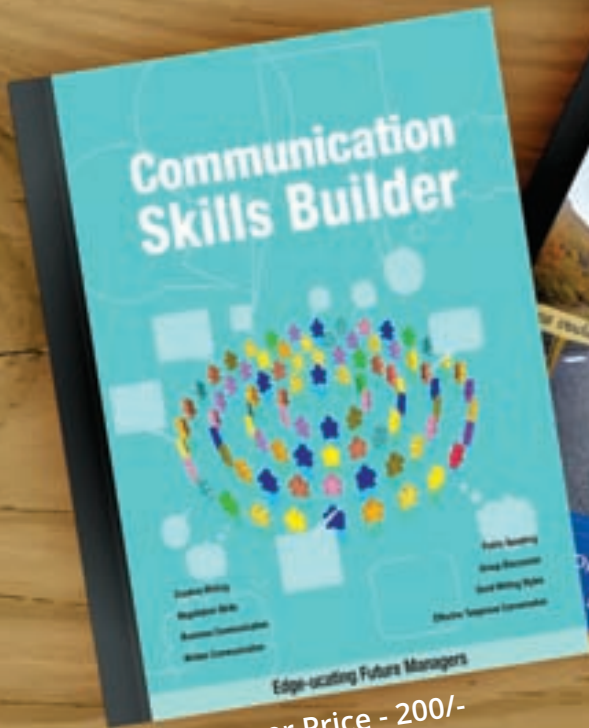
**Sydenham Institute of Management Studies,
Research and Entrepreneurship Education,
Mumbai**

City / State / Country	Mumbai, Maharashtra
Program Name	PGDM
NIRF Rank 2018	-
% Students placed in Marketing functions	29%
Average Salary (Marketing) [LPA]	NA
Average Salary (Overall) [LPA]	10.92
Median Salary (Overall) [LPA]	10.5
Top Marketing Companies Hiring - Dabur, Godrej, Kotak, Lenskart, Aditya Birla Group, Welspun, Box8	



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The right PGDM/MBA program choice is critical to transformative success

Business Schools treat all students the same, regardless of education background, skill or knowledge levels. An engineer has more exposure to quantitative skills than a BBA or B.COM student. In turn, BBA students have more exposure to management subjects. Similarly, management programs don't consider that students may have differing English levels, general knowledge and other soft skills. At ITM Business School, we've been focused on solving these issues in our PGDM program. ITM has developed a unique, game-changing PGDM program, called ITM PGDM iConnect, which refocuses business education on practical knowhow, industry experience and professional development. The ITM PGDM iConnect program is an AICTE approved, 2 year, full-time post-graduate Diploma in Management.

The faculties at ITM Business School continuously redesign the ITM PGDM program, literally from the first day-first-class, right up to convocation. Starting with revising and re-designing all the subjects with a focus on the skill-sets students need for the next 10 years, to the unique 'iConnect Core', an extended industry internship, an integral part of the learning experience. Realizing that recruiters highly value attitude and aptitude, ITM has transformed pre-placement training into a 2 year long 300-hour training program called TALEWIND, that gives its students a competitive edge in final placements. ITM's philosophy in redesigning its PGDM program is "to build it backwards" according to Chairperson Dr. P.V. Ramana. "We've mapped the knowledge & skillsets our graduates will need over the next 5 to 10 years in their careers. These competencies have been built into the program, starting with specialization subjects, to the internship, professional development and business fundamentals taught as part of the foundation course".

8 Reasons why ITM's PGDM iConnect program is transforming students and their careers

1. Get your basics right: The ITM PGDM iConnect program starts with a Foundation Course, which helps students from different graduate streams get caught up on the basic subjects required of all management students. From quantitative techniques to accounting and finance, the foundation course makes getting up-to-speed easy.

2. Become a Specialist: Students choose their specializations in the first year itself. This enables ITM faculties to deliver more specialization subjects than a standard PGDM program. This is essential, as the required knowledge in each field is vast, and students can become specialists in their chosen field.

3. Get real industry experience: 2-month summer projects are old-school. The ITM PGDM iConnect features a 5 month full-time, paid industry internship. Students get hands-on work experience in top companies, handling business operations, strategy and research projects. Aided by faculty mentors, teams of students work and learn directly from industry. Many students get a PPO (Pre-placement Offer) from their internship companies.

4. Evolve into a professional: Over 200 hours of personal and professional development coursework are integrated throughout the 2 year program. This innovative course combines essential hard skills, general knowledge and soft skills to help students become articulate, knowledgeable and confident professionals. It culminates in intensive pre-placement training, to help students succeed in final placements.

5. Awaken your Inner Human: Social responsibility is not just a feel-good thing at ITM, we take CSR and ISR very seriously. That's why every student takes up a one month NGO project, working directly to support social causes and understanding how charitable organizations work and how their work changes the lives of millions.

6. Focus on What Matters: ITM faculties take up the challenging task of constantly revising and enriching the courses delivered in the ITM PGDM program. Each year, they review the state of various industries and the global economy and change course content to focus on what matters to business professionals today.

7. Start your career with the best companies: Over 650 companies visit ITM's campuses each year for final placements. Some of India's biggest companies, and even global giants are regular campus recruiters. With the best brands and challenging job profiles on offer, ITM students get a wide choice of career starts.

ITM Business School 2016 placements: Highest package: Rs. 15 lacs pa Average: Rs. 7 lacs pa

8. Build a network for a lifetime: With thousands of Alumni in virtually every top company, becoming an ITM PGDM graduate has value beyond the 2 years spent studying. ITM students get plugged into a vast network of ITMites, which will help them progress in their careers.



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How to Ace Personal Interviews

MBA aspirants often spend too little time preparing for the personal interviews and that is one reason why their performance is often found wanting. Here are some pointers to develop your unique responses.

Amarendra V Singh

Mentor, IMS

Business Head, www.goFYI.in

While, the short-listing for an MBA interview depends a lot on your performance in standardised test ranks (CAT / XAT or GMAT scores or percentiles), and past academic records, the final selection depends heavily on how you perform during the Group Discussion (GD) and Personal Interview (PI).

Tell me about yourself.

How do you approach this question? Do you say, “Hi, my name is... and I belong to...?” But, the interview panel has your resume and application, and of course they know your name. Also, why would the panel be interested in knowing about the place you come from?

Instead, treat this question as an ice-breaker and try to put your strengths and value on the table. That is the beauty of an open-ended question. So, use this question to briefly talk about your background, experience, focusing on key accomplishments, and try to highlight some of those if they relate to the B-School/Programme for which you are applying. Highlight any interesting bit of your background, if you think it differentiates you from other candidates. Talk about your career goals, and how an MBA will help meeting those objectives. Limit your response to 2-3 minutes and identify key talking points in advance to avoid digression.

Why an MBA? Why Now?

Most of the MBA aspirants are simply motivated by the lure of high-paying jobs. But that is not an argument that is going to sink well with the

interview panel. You can find a high paying job without an MBA degree. So, there must be something else that motivated you to invest 2 years of your life, and large sum of money in pursuing this gruelling degree. You will do well by identifying the reasons behind your motivation to pursue an MBA.

One safe way to approach this question is to explain your motivations for pursuing an MBA degree in terms of how it will fill in some of the skills and knowledge gaps that will help you in furthering your career goals. Talk about the specific skills that you hope to achieve through an MBA, and how the same will apply to your career interest.

Why this B-school/Programme?

To be able to successfully respond to this question, you should do some research on the B-School/Programme. Dig deep to find out the key points in the programme that interest you or is going



to help you in your learning and/or building your career. While responding, discuss all those points as reasons that why the B-school/Programme is ideally suited for you. Talk about any aspects that make the B-school/Programme unique for you, and why that interests you.

Walk me through your resume.

By asking this, the interview panel is interested in listening to your life-story, and no, not about your love affairs, but rather about your career choices, and decisions. Let your resume tell an interesting story, which reflects connected choices and logical events and shows upward progression. Think about each line of your resume and discuss why did you go there? Highlight if you made any transitions. Discuss your accomplishments and how did you achieve them.

Why should we admit you?

Indeed, there are more than 2 Lakh CAT applicants each year, and with just over 2000 to 3000 seats at the very top, the admission to top IIMs and other top B-schools is extremely competitive. So, why should the interview panel admit you over the other candidate, who has a similar profile to yours - at least on paper?

While you may not know about the other candidate, you most definitely know most about your own profile. Use this as an opportunity to showcase your accomplishments, highlight your strengths, and reveal how your academic background and work experience will enrich the B-School Programme. Tell the interview panel the reasons why you chose to apply to their B-school, and reiterate how your career interests align with the curriculum and the degree will propel your career goals.

What are your strengths and weaknesses?

Addressing strengths should be fairly easy. But you must resist the temptation of talking about several! Pick three strengths, which are most relevant for your future career and are applicable to the enrichment of your peers in an MBA class. These strengths should set you apart from the competition and you should be able to validate with concrete examples.

