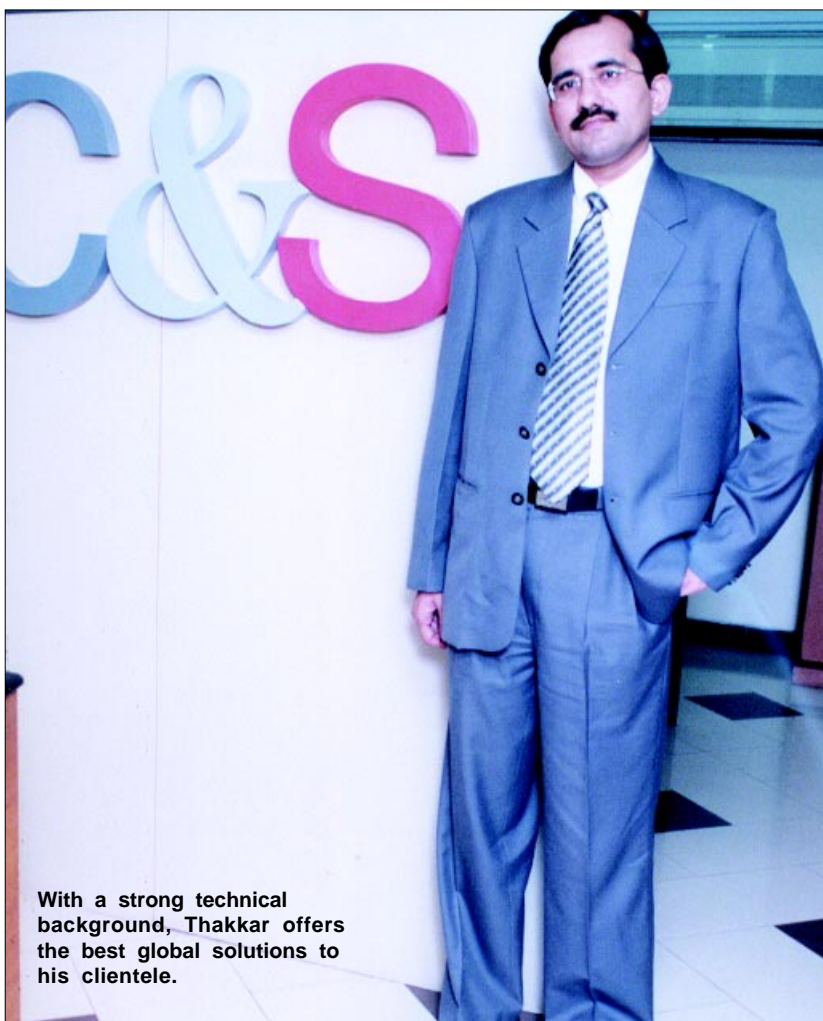


# Intelligent innovator

CA Satyam has created a niche for itself by introducing the latest technologies to Indian shores.



With a strong technical background, Thakkar offers the best global solutions to his clientele.

## CHANDRAGUPTA AMRITKAR

Located in Bandra, a suburb of Mumbai, is an organisation that has started creating waves in the country through its range of innovative products. In its fourth year of operation, the company CA Satyam is a 50:50 joint venture between Computer Associates International, USA, and Satyam Computer Services, India.

“CA is a global leader in products

while Satyam is a global leader in services. In one of our mutual discussions, we found that we could utilise the inherent strength of each of these global players and tap new opportunities,” said Ninad Karpe, MD-India, CA, and ex-CEO, CA Satyam.

And that’s exactly what CA Satyam does. It leverages on the strengths of both its parents to provide world-class IT solutions in the Indian marketplace. It has a wide suite of products and technologies.

## Defying distance

Enterprise Conferencing (EC) is the latest craze in many countries and is now coming into the Indian market. It uses latest technologies to help people communicate and collaborate in different ways such as audio conferencing, video conferencing, web meetings, seminar and e-learning.

