Specialization

Information Economy: Information Technology & Management, New Media (Web & Internet), and ICT for Development

Special Mention 2004

e-Content: Voices from the Ground, Version 1.0
This is the title of the book authored by Osama Manzar, just released in Geneva in World Summit on the Information Society, December 2003. This book has got the e-content scenario including ICT and best practices in 30 countries covering all the continents. Some content of the book can be found on its website at www.econtentworldwide.org The book has been received extremely well and its subsequent versions are expected soon covering gradually all the 191 UN countries.

Current Engagements

Digital Empowerment Foundation www.defindia.org - 2002 Onward
After having run successfully a software company, 4Cplus, Osama decided to sold off his options and concentrate on the social sector using his skills, experience and knowledge. DEF was founded by Osama in December 2002, and has been active at a low scale. However, DEF is now a full time concentration of Osama and it envisages working in the area of ICT for Development, and Digital Divide, in order to help various agencies in the sector to help them execute their jobs effectively.

DEF works with organizations like ISAP (Indian Society of Agriculture Professionals, New Delhi), Digital Partners (Seattle, Washington), World Summit Award (Salzburg, Austria), British Council (New Delhi), World Bank (New Delhi), The Hoot (New Delhi), CDAC (New Delhi/Pune), Development Gateway Foundation, SEWAA (Dehradun), Bytes for All (Internet), OneWorld South Asia (New Delhi), GIPI (New Delhi), Mahiti (Bangalore), International Center of New Media (Salzburg, Austria), European Academy of Digital Media, Arekibo Communications (Ireland), Information for Development (i4d, New Delhi), TeNet (IIT Madras, Chennai) and so on.

The primary purpose of DEF is to bridge the gap between the ICT and the people who cannot avail it because of the language barrier, and the goal is to make the ICT reach the people of all languages rather than the other way round.

Grand Juror - World Summit Award
Osama is selected by WSA as the country expert for India for eContent applications, and is also a member of the 35 grand Jurors selected from 191 countries. WSA is an initiative by ICNM in Austria under the framework of UN's World Summit on the Information Society 2003 & 2005. Osama is also on the board of directors of WSA.

Global Alliance for Bridging Digital Divide
Made with the participation of 22 countries from all continents, GABDD was formed in 2003 to fight digital divide. Osama is one of the founders and steering committee members. GABDD is based in Hong Kong.

Copy Editor - Connected for Development
Manzar has copy-edited the book titled "Connected for Development" by UN and Digital Partners. The book was released in WSIS (World Summit on the Information Society) in Geneva in December 2003. The book is a collection of articles and case studies about "Information Kiosks" across many countries worldwide.

Founder & Editor-in-chief, INOMY (1999 Onward)
Osama also parallely had established a small media set-up for the emerging Information/new economy. This venture is called Inomy Media, and accomplished a webzine at www.Inomy.com, a weekly email newsletter that goes to 5000 plus senior executives and decision makers in the emerging economy sector, and has published a well researched book titled "The Internet Economy of India" co-authored by Osama Manzar. This book, for the first time in India, has quantified the size of the Internet economy in India as US$22 billion for the year 2000. Inomy's plan is to continue with this book on an annual basis.

Coined by Manzar, INOMY is an acronym for Internet/Information Economy. Currently Inomy covers mostly everything relevant to the economy driven by information and knowledge. INOMY is the only media house of its kind as far as India is concerned.

Advisor ICT for Development, Development Gateway (2003 Onward)
World Bank funded Development Gateway, www.developmentgateway.org is considered to be the gateway to all the information related to developmental sector. On its panel of advisors for ICT for Development, from across the world, Osama Manzar is one of the advisors.

Speaking for Knowledge dissemination
Osama, in addition, is also invited in various domestic and International conferences as a speaker on topics related to IT, Internet, digital revolution, digital divide, IT & HR, and so on. Some of his recent talks were on IT & HR in Bangkok, organized by SAARC, ASEAN and International Development group of Japan; eCommerce & Localization at Penton's India Internet World 2001; Broadband & Digital Divide at Baroda - India; IT & Third Sector & Knowledge Management for Charities Aid Foundation, New Delhi, and many more.

Human Based Future 2015 (Year 2002)
Philips Design (www.design.philips.com) for its Human Future project chose Manzar, among 25 internationally renowned experts, to interview to get ideas "to develop human products driven by technology and life style of the future". The interview was held telephonically between Netherlands and New Delhi, and lasted for 2 hours. The summary of the interview is available with Manzar as well.

British Chevening Scholar
Osama has been selected for UK's Chevening Scholarship for Advance Management course for

Senior IT professionals 2001-2002, from Manchester Business School, Manchester, United Kingdom. British Council derives the initiative. Manzar is also a member of ABS (Association of British Scholars) - www.abs-india.org. Manzar successfully completed the course.