While tackling weaknesses, the MBA aspirants often try to package strengths as weaknesses. That is silly. To the interview panel such responses come across as insincere and shows that you have not done any introspection till date. Identify your critical



weakness and work towards reducing its impact. If you can also identify a few avenues at the B-School/Programme that could help you achieve that, then you have done a good job!

What is your biggest accomplishment as a leader?

Please understand that you don't need to be in a leadership position to exhibit leadership. So, if you think that this question does not apply to you because you have just started working, then you are seriously mistaken. Also, if you don't see yourself as a leader, others will also not see you as such. So, try to understand some of the important dimensions of leadership and connect your characteristics and actions to those dimensions. Prepare few examples of times when you demonstrated leadership - at work and / or other spheres of your life. Discuss what initiatives you took and the results you achieved. Demonstrate how your initiatives impacted the situations.

Do you have any questions for us?

This is likely to be your last question, and by this time the interview panel has already decided your fate. However, if you draw a blank here, it might negatively impact your candidature.

So, how do you prepare for this question? You can start by preparing B-School or Programme-related questions in advance while you are researching it. Once the interview commences, you may also make a mental note of a few new questions that arise based on your discussion and ask those to encourage conversation, both during and after your interview.

Just try to avoid asking questions that are easily found on the B-school's website or other marketing materials. Take this opportunity to make one last positive impression, and also enrich your understanding regarding the B-School /Programme. **A**

'One size fits all' no longer works



...says **CHITRANG DALAL**, AVP, Product Management at Credihealth and an alumnus of NMIMS. In conversation with **Kalyani Majumdar**, Chitrang shares his learnings as a marketing professional across industries, and provides insightful suggestions for MBA Marketing aspirants.

Q. You did an MBA in Marketing from NMIMS. Was doing an MBA always your plan?

While I was pursuing my B.Tech in Electronics and Telecommunication from Nirma University, I realised that an MBA would be necessary to move forward in my career and to excel in my core field. This was in 2008, when the job market was not in good shape. I wanted to get into a good business school, and I felt it was the right time for me to get an MBA degree. I took a break after completing B.Tech to prepare for the MBA entrance exams, and during my preparation, appeared for mock tests at IMS. I did quite well in the mocks, and in fact, I got an opportunity to work at IMS Surat. As I gradually got involved with operations and marketing, I started to understand the role of marketing in an organisation. I wrote the NMAT, got through NMIMS and started my MBA degree.

Q. What fascinated you about marketing and helped you take the decision to pursue an MBA in Marketing?

The first trimester at NMIMS was common for everyone; we were taken through the basics of Marketing, Finance, Operations and HR. But I was always partial to marketing because it had to do with bringing in business, understanding consumer behaviour, positioning the brand in a way that people choose you over competitors.

At NMIMS, we were taught how consumer behaviour shaped all the Fortune 500 companies. The idea of how consumer behaviour leads to new products, and studying that behaviour and reaching the consumer at the right time, and helping them to make a decision – these aspects of marketing fascinated me a lot. In fact, it excites me even today. Consumer behaviour is forever changing, and the learning never stops when you are looking at consumers. This fascinated me back then, which is why I decided that my MBA would be in Marketing.

Q. You started working with Jio when it wasn't the brand it is today. Tell us a bit about your experience working there.

I think I was the ninth employee at Jio! It was pretty much in its start-up phase, and was called Reliance Infocomm back then. I started with market research, and honestly, I feel that was the defining moment for my career. It involved going and talking to 100 people every day, trying to assess the needs and wants of people.

We used to have focus groups in the office. Based on all our conversation and learnings, we figured out that there was a need for OTP services because voice was rather basic, there was nothing exciting about it. We often wondered what we would achieve with 4G. YouTube was doing considerably well. But to consume YouTube content, people had to go back home and switch on their Internet. But in cities like Mumbai and Delhi, people spend a lot of time travelling. So what could we do? These were our core areas of focus. That's why we decided to create products like Jio chat, Jio TV and Jio music.

Back in 2011, big screen mobile phones were still not a fad. In fact, phones barely had any screen space, so who would want to watch TV on phones? So we started talking to manufacturers like Micromax, Lava, Apple and Samsung. And soon enough, these brands were making phones with bigger screens. People started to shift towards wider screen mobiles and were consuming content on the phone. And that's when we realised that this would be our product for the next few years.

Q. You are now the AVP at Credihealth. How different is the marketing strategy at Credihealth from what it was in Jio?

The marketing strategy is a 180 degree shift from what we were doing at Jio! At Jio, we're talking about a mass product in a cash-rich organisation, and hence, the market strategy is for the mass market and one strategy that fits all. But Credihealth is a start-up targeting people in need of medical help and support. Also, it wasn't very cash rich. So the approach was to personalise the experience at a time when people would be in their most vulnerable state.

Our aim is to help people in medical distress, and so, the marketing strategy here is very different from the general online space, which focuses on online transactions, cashbacks, discounts and so on. In healthcare, you cannot follow that strategy, since it is very close to people. In fact, if you provide offers and discounts, people will actually think you're taking them for a ride!

So our marketing strategy has always been to reach out to people when they are in need, provide them relevant content, and personalise the overall experience. Our USP is that we provide medical assistance – we help people in their decision making. We give them the right choices. We use filters to help the patient and their family make the choices that make it a personalised experience.

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Place is no longer defined anymore.
 The place now is not a physical place, it is a **screen**. And if a screen is available, you can make a **sale**.

Q. Given that digitisation is cutting across corporate India, how has the four Ps of marketing redefined itself?

The four Ps of marketing: Product, Price, Promotion and Place still exist, of course, but in the internet world, these Ps have redefined themselves. Let's take an example. Earlier, the product was generic with mass appeal, but now it is personalised.

Now, the same product is available on multiple stores and those stores are available at one click. So the price has to be right and at the same time, consumers would like transparency in prices and discounts.

Promotion is not about giving discounts and expecting people to come and buy. Everyone is giving discounts, so how are you any different? Now, the promotions are more focussed on the branded goods that the consumer aspires for. Wherever people see aspiration and a good enough promotion is available along with it, they move towards a higher valued product.

Finally, place is no longer defined anymore. Everything is available everywhere. Everyone wants everything at the click of a button. The place now is not a physical place, it is a screen. And if a screen is available, you can make a sale. So as you can see, over a period of time, the 4 Ps have redefined themselves, and all marketing companies are moving with it.

Q. What do you think of management education in general?

I honestly feel that our management schools should redefine their books. Even today, we are studying the Philip Kotler of 1998 and not his book of 2011. MBA schools are focusing on business case studies. But I feel we need more and more industry leaders to come and give real case studies. If we get case studies from HBR and so on, most of them are relevant to that market. But the Indian market is very different from the Western market! For example, in India, Apple iPhone has only around 3% of the market, while Android has around 94%, whereas in the West, 97% of the people own iPhones. Indians are very price sensitive. India's poverty line is about ₹30 per day, whereas the US minimum base salary is around \$7.25 an hour, so you can't compare! EMIs work well in India, but are not popular in the West.

Right now, we are mostly emulating what the West was doing in the early 2000s. I think that's not something that we should continue. Business schools should especially focus on the present scenario in India while teaching.

I feel the last couple of trimesters should be more focussed on business leaders and industry experts visiting and talking about real life case studies and the kind of challenges they face today. Because what you are facing today is something no one has faced earlier. So when the current students graduate and start to work, they certainly won't see those case studies that they studied in the real world around them. We need to change this about the present curriculum and move towards what is happening in the real world.

Q. Has an MBA changed your approach to life and work?

Yes, it has. Before an MBA, you study in a university with a more regional crowd, so there is little diversity. However, when you get into a good B-school, you realise that the crowd is very different; you realise the diversity in the market. One of my first learnings was that a one-size-fits-all approach does not work.

Secondly, you meet new people and realise that their ideas are very different and their approach to a particular problem is different from yours. The managerial skills start to develop when you are working in a group project. In MBA, when everyone is doing the same thing in a different way, it shows you how your MBA will help. Someone in the group has to manage it and get things done. This is the kind of managerial exposure that helped me.

Thirdly, an MBA helps you understand the basics of almost everything such as HR, operations, etc, and how they can save a lot of money, the parameters that a finance person is going to look at, and what a marketing guy would want and so on. These things are only clear once you have done an MBA.

Q. What according to you should a marketing professional fresh out of college keep in mind?

Staying relevant to the market is very important. The current generation must also understand that perseverance is the need of the hour. If you run only one promotion, you cannot expect to make a sale! You must reach out to the relevant people with all the four Ps again and again till everyone actually understands that you are meeting their needs, and *that's* when they

decide they would like to buy from you. You need that kind of perseverance, because as I said earlier, everything is available to everyone. You have to reach out to the people and show how your product or service adds value, and this cannot happen in one go.

