Projects and Progress
An Insight Into Students’ Experiences
"In every walk with nature one receives far more than one seeks"  
- John Muir
From the Coordinator’s Desk...

It gives me great pleasure to write this editorial, of *Vritaanta*’s second issue in its second year. A showcase of some of the fine achievements of the students of SIBM Pune, as well as the events organised by the teams of our ever-active Students’ Council.

Read the first-hand accounts of some of our consistent academic achievers on the support system SIBM Pune offers to the bright young minds entering the word of management. Yet academics is not everything, and SIBM Pune understands this. Our cover story explains the importance placed on live projects and internships by the institute – and by the students here. Turn to Page 1 for the learnings students have garnered from their experiences with hands-on work in the field, within the period of their MBA itself.

Perhaps it’s due to this balance between academics and live work experience that SIBM Pune has climbed so effortlessly up the rankings, hitting Rank 8 as per Outlook 2015’s latest report. Another reason for this, perhaps, reflects in our connection with our alumni, which goes far beyond the ephemeral. Enjoy Mr. Divya Prakash Dubey’s exquisite reminiscence of his time on campus – written in Hindi – which stands testament not only to the bond between Alma Mater and Alumnus, but also to the infrastructure and wonderful campus life prevailing here on the hilltop.

*Vritaanta* was conceptualised to showcase the achievements of our students – competition winners and finalists, artists, poets, academicians, among others. It also serves to cover some of the unique events our highly active and engaged Students’ Council is involved in.

We at iSMaRT only regret we do not have more pages in which to do so!

Priya K.
Coordinator, iSMaRT, SIBM Pune

*In case you would like to share any feedback on the magazine, or would care to contribute an article, do send us an email to prteam@sibmpune.edu.in with the subject line Vritaanta_Inputs. We would be honoured to hear from you!*
The Competitive Edge - Turn to page 8 for a glance at some of the laurels brought home by the students of SIBM Pune and a taste of the ever-present spirit of competitiveness.

Flip to page 14 for insights into E-Summit, the event that celebrates the entrepreneurial spirit in young minds and provides a holistic platform for encouraging the entrepreneurship acumen of MBA students. With a plethora of events, from talks featuring distinguished guest speakers to carnivals where students get a chance to set up their own enterprise, E-Summit is truly one of the most awaited events of the year.

This issue’s cover story shares insights on the experiences of students who worked on various live projects. Students also share what they have learned by interning in competitive corporate environments.
Projects and Progress

Students of SIBM Pune who have participated in Live Projects and Internships share their stories of learning and new experience.

Internships and Live Projects are fast becoming the preferred way to learn the practical aspects of management, both for students and companies. We look at some of our students’ experiences in this area to understand this trend.

The best way to enhance learning at any academic institution is to get practical exposure by taking on Live Projects and Internships. The way a live project help a student differentiate himself from his more academic counterparts, these projects usually include constraints and risks regarding cost, schedule or performance outcome. A Live Project has a definite beginning and end, with specific goals and objectives. Through participating in these projects students gain valuable understanding of a field, industry or sector which is crucial in the preparation to enter any chosen field.

Another source of learning that provides both the benefits of a live project and the field exposure is through internships. The importance of an internship experience cannot be overstated. An internship makes the classroom’s abstract theories and learned examples concrete by placing the student in a real life work situation with co-workers performing actual professional tasks, which the job encompasses. Internships generally last for a period of two months for students at SIBM Pune; they form a mandatory part of the curriculum. The goal of an internship is to gain invaluable professional experience as well to beef up one’s portfolio or resume and make industry contacts that could be essential in landing the dream job upon graduation. To most, an internship can have a significant impact on their professional career, it helps them build confidence and help them understand a job, profession or field.

What follows herein are the experiences of some of SIBM Pune’s best who have worked on live projects, and whose internship experiences have been truly rewarding.

Sai Kripashankar from MBA II Finance and his team, Harsh Shah from MBA II Finance and Nisha Todi, MBA I Finance, are currently working on a project with an educational consultancy FinShiksha. The project is titled ‘Industry and Financial Analysis of the Commercial Vehicle Segment of the Automobile Sector’. According to Sai Kripashankar, it is vital to understand what is expected by the company. “Regarding my assigned project
we worked in three phases, the first being the industry analysis which would focus on analysing the various growth parameters and growth drivers and finding out how the industry is expected to perform. This is followed by ratio analysis, followed by commentary and comparative analysis. It is important to have a clear approach after defining the objectives of the project."

While understanding the objectives, one should enhance the learning quotient, according to Sai Kripashankar. "Through the project, I have gained significant understanding of how the industry is performing and how global 'macro' factors can affect various industries, especially with regard to the automobile industry."

Shreya Sen and Chitiz Gupta from MBA II Marketing are working with Bizseer Co. on a project titled International Business Development for Accupak in Latin America. The project required them to develop a strategy for the business which plans to expand to South America. They had to identify a different approach as it dealt with a new foreign market. According to Shreya it was a challenge to understand the importers, dealers and distributors in South America because these factors are different from the Indian market. "My learning from the project is that the market changes as per the geography and your approach has to be different; you have to be more creative."

Anirudh Durbha, Ayushi Todi and Shreyank Deoras from MBA II Finance worked on a project by IREP Credit Capital Pvt. Ltd. titled ‘Identification of companies across infrastructure and SME sectors, based on growth potential in the future, for IREP to invest into’. As Anirudh relates, “The project was about gathering and building a database the company could use and about identifying potential investors for the firm.” This being a research intensive project, they had to take considerable time out from academics while keeping in mind specific restrictions pertaining to the revenues and credit ratings of the companies, and the timeline of the project. According to Shreyank Deoras, “the extensive research and reading from my part and the learning were complementary; it proved to be an internship experience in itself."

