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— Being a member of Aircel Family



Pawan Dev Singh



Pawan Gupta



Raghu Gupta

From humble beginnings in the early 90s, the growth of the telecom industry has not only been palpable, but continues to grow at a phenomenal pace.

Undoubtedly, India is one of the fastest growing telecom markets and is next only to China in terms of volume of subscribers.

The industry is one of the most dynamic and competitive in the country and plays a major role in the growth and development of the nation, enabling enhancement of income levels, generating employment opportunities and improving livelihoods of SMEs, sole traders and people running small businesses.

Captains of the industry have realized that their access to the vast market is not only through the competitive and unique plans they offer the customers, but also through the relationships they build and transparent communication they share with their extended business family - the industry's trade partners.

Relationships have gone beyond the usual gamut of incentives and prizes that were the customary business models; and have evolved to building deeper human connections with not only the trade partners but also with their families.

With about six players vying for the market share of Jammu and Kashmir, the above factor is one of the key differentiators, to gauge a company's performance and market presence.

In Jammu & Kashmir, Aircel began its services in the year 2004-05 and in a short span of time grew into becoming a market leader in the region.

This successful climb happened by not only setting up a strong network system or by offering some of the most competitive and unique plans but also by creatively engaging and communicating with its trade fraternity.

"Whether you are an employee, a trade

partner or a customer, we value relationships and you not only become a significant part of the Aircel journey, but also become an integral part of the Aircel family. At Aircel, we believe in 'doing a little extra' and this is the very ethos of our business that has helped us in building stronger and long lasting relationships," said Anupam Verma, Business Head of Aircel in Jammu and Kashmir.

Picnics or outings for grandparents and parents of trade partners, celebrating the birthdays and anniversaries of trade partners, offering scholarships to the children of trade partners, organizing cricket tournaments like the Aircel Premier League between the trade, media and the employees, painting competitions on World Tiger Day to create awareness amongst the trade community, organizing blood donation camps to encourage them to be responsible citizens or catching up on the latest Bollywood blockbusters are some of the unique initiatives and activities undertaken by Aircel for its trade community and their families.

"When I first ventured into telecom, I knew nothing about the business. I had to learn the trade and this exercise was made much easier by my tutors, the sales managers from the telecom industry. They taught me everything that I know about telecom and much more. My relationship with them goes beyond everyday business and runs very deep. I have seen them grow as they have seen me grow," said Sanjeev Puri, who began his association with Aircel in 2007, when it was relatively a new, but a growing player.

Sanjeev who earlier ran a cloth shop wanted more in life and wanted to be associated with something that was new and challenging. Taking the advice of his family and friends, he ventured into telecom and today is a thriving preferred partner of Aircel.

"This special bond that I share with Aircel does not end with me, but reaches out to every member of my family. My wife, my children and my parents, all are a part of the Aircel family," he further says.

Sanjeev's wife, Neetu reiterates Sanjeev's feelings, "It's not just the movies, the get-togethers, the picnics, etc, but the interesting people we meet during the course of these events and the lifelong friends we make."

"There are factors, incidences and people that influence you. But when you follow your instincts and follow the path that you think is correct, it is a fulfilling experience. I followed the advice of one such young man and today I am glad that I met that young man from Aircel. From running a ration shop, I have been able to grow leaps and bounds by switching my focus to sales in telecommunications. I set out on my venture knowing well that I am getting into something new, but something dynamic as well. My efforts would directly translate into the quantum of fruits that I reap. I reaped and have done well. My family is well looked after, but most of all, I am not just another partner of Aircel, I am the Aircel family," said Raghu Gupta whose words are an insight on how relationships between companies and their trade communities grow and strengthen.

"Our trade partners are an integral part of our business and it is imperative that the relationship we share with them go beyond the realms of business operations. I believe we need to understand and treat our trade partners just the way we would like to be understood and treated by our employers and organization", said Rakesh Kumar, Sales Head, Aircel - Jammu

The best relationships are developed and nurtured perhaps in the provision stores that cater to the needs of local communities. The owners or shopkeepers who double up as friend/guide are patient listeners and at times lend their advice in matters ranging from family to strategic calls. Their shops over time develop into melting pots and relationships that are built develop into long term ones.

Pawan Gupta, who runs one such store for over thirty one years now, realized that he could be more than just a provision store owner, he could offer his clients a little more.

He ventured into telecom, partnered with Aircel and today has grown into a promoter of the company. "My growth was fuelled by the relationships that I built both within the community that I serve, but more importantly with the people whom I do business with".

The relationships that the company shares with its trade partners extend beyond the boundaries of the cities and towns of the state, it extends to the rural areas too. The concept of 'Neeli Dukans' is an initiative that Aircel put to practice in the rural areas with the objective to involve youth in these belts. This initiative does not only engage and give opportunities to the youth to earn a sustained livelihood, but also, because of the relationships that these partners have with the rural folk, it helps them cater to their customers with an extra eye for customer care. This is a win-win proposition for both the company as well as Aircel. Some of these unique partners such as Anu Khajuria from Hiranagar have gone on to win not one but two motorcycles in the schemes that the company often rolls out. There is a conspicuous change in the livelihoods of these youth, one such partner, Pawan Dev Singh, who runs a Neeli Dukan in Morh village says, "This partnership of mine with Aircel has brought me the stability that everyone desires, but most of all, because of this partnership, I am able to educate my son and wish to see him emerge a successful person in the world".

In business, as in life one has to work closely with people to see success. Success in business is really about creating and maintaining relationships and not just having people in your contact list. Close genuine contact, open communication, mutual respect and above all, being reliable are steps towards the right direction. Reaching out to others, being human, simple and above all being genuine go a long way. They not only build the growth story of the organization you represent, help you grow as a person, but also build lasting human relationships that are the essence of your civilization.