Another very important point to remember is that people are looking for a very good consumer experience. So whether a consumer is buying a shoe or merely getting a haircut, everyone is looking for a good experience and after-sales service. Hence customer service and customer experience will be the game changers over a period of time.

Lastly, nowadays, people redefine what they want every day. So as a marketer, you will have to come up with strategies to keep meeting their needs. **A**

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Customer service and customer experience will be the game changers over a period of time. Everyone is looking for an after-sales service.

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Digital marketing still emerging in India



This is what **PROFESSOR SEEMA GUPTA**, faculty at IIMB in Marketing with Digital Marketing as her domain, feels. In an interview with **Kalyani Majumdar**, Professor Gupta talks about the exciting future of digital marketing, along with some important advice for MBA aspirants.

Q. What is it that excites you most about teaching digital marketing?

Earlier, I was teaching marketing and marketing communication, and gradually I shifted my focus to teaching digital marketing at IIM Bangalore. Since we are all consumers, marketing becomes an extremely relatable subject, and that's what makes it so interesting. We are consumers too.

Marketing has always been a combination of art and science, but it is becoming more and more data driven now. Earlier it was creative, intuitive thinking and judgment oriented, now with digitisation, the interface of marketing and technology along with data is making it even more interesting. I feel it is one of the most interesting careers one could look at.

Q. What do you feel are the aspects of marketing that has changed with the advent of digitisation as a medium?

Earlier, marketing was completely a one way street, as it was controlled by the marketer. So the marketer would decide the positioning of the brand, the target segment, etc. It was a monologue! But now with digitisation, marketing is co-creation, and it is a dialogue. Now, the consumers play a big role in shaping your brand, products and services. A marketer can't have a bull's eye positioning anymore.

For example, Coca Cola says they are classical, that the core of the brand is traditional, but when consumers start commenting on their Facebook page and bring in their own humour, the brand can't stop people from saying what they want to say, right? It is not controlled. So your positioning cannot be that sharp anymore. Now you have to incorporate feedback, you have to listen. Listening has become very important. So in this day and age, marketers have to be comfortable with losing control, since they don't have this control on the brand, product and services anymore anyway.

Q. You are regularly mentoring and guiding start-ups, especially in the digital sector, could you tell us a bit about that?

Most of my interaction with entrepreneurs is about guiding them on how to leverage digital marketing for scaling up their businesses. Actually, digitalisation can become very overwhelming, because there are so many platforms and so many mediums and one can easily lose focus. The entrepreneur has to decide if their focus should be on search engine optimisation, whether they should rely on organic or paid campaigns, bloggers and influencers, et al. It is

very important to understand and identify their target audience, and the channel where this target audience spends most of its time. So, it is very important to identify the relevant platforms and work only on those, because as a start-up and not an established company, you have limited resources and you can't be everywhere! So, I help start-ups identify these platforms and then craft a strategy for those focal platforms.

Start-ups are always very interesting as they are trying to solve a consumer's problem. Whenever there is a pain point, a start-up will identify the problem and provide a solution. The question to continuously ask yourself is whether the problem is really compelling. Also, entrepreneurs need to be flexible. After starting with an idea, they test it out in the market and it may or may not work. So they have to come back to the drawing board immediately and pivot and tweak their idea and then again go back to the market. You cannot first perfect the plan and then implement. If you have a plan, test it in the market immediately. If it works, allocate more resources, and if it doesn't, shift to Plan B.

Q. With digitisation coming in, what will happen to traditional marketing mediums?

They will coexist in a more integrated marketing fashion. Look at it this way: People still watch TV, right? Digitisation hasn't resulted in people ditching the TV. Yes, there's been a decline in newspaper readership. But the reach is still there. If you want to reach traditional people you will find them moving to TV. The reputation still exists that if a brand is being advertised on TV, it is trustworthy and has financial resources. This brand image doesn't form if a brand is only advertising digitally.

Of course, digital media is eating away the share of other mediums, and will become the largest. But others will also exist. TV is in fact still growing. In the US, the digital medium is the number one medium, with 38% of marketing budget being allocated to it, whereas TV has dropped to 37%. Digital marketing is gradually increasing in developed markets. In India, digital is only around 15%, and TV is strong at around 38%. So we have a

long way to go. Marketers are now pumping in and putting in more money in digital, but challenges such as frauds do exist with less transparency.

Q. Are there any major differences between MBA in India and MBA abroad in terms of study methodology?

Of course different schools will have different approaches. Harvard believes more in the case study method. In India, IIM-A is similar. At IIM-B, we aren't completely driven by the case study approach. In some countries, B-schools use a more participant-centred learning method, in which the teacher only facilitates as an instructor, and their responsibility is not to provide the solution but to guide the student to solutions on their own. And a lot of emphasis lies on group learning and group projects. I feel this is slightly more evolved, so students are also disciplined and they read and come.

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In the US digital marketing budget is 38% and TV budget has dropped to 37%. In India, digital is only around 15%, and TV is strong at around 38%.

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Q. According to you, how important are case studies and industry sessions? Which method is more effective?

Beyond a point, industry sessions are not very useful. It is of course good to have guest lectures to bring in different perspectives, but since they are not academicians, they might not be able to distil it into concepts that can be applied in a variety of situations. They mostly explain their own experiences and what

they are currently doing in the company. So I don't think we should have too many guest lectures.

Moreover, it also depends on the field one is specialising in. For instance, digital marketing benefits from more industry guest lectures, because these are more at the interface of industry or business. The industry expert will share their interesting best practices. But core disciplines like Marketing, Finance and so on are not depended on guest faculty. The foundation has to be established first by concepts and theories.

Case studies are very good as they develop your analytical mindset. Also, during case study sessions, you realise that your peers may not agree with you, and you hear divergent perspectives and develop a tolerance and respect for other points of view. You understand that data is not complete in case studies, and so you develop comfort

with ambiguity and decision making with limited information.

The other approach is running live campaigns or the workshop method, wherein you learn by doing. So any education has to have a blend of theory and practice. Only then can it be interesting!

Q. According to you, how important is sales experience in marketing?

I feel it's a must have, because only if you have experience of working from the ground up and have interacted with the consumers can you truly step into their shoes and understand and empathise with them. Only then will you devise solutions and connect with your consumers through your content.

But of course, not all sales people will make a fantastic marketer, because marketing is very different from sales. Sales is narrow in scope, and Marketing is far broader. Sales can be subsumed as part of Marketing. It covers all the aspects of how you design a product, features that are important for consumers, pricing, promotions, creative art, which media to choose and so on, thus it is more comprehensive.

Q. Being in a B-school can be very hectic. Any preparatory tips that you would suggest?

Business schools, and any education for that matter, should be thoroughly enjoyed. Only then will you internalise your learning. Otherwise, you're just reading from a book and attending lectures. Spend an hour in the classroom, but three hours outside it, and you'll find you can extract the full value from that particular session. The attitude to learn, not just to get a job placement, is very important, because *that* will make you put in the effort. You have to stay involved and motivated and willing to put in the hard work.

Typically, we see students struggling with quantitative subjects like data analytics, basic accounting, statistics and so on.

Many business school students come from various educational backgrounds, and they may have never studied accounts. So brush up before the MBA programmes starts. There are many online courses, and many B-schools have preparatory courses as well. That way, students can enjoy their B-school experience more, otherwise there will be a lot of pressure simply to pick up the new subjects, especially in the first year as all the subjects are compulsory.

Q. Many students can't decide which field to choose in the second year of their MBA programme. Any advice on how to decide?

You have to analyse your strength thoroughly. For instance, if your strength is in Finance, only then opt for Finance. Don't choose it just because you've heard that it is lucrative right from the start. Similarly, in marketing, you need to be creative and intuitive, but if you have a logical mindset and see things in black and white, then marketing may not be your cup of tea. Likewise, operations would suit someone who is extremely detail oriented and is looking at finer things. So basically, assess your aptitude to help you choose your field.

Q. Do you have any suggestions for an MBA aspirant?

Even in premier schools like IIMs, I have seen students reading basic textbooks and so on. But they don't realise the importance of investing time in analysing a situation or a case study. Particularly in India, the culture is to focus on how to get grades and clear exams, but the hunger for knowledge is missing. You shouldn't be in any programme only for the sake of a career. Getting a job is a natural outcome, but it cannot be the goal. Enjoy what you're doing, because the goal has to be to gain knowledge.

Q. What do you expect from a student who wants to get into IIM B?

Of course, the first step is the CAT. So first of all is discipline; prepare in a disciplined way for a few months. Simultaneously, identify the target institutions where you have a realistic chance of getting in and accordingly plan your career.

If you are targeting IIMs, do you have a backup plan? It's always good to have one.

Also, you should have some work experience, as it will get you some points. Of course, 30% of our students don't have work experience. But then these are exceptionally good students to have gotten admission without work experience.

