



Choice Solutions Marks 25 Years Of Excellence In IT Industry

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While many organizations are busy promoting their success in Facebook, Hyderabad based Choice solutions (CSL) has an active [Linkedin page](#) which recognizes its employees to the industry upright. The company claims it has good rapport with 98% of their alumni network. Started as a 'Startup' of those days with dynamics, CSL celebrates its silver jubilee.



Ratnakar Konte, VP and Marketing Head of Choice Solutions recall his own journey as an aimless engineering graduate in 1994, clueless about his future stepped into Choice Solutions at LIC colony where Choice solutions was then. "Twenty two years and it is closer to reality. I am talking about my journey in Choice, joined Nov 18, 1994 as a sales executive today VP for entire Non-IT vertical responsible for 14 Cr business, leading a team of 82 members, heading the marketing division as well. What could have been the thought process of the management then on recruiting a fresher, easy go lucky, carefree attitude person and transforming him to what he is today?"

Choice solutions grew from Hyderabad to Chennai, Bangalore, NCR Mumbai, Pune Kolkata, Vizag and Vijayawada in the area of business. "It's always been a philosophy of choice that growth means organization and employees. We believe and practice that always growth opportunities should to be given internal people then comes the external people." Konte wore various hats – Dy. Manager, Branch manager. RM, Programme Manager, Product manager, National sales Manager, Vertical head and Vice President Many young people who joined them as executives are leading divisions today. "This is the culture of our organization, which churns out brilliant sales representatives, managers, leaders and extremely good technical resources from time to time. I still feel so young at Choice and have big dreams and long way to go." Konte says concluding "My first CHOICE is the best CHOICE. An ex-employee of the organization Vilas Gawande recalls it was great to be part of growing company for 10 years (in two innings) before his departure few months ahead of this milestone.

The organization is into 5 key verticals- IMS (Infrastructure Management Services), Networking, Data Center, Consulting, Cloud and Power. With humble beginning, Choice solutions has branches across India serving for their key customers. "Quality work and timely support is why I choose to work with 'Choice Solutions Limited'. It just felt right. They were organized and very easy to work with. The whole experience has been great and I am very happy with our order executions' A.Suresh Kumar, Sr.Manager – Procurement & Logistics, IMI Mobile testimonies. Suresh, who is a client of CSL also adds that the best qualities of choice solutions are enthusiasm, professionalism, aggressive pricing, timely support and quality of work.,

CSL has accomplished marvelous growth and have put together prominent goodwill in the market. CSL has been always ahead of providing best solution and service support to their customers. CSL claims it always stands distinctive in the healthy competition with different approach in terms of customer-relationship, wide range of products in a common basket, providing unique solution and best in service.

The Big-Boss Speaks:

Jagannath Kallakurchi Venkobarao, aka K.V. Jagan (of course fondly called as Big Boss by industry peers) is a salaried MD-CEO of Choice solutions. This probably might be a rare practice in the channel industry. During the interaction, Jagan utters the word, 'my people'- his employees every 5 minutes. Probably, the DNA of choice solutions might have been designed in such format. Jagan takes time to interact with B Swaminathan amidst his busy schedule and get backs to his age old days of choice solutions. Edited Excerpts.

1. Journey of Choice solutions.

I was a first generation entrepreneur. With an organization experience of 6 years, entrepreneurship was an experiment for me. I made my mind to try that out and if success likes me, I will reciprocate.
Touchwood! I never turned back till date.

2. How were the initial days?

More than technology, finance system, what we had and I can say, the asset of the Choice solution is the people. We invested on people. When I was about to start the organization, it was my partner Ravi Devulapalli who stood behind to go ahead. Luckily, we were able to start cracking the deals, exactly the ninth day of the organization. Initially, Hyderabad was not the IT destination 25 years before. In case of an IT prospect one has to look at either Mumbai or Bengaluru.

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However, we tried to explore that opportunity and we thrived on that, thanks to the initial customer database. My initial days of the organization had the best team where the entire organization was looked after by certain people and I was concentrating only on the customer acquisition. We initially started as a licensed software reseller and today we are into IMS, data centre, cloud, networking power and what not? As a furious young and energetic organization, we were not afraid of expansion. We had explored the Solar business only out of my passion towards physics, my prime subject in the Alma mater. Adding fuel to our growth was when my brother joined hands with me in 2000 and we developed a product on our own. When no one imagined a concept of datacenter, we become an expertise in the year 2001. The other lines of business like enterprise solution (2002-03) and energy efficiency solutions followed in the years that came. We have more than 10 physical offices.



3. You might have faced different challenges those days.

Choice solutions, then worked typically like a start up of these days. Listening to my success story, never think it was a cake-walk for me all the way. We had toughest time in 2000s along with the global economy slapped the IT and enabled services industry in the name of recession. We had downfall as got our fingers burnt and the situation went beyond control and at once we had no clue about the next day. Thanks to the phoenix attitude of Choice solution, we crawled, walked, ran and today flying. I should thank team choice solutions which stood with the organization in the tough times. From then we implemented 360 degree transparency in the organization. At tough times, we first called all the employees, vendors, board and other stake holders and explained them what went wrong and how we were planning to come back. As promised my team built back the organization and won the trust of the clients. Some of the clientele which we lost in the tough times came back to us.

4. The top three milestones in Choice solutions' timeline?

When we did our first 1 crore turn over in 1994, When our employee strength touched a three-digit number and the moment did a million-dollar worth deal through international offerings

5. The top 3 things any IT firm should keep in mind for long run?

If you are the CEO of the company, never ever try having the financial decision making power within you. I may sound awkward. However, we experimented success through that. At Choice solutions, financial day-to-day activities are not within me. Even for me, I follow the similar procedures what any employee would follow when it comes to finance. When your accounts department is given fullest knowledge and responsibilities, they can defend themselves better- after all they are the one who will be facing the government or chartered accountants. Next, I would suggest the budding channel organizations to have a culture that engages and evolves the people. The employees should think they are valued either in terms of roles and responsibilities or rewards or anything that suits for their organization. At choice, we worked strongly on employee policy. I can say choice solutions might be one of the few channel organizations in India to even have retirement polices for employees. Last suggestion would be, focus only on the customers- they are the kings. I notice many channel organizations run behind the OEMs or distributors. My suggestion would be if we have the best customers in place, the industry will chase behind.



6. What are the key mantras of Choice solutions?

Quality, Innovation, Excellence and Customer Satisfaction.

7. What is your view on CSR activities?

We adhere to the norms in terms of CSR activities. However, as an individual, I have a self-commitment towards bringing better industry leaders. In some B-Schools, I am part of the committee that designs courses for students.

8. What you have to do after-office hours.

I like to travel (thanks to my efficient team, I can tour 365 days) while photography is also my evergreen passion.

9. You are fondly called as 'Big-Boss' or Mr.Cool by your industry peers.

You are true. I feel happy that name I haven't earned by self-proclamation. It came out of respect I believe.



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