Media Coverage
Manzar is constantly invited, and quoted by media in all its form. Some of them so far are: The Times Of India, Hindustan Times, NDTV, CNN, BBC Radio London/India, Indian Express, Express Computer, Dataquest, Voice & Data, CIOL.com, Reuters, AFP, Economic Times, Mid-Day, Exchange for Media, Rediff.com,

The Internet Economy of India (Year 2001)
As Internet created a major impact and hype on the world economy so it did on Indian economy. 1999-00 was the years of peak for the Internet driven business, better known as dotcom revolution. Yet, no body knew, and everybody wondered in the industry, mostly among the VC and investors' fraternity, "What is the kind of money floating in the Internet driven business?" Also, "What is the future of the Internet economy, or for that matter, what is Internet economy?" As a new media specialist and being the editor of Inomy.com, Manzar conceived the idea of working on the most 'practical' book possible on the Internet economy vis-à-vis India. With a rigorous work for six months and working on all the possible related numbers for the year 2000, and analyzing all the important sectors of Internet economy with the relevant experts of international stature, and accompanying the total content with interviews, finally in March 2001, Manzar brought out his co-authored book - The Internet Economy of India, which sold no less than 2000 copies worldwide. It is still regarded as the most relevant book for reference among the industry, researchers and scholars.
Some details of the book are available at www.inomy.com/bookofinomy/book.htm.

Memberships
Some of the organization, Manzar is associated with are:

1. Member, Board of Directors, World Summit Award, www.wsis-award.org
2. Member Grand Jury, World Summit Award, UN's World Summit on Information Society, December 2003
3. Member - "Association of British Scholars", India. [http://www.absindia.org]
4. ISOC - Internet Society, Washington - www.isoc.org, Membership no. [1346181]
5. Communication Management Foundation, New Delhi
6. IS India, A club of MIS managers, CIOs, CTOs, and EDP Managers
7. ICT Advisor, Indian Society of Agribusiness Professionals, [www.isapindia.org]

Work Experience

Cofounder & CEO, 4Cplus (1999 - 2003)
After having grown in the IT industry as a media person for more than 5 years, Osama co-founded 4Cplus, a "knowledge technology" company, in 1999. 4Cplus is now a well-established 80 people company based out of New Delhi, having 3 offices across India. 4Cplus (www.4Cplus.com) was started with just 20 people, and have grown to 80 in less than 2 years.

4Cplus has a unique positioning in the industry as an IT solution company having vertical focus on Customized ERP CIO365™ for Media, Manufacturing, and Food Processing industries, Patent pending technology-based multilingual Intranet called Knowledger™ for SMEs, Content Management System - MediaWrap™, Editorial Management System - NewsWrap™ for publishing industry, and Suit of Language Technology solutions for eGovernance, and all kind of regional language computing.

June 1997 - Early 2000
Head & Consultant - Interactive Media Division, The Hindustan Times
When Osama joined HT, the latter had only two people (including Osama) in the Internet department. Osama took bold initiatives in HT, which is widely known as a traditional company, and formed the "Interactive Media Division" and lunched within six months the website of Hindustan Times (www.hindustantimes.com). After its successful launch and acceptance among HT's readers and NRIs, Osama conceptualized to create a separate entity for HT in the form of a portal and lunched DigitalHT.com as India's one of the largest portal. Within six months of its launch DigitalHT.com got a deal from Chase Capital and got more than nine million dollar investment in the portal, and thus it was made a separate company. At that time, the Interactive Media division of HT had more than 40 people on roll. However, handing over the responsibilities to HT, Osama found a better prospects in ideating his own venture, and left for good. At HT, however, Osama learnt a lot about entrepreneurship, and how to manage a company and people. Later, it was learnt that DigitalHT.com had been renamed as go4i.com, and yet later, it was learnt that even go4i.com has been planned to shut down and to be merged with hindustantimes.com.

What is "India 2.0"?
Besides being a netizen of the global village, Osama feels proud for coining the word "INDIA 2.0." As he defines it, "India 2.0 is the second version of India, especially in the light of her growth in the age of information revolution, new economy, MTV generation, and her software contribution to the world market. He has, in fact, introduced a daily column called India 2.0 in The Hindustan Times. In 1997-98" "In other words, INDIA 2.0 covered the activities having affected on India/ns in the post 50-years of independent India entering in the 21st century which is influenced by the digital revolution, and the values of the global village."

