

# INDUSTRY-BRAND

## Connecting Nepal to the Web

**AN INITIATIVE THAT USHERED A NEW DAWN IN INTERNET CONNECTIVITY IN THE COUNTRY**

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Kathmandu

When it comes to Internet service in Nepal, the first name that comes to our mind is WorldLink. Nepal's leading Internet Service Provider (ISP). Established in 1995 by Dileep Agrawal, WorldLink has evolved from its humble beginning as an email service provider to becoming the biggest ISP in the country.

### INITIAL YEARS

Agrawal was a BSc IIIrd Year student of Biochemistry at Bates College in the US when he decided to return to Nepal to start his own business.

"During the summer vacation before my final year studies in the US, I decided to become a research scientist. My elder brother had also finished his engineering course in the US and was planning to start an email service in Nepal. I decided to give it a try myself and established



Photos: Nishant S Gurung / THT



the email service at my home in 1995," he says.

"The Internet was slowly developing in 1991 when I was studying in the US and only a few colleges used it for sending text-based emails. Meanwhile, it was very expensive for my parents to call me in the US. Hence the idea emerged in my mind to bring the Internet to Nepal through which Nepal is connected to the world easily," recalls Agrawal.

According to him, Mercantile Communications had started the email service in Nepal a few months before he started the service in the country.

With the help of a computer and a modem, which he bought from the grant money

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received from his college for doing research, he started the store-and-forward e-mail service over a dial-up link to the Internet in the US from his house in Sanepa.

Agrawal says, "People were not aware about the Internet then, so we used to go from house to house making people aware about our service; mostly expatriates and businesspersons were our clients at that time."

WorldLink showcased its service at the CAN Infotech exhibition at Tripureshwore in 1996, which proved to be a milestone for the company as many people liked the service and signed on to be customers which helped the business flourish.

"With the growth in demand, we started providing Internet service to our customers from 1997 by leasing Internet connection system from Canada's Teleglobe Company, and Nepal Telecom for 24-hour Internet connection," adds Agrawal.

Similarly, after Nepal Telecommunication Authority (NTA) gave satellite installation rights to WorldLink, the company started dealing with international Internet providers directly from its office at Jawalakhel.

"We first connected with the Telecom Public Company Limited of Thailand for Internet service through satellite," shares Agrawal.

### QUALITY SERVICE

WorldLink uses fibre-based Internet service, which is regarded

as an efficient medium for transferring data with greater speed. The company leases Internet services from different countries such as India, the UK, Singapore, Hongkong, et cetera and charges Rs 15,000 for the whole package of a year which includes Internet with 25 Mbps speed, NetTV along with new apps.

According to Agrawal, WorldLink at present has been providing Internet service to 2,40,000 households. Likewise, it provides free Wi-Fi hotspots service at 3,000 locations in the country which it aims to increase to 10,000 within the next year as part of its corporate social responsibility.

The company also plans to take Internet service to the Annapurna



Base Camp very soon to make it accessible to rural people.

"Our network is spread across the country, serving 70 districts providing high speed Internet up to 100 Mbps along with HD Internet Protocol Television (IPTV) service," informs Agrawal.

According to him, providing high quality Internet service to people and bringing positive changes in their lives through it is the goal of the company.

"By the end of the day, it is customers' satisfaction which motivates me to work harder," Agrawal further states.



## Customised 'mantra'

**THREE FRIENDS MAKE MACHINES FOR AGRICULTURAL AND CONSTRUCTION SECTORS AS PER YOUR ORDER**

Himalayan News Service  
Kathmandu

Machines have played a big role in the development of Nepal's agricultural and infrastructural sectors. However, there are also small entrepreneurs working in these sectors who wish for a particular type of machine that can be used

The friends are from engineering background and were interested in experimenting and making appliances as a part of their project work while pursuing their Bachelor's degree in Mechanical Engineering at Pulchowk Campus, Lalitpur. However, the uniqueness of constructing machines of different sorts materialised when they won a competition for innovative concepts organised by UNDP Nepal, which required participants to construct machines for processing *Allo*, popularly known as the Himalayan nettle, for making different items from its fabric.

