

## EkGaon Named Winner of the First Annual Dell Small Business Excellence Award in India

Dell, UTVi and Endeavor India named the national winner of 2009 Dell Small Business Excellence Award. Based in Delhi, EkGaon functions as an IT services provider for rural India, designing and developing technology and information systems to address the varying needs of developing communities. The company, founded in 2002, has become a pioneer in mobile rural accounting and mobile tracking of transactions for small rural financial organizations.

The company has a history of creating innovative interface designs for semi-literate population through image capture, numeric and audio output. Their goal was to create a system that enabled rural financial institutions to better serve their customers through paperless updates to a central financial database. This service then grew to address the more pressing need to provide an organizational framework for lending groups- the microfinance institutions clients. The camera based and spoken interaction system for lending groups has enabled a new semi literate population to access financial services. The innovative use of interface design allows customers to capture more information accurately, without having to rely on banking correspondents who would travel to a village infrequently and might not have the customer's best interests at heart.

As the company grew, it needed a way to streamline and automate its operations while still providing the level of human interaction its customers had come to expect. The use of mobile banking solutions has also reduced the cost of loans and financial transactions by removing physical barriers to having bank branches in rural areas. The solution has the ability to transform the landscape of rural banking as physical proximity is replaced by digital correspondence in a rich format of text, audio, and picture interaction.

"In an effort to capture information about an expanding rural clientele we are identifying problems at the individual level and letting them drive development. Creating the atmosphere where we can co-develop solutions with local participation is one of our end goals but also one of our greatest operational strengths as we are able to address local needs faster and more precisely than our competitors," said Vijay Pratap Singh Aditya, co-founder and Chief Executive Officer of Ekgaon. He added, "Technology is a critical tool for EkGaon, it's what allows us to facilitate collaboration over long distances between our offices in north and south India, partners globally and track client performance in real time."

It was this strong focus on co-development of solutions with customer participation backed by innovative technology that set EkGaon apart from the record breaking 5,000 applicants for the 2009 Dell Small Business Excellence Award.

"EkGaon is living proof that smart IT investments can not only pay off for the business itself, but for their customers as well," said Ravi Bhardwaj, General Manager - SMB, Dell India.

EkGaon will receive \$25,000 in Dell products and services, and a day of best-practice sharing with Dell experts, including time with Chairman and CEO Michael Dell.

EkGaon joins the 13 national winners from Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, France, Germany, India, Italy, Japan, Mexico, Spain, United Kingdom and the United States for a chance to win the global Dell Small Business Excellence Award; ½ worth \$50,000 in Dell technology and services and

participation in a global entrepreneurs' summit. National winners are being announced now, and the global winner will be announced later in 2009.

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