Sidharth Khanna from MBA II Marketing, Diptendu Das from MBA II Operations and Kayalvizhi M. from MBA II Marketing worked on a live project with Physiocell, which is into the corporate wellness sector. According to Sidharth, the project provided ample learning as it required them to understand a new sector and come up with the market potential for the same. “The core learning for me by working on a live project has been that I got a chance to explore a new sector, the corporate wellness sector, and to explore the various problems that corporates are facing today, along with those of the employees themselves.” Said Sidharth, “When doing a live project, always remember that there is a solution to and a way out for each and every problem.” Students need to look at a problem from different angles and need to be proactive in a project.

Meghna Biswas from MBA II Human Resources interned at Tata Steel Ltd. She was assigned a project on mapping the competencies of contract labourers. “What I have learned from my internship is that you have
to be very diligent when it comes to work. My negotiation skills have improved through my experience of talking to the contract workers. Since I had to get data by constantly calling and checking up on them, I had the chance to witness and deal with day-to-day labour problems, attend disciplinary hearings and even saw how charge-sheets were filed, all of which is necessary experience for any aspiring industrial relations manager. Working with one of the largest steel manufacturers in the world, watching the steel plant in operation itself was an experience to remember.”

Karan Kaul from MBA II Marketing, who interned at Godrej Consumer Products Ltd. in East Africa, admits the approach that he had to use in his internship was different. He had started very early, had gone through his project brief two weeks in advance and got in touch with his mentor very early. “I had the opportunity to do secondary research on the campus itself before I could go on the field”, he tells us. He stresses the need to be creative, to seek different approaches to a problem and to go beyond the guidelines in order to successfully complete an internship.

Mandeep Sandhu from MBA II Operations, who interned with Mahindra & Mahindra Ltd., reports that the learning that one can take away from an internship is paramount in being able to relate what is learned in the classroom and practising it in the industry, “By talking with the various senior industry leaders, we get to know of their approach to business and understanding that approach is very important for an MBA student.”

Aparna Kumar from MBA II Innovation and Intrapreneurship interned at I.R.E.P. Credit Capital Pvt Ltd. Aparna states that she learnt many things through the various projects that were assigned to her in the span of two months, such as credit analysis on incoming deals, the amendments made in the real estate regulatory bill and their impact on non-banking financial companies throughout India, especially Maharashtra. “Projects on asset-management were particularly challenging since one has to understand the portfolios of companies across the year, how they have performed, whether are they meeting the criteria set and what the changes are that need to be made.”

Pooja Ninan from MBA II Finance interned at Nomura Services India Pvt. Ltd. She says that there is a plethora of learning to be gained by working in an investment bank. “You can improve your understanding of the sector, you are exposed to many analysts who have a deep understanding of the subject, you get opportunities to work with live deals and it’s exciting to see what you learnt in class being implemented on the ground. We were also given a bit of the line work from analysts on the floor, which involved us helping them in their daily work. This gave me invaluable insights on how the company works.”

Hearing these experiences, it is small wonder that internships are quickly becoming one of the favourite ways for employers to hire. The experience gained from working on a live project or interning at a corporate definitely increases the marketability of a college graduate for the future. Internships also help some to take a test-drive of their career and understand how their coursework prepares them to enter their chosen career while developing skills, building a better work habit and networking.

Today it is vital to take initiative and seek knowledge beyond academics by pursuing challenges and doing work that could benefit a company in the long term. The batch of 2014-2016 have shown us that it is important to have a thirst for knowledge, to be creative in approach and to go beyond what is expected so as to gain the maximum benefit, be it while doing a Live Project or an Internship.
Mr. Divya Prakash Dubey, an alumnus of SIBM Pune and a successful Hindi writer, writes a letter to his college, waxing nostalgic about the many things he misses.

2007-09 बैच वालों का नाम SIBM के इतिहास में हमेशा थोड़ा अलग तरह से लिया जाएगा क्योंकि हम इकलौते बैच हैं जिसमें एक साल पूर्व कैम्पस में काटे और बचा हुआ एक साल लवले के नए कैम्पस में। पूर्व कैम्पस के बाद नए कैम्पस में आना ऐसे था जैसे कोई मुंबई के चॉल में रहने वाले किसी बालक को हनीमून के लिए Switzerland भेज दिया जाये।

सब कुछ खुला खुला ,आस पास पहाड़ ,क्लास में पढ़ने-पढ़ने खिड़की के बाहर बादल आ जाना। SIMC की बंदियों ,ट्रेफिक का कोई नामों लिखना नहीं ,एक दम भी शोर नहीं ,शाम को बैठक सूज से दबाव हुआ देखना। कुलमिला कर ऐसा लगता था कि कॉलेज नहीं कहीं छूटी पे मस्ती करने आए हुए हैं। ऐसे मस्त माॉल में ये बड़ा मुक्किल था कि में लेखक नहीं बन जाता। कॉलेज के दौरान 2-3 प्ले लिखे। क्लास में पीछे बैठकर न जाने
कितनी कवितायें। एक आधे छोटे मोटे प्यार भी हुए।
कितनी बार लोगों ने मेरी कवितायें झोली।
कोलेज के दौरान जब हमारी लाइफ के कितनी ही 'funde' कम्पनी के CTC के हिसाब से बदलते हैं। इन सारी चीजों के बीच में एक चीज जो न मेरे कोलेज ने बदलनी चाही न ही मेरे बैंक ने वो थी कि इसने मुझे वैसे ही अपने साथ टाइम बिताने दिया जैसा में था। मुझे बदलने की कोशिश नहीं की। वो कोशिश जो मेरे मोहल्ले के हर अंकल नी की थी ,वो कोशिश जो मेरी हर गर्लफ्रेंड ने की थी।
अगर कोई मुझसे तुमसे (SIBM) मेरे रिश्ते के बारे में पूछे तो मेरा जवाब स्टूडेंट और alumni वाला तो बाद में होगा पहले एक जिंगरी दोस्त का होगा। ऐसा दोस्त जो कभी बुरी चीज करते हुए आपको रोकता नहीं बल्कि बस आपके साथ हमेशा खड़ा रहता है।
िससे ज्यादा लिखुंगा तो में इमोशनल हो जाँगा क्यूंकि लिखने को इन्ते दोस्त कहानियाँ और सुबह के इंतजार करते वीरी न जाने कितनी सुबह हैं जिनका हिसाब किाम करते में एक उम लग जाएगी।
दो किाम किाम ने के बाद जिन्दगी को भाले अब थोड़ा सा अलग तरह से देखना सीख रहा हूँ लेकिन आज भी कोई मेरी दो किाम के बदले तुम्हारे (SIBM) के दो साल लौटा दे तो में तुरंत ही कर दूंगा क्यूंकि उन दो सालों में न जाने कितनी किाम दबी पड़ी हैं।
कभी कोलेज लौटकर चाय पीते हुए SIBM तुम्हारे साथ किसी किसी को ने में बैठकर सूरज को दूंगे हुए देखने का बहुत मन है। देखो कब तुमसे मिलने आना होता है।
िादर,
दिल्ली प्रकाश दुबे

