Ashok Soota

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Executive Chairman
Happiest Minds Technologies

1. What is your perception of the Indian Electronic Systems Design & Manufacturing (ESDM) industry?

India, though reasonably strong in Electronics System design, lacks solid presence in the manufacturing area. To make a mark in the global ESDM industry, we need to have many product design companies who design and manufacture products in India. Government can play a big role in this by promoting start –up companies in product design and electronic manufacturing. We also lack the eco system of electronic component industry. Eco system will come up once design and manufacturing picks up India.

2. What are the top 3 innovative trends Happiest Minds Technologies sees in ESDM technology?

- IOT (internet of things) wherein every small gadget will be Smart, Secured and Connected.
- Energy efficient products & Home automation.
- Low powered, Low cost wearable technology, and gesture controlled devices with Artificial Intelligence sensors.

3. What part does India play in the overall technology strategy and marketing strategy of your company??

India is an important market for Happiest Minds business. In terms of Technology strategy, our approach is to invest based on global trends and leverage Technology ecosystems both in India and abroad.

4. How do you place the competency of Indian product and design companies as compared with MNCs?

India can do product design but not many Indian companies are into complete product designs. Complete end-to-end product design services (designing from concept to product) is one of the key focus area for Happiest Minds. Compared to MNCs Indian companies offer the complete product design with a good eco-system to enable design as per specs in a timely and cost effective way.

5. What would be the key market drivers in 2013 ?

Tablets, mobiles, Wearable devices, Gesture controlled sensors, Low cost low powered M2M sensors.

6. In your view, what should India's focus be for the next 2 years?

India should focus more on electronic manufacturing, electronic product design, in addition to the focus on IT services.

7. How does India fare with regard to innovation in the semiconductor domain?

Most of the semiconductor work happening here are not complete product designs, it is either verification work or designing a portion of the chip. India need to start doing complete end-to-end chip designs. There is a strong collaboration needed between government and private sector to boost innovation in the Semi industry. We need ready to use labs and place for mutual collaboration and incubation centers to boost innovation.

8. What would be your mission and vision statement for the growth of the Indian ESDM industry?

India to be a leading design and manufacturing hub for high quality electronic goods for India and International markets

To achieve this, many product design and electronic manufacturing companies have to come up in India. The design that we do here has to meet global quality standards. Along with manufacturing houses, we also require the electronic component industry and several electronic test and accreditation labs across India.

9. What are the key verticals addressed by Happiest Minds Technologies in the next three years?

In the ESDM space, we focus on Networking, Storage, Automotive, Consumer Electronics, Medical.

About the author
Ashok Soota
Executive Chairman

Ashok Soota, Executive Chairman, Happiest Minds, a next generation IT Services company, is widely recognized as one of the pioneering leaders of the Indian IT industry.

Prior to founding Happiest Minds in August 2011, Ashok led the growth of Wipro's IT business from $ 2 m to $ 500m run-rate. Subsequently, he was founding Chairman & MD of MindTree and led it through a very successful IPO. His second entrepreneurial venture, Happiest Minds has already established several benchmarks in the IT Services industry in India and is on course to achieve its goal of being the fastest to achieve USD 100 mn revenue.

Ashok began his career in 1965 with the Shriram Group of Industries in India. In 1978, he became CEO of Shriram Refrigeration, a company which was unprofitable for four straight years. Ashok facilitated a complete turnaround, making it profitable in his very first year and taking it to a position of leadership in each of its product lines.

Ashok is a leader of industry. He was President of Confederation of Indian Industry (CII), India's largest Industry association and also President of Manufacturers' Association of Information Technology. He has served on Prime Minister's Task Force for IT and on the Advisory Council for the World Intellectual Property Organization, Geneva. For his contributions to India's IT industry, he has been recognized twice as IT Man of the Year, also as Electronics Man of the Year, and recognized at Infocom 2013, Kolkata, as one of the 12 Gems who helped to build Indian IT Industry. The companies he has led have created about 25,000 jobs during his leadership tenure.

Ashok's philanthropic contributions are channeled through Ashirvadam, a Trust he has created for Environmental Protection and help for the needy including vocational training, education and medical assistance.

Ashok holds a Bachelor of Engineering degree from Roorkee University (now IIT, Roorkee) and an MBA from the Asian Institute of Management, Philippines. He is a Fellow of INAE. Ashok's hobbies include trekking, the outdoors, yoga, taichi and meditation.