



Credits: Shashank Kaushik

BY ASSOCIATION OF INDIAN GRADUATE STUDENTS (AIGS) AT UC SAN DIEGO

# AIGS Newsletter

Compiled by

Chetan Gokhale  
Aekaansh Verma

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## IN THIS ISSUE

## Editor's Pen

by Siddhartha Nath and Viraj Deshpande

Dear all,

We are delighted to present the **first issue of the newsletter**, along with a swanky and [redesigned website](#) for members and well-wishers of the Association of Indian Graduate Students (AIGS) at UC San Diego. We take this opportunity to introduce our highly energetic and enterprising [team](#) for the academic year 2014-2015. This year, our team has come up with several new initiatives, and we are very excited about implementing those. The AIGS team is constantly looking for new ways to serve the interests of the diaspora of Indian graduate students, including those interested in Indian culture. We appreciate any suggestions and would willingly support any ideas that further our goals.

With an increasing size of the organization and the scale of events, we always need help either in a position of responsibility or as a voluntary participant. Furthermore, our university funding (from GSA) has not scaled up with the size of the organization and events. We do not charge any membership fee as students already pay a quarterly fee for student organizations that augment to GSA's funding sources. To implement new

initiatives, we appreciate any contributions from past and present members, well-wishers and affiliates. Please take a moment to click on the fast and convenient [Donate button](#) to give us the much-needed push. Finally, we hope you can make maximum use of our resources and attend our events and activities that we will organize in the coming academic year.

Wishing you a great year ahead!

### About Authors:

**Siddhartha Nath** is a PhD student in the department of Computer Science and Engineering. He is the advisory president of AIGS.

**Viraj Deshpande** is PhD student in the department of Computer Science and Engineering. He is the president of AIGS.



Credits: Sayed Asad Ali

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# Startups Done Right:

The inside scoop on succeeding at startups!

by Sriskanda Shamasunder

## Startups!

You've heard the word enough times to forget whether it's a word, noun or an exclamation. Silicon Valley is overflowing with them and yet a thousand more pop up every day. Some make it big, most not so much, but all have a story to tell. Every successful startup entrepreneur knows that the key to success is 1 part perseverance and 99 parts showmanship. That's why I've put together this whirlwind tour of startups and a guide to kick-start your own venture with the least effort and maximum attention.



Startups are all about impact. Strategic research, a refreshing idea and a flawless execution are the three pillars of every startup. If these phrases sound like buzz-phrases, that's because that's exactly what they are! Buzzwords and phrases are the heart and soul of every startup. The first step to becoming a successful entrepreneur is to gain mastery over buzzwords and develop your own toolkit – or as I like to call them – buzz-kits. At the drop of a hat you should be able to dive into your bag of buzzy goodness and pull out a word the world has never heard before. Not sure if something is a real word? Doesn't matter! Just say it confidently enough and anything can become a word. I can "guarantify" it.

The next step on the ladder to startup-dom is advertisement. Put down your pens, papers and drawing boards. I'm not talking about advertising your product. I'm talking about advertising YOU. It is a well-known secret in the startup circles that the first thing someone notices about your product is your "about the founders" page. So roll up your sleeves, roll up some leaves, and get cracking at that webpage using all your web development skills you picked up during that one summer at web-camp. I recommend using a generous helping of words like "rockstar", "game-changer", "ad-guru", "sales-shark", "dev-genius", and "marketing-mastermind". Once you're done describing yourself as the most God-awesome person to

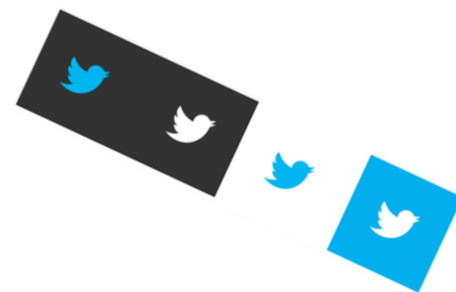
ever walk on planet earth, get some friends to write a few testimonials about how you "inspired them", or how you were always a "trend-setter". Good job, now you're already halfway to your dream of living in Fremont

You're probably thinking "I've already done everything that matters, what more could possibly be there to do", but trust me we're almost there. Your next step is aggressive advertising. You want your online presence in every major social media arena - Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Vine, WeChat, IRCTC - everywhere. It takes a genius to come up with a revolutionary product but it takes a revolutionary to create genius advertising. Use your hard-selling skills and spam every friend, relative and pet you have on these platforms until they either succumb to your pestering posts and terrifying tweets or give up the internet and cower at the mere sight of you. You need every single person you can reach to be talking about your product –which you will eventually develop at some point – don't worry about that right now.