Rising Through The Ranks

The Best B-Schools 2015 ranking by Outlook magazine has just been released. SIBM Pune has moved up and stands as the eighth-best B-school in the country and the third-best private B-school.

What Makes a Good B-School

Business is not black or white; it is a world full of grey. The world of B-schools remains quite different from other courses. It’s a diverse world which gives beyond -the-job learning to prepare us for the many uncertainties of life at the workplace. The academic curriculum and the assignments with their tight deadlines all just challenges set for us to become great leaders in the future. It’s only natural, then, that a stiff competition exists between the top B-Schools in India. This is where SIBM Pune recently stood up to the test by being ranked the 8th Best B-School in India in research conducted by Outlook magazine.

Following a rigorous methodology on the basis of various parameters like the admission process, personality development during the course, academic excellence, infrastructure, facilities, and placements. SIBM achieved a total score of 752.6 out of 1000 (while the top-ranking college, IIM-A, achieved 889.2). In the region-wise list, SIBM stood at 3rd position in the West region. Being a college that looks beyond theoretical academics alone with its MBA course in Innovation and Entrepreneurship, SIBM stood at the 3rd place nationally among colleges that funded start-ups.

This is indeed an institute which seeks a more holistic development for its students. To this end there have been some unconventional courses like the Moral Re-Armament Programme conducted in Panchgani. Electives such as ‘Doing Business in India’, ‘Indian Film Industry - a Business Perspective’ and ‘Management Lessons from Gita’ have been introduced as part of the regular course for students to get an idea about business from different angles. Such thoughtful attention to the academic structure has helped SIBM achieve rank 6 in Academic Excellence. There were further parameters, such as the Selection Process and Admission, where SIBM’s fastidious selection procedure helped the institute attain rank 9. SNAP, a test taken by thousands of students across the country, is one of those exams which require great amount of diligence and strategy.

As an icing on the cake, the beautiful, lush green campus on a hilltop in Lavale, Pune makes it a uniquely enriching experience for the students residing here. It’s an experience worth living, which makes these two years of MBA more than just a regular college stint.
‘Rendered In Autumn Gold’

A surrealistic painting that uses shades of red, yellow and black in a chaotic style to attain just the right visual harmony.

Chhavi Chauhan, MBA II HR
Ground Zero

The Competitive Edge

Accounts of some of our competition winners – their challenges and learnings.

INTERROBANG?!

‘Interrobang?!’ is ITC’s campus engagement initiative which lets students from top Indian B-schools engage with the company through a unique and interactive learning experience. It aims to provide students an experience where they can ask/interrogate senior leaders at ITC to seek their views on different managerial challenges faced by them in day-to-day life and test their own budding managerial skills on such problems.

The entire experience has three faces. As a run-up to the event, Interroquiz, a daily online quiz is hosted on ‘Hub n Scope’, ITC’s talent page on Facebook. The Interrojam sessions give students an opportunity to dialogue with ITC’s business leaders on their brand stories, people practices and supply-chain processes.

Finally, the Interrobang Case Challenge provides students the platform to plan and conceptualise different and innovative solutions to real life problems faced by top ITC management. It is conducted across top-notch B-schools in India. Students of the winning teams also receive a Pre-Placement Interview (PPI) opportunity with the Company. Students from SIBM Pune have won the competition for the Western region: Abhinav Magapu, Jyoti Prakash Mallick, Swati Prasanna, Vaibhavi Belsare from MBA II, HR.

MAHINDRA WAR ROOM

Mahindra War Room is a competition organised by Mahindra Group for engaging top notch B-school talent to work on live business issues. This year’s National Finalists from SIBM Pune were team ‘Game set Match’, consisting of Aastha Chawla, Abhishek Nair, Ashima Kandari Karan Kaul from MBA II, Marketing.

Aastha tells us, “I think the key to our success was identifying our resource pool and utilising it opti-
mally. Our mentor from Mahindra helped us revisit and refine our campaign from time to time which again worked very well for us and kept us motivated all along.”

Adds Ashima, “It took a lot of perseverance and we even modified and added to some of our ideas as we went along. Finally, our hard work paid off and our campaign was so successful that we got a press release on Afaqs. Mahindra War Room has been, and will surely continue to be a journey of learning, teamwork, dedication and perseverance – one that I feel truly proud to be part of.”