“In today’s corporate world, fast and proper communication has become a key factor for success. Earlier people used to spend both time and money to commute for meetings. Today, customer needs one single application to cater to various communication and collaboration needs so that technology acceptance within the organisation is much easier and rollout is quicker. That’s where enterprise conferencing can make a difference,” says Jayesh Thakkar, CEO, CA Satyam.

Interwise Enterprise Communications Platform (ECP) Connect integrates web, video and voice in an IP-based software platform. The platform features fully integrated VoIP and ties in with the company’s existing VoIP infrastructure. Users are given a choice to connect to a meeting via a traditional PSTN line or through VoIP on a PC. Says Ananth Sayana, GM Corporate IT, L&T Infotech, who has been using Interwise for over a year, “The need arose when we found that executives had to commute from our six development locations across the country. As the frequency of meetings increased, it became difficult to match everyone’s time. Now with Interwise, we have over 60 meetings with audio, Power Point presentation, etc every month. There was an occasion when we had 14 simultaneous meeting with our US clients.”

“Usage of Interwise has benefited the business to save money by

## CASE STUDIES

## E-learning in hinterland

*CA Satyam has helped MKCL redefine and redesign distance learning.*

One of the most successful implementation of Interwise is at Maharashtra Knowledge Corporation Ltd (MKCL). It is a public sector consortium jointly promoted by the State Universities in Maharashtra.

Under its IT Literacy and Functionality Programme, it offers a wide variety of short-term courses in IT for dissemination of actionable knowledge in IT tools and methodologies among the young aspirants to boost their employability.

“We have almost 2,500 authorised training centres spread over the State – metro, urban, rural and even tribal and hilly areas. There’s a need for all of them to get quality education. It’s not easy to provide good teachers everywhere. So when CA Satyam came up with this solution, we found it ideal,” said Vivek Sawant, MD, MKCL.

They are already finding the solution cost effective. “We have had virtual classrooms using ordinary dial-up connection bringing the expense to just Rs 14/hour. So, if you have 14 students in a class, it boils down to Re 1 per student. Also quality teachers, who could have cost us substantially, if they had to teach individually at these centers, now cost us much less as the cost gets divided across the training centers. Whiteboard sharing, mike, Power Point presentation, etc, is all feasible making it a real classroom experience,” said Mr Sawant.

## Creating synergies

*How CA Satyam facilitated Patni Computer Systems to coordinate intelligently.*

Patni Computer Systems Ltd, a global IT player, decided to revamp its physical security mechanism. Patni has a strength of 10,000 professionals servicing clients across diverse industries, from 24 sales offices across the Americas, Europe and Asia-Pacific, and multiple offshore development centres across eight cities in India.

It was necessary to track the movement of personnel within their buildings spread across India. “Earlier we had barcode readers but there was no security. Also due to BS7799 implementation, it was necessary to go in for smart cards. After discussing with quite a few vendors, we found CA Satyam’s technology appropriate,” said R Neelkantan, Manager, Hardware and Operations, Patni Computer Systems Ltd.

CA Satyam worked closely with the team at Patni and put together a solution to manage and control access between different offshore development centres. They developed a universal card management system that would allow Patni track the lifecycle of the card and control physical access from a central location.

reducing the travel and also saved lot of travel time for managers. Managers can participate from their own workplace and therefore all the information is available with them either in the form of electronic data or as physical entity,” said Mr G M K Raju, CEO of ITC, Printing and Packaging Division.

Sharekhan, an online brokerage firm and equities consultancy, has also found enterprise conferencing an ideal tool. “Every evening, we have our research conference calls connecting 250 outlets in 113 cities across the country. We discuss, make presentations using Word, Power Point, Excel, etc. This instant access has seen a rapid growth in our business,” said Jaideep Arora, Director, Sharekhan.

### E-learning tools

Virtual Classrooms are seeing a rapid growth in the corporate world. Many are using this tool to teach and upgrade their employees sitting at remote locations. “A lot of our on-site employees located at customer sites across the globe could not take benefit of our regular training. With Interwise, we found that Virtual Classrooms can be held even at remote sites at an economical price. Infrastructure was also a major issue as space, you know, can cost quite a bit. This solved our infrastructure problems also,” said Jayanti Patil, Group Head-Education Services Group, MBT.

