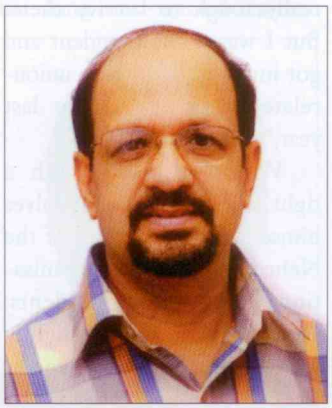
Probal Ghosal

Chief Executive Officer, Quipo Telecom Infrastructure

Probal Ghosal, chief executive officer, Quipo Telecom Infrastructure, harboured a childhood ambition to be a doctor. However, as he was an "average" student, his elder brother advised him to opt for commerce instead. "My brother was a brilliant student, while I was quite average. After I was told to opt for commerce, I considered this a challenge and promised myself I would prove everyone wrong by doing very well. I managed and even got a scholarship. This is testimony to the fact that if you put your mind to something, you can scale great heights," he says.

His job involves acquiring new businesses and building value within the company. To achieve these targets, he chooses an open and transparent style of management. "I am a firm believer in the 'balanced scorecard' concept of management. Every individual has to be a part of the value chain and contribute to the best of his or her ability."

However, he does admit that it gets difficult to maintain a calm front when things go wrong. He explains, "I get desperate when I find that things are not going the way we planned. I am a hard taskmaster and want my team to perform at the same pace as I do. If they do not manage, they lose out on opportunities."



This style of management has helped him at every step of a 23-year-old career that began with Siemens where he worked for 11 years. Subsequently, he moved to Escorts Finance as head of finance. He later went on to work for GE Capital. His last stint was with the Times of India as the group's chief financial officer.

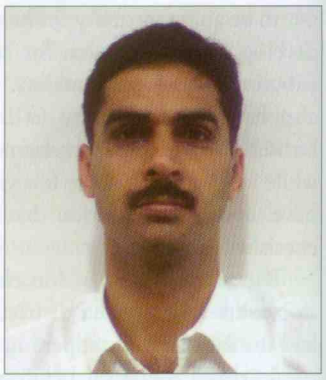
Ghosal enjoyed the last two jobs. "Working with GE Capital was my most memorable experience as the organisation has world-class processes, such as financial reporting, business processes, people management and human resource development. My experience with the Times Group is still fresh in my mind as I spearheaded several joint ventures which are doing very well," he says.

With work that spills over into weekends, Ghosal says that he barely gets any spare time. "My wife and children are quite tired of me tapping away on the laptop or answering calls and e-mails on my BlackBerry on a Sunday. However, the fact that my wife herself has quite a hectic schedule these days, helps," he says.

On the rare occasion when he does get some time, Ghosal enjoys singing and playing the harmonium – he was trained to play the harmonium in his younger days in Kolkata. "I hail from the City of Joy and am the youngest of three children," he reveals. "My childhood was quite typical of someone growing up at that time. My siblings and I had a fantastic time and being the youngest, I was the most spoilt." ▲

Dhiraj Soni

Senior Marketing Manager, Sony Ericsson



Dhiraj Soni, senior marketing manager, Sony Ericsson, believes in products that give a unique experience to the customers. "Our products provide a special feel, whether it's music, checking e-mails, accessing the web, taking a picture, or playing a game," he says.

Soni considers innovation a key strength in marketing, and is sure that his methods will make Sony Ericsson products more popular in the future. "Right now, we are driving our brand in the top 52 cities. Our aim is to bring to the consumers key products in an environment where they can feel and appreciate the experience."

Over the years, he has observed that consumer behaviour changes constantly. This makes regular product updates necessary. India is currently a booming market for mobile handsets, with Category B and C circles witnessing the highest growth rate, more than that in the metros. "The best way for us to reach out to more and more people will be through consolidating our retail presence through Sony Ericsson Experience Stores," says Soni.

According to him, there are a few key trends that will shape the future of the market, the most prominent being the explosive growth of high megapixel camera-embedded handsets. Due to this, more and more amateurs are becoming addicted to photography. Moreover, the shift from just taking photographs to sharing, printing, storing and managing them has also begun.

Another key trend, according to Soni, is the increasing popularity of mobile gaming. Music will further strengthen the hold of gaming and the internet on subscribers. Moreover, the evolution of innovative features and services, including navigation systems, will bring many new customers to the internet.

Soni's knowledge of the markets and his skills at marketing have been honed by long years of experience in different verticals. "Now, at Sony Ericsson, I am able to apply 14 years of experience. I started my career with Stroh's Beer. I worked with the company for two years and then moved on to Sony India for its visual product range. At Sony, I spent a good four years, then decided to move to Ericsson Mobile Phones and Airtel – two short stints in two years," he says.

He has attained considerable success at Sony Ericsson, a company he joined in July 2002. After handling marketing communications and channel marketing, he moved on to be the head of product group marketing.

Soni's wife works as assistant vice-president for an MNC in the insurance sector. Their six-year-old son has enough mischief on his mind to keep both parents on their toes after work. Soni loves watching the English Premier League with his son. ▲