Abhishek Nair sums it up by saying, “Nothing good in life comes easy! And the same holds true for Mahindra War Room. I humbly say that we emerged as the winners during the campus evaluation and we hope to bring back the laurels of last year by putting in our very best efforts.”

The winning team from each campus will be flown down to Mumbai, where they will present their strategies to a jury comprising of Mr. Anand Mahindra, the Group Executive Board and a number of eminent Mahindra managers.

DELOITTE MAVERICK

We spoke to Debopam Das, National Finalist of Deloitte Maverick, on his experience at the competition. “Deloitte Maverick was an exhilarating experience, with over 2200 teams from across the country participating this time. The competition consisted of a shortlisting round, a regional round, further subdivided into a boardroom round and stage round, followed by the grand finale. In this kind of competition, it’s important to start out with a good team and ours being a cross-specialisation one, with members from both Finance and Operations, was strong in this area. Every round of the competition had a separate case-study on a different sector, with tightly constrained time-frames making it even harder. It took burning the midnight oil to get through the Regionals and reach the Grand Finale, having competed against twenty of the best teams in the West zone, including those from IIM-A, SP Jain, NITIE, JBIMS and the likes.”

The Grand Finale was a two-day event in Deloitte India office at Hyderabad. The case was designed around contemporary HR issues, and pushed the teams out of their comfort zone. Moreover, not only was the time-frame to solve the caselet and prepare the presentation a brief 6 hours, the deliverables were being constantly changed to create further stress on the teams. “Ultimately, the experience of presenting in the Deloitte Hyderabad boardroom in front of the top brass of Deloitte was truly exciting and exhilarating. Win or lose, the learning and the experience gained from this event will definitely help us in our future career.”

Team “Few but Ripe” for the event consisted of: Akshay Mittal and Sai Kripashankar from MBA II, Finance and Debopam Das MBA II, Operations.

GODREJ LOUD

Godrej LOUD is a platform where passionate individuals are given an opportunity to express and fulfil their dreams. Godrej believes that if people are really passionate about something, then they will bring that passion to work. This is why Godrej LOUD winners get Rs. 1.5 lacs as well as mentoring and support to fulfil their dreams. Not just this, the winners also get a pre-placement summer offer at Godrej Industries Gurukul program. During the finale, participants have a chance to interact with the Godrej leadership as well as to present their dreams to a panel headed by Nisaba Godrej.

“As a LOUD winner, I will be visiting Berklee College of
Music in Boston this summer to attend a summer course on production and composition techniques”, says Navonil Datta Datta (MBA I Marketing), Godrej LOUD winner from SIBM Pune.

For Nansi Mahajan Mahajan (MBA I Marketing), also our Godrej LOUD winner, the dream is to design aids for daily living for people with impaired limb functions.

SAB Miller’s Brew-a-Career Season 2 was another one of the many challenging competitions that students at SIBM Pune work upon. “Calling our team The Beer Rockers, we started off with a primary survey in a few local pubs. A few days were also spent in front of SIBM’s Bloomberg terminals researching the overall beer industry. At last we made it through as campus finalists, after which we added further details to our solution by burning some more midnight beer...er, oil. Finally, we presented our ideas with a passion and conviction and that stood out and led us the National Finals. Although we didn’t make it as the winning team in the finals, the entire experience itself was a highly enriching one, both in terms of the learning and the enjoyment!” said Hullas Arora MBA I, HR. The team consisted of MBA I students, Hullas Arora, Shruti Mehta, Shreyasi Mehta and Rohan Doshi.

Telenor Youth Forum 2015 is a global platform for young opinion-shapers to come together and engage in dialogue with luminaries and leaders of different fields on the transforming world we live in and on our digital future – truly the social and professional experience of a lifetime. This year’s center-slogan was “Education for All”. The task was to leverage technology to improve education and to ensure access to this knowledge. The national winners would be selected to represent India for dialogues of global impact along with youth from Telenor’s 13 markets across the Nordic region, Europe and Asia during the Nobel Peace Prize event in Oslo, Norway in December 2015.

8 students from SIBM Pune (7 seniors and 1 junior) were shortlisted for the Maharashtra-Goa regional round, out of a total of 13 finalists from this region. Vinayy Bahety, second-year MBA student was one of two winners from the regional round and is now a finalist for the national round.

Dineout
Dineout is part of Times Internet, a table reservation service that enables diners to get tables at their favourite restaurants, along with discounts, cash-backs and much more. The Dineout Marketing Challenge was open for students across B-Schools in India.

A qualifying Round to suggest marketing strategies for growth and to suggest 3 growth hacks/marketing strategies to make the Dineout app viral with a cost/benefit analysis of each was followed by a round in which teams needed to suggest a detailed execution plan for each strategy to attain disruptive growth. The Grand Final of the event was to attain crazy growth via smart execution. “It was a great experience and we realised that what they wanted was an awareness campaign for the app, so our plan was a holistic one that involved raising awareness via CSR, social media promotion as well as a BTL activity all tied into a marketing campaign” explains the team who consists of Amartojit Basu, Shekhar Rai and Devesh Kumar from MBA II, Marketing.
Olympus 2015

A unique event through which student-alumni interaction is made possible, Olympus 2015 has just finished two chapters in two cities—The event is slated to cover several more across the country.

The concept of Olympus originated from the idea that students need some kind of value addition in terms of resource sharing.

Olympus is essentially a platform designed to bring together industry leaders from diverse backgrounds to discuss contemporary business issues in a boardroom setting. The motive is to facilitate knowledge creation by documenting and publishing the discussions in the form of a book so as to share this knowledge and expertise of our eminent alumni beyond the SIBM Pune family.

The event has resulted in the bringing together of decades of experience on a single platform for discussion over the latest in the field of management and in learning from their wisdom. Objectives of the event were creating new touch-points with our eminent alumni, discussing contemporary business issues that can help students and SIBM Pune alumni, and creating a knowledge bank by documenting and publishing the discussion.

