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Snapfish: Ten Years of Online Photo Printing



So Snapfish, one of the biggest brand backed names in online photo printing, recently celebrated its tenth birthday. However, it's still less than three-year-old in India. And though there were a lot many domain players before it entered, it took a name like HP to turn online photo printing into some sort of a sizeable market. Given the energy and investment that HP has made, it is clear that HP is taking

online photo printing seriously. In its tenth anniversary celebration, HP also announced it will open its application programming interface (API) to allow creative individuals and businesses to be part of the evolution of its leading online personal publishing service. The initiative—called Snapfish Publisher—will allow India's rich pool of designers, developers and printing partners to reach more than 85 mn registered users through the worldwide Snapfish network to market and sell its creative designs, merchandise and services and tap into the \$1 bn market for online photo ordering.

What is less visible is the seriousness the consumer is according to virtual memories. As more and more Indians are beginning to get comfortable with online transactions, online photo printing is seeing a variety of action. With India's total Internet user base touching close to 75 mn, with 42 mn active Internet users, digital printing has seen remarkable growth from 2000 through 2010. According to Bala Parthasarathy, Snapfish's founder and MD for the APAC region, "With the unique opportunities it presents, India is a very exciting market for Snapfish. With the market for digital cameras expected to grow from the current 2 mn units to close to 10 mn units by 2015, we see a huge potential for our business to grow over the next five years."

The social networking phenomenon is further fuelling the growth of online photo printing and merchandise in India. Facebook today has more than 400 mn active users who upload more than 3 bn photos to the site each month. A recent global report by IDC Research predicts that more than 124 bn photos will be shared through social networks by 2013. One of the most prominent trends that has emerged is that of variety. Almost all the online printing sites are offering their consumers a basket of products, some of them really innovative ones like the canvas print, collages, sketch pictures etc. The other important factor has become the price points. Not only are the sites offering a range of pricing, they are also striving hard to gain the competitive edge.

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