

A pharma website with big e-plans

By M RADHIKA

Bangalore, April 11: There was this girl at Mount Carmel College where I taught for a while. During one of my classes, she shot a question at me. "What do you call a smart Malayalee?" She said he was 'Debonair'. She shot another question. "What do you call a rich Malayalee?" The answer: Millionaire. As if that was not enough, the third question followed. "What do you call a flamboyant Malayalee?" The answer was 'Pheno-Menon', says Murli Menon.

Murli Menon's phenoMenon Consultants' name was born then, in 1995 June. He named the website that was launched in October 1995, www.tips4ceos.com - aimed at CEOs in the pharmaceutical industry and with long-term objectives.

How does it work?

"It's a specialised website," says Murli Menon who has not listed the website in the '12,000' odd search engines that "make a mess of searching". Murli started off by holding a market research project by a few MBA students in the field, the response was good. Now it is a team of MBAs all over the world sending "strategic information from pharmanet

sites, says Murli.

The website aims at a membership of "only 50 pharmaceutical companies". It has 30 members on rolls now. They include Strides, Arcola, Microlabs, Glenmark, and so on. "We initially wanted a site that would cater to CEOs.

We cater to Pharma CEOs now."

A post-graduate degree holder in bio-

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chemistry and a Zen trainer, Murli Menon had an MBA help him in the venture. "I worked with companies such as Astra, Bayer, and Cadila in the pharmaceutical industry for 10 years, until an accident paralysed me when I was 28 years old."

"I recovered by practicing Zen." He wrote poetry as he recovered, and got the collection published. "I had to work from home after that. I hit on the idea of a consultancy then," says the CEO who claims to work only three months a year. "The rest of the year, I spend travelling, in forests, wildlife sanctuaries and being myself."

His website charges its members (pharmaceutical companies) Rs 12,000 annually. "We search for data on India related news and information on pharmaceutical industry on the Net and supply it to our clients."

The work of the website is to keep track of the member company's position in the stock market, its profitability, and train its CEOs on strategies. "Watchdog!", the site facilitates tie-ups between members and earns a commission.

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The website has tied up with another site Medibiz.com to network with chemists and pharmaceutical shops in India and provide data to its members.

Murli is in Bangalore looking for new members. "But I will limit the membership to 50."

"The pharma industry is doing good now and will do so for another 10 years," he says, adding that people are getting disillusioned with surgery and drugs, which will question the pharma industry later... Murli Menon can be contacted at feno@vsnl.in.