The event was planned so as to cover multiple cities across the country – Bengaluru, Pune, Delhi and Mumbai – as different chapters, and involved a panel discussion on the current topics in business, live-streaming of the discussion for SIBM Pune students and alumni and video documentation of the discussion. A comprehensive book is also published, containing views of panelists and panel-discussion details for every chapter.
Box Cricket and Rink Football are events that strengthen relationships between the 1st and 2nd year students of SIBM Pune. They witnessed a huge audience this year as the battle of the specializations brought out the competitive spirit in players.

The month of October marks the beginning of Cricket and Football extravaganza at SIBM Pune. The much awaited tournament is one of the favourite events at the college. The event was scheduled for 4 days from the 2nd to the 5th of October, 2015 but, due to the will of the rain gods, the tournament was extended by 3 days. This year, the excitement and enthusiasm levels among the students reached new highs, with 29 teams participating in Box Cricket and a total of 21 teams in Rink Football, including 6 women’s teams in Rink Football. With matches being played in the knock-out format, the margin of error for the teams was quite small. A number of close calls and nail-biting finishes were witnessed, as the teams revealed their skills. Women players went toe-to-toe with their male counterparts, often outperforming them and leading their teams to victory. Rib-tickling commentary from students of MBA II provided hysterical moments during the intensity of the matches.
October 8th marked the final day of the event, resulting in a battle between MBA I and MBA II. Two teams from MBA I, ‘5-Stars’ and ‘Kickers’ took on ‘Power Puff Girls’ and ‘Balls to You’ of MBA II in Rink Football Women and Men category respectively. MBA II emerged victorious at the end of the day, maintaining the legacy of remaining undefeated. Box Cricket finals was played between the teams ‘Out of the Box (Finance batch)’ and ‘Innovation United (I² I&E batch)’, where both showcased awe-inspiring performances. ‘Out of the Box’ emerged victorious at the end of the day. Students look forward to the return of the tournament next year with umpteen numbers of teams participating with even greater vigor and enthusiasm.
Entrepreneurship Summit is intended to provide a 360-degree perspective and a holistic platform for encouraging the entrepreneurship acumen among MBA students. The event has hosted numerous distinguished personalities from the field of entrepreneurship, along with various events and competitions focused on the different facets of entrepreneurship. The event has witnessed participation from students of premier business schools across the country and from budding entrepreneurs based in and around Mumbai and Pune.

The students gained valuable entrepreneurial insights from all the speakers in the Chat with Entrepreneurs and Pride and Passion events. These events were very interactive and students could ask questions regarding various aspects of starting up businesses and becoming entrepreneurs. Mr. Paavan Nanda, Co-Founder, Zostel and Zo-Rooms and Mr. Milind Sharma, Co-Founder, PepperTap & NuvoEx were the guest speakers during Chat with Entrepreneurs. Mr. John Kuruvilla, Managing Director, GenNext Ventures and Mr. Satish Mandora, Success Coach and CEO, Square Circles were the guest speakers at Pride and Passion.

Panel Discussion

Panel of Investors:
Dr. Arvind Chinchure, Chair-Professor, Innovation & Entrepreneurship, SIU
Mr. Ramesh Shah, Co-Chair Harvard Angel Network India
Mr. Mehul Shah, Founder AMS Investments
Mr. Darshan Doshi, Head of Digital Services, JumpShift Angel Investor

The students witnessed a discussion among three of the top investors from across the globe about the strategies of pitching ideas and raising investments. Students were free to ask questions and participate in the discussion which helped improve their knowledge of developing business models.

The Panel Discussion event was followed by Udaan – The Pitch event where the top 5 business ideas, shortlisted through rigorous testing rounds, were presented by 5 teams to the aforementioned panel of investors. These teams came from all over the country and also got a chance to streamline and structure their business models through a mentorship program in order to effectively present them to the investors. A prize money of Rs. 35,000 was awarded to the team Endless Robotics for winning Udaan – The Pitch event. Endless Robotics team came all the way from BITS Pilani.
SymbiHaat consisted of student-run business stalls

Jugaad-The Fund Raiser

Drive – a national level case-study competition
What is the one aspect of SIBM’s academic curriculum that helps students perform better?

**Aastha:** The best aspect is getting to choose our specialisation in the first semester and getting an introduction to marketing subjects from the start.

**Mandeep:** It is very important to know and to focus on one’s specialization from the very beginning and SIBM’s academic curriculum gives us a scope to start building early on our branch.

**Rachit:** Selecting our specialization in the first semester provides us with ample time to develop basic knowledge about the subjects, which helps during internships and also in learning advanced topics in the final year.

**Rupinder:** We have a healthy mix of individual and group assignments; there is also a continuous evaluation system which reduces the stress during the final exams.

Tell us the one strategy you’ve followed to be a consistent academic performer.

**Aastha:** I believe in learning beyond the classroom, from peers, and then relating all these learnings with industry examples.

**Mandeep:** I’ve learnt that last minute submissions are a bad idea. One needs to start working on assignments early to achieve the best results.

**Rachit:** Don’t restrict yourself to what is taught in class; try to learn a little extra. Also, get in the habit of peer learning – it’s extremely effective.

**Rupinder:** In my opinion, there is no substitute for hard work. Students must put their hearts into the work at hand in order to be successful.

In B-schools, people often talk about focusing on competitions. How important do you think academics are in helping with such extra-curricular activities?

**Aastha:** Academics form the basic building blocks for
competitions. What we learn from our curriculum helps us perform better in competitions as we’re applying the same concepts.

Mandeep: What you learn in class is often applied in competitions and thus results in holistic development. You can also expand on what you’ve learnt and apply it in competitions.

