

LIQUID

Marrying Learning and Technology

Liquid was set up to teach the Queen's language in the most discerning way so that learning becomes fun



VIVEK AGARWAL

Franchise India (FI): What was your prior occupation? What made you consider entrepreneurship?

Vivek Agarwal (VA): This is my second venture. Prior to this I had founded E-gurucool, which was a pioneer in technology-based learning and became India's best known e-learning company. For me the idea of being an entrepreneur is to have an impact. Education industry, in that sense, offers a chance to do well by doing good and is immensely satisfying.

FI: Tell us something about your company Liquid. What are the various products and services you offer?

VA: Liquid is a company specializing in application of technology to the learning process. We provide customized learning solutions and English Language learning solutions to customers around the globe. We have global leaders as our customers and partners.

Liquid's English Edge offering has three dimensions on which it is differentiated - Pedagogy, Curriculum and Delivery. In terms of pedagogy we use the new communicative approach as opposed to the traditional grammar Translation approach. On the curriculum side, we have created

QUICK FACTS

Company: Liquid
Founder: Vivek Agarwal
Year of inception: 2002
Turnover : INR 20 crores

specialized curriculum for different needs of learners. We have also created content in ten different vernacular languages as well as for different proficiency levels of the learners.

FI: How long did it take you to break-even?

VA: The company has been operationally breaking even pretty much from the start.

FI: How was the experience of hiring first employees, building a team for your company?

VA: Fortunately for me, I had already had experience of creating a successful enterprise, egurucool, which had created some reputation in the market. So it provided a good

foundation on which to have discussions.

FI: What is the market potential for this segment in India?

VA: The market for our English language learning solutions is vast. An English is a important component of every educational and training offering - from young children to adults and continuing education. The segments we serve are schools, colleges, vocational training governments, corporate and international customers. The Global English training market is estimate at USD 20 billion and we have estimated the Indian market at US\$ 1 billion.

FI: What is the biggest challenge you have faced so far and what was the strategy you implemented to deal with it?

VA: We are trying a very innovative model of scaling education by leveraging technology. I think the biggest challenge has been explaining the new concept to the various stakeholders - people, customers and investors. We have dealt with this through communication and proof-of-concepts. As people have seen demonstrated success and realized the value, they have turned believers.

FI: What have been the key marketing and brand building strategies for your business?

VA: There are several elements to our marketing strategy. First and foremost has been word-of-mouth. We have become probably the largest English company in India in terms of number of users without doing any mass marketing.

The other areas are participation in trade shows and conference, PR and leveraging the internet and digital social media.

FI: What is your growth plan in the next three years?

VA: We have massive growth plans for next years with growth rates of about 80-100 per cent year on year. We plan to have about five million learners going through our English language programs on an annual basis.