The next thing on your calendar is a visit to San Francisco. It's time to put on your most expensive suit (you need to look impressive after all), book a week for yourself at the Hilton SF (you're an upcoming superstar, you deserve it), and get ready for some hardcore business. Now, a rookie mistake to make is thinking that the trip is about meeting investors and developers, but you won't be making that mistake because we know better. Every startup sultan knows that business trips are a subtle way of building your image by posting pictures of every street you cross and hobo you pass on every social network you know. Are you done uploading that album of you posing in front of the golden gate from every angle that is allowed in three dimensions? Good. Keep in

mind the ol' saying in Silicon Valley "Pictures are worth a thousand words; Pictures with filters are worth a million likes". Once you've raked in those likes and retweets you might even find some time to have a business meeting with investors, but no worries if you didn't.



You're almost there now. The one thing that sets apart a Silicon Valley 'cell-ebrity' from other entrepreneurs is the much sought after "serial" tag. You don't become a serial entrepreneur overnight; it takes days of perseverance and two startups before you've earned yourself the knighthood of engg-land. Nobody ever went too far in life by doing just one thing, so shelve this current project of yours and turn your laser sharp attention to the next big groundbreaking idea that's bubbling inside of that genius mind of yours. Given that now you're a veteran in the field it should take you half the time to spam twice the people with ten times the number of tweets and posts. A few carefully planted articles about you in highbrow literature like Buzzfeed and ScoopWhoop, a few pictures of you at Madame Tussaud's shaking hands with Larry Page and voila!

Congratulations, you've finally made it! All that bloody mary and sweat has finally paid off. You're now part of the crème de la crème of who's who of where's what. Now kick back, relax and sip on that glass of 1367 Chardonnay (1367 BC, because AD is just too mainstream and the 1367 AD is piss anyway). It's only a matter of time before all your likes and shares mature and then you can sell it all on the share market and retire on the 95 ft yacht like you always dreamt off. If you're a true entrepreneur by heart, like me, you might even end up writing a book on startups and become even richer, if that's even physically possible.

- Skanda Shamasunder  
Serial Entrepreneur, Startup Guru  
& Tech genius

## About Author

Skanda is a 2<sup>nd</sup> year Masters student in the department of CSE.



# Poems

by Prarit Agarwal

## Friends

There will be times when you will feel scared,  
and there will be moment when you will  
feel that no one cares,  
there will be situations that will make you  
feel all alone,  
that no matter how hard you try, your  
voice always falls on  
ears made of stone,  
But I promise you, that these will always  
be ephemeral,  
that the coldest winters will still have  
Christmas carols,  
and that you will always have friends,  
who will stand right besides you, no matter  
how the storm ends.

— Prarit

## Manzil

रिज-झिज, रिज-झिज बरसती है  
कह थाद दिलाती है  
रबो जाने को सपने कि दुनिया में,  
ये मुझे डालती है।  
पर एक सवाल उठता है मेरे मन में,  
क्या ये सपने कभी सच हो पायेंगे ?  
या फिर सपने बन कर सपने कि दुनिया में ही  
कहीं से जायेंगे ?

कल कल करता है पानी जो बह रहा है,  
सदा सतत चलते रहने को ये मुझसे कह रहा है,  
पर एक डर लगता है मेरे मन में,  
क्या मैं अपनी मंजिल तक पहुँच पाऊँगा ?  
या फिर चलते-चलते थूँ ही थककर  
बैठ जाऊँगा ?

नीला-नीला ऊँचा डूठा ये आसमान,  
मुझे विश्वास दिलाता है,  
और कहता है,  
सपने सच होयेंगे जहाँ  
मंजिल मुझे मिलेगी जरूर ॥

— प्रेरित

## About Author:

Prarit Agarwal is a PhD student in the department of Physics.

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## Photo Gallery

<http://aigs.ucsd.edu/#gallery>

### Photo Credits:

Asad is a 2<sup>nd</sup> year Masters student in the department of CSE.

Shashank is 2<sup>nd</sup> year Masters student in the department of CSE.



# The Story of Dharnai:

India's first fully solar powered village!

by Chetan Gokhale

Dharnai, a small village in Bihar, which had no electricity for three decades, now looks different as it declared itself an energy-independent village this July and became the first fully solar-powered village in India. The feat was achieved by the efforts of [Greenpeace India](#), a non-profit organization with the help of villagers of Dharnai, and the NGOs [BASIX](#) and [CEED](#). After two months of successful testing, a solar power micro-grid was launched on Sunday July 20.



Dharnai is the first village in India where all aspects of life are powered by solar energy. The solar-powered 100 kilowatt micro-grid provides regular and quality electricity to over 2,400 residents of this village. The micro-grid is able to meet the electricity requirement of the entire village that includes 450 houses, 50 commercial buildings, 2 schools, 60 street lights, 1 health centre and 1 Kisan training centre. A battery backup ensures power around the clock.

## Read More at:

[The Better India dot Com](#)

<http://www.dharnailive.org/>

[The GreenPeace dot Org](#)

All contents and image credits: [Source](#).

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