A new form of outsourcing – education process outsourcing (EPO) or online tutoring – is picking up pace these days. Today teachers in India are tutoring children across the globe in math and science at the click of a button, right over the internet.

A leading player in this segment is Career Launcher. Highlighting the benefit of technology, Sujit Bhattacharyya, Director, Career Launcher India Ltd, said, “Interwise helps us to deliver education to the desktop of student irrespective of which part of the world he or she is. Also our teachers can collaborate across geographies which give students the highest quality at any time and place of convenience. Thanks to technology it all happens over the internet, which requires minimal investments to implement.”

It helps companies create and retain their competitive edge in the market, on a continuous basis, by developing critical skills in their employees. C&S offers Think Tank LMS for medium size organisation and Sum Total Solution for medium to large organisation.

Content is a very important aspect of any e-learning initiatives. C&S offers off-the-shelf content from Element K. It has 1,900 courses in a wide range

## “We act as business partners for our clients.”

To be successful a company requires a dynamic leader. Rarely have Chief Technical Officers (CTOs) taken up the responsibilities of Chief Executive Officers (CEOs). Differing from the trend, Jayesh Thakkar has steered CA Satyam to new heights.

In the words of his mentor, Ninad Karpe, MD-India, CA, and ex-CEO, CA Satyam, “For this type of a set-up, we need a person who understands technology thoroughly. I found Jayesh had both deep technical experience as well as good execution skills.”

In an exclusive interview with *India Business Journal*, **Jayesh Thakkar** speaks in detail about his company, its plans and programmes and its business strategies. Excerpts:

### ■ What led to the creation of a JV between CA and Satyam?

Both Satyam Computers and CA are leaders in their respective space. The idea of coming together was more from working on technologies not covered by either CA or Satyam and which are emerging.

### ■ How successful has your strategy been?

I think it is working very well for us. Over the past four years, we have laid solid foundation and created a very vibrant and dynamic team. We are working on some of the latest technologies. Our customer-focused approach and good turnaround time are praised by our customers.

### ■ You have quite a few international tie-ups. How important are they?

It is one of the key aspects of our strategy. Our goal is to give the best-of-breed solutions to our clients in some of the relatively newer areas like e-learning, web collaboration and smart cards and hence having the

best technology from international players is very important for us.

### ■ What are the major projects that CA Satyam has taken up?

We have worked on many large projects for many companies. Currently, we are working with Patni Computers for smart card-based identity management project. We are working as a technology partner for a large project related to registration of vehicles on smart card for the Gujarat government. We have implemented a



Jayesh Thakkar, CEO, CA Satyam

large project for Maharashtra Knowledge Corporation (MKCL) on e-learning for providing education in most districts of Maharashtra. Apart from that, we have done numerous projects on our flagship product, Interwise for Enterprise Conferencing (EC), for companies like ITC, L&T Infotech, Sharekhan, etc.

### ■ Yes, your EC has been in the news quite a bit. How beneficial is such a product for India?

The scope for EC has widened with a significant increase in the number of staff and partners, modes of communication channels and the very purpose of communication. Today, an organisation can use the web to meet

global partners and hold sales presentations, virtual training classes and even global seminars. And with the economy becoming very competitive, effective enterprise conferencing systems can reduce time and costs and increase efficiency in the use of human capital. Today, we have more than 40 customers.

### ■ BPO is the focus zone for India. Any plans to enter this arena?

Yes, definitely we are increasing our focus in that space. Security and training would be the focus area from our side as far as BPOs and KPOs are concerned.

### ■ What are the major problems that your industry is facing?

We are focusing on technologies, which are futuristic. Hence we have to do a lot of market education and awareness. Some of the technologies are newer and hence there is some amount of management issues that one needs to take care. Over the past four years, we have developed a lot of skills in making this change happen in the end-user organisation. Our approach has been to act more as a business partner rather than just selling the software.

