



Our Distinguished Alumni – The story of Bhavin Turakhia , 1994 Batch Bandra West

"Just a few minutes more, miss. I am almost done," he said, pecking away furiously at the keyboard.

He kept his eyes on the screen, trying not to get distracted by the teacher standing behind him.

"But Bhavin, it's almost 3.45pm, it's time to lock up and go home," said Ms. Jayanti patiently.

Bhavin didn't reply. He was too focused on what he was creating on the computer and didn't hear what she said.

Recognising true talent when she saw it, Ms. Jayanti quietly left the keys to the computer room at Bhavin's side and walked away. She knew that she could trust him to lock up when he was done.

"That boy is going to make something of himself," she thought as she walked towards the elevator on the 3rd floor of Arya Vidya Mandir school.

Bhavin, oblivious to the fact that she had left, carried on typing on the computer.

"It was her trust in me that allowed me to create the foundation of my skills," he recalls 20 odd years later, standing in the lobby of the company that he created with his brother.

Now in his late 30's and a billion dollars later, he credits his school and teachers for helping him develop the foundation of what was to become his calling.

With an estimated 20 million residents, Mumbai has the kind of crowd it can be hard to stand out in, but Bhavin soundly beat all the odds. His father is a chartered accountant who runs his own business specializing in tax consulting, auditing and company incorporations and his mother is a law school graduate.

Bhavin was first exposed to computers when he was in the 6th standard of Arya Vidya Mandir Bandra West. The 12-seater computer lab soon became his "Mecca". He spent countless hours after school exploring BASIC and other programming languages on his own. He read various manuals and books to teach himself, beyond what his teachers taught. By grade 9, he was the "computer guru" taking extra lessons for students and teachers after school hours. Bhavin fondly recalls his fascination with his friend's 8086 PC. The two worked on several projects, writing codes for advanced features such as mouse enablement, simulation engines and music player on those basic systems. By grade 10 Bhavin had coded a stock market simulation game built to track stock prices.

From an early age Bhavin was passionate about whatever he undertook. By the end of grade 10,

Bhavin had discovered his entrepreneurial zest, constantly pushing himself to “Create something of Value in the world” – a personal philosophy Bhavin stands by even today.

By the time he reached college, he couldn't wait to work on his ideas and experimented with a few business ventures. Some worked and some failed. Eventually, he took a loan of Rs. 25,000 from his father and co-founded

Directi, an entirely bootstrapped technology conglomerate in the year 1998 with his brother Divyank.

In the late nineties the world witnessed the dot com boom which brought with it easy access to capital for most internet ventures. Several venture capitalists (VC) made prompt investments in web companies. Bhavin frequented the exhibitions and conferences attracting potential clients. On one such occasion in Delhi, Bhavin remembers having sold his product at all the 60 odd sales booths in the conference. He went on to acquire remarkable business acumen and enjoyed phenomenal success.

Till date, Bhavin has founded or co-founded 11 businesses, all bootstrapped and among the top 5 in their respective category. Even his business exits have hit the headlines. In 2014, he created a buzz by selling all four of his web presence businesses to Endurance International Group for \$160 million. In August 2016, he (along with Divyank) again made the headlines for selling their advertising technology firm Media.net to a Chinese consortium of investors for a whopping \$900 million. This sale stands to be the second largest ad-tech deal in history.

Bhavin's current portfolio of companies comprises Flock, Radix, Zeta, Ringo, and Codechef, all of which he continues to steer towards success. Across his multiple businesses, Bhavin employs 1500+ people across 8 offices, with over 9 million customers, revenues of over \$250 million, and a group enterprise value of over \$1.4 billion.

Looking back, Bhavin recalls, “It all started because Ms. Jayanti gave me a few minutes more”.

