



Our Distinguished Alumni - The Story of Al Maz , 1994 Batch Bandra West

“I was at the right place at the right time.” That’s how Almaz sums up the secret of his success despite a rocky start.

Losing his father at an early age left the entire family grief stricken. But they were made of sterner stuff. They rallied around, put on a brave face, and supported each other to take on life.

In 1995, when Almaz was in class XI, he moved to the USA to complete his education with the support of his family. Since the family had roots in the film and advertising business, he decided to study advertising

and took up a course in imaging at the University of Wisconsin, Madison. What he thought was a course in learning to make ad films, opened him to a world of computer sciences and graphics. Artistry met science to light up Almaz’s creativity.

In 1999, at the advise of a close friend, Almaz moved to California for his first job at Adobe Systems. Working on cutting edge technologies was a huge learning experience. He was on the team that worked on PDF format, EPUB, Adobe Flash and other technologies that people use in their everyday lives.

It was the boom time for technological advances and although the work was exciting, Almaz took a month’s sabbatical to regroup his thoughts. With creative juices flowing, he decided to start his own company in May of 2010, which received a multi-million-acquisition offer from an Equity firm within 6 months of its existence. They worked on creating technology for custom digital watermarks, used mainly by Yahoo and later Verizon.

Almaz gives credit for his innovative spirit to great teachers and lifelong friends he’d met at Arya Vidya Mandir. “The friends that I made at Arya Vidya Mandir were to become lifelong confidantes and guides. We share a bond that’s more than family “

Late night sessions with friends like Tushar Burman , Adeet Deshmukh and Tilak Das is where he learned basics of computers. “ Sumit Mody was always there to give to me sound advice. He and many more friends who I have till today were the source of confidence and encouragement when I needed to believe in myself. Success comes from support and belief of others, as much as it’s from one’s own strength.”

Brilliance is seldom left alone. Almaz moved to work with Barnes & Noble. Here he and a team worked on the first version of an e-book reader, which we know as NOOK. Nook had a very good run but was unable to compete with the Kindle eco system.

In 2012, Almaz decided to give his own company another try, and ‘Momentum Software’ was born. It was an R&D company creating cutting edge mobile and consumer HW products. Their first break was building the Starbuck application with an in-app payment option to pay for coffee in store. They were also responsible for working with multiple unicorn companies in their infant stages. Momentum was acquired in 4 and half years for its design driven first approach to product development.

Momentum was an incubator for ideas Almaz had floating in his head. He spun out a few other



companies. One of which is Virtual Visions, at a current evaluation of over \$60 million USD. They are changing how technology interacts within physical spaces.

Almaz is also the Chief Technology Officer and Advisor at Razor Scooters, evaluated at \$300 million USD. At Razor Scooters “we are changing urban transportation.”

Almaz is an active technology investor in Venture Capital firms like Seraph Group, which are investing in ground breaking technology companies.

The process of innovation is continuous

and ably aided by opportunity. Being at the right place at the right time is what makes these opportunities succeed and that is Almaz – a success, our hero!