### ■ An offbeat question. Having been a CTO, did you have difficulty in fitting into the role of a CEO?

Well (smiles). To be a CEO is definitely more challenging than my previous roles as a technologist or a consultant. I have had an opportunity to meet and interact with a lot of people in the last 17 years of my career and I am quite comfortable at dealing with people and that's what is helping in my role as a CEO. In this constantly changing world, every day is a new experience and my technological background is definitely an added advantage, especially in a technology company like CA Satyam. In addition, I also look up to my mentor for guidance. ■

of IT, computing, compliance and business management topics. The uniqueness of this offering is that the solution offers thousands of short technical articles, a full text e-reference library and executive level abstracts from many hot business, marketing and leadership books. Element K is probably the only one to offer VLabs (Virtual Lab) for hands-on experience over internet.

The iMarkup Server is a web-based software solution providing document management, workflow automation, electronic forms processing and knowledge management. The server transforms one's document-based information into knowledge assets by providing powerful storage, categorisation and search technologies.

"It provides users with an easy way to manage, distribute, locate, collaborate on, annotate and review documents and digital content. Apart from this, the iMarkup has an embedded workflow engine, which is designed to automate a company's business process for the creation, updation, review and approval of documents and digital content," said Devayani Chaubal, National Manager-Sales, CA Satyam.

#### Smart solutions

There's no doubt that smart cards are going to be a necessity for India. Apart from corporate, Central and State governments are taking a keen interest in this area.

"We realised there was a huge requirement in this area and we entered it. It has turned out to be a good decision as we have some of the best projects in the market. Also there's a sense of pride among us as we know some of the projects are a step forward in the nation's march towards a complete e-governance model," said Anil Makhija, General Manager, CA Satyam.

The two major projects are for the Gujarat and Maharashtra governments. The Gujarat project is for the transport department and the man-

date is to issue 6 million smart optical cards to all new and existing commercial vehicles as well as to new non-commercial vehicles.

The smart optical card is aimed at replacing conventional paper-based vehicle registration certificates with a smart optical card, making life easier and safer for the vehicle owner. The smart optical card is capable of storing over 80 times more data than regular smart cards. Unlike other smart cards, it can also store graphical data. To top it all, the data is unalterable and hence the card is completely tamper-proof.

"Similarly, we are working for the



**InterWise, one of the solutions offered by CA Satyam, benefits businesses by enabling them to cut costs and save time.**

transport department of the Maharashtra government. The mandate of the project is to issue 10 million smart optical cards to all new and existing commercial vehicles as well as to new non-commercial vehicles," said Mr Makhija.

Globally, corporate identity cards are gaining immense importance as a powerful security mechanism. Hence a single card can be used for both physical access as well as logical access.

Physical access control restricts

unauthorised access to sensitive areas like laboratories, server rooms, data storage areas, etc. Logical access control prevents unauthorised access to emails, important documents, common domains and networks, knowledge bases, etc. CA Satyam is currently implementing a very large project for Patni Computers Systems Ltd in this space.

Smart cards have also proved their versatility and power in the areas of campus cards, and loyalty programmes.

A loyalty smart card adds power, scalability and interoperability to any loyalty programme. The chip in the card stores customer details, preferences and loyalty point information. This makes loyalty point information available in an offline mode at any location.

CA Satyam has done a number of projects in the area of campus cards for educational institutes and corporates. Vidyalankar, one of the largest tuition class providers in Mumbai region, is using smart cards for tracking fees of students as well as for marking attendance in class and storing exam records of students.

"We were on the look out for a technology that was cost effective. Though online connectivity was an option, we knew it would set us back quite a bit (monetarily). Then we came across CA Satyam and they have been successful in fulfilling our needs. CA Satyam has already issued 10,000 cards. They have also integrated the smart card with the existing MIS of Vidyalankar providing significant user-friendliness and saving cost," said Dheeraj Shah from Vidyalankar.

Be it an online equity broker or an educational institution, CA Satyam has something for everyone. CA Satyam has time and again proved that few can rival it in the world of connectivity and technological innovation.