Clarity of thought when you are appearing for your interview is very important. You should have in depth knowledge of your field so that you are able to connect with the interviewer. You must appear genuine and exude confidence, although not overconfidence. So it requires lot of grounding, maturity and humility to be able to make it through, apart from clearing the exam. **A**

MBA helps at every step: A real life story

We know how an MBA education helps grads in their business roles. This is a true story of how the writer's MBA in general and Marketing major in particular helped him make professional strides in his career journey with Cummins over the last 9 years.

• Sanjay Kumar •

Reminiscing about the memories of the two years I spent doing my full time MBA from Kelley School of Business, Indiana University, has been a sheer avenue of joy for me. If I were to summarise the experience in just a statement, I'd say that it helped me upgrade my skill set, master the art of developing multiple perspectives around a business issue, and evolve my thinking around complex problems that require an out-of-the-box approach. My double major in Strategy and Marketing also helped me adapt between high level approaches to a discrete tangible approach, depending on the problem at hand.

A 'strategic' beginning

In the past nine years, I have had three different roles of increasing responsibility at Cummins Inc., the company I work for. I started with a strategy role. This was pretty high level work, with dedicated short duration projects and defined deliverables.

The strategic frameworks

I had learned during my MBA came in handy in structuring the thoughts around business issues of strategic importance. The projects would often entail creating a base scenario, together with sensitivity analysis around alternate scenarios. During my MBA, one vital skill I learned was to make logical assumptions and quantify the resulting financial implications through spreadsheets that closely mimic business realities. This skill immensely helped me in putting together high-quality deliverables in my strategy role.

The shift to marketing

After two years in strategy, I next moved to an account management role for the North America automotive market. This was quite a complete linear shift from

one end of the spectrum to the other. I was responsible for managing a big automotive account worth \$300 million in annual revenues. My marketing major suddenly took center stage in the wake of the requirements of a customer facing role!

The critical points to success in account management roles are clear identification of customer needs, aligning your offerings around the needs so identified, and helping the customer win in the marketplace through collaborative intervention. Because of my formal training in marketing management, I could quickly identify my customer's needs and pain points.

How the program helped

Let me give you a specific example. One of my customers was unable to gain incremental business because of a few inherent anomalies in the warranty and extended coverage portfolio of Cummins.

Such anomalies restricted the bid competitiveness of my customer. I quickly dived in with a rapid analysis of past five-

mba
Marketing



year bids that my customer had lost. I complimented this with a massive 'voice of the customer' (VOC) exercise of 300 dealers of the automotive company that faced the end customers directly.

Based on these twin endeavours, I was able to rationalise Cummins' warranty and extended coverage portfolio that was more aligned to the customer's needs. This specific initiative enabled my customer to win incremental bids worth \$40 million in a single calendar year! Without my formal training in marketing management and the tools I learned in pursuing that major, articulation and execution of the initiative I cited would not have been possible.

Simple things such as training my customer on the engines Cummins sold to them, helping them compare the value offered by Cummins vis-à-vis a competitor engine supplier, effectively negating the misinformation campaign a competitor was running about fuel efficiency, etc helped my customer position itself better in the marketplace. All these actions were directly borrowed from a classical marketing management textbook and adapted to the specific situation or problem.

A broader ambit

After three and a half years of

my account management role, I took a leadership role in the aftermarket space. I have been leading the global mining aftermarket business (parts and services) worth \$500 million in annual revenues for Cummins. This

space was totally new for me, as it involved a lot of supply chain, logistics, and channel elements that I wasn't very familiar with. The MBA training of deep diving into a plethora of information and quickly identifying useful

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Since the path to market is through distributors, communication becomes a key ingredient of differentiation.

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information by cutting out the clutter helped me develop a good understanding of the scope and the complexity of this business.

My current role is a truly global one, and market specific nuances dictate the strategy, initiative and execution for each region. This is also a fundamental premise of marketing management fundamentals. No matter how much Cummins wants to standardise processes and offering across the world, the aftermarket offering must be tailored per each market's specific needs.

In this role, I have truly leveraged the 4P approach,

and played with a variety of combinations of product, price, place, and promotion to deliver superior business results. For example, a mining customer in North America values uptime the most, and hence wants a premium engine rebuild without much price sensitivity. On the other hand, a mining customer in Indonesia cares for price competitiveness and is comfortable with moderate quality of rebuild at a lower price. Hence, various tiers of rebuild kits needed to be developed, that would align well with what the customer needs for each market.

Since the path to market is through distributors, communication becomes a key ingredient of differentiation. Hence a massive effort to arm the channel with the most accurate and comprehensive communication about product positioning, capabilities, and competitive advantage was taken up. This also included developing marketing content and imparting training. My marketing major training had a clear linkage to an initiative such as the one I just talked about.

At the end of the day, as the journey unfolds and I try to help businesses across the globe grow, the fundamental marketing management knowledge I gained from my MBA and the iterative improvements that occurred through practical execution continue to remain my constant companions. **A**

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Name of the game: Customer Experience

With a plethora of companies offering similar services in the same market, the only way of differentiating the wheat from the chaff is the customer centricity of a company. Today, companies are realising this, and are striving to provide the best experience for their customers – an essential part of both the business and marketing strategies.

• Dr Suresh Srinivasan •

With competition intensifying across online business, we can now see a clear shift in focus from the discounting game to offering a superior customer experience. Large players have learnt this the hard way, often after burning billions of dollars of venture capitalist funds, that discounting rarely converts into customer loyalty. Players across the e-commerce space are now moving resources that will generate 'customer experience' rather than offering steep discounting!

The online travel space, and the strategies of the 'online travel aggregators' (OTA), is a classic case that can be used to examine and understand what is currently driving the industry. Competition has intensified in this space last year, and as is seen across the e-commerce bandwidth, incumbents as well as new entrants have been generously throwing in discount dollars to gain customer attraction.

How OTAs work

Online or digital aggregators are becoming ubiquitous. Be it Airbnb, Cleartrip or Oyo, they bring together a set of service providers as their partners, and sell their services under their own brand. Since the aggregator is a brand by itself, the OTA has to provide services which have a uniform quality and price. Here, it is important to understand that the service providers are not the employees of the OTA; they are partners to the OTA business.

OTAs act as a 'general purpose' contractor; i.e., they are the 'digital front' to the traveller, seamlessly integrating different service providers (airline, hotels, local logistics) through a sort of digital supply chain, to provide a superior experience to its customers.

Partners also have the freedom to accept or to reject the offer

provided by the aggregator on a case by case basis. The contract that the OTA signs with the service providers in its value chain, and the



tripadvisor

trivago

cleartrip



Expedia

service providers' adherence to service level agreements, is crucial for ensuring that the OTA's brand doesn't get diluted. To that extent, the choice of the service provider and their portfolio in an OTA's value chain is an extremely important choice that an OTA needs to make for its success!

Having realised that discounts are not sustainable in the long-term, companies are now breaking away from the pack and are now single-mindedly focusing on customer experience. Cleartrip, for example, is targeting customers by providing them with a theme where experience is the core. They strive to engage the customer deeply and offer them an outstanding local experience. The dimensions of local experiences range from fitness and other activities, events to food and beverage. Airbnb is also taking this route.

So what is customer experience?

In simple terms, customer experience is the interaction

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The OTA strives to deliver a highly customised travel experience to the customer without causing any friction between the service providers.

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between the OTA as an organisation and the customer during the course of the itinerary, as perceived through both the customer's conscious and subconscious minds. It is a blend of all the experiences of the customer across the service providers' part of the OTA value chain (flight, hotel, cab, event, food, etc) – what excites the customer, what lets him down and eventually negate the overall emotions evoked – all of these measured against the customer expectations across the value chain.

What does an OTA strive to achieve?

Through technology, the OTA strives to deliver a highly customised and superior travel experience to the customer, without any friction between the service providers. Especially with the deep penetration of mobile phone and apps, the OTA provides the customer seamless travel, hotel transfers, managing their sightseeing and restaurant appointments. Events, fitness and specialised themes and itineraries like eco-tourism are also thrown into the value chain.

Individual service providers also have their own websites, and the customers can directly book from them as well. So, what's different between these individual service providers (like airlines, hotels, cab operators) and the OTA? And where does the OTA add value?

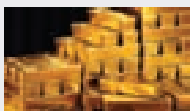
The answer boils down to the 'customer experience' that the OTA orchestrates, which the individual service providers cannot match. The clear

INDIA INC: AT A GLANCE



Quest sells India biz to Strand

Strand Life Sciences, a Bangalore-based specialised research and diagnostics company, announced an agreement to acquire the India medical diagnostics business of Quest Diagnostics, the world's leading provider of diagnostic information services.



Gold imports up 4%, jacks up trade deficit

Gold imports during the first half of the current financial year 2018-19 rose about 4% to \$17.63 billion, pushing the country's trade deficit to \$94.32 billion in April-September 2018-19, as against \$76.66 billion in the same period last year, according to the commerce ministry data.