Rachit: Undoubtedly, competitions are important in a B-school, but to perform well in them you need to have a strong grasp over the basic concepts of your stream. Competitions test how well you apply what you’ve learned in the class. Thus academics are important not just for competitions but also for when you move to the corporate world.

Rupinder: Academics surely are vital in both knowing how to approach the competitions and winning them. There have been competitions which required a thorough knowledge of labour laws, industrial relations, compensation and benefits and other such academic topics.

Within your specialization, which subjects do you believe are the most important and which require special focus?

Aastha: While all subjects are important, out in the industry, Sales, Marketing Research and Consumer Behaviour help the most in understanding the nuances of work agencies.

Mandeep: Looking at Operations, Basics of Supply Chain Management, Lean and Six Sigma are the most important subjects, as they are upcoming fields.

Rachit: For Finance, one should be thorough with concepts like Time Value of Money, Economics, Financial Management and basics of Financial Accounting.

Rupinder: HR Analytics, which helps in evolving from HRM to Human Capital Management, and Compensation & Benefits are important.
Man, being a social animal, is influenced by the opinion of the people around him. Failure is looked down upon and is criticized by the society. Failure is perceived as the dead end. And so, one is afraid to fail and to even travel the un-trodden path. But what people don’t realize is that failures are the real milestones. It is a test of your endurance and learning through self analysis. Accepting and embracing the failures always generates valuable learning of one’s lifetime.

Organisations are a reflection of society. Society is evolving and so are the organisations. Organisations are now doing the unconventional. They hire failed entrepreneurs for their invaluable experience. They have earned a courage and risk-taking ability in the tough times. Google has ascended a transforming step to reward employee failures. This liberates employees from the pressure of always being right. They are encouraged to explore the unexplored. Various drastic changes are being witnessed, not just at the employee level but also at the team level in the organisations. Teams are encouraged to take up uncertain projects by tying them with greater rewards.

And thus, it fosters a healthy organisation culture. Organisations struggle every day with the dynamic preferences and tastes of the customers. They offer alternatives and design pooled offers for attracting customers. An organisation may encounter a failure in various aspects like financial results, brand equity or in customer loyalty. Each is a humungous loss to the organisations.

But in such hard times, the leadership needs to take a fresh look at things. They might need to redefine or restore their values and reframe the strategies because the customer’s brand preference strongly determines the customer’s lifetime value. Even a product like Maggi, which contributed nearly 80% revenues to Nestle, upon failure, shouldn’t be fatal for an organisation. Though it may shift its focus and put its eggs in other baskets to diversify, it should never relinquish its faith in its own capabilities. Even when the company is fail-
ing in customer centric innovation in such demanding times, it is advisable to power through the bad times using its cash cows and to wait for the right opportunity to knock the door.

While rebuilding organisations, one must rebuild not just hard facets like strategy and assets but also the softer centered facets such as culture, talent, leadership, credibility, alliances and relationships.

There might be harder times when a company might not be able to survive the competition; it may undergo strategic alliances like an acquisition, or may need to enter a merger or form a joint venture. In such cases or otherwise, when company witnesses a change of leadership in parallel, it is imperative to not just rebuild the organisation but also reshape and reposition it, where it is usually required to redesign its customer value proposition as well as its employee value proposition.

Surely, the leadership of a company is instrumental in maintaining its internal and external parity. None of us can ever forget the recent events where Tata Motors lost its CEO Karl Slym and when Infosys had to once again return to the guidance of Mr. Narayan Murthy. At such times, not just the organisation is to be rebuilt, but also restructured in terms of organisation design, human resource planning, geographic and functional deployment. And then, the organisations should be ready to be re-strengthened through talent development strategies to preserve and nurture its intellectual property. This is bound to lead to research and innovation excellence and offers a competitive edge to the organisation.

There’s not an iota of doubt about the importance of leadership and change agents in such scenarios, but we should also understand that it is not solely their responsibility. All the stakeholders of the organisation should be equally concerned and involved. As the saying goes, “Be the change you want to see”.

Among the tales of successful surfing on the tides, there may be reasons for failure that are beyond control. And when it is outside your purview, there is no point devoting time to think about them, as you cannot change those circumstances. It is then advantageous to align your sails with the direction of the wind to reach as far as possible.

You evolve till you are alive. Till that last drop of blood, it’s worth fighting for. Failure is nothing but a perception. You might imagine yourself to be utterly lost at every hurdle on the way, but it’s never a failure as long as you survive. If you don’t die at your imaginary finish line, there is magnificent glory waiting to be attained beyond. But it requires you to reinvent yourself consistently and push yourself to that extra mile. Survive! There’s always a tomorrow!
The basic need for segmentation arrives out of a need to effectively communicate with a heterogeneous group of consumers and to get them respond differently to different marketing stimuli. Today’s retail industry in India is as diverse as the complex and unpredictable Indian consumer. This mix of retailers is going to be even more diverse in the future. Thus, from a manufacturer’s perspective, it becomes extremely important that they not only segment their consumer but their customers i.e. their distributors and retailers as well. With this study, we intend to formulate a basis for segmenting retailers in the FMCG space.

The paper researching the factors that a company considers while segmenting its retailers. For this purpose, 36 copies of questionnaires (consisting of both quantitative and qualitative questions) were administered to 36 different retailers (not evenly distributed) from 4 big FMCG companies. These distributors were from Pune city only. The illustrative data analysis like KMO test and Bartlett’s test of sphericity were used to filter down to the important and significant variables. The research suggests that certain variables are common amongst all the FMCG companies and that each company has a certain number of variables that it considers important due to factors like price point of the products, location, credibility, etc. In the future, the outcome of this research may be considered by any company at any scale to segment its retailers and to understand what number of SKUs, what schemes should be offered to the retailers and many other such important questions which a company faces difficulty answering.
Change Management

Ayushi Garg from MBA II HR explains how successful adaptation to change is as crucial within an organization as it is in the natural world and how business needs to establish coping mechanisms for responding to change.