"We won the competition by working hard on the concept paper for making the machines, which impressed the UNDP officials a lot. We received a cash prize of Rs 17 lakhs, which assisted us a lot in making machines for rolling, cooking, beating and processing *Allo* bark," says Neupane.

According to Neupane, the machines were first sent for trial in rural areas such as Farbat and Rolpa, where many farmers and entrepreneurs liked them for their high efficiency in debarking *Allo* stem to processing the final product with great speed.

"Even the Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Supplies liked our products and asked us to make 80

machines for it. We also made machines for private entrepreneurs across the country and received good response from them," he says.

The company also uses the machines in its own company named Sanjiv Allo Engineering, which produces different items made from *Allo*.

After the initial success, the trio started making various types of machines mainly for agricultural and construction purposes such as brick cutting set-up, rotary sieve, pan mixer, wire straightener and conveyor belt systems among many others. According to Neupane, people from earthquake affected areas such as Gorkha and Sindhupalchowk are using the brick making machines to make their own houses as well as for business purposes. "Since the machines run on electricity, they don't emit any smoke while making bricks," he adds.

Stainless steel, plastic, nylon, motors, gearbox, paints, et cetera are the raw materials the company imports from India, and as well as use

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raw materials obtained in Nepal. "We have 16 employees working at our factory, which includes helpers and skilled manpower. Our team of technicians inspects work from the very beginning to the finished products to guarantee quality and strength in our machines," says Neupane.

According to him, many customers are opting for the company's products instead of imported machines as they can order machines as per their requirements.

The company not only provides a one-year guarantee on its products but also delivers the machines across the country and fixes them at customers' places for their ease. According to Neupane, customers' satisfaction and replacing exports through locally made machines is the company's main goal.

"The word 'Mantra' means special technique and we are proud of our mantra, which has helped customers do their work with ease through our products," Neupane further shares.



Aditya Neupane and Sumit Yadav

for doing specific type of work such as debarking grass stem and making bricks at home among others which would save a lot of time. In order to help entrepreneurs conduct business activities effortlessly three friends — Aditya Neupane, Sumit Yadav and Sanjiv Paudel — established Mantra Incorporations at Kumarjari, Lalitpur in 2017, which manufactures different types of customised machines.

## Happy feet

**AMERICAN COUPLE GENERATE EMPLOYMENT IN NEPAL BY MAKING HANDMADE SLIPPERS**

Himalayan News Service  
Kathmandu

Slippers are an integral part of modern life. This daily-use item can thus become a good source for generating employment for Nepal's citizens and the country can also look to boost the economy by exporting international quality products abroad.

Hence, with a humble aim to meet this dream, an American couple has stepped in the coun-

tries, we have a long-term plan to create a big name for Nepal's slipper industry around the world through exports," shared Chester.

When asked about the name of the company, Michelle says, "*Jivana* means life in Nepali and through Jivanas, we want to provide a new lease of life to the unemployed people in Nepal and improve their life standard."

According to her, currently this

steady rise in the demands even in a short time," adds Michelle.

According to her, the slippers are biodegradable and eco-friendly and since they are handmade, they look attractive naturally.

"The leather in our products contains natural pores which allow air to pass freely and helps prevent odour and hence is healthy for the feet," Chester adds. The company produces leather strap slippers for people of all age groups.

Currently Jivanas exports its products to the US, the New Zealand and Europe and sells its slippers in Nepal through Le Sherpa's Farmer's Market in Lazimpat.

"Our products' price equals our high quality and we are currently focussed on branding our slippers abroad for recognition. However, we do have customers in Nepal and are planning to make afford-



Michelle Zygmont and Chester Zygmont

company employs 15 staff members and provides attractive salaries with provident fund facility to them along with other facilities. Leather, rubber, glue and dyes are the main raw materials the company uses in its slippers.

"As we aim to compete with global brands, quality is our top priority for which we source 100 per cent pure raw materials from Italy and the US. This is why customers are highly satisfied with the comfort and strength our products ensure and there is a

ble slippers for those with limited pocket soon," says Chester.

The company promotes itself via Facebook and Instagram through which customers can put an order or directly visit the factory for the same. "Timely delivery service has boosted our connection with the customers. Through our hard work, foreigners have come to believe that Nepal is not only a beautiful country but also produces beautiful products for the world," adds Chester.