91 Digital acquires majority stake in Pricebaba

91 Digital, India's largest smartphone discovery platform, has acquired a majority stake in Pricebaba.com. With this, 91mobiles will be operating three websites in the gadgets vertical – 91mobiles.com, KillerFeatures.com and Pricebaba.com – with a reach of 30 million visits per month.

differentiator is moving away from 'discounting' to creating that enriching 'customer experience' that no standalone service provider in the value chain will be able to offer. This is not a short term game, and is achieved only through acquiring and retaining loyal customers through building enormous capabilities.

Delivering great customer experience

What capabilities need to be built by OTAs to deliver that superior customer experience?

Proximity to customers and precisely understanding their pain points is crucial. This is highly data intensive, and OTAs use high end analytics to achieve this. It is all about understanding the expectations of customer groups with different age profile, geographic locations, behaviour, lifestyles and precisely assessing what would attract and entice them. The OTA platform needs to remain simple, and yet at the same time powerful enough to deliver a superior experience across every stage of the OTA value chain.

'Experience' is thus becoming an emerging segment and a big source of revenue for OTA players. Are there any parallels to be drawn or learning for Indian OTAs from global examples as they go about building experiences segment?

The entire 'digital supply chain' from customer to the service provider lies at the heart of value creation by the OTA. This is heavily supported by digital technologies that include artificial intelligence, and deep machine learning

supported solutions. Big data and predictive analytics are forming the backbone of any OTA, and they are spending billions of dollars to excel in such technologies. Passionate, innovative and customer-focused staff are also key ingredients to deliver this customer experience.

OTAs also need to carefully choose their service providers and align their offering to the customers they are pitching such services to. Providing a standardised quality of experience to every user is the objective. Unfortunately, most of the experiences turn

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OTA platform needs to remain simple, and yet powerful enough to deliver a superior experience across every stage of the OTA value chain.

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bad when this part of the value chain is not strong enough.

A few examples

Priceline Group and Expedia group own a number of travel aggregators and meta-search engines like Trivago, and are highly focused on walking the talk in creating superior customer experiences. Unfortunately, they are still yet to perfect this art. The last mile connectivity is where such models fall short.

Partner portfolio management and integration is a crucial component in

the overall OTA value chain. Customer reviews is a good tool that helps the OTAs to fine tune value. For instance, TripAdvisor is a classic case of how customer reviews wield enormous power in subsequent customer choice.

Effectively though, this is a vicious circle with a snowball effect – highly relevant and meaningfully differentiated services offered by the OTA will drive more customers, which in turn will improve the number and quality of service providers, resulting in better customer experiences which, in turn will increase the number of customers. This cycle goes on.

Challenges

Disruptions to the OTAs can emerge from many directions. The service providers' part of the OTA value chain (say hotels, cab companies, etc) are also striving to convert their OTA guests on their own, by improving their own website experience and providing incentives to OTA guests to book directly. But what puts the OTAs on a different pedestal is their presence across the value chain and their ability to provide a complete experience to the customers, which individual service providers will be unable to.

In effect, customer centricity becomes the heart of OTA and their ability to differentiate themselves from the competition! In a digitalised world with artificial intelligence, machine learning and with analytics gaining prominence, technology will play that crucial role in achieving customer centricity. **A**

Global economic volatility: India impact

The last few months have been a rollercoaster ride for global markets, especially in the context of crude oil. Rising geopolitical tensions have also made the markets quite sensitive, and have hit emerging economies adversely. In this article, we explore the reasons why.

● Dr Suresh Srinivasan ●

The last few months have been witness to enormous volatility in the global scenario, both in terms of geopolitics and economics. Sensex, the benchmark Indian stock market index, recently fell sharply by around 800 points, recording the biggest weekly fall in more than two years. Given the global uncertainties, especially with respect to the international relations in US, Iran and China,

more such declines are being talked about. The Indian rupee has moved from ₹65 to a US dollar to ₹74 to a US dollar in the last six months – close to a 14% depreciation over the last six months.

The Indian stock market's fall was not isolated; it was in response to a global meltdown in some form. Asian markets as a whole recorded a sharp fall in alignment with the US equities,

which also did see a slide. A number of global factors drove such a fall – uncertainties in the form of rising US interest rates and the potential impact of such a scenario on emerging market funds was a major concern. Liquidity around the world is becoming tight, and asset bubbles are being spotted. The US-China trade tension is spilling a major uncertainty.

Rupee, crude and deficit

The global crude oil price has moved sharply from ₹52 a barrel to ₹78 a barrel in just six months. This is a straight 50% increase, and has thrown many crude-intensive industries in peril. As India imports more than 75% of its crude oil requirements, such an increase will, and has already started to, sharply hurt our import-export balance and drive the current account deficit to higher levels.

Fuel prices at petrol pumps and gas stations have become a nightmare to the current government, the last thing any ruling government would want to happen in an election year! High petrol prices hovering around





₹87 per litre and diesel prices at an all-time high have hit the common man straight. Last month, petrol breached the ₹90 mark, and cooking gas LPG too went past the ₹500 mark level for the first time ever. The rising fuel price has also become a handy tool in the hands of the Opposition.

Although the government has offered relief in terms of excise duty cuts and thereby reduce the price of fuel at the pumps, the drop in price has been marginal and by no means large enough to lift the low morale of the common man. A part of the price cut has been passed on to the oil marketing companies like Hindustan Petroleum and Bharath Petroleum, which has caused their shares to sharply fall in the stock markets.

The crude oil-intensive airline industry, for example, is showing large cracks, especially with companies like Jet Airways in a very serious financial condition. Not only airlines, the impact of crude oil increase spills over to virtually all industries and most of the goods and services, in the form of higher 'input' costs and expanded cost of incoming logistics and transportation; in turn having a larger impact on manufacturing intensive industries.

From one point of view, such increase in costs of goods and services will have an impact on inflation, which the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) is keeping a close watch on. In the recently concluded monetary policy review, the RBI kept key rates unchanged for the time being. but the committee warned that the global

headwinds in the form of escalating trade tensions, volatile and rising oil prices, and tightening of global financial conditions pose substantial risks to the growth and inflation outlook.

The RBI has revised the Consumer Price Index (CPI) based inflation projections to 3.7% in the second quarter of 2018-19, 3.8% to-4.5% over the subsequent two quarters and at 4.8% in the first quarter of 2019-20 ending in June 2019.

Geopolitics

With crude prices hovering at a four-year high, there are already justifiable propositions that predict prices as high as \$100 a barrel in coming days, and the prevailing global uncertainties are many and varied. Political uncertainties and disruptions in large oil-producing states like Venezuela, Iraq and Libya is causing short term supply side glitches.

Strong economic growth in China and India, as well as the approaching winter in the US and Europe, is spiking the demand for oil. All of these are driving a big increase in the global oil demand. In addition to these demand side issues, the supply could be impacted due to the geopolitics of tensions between the US and Saudi Arabia as well as the US sanctions against Iran.

Iran, Saudi Arabia & US

US energy sanctions against Iran will be effective from the first week of November. All countries procuring crude oil from Iran will have 30 days to wind down their off-take from Iran and identify alternative sources of procuring crude. This is considered to be harsh, as it is extremely difficult to get purchasing sources in such



a short span of time. India, for example, has been purchasing a large proportion of its crude requirements from Iran for ages and at terms that are most favourable, including the fact that the payment currency is not designated in US\$.

Global politics has been further muddled with the recent assassination of Saudi Arabia's Jamal Khashoggi. The liberalisation initiatives undertaken by Saudi's Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman and his initiatives in opening up the Saudi economy have triggered many issues. His 'iron fist' rule challenged and opened up many 'no go' traditions, like allowing women to drive, opening up the kingdom for cinema and international films and theatrical exhibitions after 35 years.

However, Prince Salman's rash jailing of many political enemies and prominent figures has had its own backlash, and has faced substantial criticisms from the international press, especially from the West. Khashoggi, who writes for *The Washington Post*, was a critic of Prince Salman,

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The RBI has revised the **Consumer Price Index (CPI)** based inflation projections to **3.7%** in the second quarter of **2018-19**.

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and was recently killed inside the Saudi consulate in Istanbul, Turkey, opening up a conflict between the US and Saudi. This is a concern for the global oil situation, since Saudi Arabia is the largest producer of crude oil.

The US economy is also in poor shape as a result of President Donald Trump's large scale tax cuts, and the deficits are likely to widen. Furthermore, the US Federal Reserve's decision to increase interest rates has put emerging markets under stress.

Impact on India

Over the last month, the Indian government and the

Reserve Bank of India (RBI) have taken a number of steps to minimise the adverse impact of such geopolitics on the Indian economy. These include stabilising the Indian rupee, easing rules on foreign borrowings, issuing of masala bonds to stabilise the rupee and reducing the current account deficit (CAD). High crude price will push the CAD to 2.6% of the GDP, as against 1.9% seen last year. India has also raised import duty on a range of items that could bring in more than ₹80,000 crore, thereby reducing the CAD.