“\text{It is not the strongest species that survives, nor the most intelligent, it is the one most adaptable to change.}”

- Charles Darwin

In today's world there are constant changes in technology, market conditions, customer demands, input costs and the policies for any business to cope with to keep with the competition. Depending on the extent of adaptability of the business to change, the business may or may not survive the cut-throat competition. Adapting to and managing change provides a competitive advantage, allowing organisations to quickly and effectively implement change to meet market needs.

But what if change is not managed effectively? The organisation’s productivity may decline, valued employees may leave the organisation, existing employees’ morale may deteriorate, projects may go over budget or may be unable to meet deadlines. Employees may find alternatives to the new working methods or may go back to the old ways. A divide can be created between the organisation and the employees.

Research has shown that effective application of change management increases the success rate of organisational changes by as much as 96%. Change management basically applies a structured framework of methods, tools and processes to achieve the gap created by change between the actual level and the desired level. It has at least three different aspects, including adapting to change, controlling change and effecting change. The scale of the change does not matter; what matters is how effectively an organisation applies the change management, thereby increasing the chance of staying on schedule and budget, and resulting in higher benefit realisation and return on investment. Thus, leading corporations, government organisations, institutions and non-profit organisations are adopting change management in today's ever-changing business world.

Change Management as a discipline began to emerge in the 1980s and early adopters such as GE, Ford, and AT&T were very large corporations that could derive significant savings through more efficiently implementing new programs. During the 1990s, industries
undergoing significant and rapid change in areas such as information technology and human resources began highlighting the benefits of Change Management programs on a broader scale. The experiences, consequences, and costs of implementing change without a structured approach has helped employees and organisations embrace Change Management tools. The 2000's marked a widespread acceptance of Change Management as a business competency for leading change.

Change management entails thoughtful planning and sensitive implementation and, above all, consultation with and involvement of the people affected by the changes. If you force change on people, problems inevitably arise. Changes such as new structures, policies, targets, acquisitions, disposals, re-locations, etc., all create new systems and environments, which need to be explained to people as early as possible, so that people's involvement in validating and refining the changes themselves can be obtained. Change must be realistic, achievable and measurable. These aspects are especially relevant to managing personal change. Furthermore, before proposing changes, it is important that leaders ask for the opinions and reactions of their subordinates to the proposals, to make the changes beneficial to all of the members of a particular corporation or organisation. Two examples follow:

Tata Motors marked the biggest turnarounds in the history of Indian automobile manufacturing industry in 2001. This success story of Tata Motors can be entirely attributed to the timely change adopted by the Tatas and the then M.D Ravi Kant, who led the initiative.

Tata Motors was predominantly a manufacturer of commercial vehicles, and that is a very cyclical business. The commercial-vehicle market in India shrunk by more than 40 percent. The 5 billion rupee loss in 2001 was the first time something on this scale had happened in the company's history, and it really shook everybody within the organisation. They tried to understand what had gone wrong and wanted to create a path for the future to ensure that they never got into such a situation again. So in 2001 they decided on a recovery strategy that had three distinct phases, each of which was intended to last for around two years—six years in all. Phase one: costs had to be reduced in a big way, and that was going to be a huge challenge for a company that was not only the market leader but had been used to operating in a seller’s market and employing a cost-plus approach to pricing. Phase two: consolidating their position in India. Phase three: venturing outside India and expand operations internationally.

Historically, Kodak was built on a culture of innovation and change. They had people who led change. One key to avoiding complacency is to ensure these innovators have a voice with enough volume to be heard (and listened to) at the top. It’s these voices that can continue to keep a sense of urgency in your organisation. If they are given the power to lead, they will continue to innovate, maintain a culture of urgency and affect change. As Kodak became more successful, complacency grew, leaders listened less to these voices, which made complacency grow some more. It can be a vicious cycle. When Kodak did move into the digital world, it was too little, too late.

Terry Paulson believes “It’s easiest to ride a horse in the direction it is going.” Changes come our way and we need to adapt to them even though it may not be the easiest way!
M ost of us love stories and we often live our entire lives out trying to make fiction and reality meet, and hence, I’ll take the liberty of starting this piece of writing with a situation straight out of a fairytale. Say a Genie were to appear before a typical Indian business school student and ask her to make a wish – the one thing she would wish for would in all probability be a getaway. Without dilly-dallying even a jiffy, she would ask for an escape to a place where there’d be no assignments, lectures, or submissions. So when we heard that the college itself was sending us for such a holiday, we couldn't help but rejoice.

When the day came, early in the morning, we heaved our bags onto the bus and started preparing ourselves mentally for what we had gathered from the title of the programme to be a series of not-so-interesting lectures preaching on moral values and their importance.

However, the moment we reached the premises, there was an aura about the whole place that laid our speculations to rest. When we stepped off the bus and looked around, we saw a couple of buildings nestled among tall conifers. As the breeze swept through them, the trees hummed mystical tunes that filled the place with a serenity—one that seemed to have somehow diffused into every living being present there.

The inaugural session began and, to our surprise, involved no external instructors hurling diktats at us; the only voices we would hear over the coming four days would be our own. The organisation which conducts this programmed is called ‘Initiatives of Change’. They had coordinators from different countries to help us over the next four days; soul-searching, after all, is no mean feat. We were divided into ‘Family Groups’ through which we got to know batch mates who we hadn’t talked with very often thus far. With our respective Family Groups, we had daily meetings; ‘meetings’ that didn’t quite fit the typical definition of the word, as there was no pre-decided agenda, nor any targets to be met. All we had to do was sit together and just be comfortable in each other’s presence. Sometimes sitting in silence, sometimes talking our hearts out, at other times singing a song with one of us strumming the guitar.