Along with the regular job, Osama remained in touch with many foreign journals and magazines as stringer and contributing writers. Some of them were:

>>>The Industry Standard, San Francisco-based, an IDG's weekly publication for the Internet Economy in which Osama was a contributing writer since its inception in 1997. For those, who know, TIS started as a less than 100 page magazine per week by IDG (International Data Group) and grew up to 300 plus pages per week. Primarily driven by the dotcom economy as far as the ad revenues were concerned, the company however could not survive in the post dotcom era despite it's being the most unique magazine covering the information economy. Manzar's articles published in the magazine can be searched from its archive website at www.thestandard.com. Industry Standard's influence on Manzar was so much that he started the similar concept driven magazine with Indian focus (read www.inomy.com).

>>>MIS Asia, Singapore-based monthly for MIS managers on information management. Osama was stringer with the publication for about 3 years doing various case studies on IT usage in successful India corporate houses. He did IT usage case studies on CBI (Central Bureau of Investigation, India); Department of Post, India; Indian Institute of Management, Bangalore; Modi Xerox, New Delhi; National Crime Research Bureau, New Delhi; The Times of India, New Delhi, and so on. All these articles and more can be searched from MIS website at www.misweb.com.

>>> Beside, Osama also contributed occasionally to Philippine-based World Executive Digest, Germany-based news agency called 23rd.Com (www.23rd.com).

December 1994 - May 1997
Assistant Editor, IS Computerworld, New Delhi
IS Computerworld was an Indian affiliate of IDG (www.idg.net) of US, the publishers of Computerworld (www.computerworld.com) of US. The fortnightly targets at the IS managers in the country, and boast a circulation of over 15,000, in a niche market of merely 25,000 IS managers. Osama joined the magazine as a correspondent, with a focus on newsgathering and occasional features. During the early 12 months, he did incisive stories on almost all the major fields within the InfoTech industry. That gave him valuable insights into the working of the industry, the perceptions of the users, and the needs of the readers. It was during that period of learning that he was exposed to the desk and the nuances of production. This exposure also gave his stories a stronger focus in terms of visuals, charts, word length and the like. He learnt that merely reporting on a beat was not enough; the report needed to be communicated in a simple and reader-friendly manner. Due to his understanding of the highly discerning readership, within one year the expanse of his responsibilities was increased.

As assistant editor, he was singularly responsible for a 16-page section on the Internet. IS Computerworld, was the only periodical then in India, which had a section completely devoted to the Internet. Right from the very first issue, this section became successful not only with the readers, but also with the advertisers. Incidentally, only a few fortnightlies of Computerworld could be seen as Osama's stories not on the cover. Osama owes a lot to the leaders of the IT and IT users' fraternity for they taught him in the process of reporting and writing. Osama considers his days at ComputerWorld as the foundation of future endeavors.

January 1991 to November 1994
During this period spanning almost four years, Osama developed a keen sensitivity towards the larger issues addressing the country. These include the environment, economic development, education, and social relations. Using his pen as a tool, he learnt about these issues by meeting people at the frontiers and translating their perceptions into researched reports for the media. The shift from the pen to the keyboard further sharpened his skills. His work during this period is as follows:

>>> In this period he got published more than 150 of write-ups for various national dailies and magazines, such as The Hindustan Times, The Pioneer, The Independent, The Telegraph, The Sunday Observer, etc.

>>> SOS Children's Villages of India. This is an Indian arm of the worldwide institution SOS Kinderdorf, Austria, which provides homes for orphaned children. Osama was the editor of this organization's newsletter. This is an Indian arm of the worldwide institution SOS Kinderdorf, Austria, which provides homes for orphaned children.

>>> Down To Earth. "Down To Earth" is a fortnightly on science and environment. This is a part of the internationally known Centre for Science and Environment, a non-government organization at the forefront of policy and development issues. Osama did a series of project reports for this organization, some of which were used in the magazine.

>>> Freelance Writing. While gathering knowledge on these fields, Osama wrote in a whole host of newspapers and magazines. These include, The Sunday Observer (circulation: 10,000), The Pioneer (circulation: 10,000), and The Hindustan Times (circulation: 7, 50, 000).

Education

Online Internship Program from Diplomacy Foundation at www.diplomacy.edu, 2003

Advance Management Program for Senior IT professionals from Manchester Business School, Manchester, United Kingdom, 2001-02

Osama has majored in Physics, with Mathematics and Statistics as the other subsidiaries. Topping his graduation in 1989, he completed post-graduate diploma in Journalism in 1990. All his education has been completed from the Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh, one of the 5 central universities and a prime centre of learning in India.

Manzar speaks, read and write English, Hindi, and Urdu. He can only read and write Arabic and Persian. He learnt French for six months when he was graduating from AMU, but remembers no more. He however believes that he can revive his French language for necessity if required.