Although this government benefitted from low crude oil prices for most of its term, which helped them launch several welfare schemes, the geopolitics situation in the last year of its term has turned out to be gruelling. A recent default by the major infrastructure financier ILFS is also a clear indicator that the liquidity crisis in the market is widening. All of these are very serious developments for the current government and the politics associated with it! **A**

INDIA INC: AT A GLANCE

Markets looking up

Stock markets started picking up from the fall. Five of the 10 most valued companies in the country together added ₹31,000 crore in market valuation in the second week of October, with ITC topping the chart. HUL, ITC, Infosys, Kotak Mahindra Bank and ONGC saw addition in their market capitalisation during October.

Foreign investors pull back from markets

Foreign investors have pulled out close to ₹32,000 crore from Indian capital markets in the first three weeks of October due to higher US treasury yields. This is much higher than the over ₹21,000 crore net outflow seen in the entire month of September.



Zendesk acquires FutureSimple

Zendesk Inc announced it has acquired FutureSimple Inc. Zendesk will invest in the company's ongoing market growth and product development, focusing on existing customers and delivering products for smaller, fast-growing sales teams, expanding to larger organizations over time.

LIC's investment in IDBI: A good move?

Is LIC's investment in the plagued IDBI bank a good decision on the government? Although the move is to ostensibly allow the floundering bank to turn its fortunes around, the deal may have far reaching repercussions.

• Dr Suresh Srinivasan •

Life Insurance Corporation (LIC) is the Indian government-owned life insurance company, a brand name in which the country has enormous trust when it comes to life insurance policies. There were two key developments in recent weeks that put LIC in the spotlight.

The financial crisis and default of the infrastructure financing company Infrastructure Leasing & Financial Services (ILFS) is the first case where LIC is the largest equity shareholder. ILFS reported to be in a dire financial condition with severe liquidity crisis, and LIC has agreed to fund additional loans to this company. The second case, a more prominent one, is the announcement that LIC will now hold a majority 51% stake in IDBI Bank and turn IDBI, which did not have many takers, into its subsidiary.

The contentious issues here is that the core objective of LIC is to issue life insurance

policies to the general public, collect premiums and through this process maintain its financial health, so that redemption of policies are honoured in the normal course as they fall due. Of course, LIC has a mandate to invest the premiums and surplus cash into investment that it deems fit and that would offer an appropriate return without putting the policyholder monies at great risk.

A part of the surplus funds in LIC are parked in equity investments, which is considered to be riskier than investments in debt, but the question is whether it is appropriate and acceptable for LIC to become the largest strategic shareholder in

A part of the surplus funds in **LIC** are parked in **equity** investments, which is considered to be riskier than **investments** in debt.

companies and run them, which is being planned for its majority equity investment in IDBI. Does LIC have the expertise to turn failed companies around? Is this a good way to manage policyholder monies? These are some of the pertinent questions that arise.

Before we analyse this question, we need to understand the major issues that are affecting the Indian banking industry.

Indian banking sector: concerns Key Indian banks are



fraught with high levels of non-performing assets (NPA) and low levels of capitalisation. These include the doubtful payments and the restructured loans which the borrowers were unable to pay back on time. These NPAs crossed the ₹10 lakh crore mark, and is a significant burden on the economy of the country. While a strong and healthy banking system is considered vital for any economy and can be a saviour at the time of financial distress, India's weak banking system has always been a concern.

Many banks are on the verge of faopiling, and the government has been announcing small packages to capitalise. Recently, an ₹88,000 crore package was announced to capitalise the banks in the country. The need for such capitalisation is the poor performance of these banks, driven by the lack of governance and an independent professional board that can provide management depth and execution oversight. Interference from the government in commercial

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The Banks Board Bureau (BBB) act as an intermediary structure to run the PSBs taking the burden away from the government.

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decisions is a major concern.



P.J. Nayak committee

A few years back, the P.J. Nayak committee flagged precisely these problems

and recommended creating an intermediary structure, through which the Banks Board Bureau (BBB) could professionally run the public sector banks (PSB) taking the burden away from the government.

Although the BBB was created two years ago, it was unable to provide an independent professionally run platform as government interference continued.

It is very important to understand that if the government does not get out of managing banks, it would need to drain more valuable public money into uncompetitive PSBs. Instances like LIC investing in IDBI Bank are by no means an answer.

The government needs to seriously consider privatising such weak PSB's; this is extremely difficult from a political perspective, with serious employee union issues, but is becoming inevitable by every passing day.

IDBI Bank

Earlier this year, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) voiced its

INDIA INC: AT A GLANCE

Centrum acquires L&T's supply chain fin biz

Centrum Financial Services Ltd, the NBFC arm of the Centrum Group, a leading domestic integrated financial services organisation, signed an agreement to acquire L&T Finance's supply-chain finance business.

Safecrop to take over SHAI

Safecrop Holdings Pvt. Ltd, a consortium of private equity firms WestBridge Capital, AIF, Madison Capital, and Rakesh Jhunjunwala have agreed to acquire Star Health and Allied Insurance (SHAI), the largest insurer in India in terms of profits and premium.

Indian stock market

The second-quarter earnings of 2018, combined with the direction of foreign fund flows and the liquidity situation of the non-banking financial companies (in the ILFS crisis backdrop), are expected to determine the trajectory of Indian stock market indices during the coming days.

concern to the finance ministry on the poor financial position of the government-owned IDBI Bank. The RBI noted a number of issues with the bank's operations, including the way the NPAs were calculated and reported. It aired its view and assessment that IDBI's NPAs would be far higher than what was being reported by IDBI.

A number of cases of fraud and corruption involving IDBI were reported.

In the Kingfisher case, the Central Bureau of Investigation claimed that IDBI officials played an active role in the sanction of loans to the airline in spite of Kingfisher's poor credit rating. In the Sivasankaran case, the CBI opened cases against many senior IDBI officials for allegedly cheating the bank to the tune of ₹600 crore. In other cases like the Kisan Credit Card scam, the CBI filed three cases to the tune of ₹740 crore and more. Major lapses in processing and disbursing loans by its officials in Andhra Pradesh and Telangana were also reported.

The RBI also moved IDBI into the prompt corrective action (PCA) framework, which brings the bank into close monitoring by the RBI. IDBI's reported gross NPAs came out at more than ₹50,000 crore by the end of 2017, which translated close to 25% of its loans and advances. Its profitability figures were low and declining. Being under the PCA watch list does not allow IDBI Bank to lend, although it can still collect deposits; in essence, it is yet to restart its normal business.

The government also infused equity for IDBI to tide over its



financial distress as well as for the bank to meet the minimum common equity tier capital norms.

LIC's equity investment in IDBI

The primary concern about the current LIC-IDBI deal is that such an action is a gross misallocation of resources – valuable policyholder money is being used to bail out sinking

than a planned disinvestment of banks, is the bigger concern. Clubbed with this is the concern of using the policyholder's money, and if such instances can become a precedent for similar future transactions, is also a concern.

Of course, there is an argument that it would be a win-win situation both IDBI and LIC, where IDBI can sell LIC's insurance policies, and LIC's policies can be marketed to IDBI Bank's 140 million customers through its 1,900 branches. This is absolutely flawed, and no equity infusion is required to achieve this; a mere arms length agreement between LIC and IDBI can effectively achieve this objective.

The rationale for the government to have gone ahead with this deal could be that it may not have wanted to upset the apple cart by announcing one more failed bank at this stage when elections are looming.

These could provide wrong signals on governance, especially with the government having recently brought in many credible and worthwhile reforms in the banking industry through the recently announced stressed assets resolutions regulations. With everything said and done, it is extremely difficult to justify this deal! **A**

The RBI also moved IDBI into Prompt Corrective Action (PCA) framework, in order to bring the bank into close monitoring by the RBI.

banks. The bigger concern is whether there is a credible turnaround strategy to provide LIC with an appropriate return on investment.

There are proponents who argue that the deal is not as bad as it sounds. IDBI's investment of around ₹10,000 crore is less than 2% of LIC's equity assets under management (AUM), and the equity investment by itself is only 20% of LIC's total assets. Although LIC's investments in IDBI may be proportionately small, the philosophy of reactive investments, rather

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Breathe out the exam blues with Pranayam

• Kalyani Majumdar

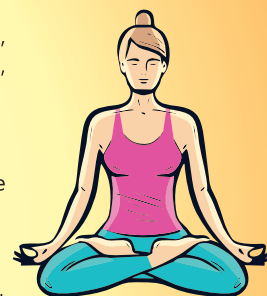
Now that there's less than a month left for CAT 2018, you must be facing the dreaded test-anxiety, right? And, we all know too well how this anxiety can impair the normal functioning of the body and the mind. To overcome this anxiety, just breathe a little differently!

This is a simple Pranayam technique that can be practised even by beginners. Anulom Vilom Pranayam, also called the alternate nostril breathing technique, involves inhaling, retaining and exhaling on counts. Through breathing, you can control your prana (energy or life force).