On the first day, we went for a trek up to the ‘Table Land’ which is essentially a vast plateau that looks lovely amidst the clouds with lush green grass and a lake in the middle. The view on looking down from atop was liberating, reminding one of how insignificant one’s problems are. The meadows reminded many of

Apoorva Mishra from MBA I Marketing talks about the Moral Rearmament Programme.
us of Heidi (a story set in the Alps). The next day, we were taken to a rustic set-up called ‘Grampari’, the title is an amalgamation of two words that mean ‘Village’ and ‘Ecology’. The self-sustaining model village stood true to its name as it was a beautiful example of how rural upliftment and ecological balance can go hand-in-hand. Later in the day, we were shown a heart-touching movie called “Tuesdays with Morrie”. It made me sit back and reflect on the futility of hurrying through life.

In a moving session, a few of the coordinators narrated us stories of their relationships that had taught them the importance of harboring and expressing love for fellow beings, irrespective of religion, caste and differences in opinion. Without even realizing it, each day, all of us were healing little by little. As time passed, the bitterness that each of us bore in the distant corners of our hearts had somewhat receded. That day, a few of us sat under the clear night sky and spoke a great deal of things that interested us. We conversed on a plethora of subjects, from theories of evolution to astrophysics, from Derridean philosophy to the meaning of life. We went to sleep with a few answers and lots of new questions.

On the last day, a coordinator helped us get an inkling about our lives’ purposes by getting us to think upon how we could bridge the gap between what made us happy and what the world needed. And then, as all beautiful things are bound to end, it was time to leave. Still trying to comprehend the magnitude of what we had learnt over the last four days, we got on to the bus. We promised the friends that we had made to come back and visit, and promised to ourselves to continue introspecting throughout our lives. Goodbyes were bid and thus ended this unforgettable camp.
Leadership On Two Wheels

An article on what leadership can mean by Vishal Bhardwaj, MBA | Marketing.

There's something about riding a motorcycle that brings out the philosopher in most people. (Of course, in some it brings out the cartoon roadrunner.) I, too, have had my musing moments, both while weaving through Pune's crazy, erratic traffic and cruising along the many lovely, winding roads outside the city. What follows is just one of those realisations.

I've spent many happy hours riding around the city with a group of friends, all on bikes. Over time, I've come to observe a group dynamic that naturally develops among bikers riding together. You see, the group effectively acts like a team, with everyone moving together and the lead rider the undeclared team-leader. I say undeclared, but in fact his role is very much that of any leader in any situation. This is where some interesting analogies with business scenarios emerge.

While it's all too tempting for the first rider to race off through the traffic, keeping only a speedy arrival at the destination as a priority, he must maintain a carefully regulated speed to ensure the group stays together. This is easier said than done. Firstly, he must keep in mind the speed limit of the slowest bike in the group. No man must be left behind and, to ensure this, the leader must know the strengths and limitations of each one. The lead rider's attention is essentially divided between the road ahead of him and his rear-view mirrors, often at the cost of his own speed and safety. He must also sacrifice the little thrills of catching a green light at the last second or of zooming through a closing gap between two buses, lest the rider behind him attempt the same and land in trouble, or worse. In close traffic, it's his job to find the gaps, to carve out a route through the jam or take necessary detours or short-cuts. Even when one of the bikes in his rear-view mirror disappears from sight for too long, he stops the others and checks on the straggler to see if he's had a breakdown or needs rescuing from the traffic police. Finally, every now and then, he must uncomplainingly let another rider overtake and take over as leader, because that's just how it is with any team.

The parallels with business leadership may now have become too obvious to elaborate upon, but I'll leave you with one final thought. The next time you see a biker riding at the head of a motorcycle gang, remember that for him/her, being ahead of the others is mostly about looking out behind for them.
The New Societies of SIBM Pune

A glance into the Special Interest Groups of SIBM Pune.

OpCellence – Operations Club
The operations club takes various initiatives to further student learning, such as by conducting a Six Sigma Green Belt certification through ISI, Pune – a course that’s particularly relevant for operations students. Co-Operate, the annual magazine features articles by operations students of SIBM Pune. Juniors are prepared for summer internship recruitments through lectures on important topics, mock group-discussions and interviews and pre-internship guidance to through experience-sharing sessions by seniors. A workshop on MS Excel was conducted by faculty and seniors. Plans for the future include case study events and quizzes with a focus on operations.

Caf-Fin – Finance Society
The Finance Society works to help students stay better prepared for the particularly intensive and demanding course. They send out a GK dossier to students, containing a collection of relevant articles and news from the past six months. They also conduct sessions on MS Excel and SPSS. Previous years’ participants of important finance-related competitions share their experiences and tips with juniors. For the future, they plan to put up a bi-annual magazine featuring student articles and also an inter-B-school case study challenge.

Vitarka – HR Society
The HR Society works to add value to the HR batch through a number of activities. In Internship Hacks, seniors talk about their internship experiences and share tips on performing well with juniors. Excel Hacks is a peer-to-peer learning session where students are exposed to advanced Excel usage. Lectures and mock GDs and interviews by seniors on important topics go a long way in preparing juniors for the summer-internship recruitment process. Future plans include launch of events, including article-writing contests and quizzes.

Mark-O-Polo – Marketing Society
The marketing society actively promotes marketing, sales and branding-related news and topics among students. They conduct Prarambh – an online event where contestants dig out interesting marketing/advertising campaigns which can be shared with the marketing students. 5-star chats is a series of talks and conferences by seniors and marketing alumni on topics like digital marketing. Future plans include conducting marketing-related competitions including sales negotiations, pitches, brand quizzes, etc.