



Catching more fish

We spoke to Bala Parthasarathy, Managing Director - Europe and APAC, Snapfish, Hewlett-Packard on its plans for the Indian market.

Nash David
nash.david@thinkdigit.com

What has Snapfish planned for India in the near future?

Anyone who has been keeping a close watch on the online photography space in India would acknowledge that Snapfish has etched out an enviable success story within its inaugural year in India. With a robust economy despite the meltdown, an unprecedented internet penetration rate and the express globalisation of the Indian consumer, Snapfish had always envisioned an all-digital-photography landscape for India. We indeed have ambitious growth plans for the Indian market that comprises business alliances, interesting product integrations and emphasis on product innovation in order to deliver distinguished service to our customers.

We have recently launched the Snapfish application on two of the latest imaging phones by Sony Ericsson - C903 and C510 Cyber-shot. Both the phones come with the pre-installed Snapfish application, which allows users to click pictures and directly upload them on www.snapfish.in from the phone. Moreover, the application also allows users to order prints of their pictures and get them delivered at their doorstep. We have also partnered with eBay India, the leading eCommerce marketplace in the country, in our attempt to enrich the user experience of the online shoppers by offering them the convenience of uploading and sharing their memories as well as creating personalised products instantly.

Tell us more about your print labs and how you deliver prints to the end user?

We have state of the art photo printing labs that house HP's Indigo, Design Jet and RPS printers. We have tied up with leading logistics companies to have the orders shipped to anywhere in India.

Is the model for Snapfish India specific to India or does it follow the global HP network?

Snapfish follows the same business model globally.

What do consumers do if they are not pleased with the print quality?

As part of the HP family, impeccable print quality is in the Snapfish DNA. All the photos at Snapfish are printed using printers and have a shelf life of over 100 years if kept exposed and over 200 years if they are kept protected in an album or in a glass-protected photo frame. However, consumer feedback is very valuable to us as it gives us an opportunity to continually



upgrade and enhance our product and service offerings. Hence, we have a mechanism on our web site through which customers can share their feedback.

What is unique about Snapfish that you expect users to be drawn? Especially with Google Picasa and Yahoo Flickr for storage and numerous others allowing print, what is Snapfish's USP?

Being one of the early players in the industry, Snapfish has been an integral part of the industry evolution for over a decade. Hence, Snapfish is in the best position to understand and address the needs of the digital consumer today and is therefore the leading player in the online photography space globally. Further, operating under the aegis of HP we have been able to scale down our costs considerably. We don't anticipate any major competition since we offer the best quality products at the best price and also have the largest array of products in the online photography space comprising over 25 photo products. Some of our popular products include greeting cards, canvas prints, collage posters, photobooks, collage photo mug and photo calendars.

Tell us some interesting consumer trends in the recent past. How do you see consumers responding in the near future?

Never relying on the crystal ball, Snapfish has always taken cues from consumer and market research data in order to predict future trends. With the handset industry witnessing a mega pixel explosion, camera phones are becoming the digital cameras of the future and the number of people relying on their camera phones to click spontaneous pictures is bewildering. Moreover, the basic premise of our business is to help people share, print and store their photos no matter what type of gadgets they use to click pictures. Hence, we have already started work in this direction, initiating interesting partnerships with handset manufacturers such as Sony Ericsson for Snapfish application integration into their phones. This would address the needs of the digital consumers who have already started looking for ways to integrate the click, share and print phenomenon into a single device. 