Now you might ask, isn't breathing an involuntary act? Yes, it is, but when done properly and consciously, it is a powerful technique to calm your mind and body, improve concentration, reduce nervousness and help you stay in the moment, thus removing stress. While inhaling is easy, the technique of proper exhalation is really the challenge, and that is what you will learn through Anulom Vilom!

STEPS TO ANULOM VILOM PRANAYAM

- Sit on a Yoga mat, preferably in **Padmasana** (lotus pose), but if you are uncomfortable in that pose, then you can sit in Sukhasana (the easy or the pleasant pose). If you have knee problems or arthritis, you can also do this while sitting on a chair.
- Make sure that your back is straight, and relax your shoulder, arms and neck.
- Close your eyes. Rest your hands on the knees with your palms facing up.
- Make Vishnu Mudra with your right hand, i.e., fold the index and the middle finger and touch it on the base of the thumb. Extend the thumb, ring finger and the small finger.
- Make Chin Mudra with the left hand, i.e., connect the tip of the thumb and the index finger.
- Inhale and exhale deeply. As you inhale, your belly rises, and as you exhale, your belly goes in.
- Continue to keep your right hand in Vishnu Mudra as you raise your right hand and close the right nostril with the tip of the thumb.
- Inhale to a count of 4 from the left nostril.
- Close both your nostrils and retain your breath for a count of 8.
- Keep the left nostril close with the tips of the little and ring fingers as you exhale from your right nostril to a count of 8.
- While keeping the left nostril closed, inhale to a count of 4 from the right nostril.
- Retain your breath by closing both the nostrils to a count of 8.
- While keeping the right nostril closed, exhale from the left nostril to a count of 8.
- This is one round of Anulom Vilom Pranayama.
- Start with 5 rounds and gradually increase it up to 20 rounds.
- Please note that if you initially feel uncomfortable retaining your breath, then keep a 1:1 ratio of inhalation and exhalation, i.e., inhale up to 4 counts and exhale up to 4 counts.
- As you get comfortable with alternate nostril breathing, then graduate to retaining your breath and keep the ratio 1:2:2, i.e., inhale up to 4 counts, retain for 8 counts and exhale to 8 counts.



BENEFITS OF ANULOM VILOM PRANAYAM

- Increases oxygen supply throughout the body, making one feel calm and peaceful
- Improves concentration, patience, resoluteness and decision-making ability
- Regulates blood pressure
- Helps in curing diseases of the muscular system, and is beneficial for arthritis, varicose veins, and sinusitis
- Aids in positive thinking and to overcome tension, anger, worry, forgetfulness, anxiety and uneasiness
- Helps in curing migraine and insomnia

REMEMBER

Avoid retention or holding your breath if you have high blood pressure or any heart ailments. Ideally, it should be practised under the guidance of a trained Yoga instructor.



Are you a Brainiac?

In this section, we shall explore several different types of questions from the various areas of entrance exams like the CAT, CET, GMAT, etc, and how to best solve them.

Quant

1. The factorial of a natural number 'n' (or n!) is defined as the product of all natural numbers less than or equal to 'n'.

Given: $m = 1! + 2! + 3! + 4! + \dots + 99! + 100!$

Find the last two digits of 'm'.

- 1] 3 2] 9 3] 13
4] 19 5] 23

- Ans: 10! is the least factorial, which has two zeros at its end.

The last two digits of m will be same as that of $1! + 2! + \dots + 9!$.

The last two digits of

$1! + 2! + \dots + 9! = 1 + 2 + 6 + 24 + 120 + 720 + 5040 + 40320 + 362880$ are 13.

Hence, [3].

2. The factorial of a natural number 'n' (or n!) is defined as the product of all natural numbers less than or equal to 'n'.

Given: $m = 1! + 2! + 3! + 4! + \dots + 99! + 100!$

Find the remainder, when 'm' is divided by 168.

- 1] 33 2] 129 3] 153
4] 67 5] 9

- Ans: $168 = 23 \times 3 \times 7$

$7! = 1 \times 2 \times \dots \times 7 = 23 \times 3 \times 7 \times (5 \times 6)$ is divisible by 168.

Hence, all factorials from 7! to 100! are divisible by 168.

The remainder obtained by dividing 'm' by 168 is the same as that obtained by dividing $1! + 2! + \dots + 6!$ by 168.

Now, $1! + 2! + \dots + 6! = 1 + 2 + 6 + 24 + 120 + 720 = 873 = 168 \times 5 + 33$.

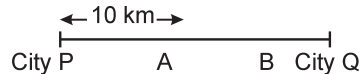
Hence, the remainder is 33. Hence, [1].

DIRECTIONS for questions 3 and 4: Answer the questions independently of each other.

3. Alok started one hour after Bimol from city P towards city Q and crossed Bimol at a distance of 10 km from P. After reaching city Q, Alok immediately started moving back to city P along the same route. On the way back, he again met Bimol, who still needed 1 hour and 12 minutes to reach city Q. Find the distance between city P and city Q if Alok and Bimol travelled at a constant speed throughout the journey and Alok's speed was 5 km/hr.

- 1] 30 km 2] 28 km 3] 34 km
4] 20 km 5] None of these

Ans:



Let Alok and Bimol meet for the first time at A and for the second time at B.

The time taken by Alok to reach A = $\frac{10}{5} = 2$ hours.

\therefore The time taken by Bimol to reach A = $2 + 1 = 3$ hours

Bimol's speed = $\frac{10}{3}$ km/hr.

Now, the time needed by Bimol to travel from B to Q = 1 hour 12 minutes.

\therefore The distance between B and Q = $\frac{10}{3} \times 1.2 = 4$ km

Let the distance between A and B be d km. Then, as Alok and Bimol met for the second time at B, we get,

$$\frac{AB + BQ + QB}{5} = \frac{AB}{3}$$

$$= \frac{d + 4 + 4}{5} = \frac{d \times 3}{10}$$

$$\Rightarrow d = 16 \text{ km}$$

The distance between city P and city Q = $10 + 16 + 4 = 30$ km.

Hence, [1].

Verbal

DIRECTIONS for questions 1 to 3: The sentences given in each question, when properly sequenced, form a coherent paragraph. Each sentence is labelled with a letter. Choose the most logical order of sentences, from among the given choices, to construct a coherent paragraph.

Q. 1.

- A. No one would think to commit a deep thought or a long argument to a pebble or a potsherd.
- B. They had the advantages of being cheap and plentiful but the disadvantages of being small, irregular in shape, and easily lost, broken or otherwise damaged.
- C. When people first began writing things down, they'd scratch their marks on anything that happened to be lying around - smooth-faced rocks, scraps of wood, strips of bark, bits of cloth, pieces of bone, chunks of broken pottery.
- D. They were suitable for inscriptions and labels, perhaps a brief note or notice, but not much else.
- E. Such ephemera were the original media for the written word.

1] CDABE 2] CEBDA 3] CDBAE 4] CEDAB

Based on the options, C is the first sentence. 'Such ephemera' ('ephemera' refers to short-lived items) in E refers to the items mentioned in C, so we get the CE link. The DA link is also obvious: D states what the writing materials were suitable for, and A states what they were not suitable for. This leaves us with options [2] and [4]. B does not follow from A, (as proposed by [4]), as A states a negative point about the ephemeral writing materials, while B first states a positive point and then a negative one followed by a 'but'. Rather, B fits better before D, as in [2], as both B and D state some positive points of the ephemeral writing materials. Therefore, we get the sequence CEBDA. Hence, [2].

Q. 2.

- A. There are surprisingly few rules: it's not impolite to start a second, or third, conversation in a group before the first one has ended, or even to interrupt someone in mid-sentence, as interrupting shows you're in the game.
- B. Rambling on about yourself and your work is the only thing that is truly unacceptable, because it's boring.
- C. Whether friendly or hostile, conversations

are always competitive, steered towards someone getting the upper hand, demonstrating wit, or otherwise making an impression.

- D. The French like the level of discussion to be as high as possible.
 - E. Conversation is a game, an invitation to go head to head with someone.
- 1] DEACB 2] DEBCA 3] DABEC 4] DCEAB

Statement D is the opening sentence, as it introduces the topic of the French attitude to conversation, and is also the first sentence in all the options. B is linked to A, as A states what is acceptable in conversation, and B states what is the only thing that is not acceptable. A, which refers to conversation as 'the game', has to appear later in the sequence than E, which first calls conversation a game. Thus, the only correct sequence among the options is DCEAB.

Hence, [4].

Q. 3.

- A. It could be confusing.
 - B. Unfortunately there would later be another Gupta Chandra-Gupta, so the founder of the
 - C. Gupta dynasty is designated as Chandra-Gupta I - which naturally brings to mind the Mauryan Chandragupta.
 - D. History is said to repeat itself.
 - E. But the first date was, of course, BC, the second AD; and to clarify matters further, the Gupta Chandragupta is often phonetically dismembered as 'Chandra-Gupta' or 'Chandra Gupta'.
 - F. Seldom, though, does it oblige as readily as with the creators of ancient India's two greatest dynasties: a Chandragupta had founded the Mauryan empire in c320; just so did a Chandragupta found the Gupta dynasty in c320.
- 1] CDBEA 2] CEADB 3] CAEBD 4] CEDAB

Statement C is clearly the first sentence, judging by the options. It connects best to E: 'it' in E refers to 'history' repeating itself. So options [1] and [3], which lack this CE link, can be ruled out. A fits best between E and D: the similarity between the two Chandraguptas and their dates mentioned in E 'could be confusing', but D attempts to resolve this partially by clarifying that the dates were BC and AD, and showing how the two names can be differentiated. Thus option [4] is ruled out, and we get the right sequence, CEADB. Hence, [2].

WORD DOSE

When in need...

By the end of eleven years, however, Mrs. Price could no longer **afford** to **cherish** pride or **resentment**, or to lose one connexion that might possibly assist her. A large and still increasing family, an husband **disabled** for active service, but not the less equal to company and good liquor, and a very small income to supply their **wants**, made her eager to regain the friends she had so carelessly **sacrificed**; and she addressed Lady Bertram in a letter which spoke so much **contrition** and **despondence**, such a **superfluity** of children, and such a **want** of almost everything else, as could not but dispose them all to a **reconciliation**. She was preparing for her ninth lying-in; and after **bewailing** the **circumstance**, and **imploring** their **countenance** as sponsors to the expected child, she could not **conceal** how important she felt they might be to the future **maintenance** of the eight already in being. Her eldest was a boy of ten years old, a fine **spirited** fellow, who longed to be out in the world; but what could she do?

An excerpt from Jane Austen's Mansfield Park

MATCH THE WORDS WITH THEIR MEANINGS

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| 1. Afford [<i>uh-fohrd</i>] (v) | 8. Despondence [<i>dih-spon-duh n-see</i>] (n) | <i>kuh m-stuh ns</i>] (n) |
| 2. Cherish [<i>cher-ish</i>] (v) | 9. Superfluity [<i>soo-per-floo-i-tee</i>] (n) | 15. Imploring [<i>im-plohr ng</i>] (v) |
| 3. Resentment [<i>ri-zent-muh nt</i>] (n) | 10. Want [<i>wawnt</i>] (n) | 16. Countenance [<i>koun-tn-uh ns</i>] (n) |
| 4. Disabled [<i>dis-ey-buh ld</i>] (adj) | 11. Dispose [<i>dih-spohz</i>] (v) | 17. Conceal [<i>kuh n-seel</i>] (v) |
| 5. Wants [<i>wawnts</i>] (n) | 12. Reconciliation [<i>rek-uh n-sil-ee-ey-shuh n</i>] (n) | 18. Maintenance [<i>meyn-tuh-nuh ns</i>] (n) |
| 6. Sacrificed [<i>sak-ruh-fahys-d</i>] (v) | 13. Bewailing [<i>bih-weyl ng</i>] (v) | 19. Spirited [<i>spir-i-tid</i>] (adj) |
| 7. Contrition [<i>kuh n-trish-uh n</i>] (n) | 14. Circumstance [<i>sur-</i> | |

- | | | |
|--|--|--|
| a. Hold (something) dear. | i. Express great regret, sadness, or disappointment about (something). | and determination. |
| b. Requirements, essentials needed to survive. | j. Support or approval. | o. State of being despondent; depression of spirits from loss of courage or hope; dejection. |
| c. Lack something desirable or essential. | k. Give up (something valued) for the sake of other considerations. | p. Beg someone earnestly or desperately to do something. |
| d. Sincere penitence or remorse. | l. The provision of financial support for a person's living expenses. | q. A fact or condition connected with or relevant to an event or action. |
| e. Incline (someone) towards a particular mood. | m. (Of a person) having a physical or mental condition that limits their movements, senses, or activities. | r. An unnecessarily or excessively large amount or number of something. |
| f. Be able to do something without risk of adverse consequences. | n. Full of energy, enthusiasm, | s. Bitter indignation at having been treated unfairly. |
| g. The restoration of friendly relations. | | |
| h. Prevent (something) from being known; keep secret. | | |

A quiz to boost your General Knowledge

- In 2018, the Opposition leader of this country Ibrahim Mohamed Solih defeated President Abdulla Yameen in the elections to become the president in 2018. This country, where tourism plays large role in the economy, is a key battleground in the rivalry between India and China. Name the country.
 - Bangladesh
 - Maldives
 - Philippines
 - Indonesia
- UK-based consultancy Brand Finance publishes an annual report called Nation Brands, in which 100 countries are ranked according to the strength and value of their nation brands. In its 2018 report, the US topped the list with an increase of 23% and a brand value of \$25,899 billion, followed by China and Germany at \$12,779 billion and \$5,147 billion respectively. In the 2018 report, India's brand value increased by 5% to \$2,159 billion. What is India's rank?
 - 5th
 - 7th
 - 9th
 - 13th
- Sign language was officially adopted at the 72nd United Nations General Assembly in December 2017. The first ever International Day of Sign Languages (IDSL) was held recently this year, fully acknowledging the basic human rights of the deaf. When was the first IDSL observed?
 - September 23
 - September 29
 - October 2
 - October 27
- The Man Booker is a literary prize awarded each year for the best original novel written in English and published in the UK. The Man Booker 2018 shortlist comprised six books, one of whom was by Daisy Johnson, the youngest ever author to be shortlisted for the Booker. Who won the Booker 2018?
 - Daisy Johnson, *Everything Under*
 - Washington Black, Esi Edugyan
 - Anna Burns, *Milkman*
 - The Overstory, Richard Powers
- The Global Partners' Forum is a unique initiative to unite collaborators of Partnership for Maternal, Newborn & Child Health (PMNCH) from around the world. The forum focuses on bringing together strategies to expedite improvements in health and well-being of women, children and adolescents. In which of the following cities will this year's forum - the 4th edition - be held?
 - Gandhinagar
 - Chennai
 - Kolkata
 - New Delhi
- The Ease of Living Index, compiled by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, is a measure of urban planning and management among all Indian states. In the 2018 index, Andhra Pradesh topped the charts. Which of the following states was ranked second?
 - Madhya Pradesh
 - Odisha
 - Gujarat
 - Telangana
- The UAE recently signed an agreement with the Red Cross to support humanitarian activities, with the UAE providing \$6 million to support health centres, water and sanitation facilities, in which of the following countries?
 - Turkey
 - Libya
 - Syria
 - Yemen
- The UN-backed Green Climate Fund (GCF) recently approved a budget of \$43.4 million for enhancing climate resilience for millions of people living in this country's coastal communities, in order to combat the extreme effects of climate change. The new project will be supported through the United Nations Development Programme

(UNDP). Which country is set to receive the aid?

- a. Sri Lanka
- b. India
- c. Myanmar
- d. Japan

9. The space agency of this country recently created history by becoming the first to successfully land two robotic rovers, collectively known as MINERVA-II1, on the asteroid Ryugu. Asteroids are believed to have rich information about the formation of the solar system billions of years ago. Which is the country?

- a. Russia
- b. China
- c. Japan
- d. US

10. The 27th IAEA Fusion Energy Conference was a 3-day event organised by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in October 2018. The purpose was to share the R&D results in fusion experiments across the world. In which city was the conference held?

- a. Gandhinagar
- b. Paris
- c. Tokyo
- d. Washington

11. The metro network in the city is a 46-km stretch, and is the second largest operational metro network in India. It is also world's largest public private partnership, with the total investment around ₹15,000 crore. Which city's metro network are we talking about?

- a. New Delhi
- b. Kolkata
- c. Bangalore
- d. Hyderabad

su | do | ku
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9	4		6		3
2	1	9			
8				7	
	8		6	9	
1	5	4	3	6	7
	7	2		1	
	9				6
			5	4	2
3			4	8	9


How to Play
Fill in the grid so that every horizontal row, every vertical column and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1-9, without repeating the numbers in the same row, column or box. You can't change the digits already given in the grid. Every puzzle has one solution.
Hint: Don't fill in numbers at random. While filling a particular square, write numbers 1-9 on a pad and start eliminating those numbers that already appear in the same row, column or 3x3 box.

ANSWERS

GLOBESCAN

1. b	2. c	3. a	4. c
5. d	6. b	7. d	8. b
9. c	10. a	11. d	

SUDOKU



For more similar puzzles, visit:
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WORD DOSE

1. f	2. a	3. s	4. m	5. b	6. k	7. d	8. o	9. r	10. c	11. p	12. g	13. i	14. q	15. p	16. j	17. h	18. l	19. n
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*Source: Analytics Vidhya (analyticsvidhya.com), Analytics India Magazine (analyticsindiamag.com), India Today Magazine, September 2017



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