

Kongu Community Radio

www.kongu.ac.in

Radio is one of the easiest communication tools that can reach the target groups. Being a relatively less expensive medium, poor, down-trodden and marginalized sections in rural Indian society are prime beneficiaries. They generally are not aware of human health aspects and nutrition needs. The most affected in this respect are the women folk. With these facts in mind, Kongu FM Community Radio was launched on April 14, 2007 by Kongu Engineering College, Perundurai, TN. to catalyse and support a project called "Science for Women's Health and Nutrition". According to Prof. K. Thangaraj, the chief coordinator of Kongu FM and a faculty at the Department of Physics at the College. "Kongu FM is a platform for the local community to voice their needs, share their aspirations, ambition and abilities". In March 2008, Kongu CR organised a listeners' meet, the first of its kind in Community Radio history which was highly successful in terms of community participation as listeners also programme development. The Kongu FM Community Radio has won the best community radio award, Radio Duniya 2008 Award, competing against 27 community radios.

For the last one year Kongu Community Radio has been broadcasting programmes for 20 to 30 minutes every day on health and nutrition particularly for women and this programme is repeated thrice in a day at different times. Apart

from broadcasts, it also organises Health camps, awareness programmes, workshops and competitions, in the form of song, skit, programmes on health tips & nutrition, interview and interaction with experts and advice from knowledgeable people etc. Through various ways, people who are not easily reached are also reached and their needs are addressed by Kongu Community Radio.

Kalanjiam Samuga Vanoli Community Radio

The production for AIR-FM Karaikal was planned as a part of documenting the various development interventions that was taking place along the coast of Nagapattinam district after tsunami; there by create awareness among the community on disaster and the coping-up mechanisms for overcoming such impacts of disaster. Accordingly programmes on Disaster Risk Reduction, rebuilding livelihoods, overcoming trauma-stress & rebuilding lives and other interventions after tsunami were recorded and broadcast in the weekly socially establishing the community radio Kalanjiam Samuga Vanoli. For producing the content local talents of high school to higher secondary school qualified community volunteers were trained in doing audio production works, editing, handling digital voice recorders, etc. For Dalit and marginalized community this Radio is playing important role such as it create rights awareness, educate at their access, streaming

with mainstream institutions (financial inclusion), provide information on development schemes, create health awareness, give information on employment opportunities and legal awareness, give platform for their culture and practices and bring out the issues they face in their lives.

Ticketvala.com

www.ticketvala.com

Ticketvala.com is a portal for convenient bus ticket booking through phone and internet. Over 70% of travel in India is



by road, yet road transport has remained untouched by the benefits of the giant technology advancements leveraged by other modes of mass transport. Ticketvala.com's aim is to bring the benefits of internet-based technology to all members of the bus travel eco-system: Efficient business management software and hardware to the bus operators and convenient bus travel booking to the people who travel by road. They provide live seat inventory, complete journey details, maps, seat maps and price comparisons so that Indians anywhere can make an informed choice for their travel needs. The service is available through Toll Free phone and the Internet. The network covers the whole country from Jammu to Thiruvanthapuram and over 300 bus services. No registration is required and there is no extra charge on the price of the ticket. Travelvala.com is headed by Haranath Lokanadham, a 20-year management veteran in IT, ship-

ping and travel technology with vast global experience. Interestingly, over 1 million tickets are processed through the Ticketvala.com system as it boasts of a truly pan-India network. And it is the first to introduce fully mobile phone based 'paperless' bus tickets. It is very easy to operate, search for bus route and book ticket via online, mobile or cash payment, even home delivery is available in select locations. Just a phone will do.

Mobile Information Services (MobIS)

MobIS is a solution to provide convergence for access of citizen centric data by making information available on the mobile platform. MobIS has been developed pertaining to the large scope of requirement for the availability of information on readily basis. It envisages the integration of services pertaining to citizens, visitors, and officials of the city and renders them at their fingertips. It provides the information needed at once. MobIS allows browsing, lodging complain and availing services. The project is build up on the scale of rural area to municipal corporation and metro for their required services speedily. Having an Ideology "provide cheapest and efficient solution with available resources for better inter face of citizen". The project had started with the municipal corporation of Surat city. It maintains a website to give information about its working, general city info, contacts, important updates and complaining facilities. This project has won the first

prize at Microsoft's Competition "Student to Business" and was highly appreciated by government officials.

Business Portal of India

www.business.gov.in
The Business Portal of India is an exclusive portal that imparts extensive information related to business and its diverse aspects. The portal



provides a single window access to business related information that are vital for any entrepreneur, as well as those engaged in small and medium firms. www.business.gov.in, empowers its readers with a step-by-step guidance on starting, developing and sustaining a business not only in India but also overseas. With this, it also endows its audience with the entire lifecycle of a business. The portal provides authentic, accurate and vital information on topics such as How To Set Up A Business, Growing and Managing it, Incentives offered by the government, Doing Business Abroad, Taxation, Infrastructure of the Indian Economy, Workplace Issues, Laws and Legislations making it a perfect business almanac for those who wish to set a business in India. In a nutshell business.gov.in, provides an easy access to all aspects of business in a user-friendly manner.

Hand Held device to speed up courier delivery

A new hand-held device test

run by a courier company may be saving them as much as 16 hours a day. What happens is that when a courier



delivery man knocks at your door with the packet, instead of pulling a sheet of paper for you to put your signature on as a proof of delivery, he takes out this hand held device where you put your signature with any pen and it is registered. So, the clerk in the courier office doesn't have to copy so many names and put them from one register to another. And all this is online. So technology is saving a tiny but irksome practice of an obligatory signature for you and helping your courier company to deliver another packet faster in your neighbourhood. Talk of technology for the aid of people.

Audio-book in Marathi proving popular

Game for a Marathi audio-book in a CD costing Rs 120? 'Drishti' written by Marathi writer Anant Samant and narrated by Marathi Poet Sandeep Khare with the purpose of spreading Marathi literature to the fast paced or illiterate audiences is proving quite popular if we go by the audio book's sale, more than 1000 copies already have been sold. The writer risked his

own money in this new format. As opposed to reading a book this can be enjoyed even while working. This experiment has already been tried in Kannada & Tamil besides English but with the old cassette format. It is an interesting way to popularize native books among a wider audience in increasingly fast-paced lifestyle. Now you should be ready to listen a story while on a long drive!

Yahoo to launch India specific social networking site

Yahoo is planning to launch an only-for-India social networking site to be called MSpot. Yahoo who is second only to Google when it comes to Internet search felt that an application where web and mobile can merge could be best bet for success in India considering that India has traditionally been and still is in, large parts, an oral society. It is worth recalling that social networking sites such as Google's Orkut and Facebook are extremely popular here in India. Obviously Yahoo wants a slice of this large pie. Currently it has no social networking site though Yahoo Messenger is there.

Pre-paid card for e-tuition launched

After mobile and DTH TV industry, now it is time for e-tuition providers to launch a pre-paid Smart Study Card. Online education providers Extramark.com has taken the initiative and gone ahead with the innovative idea of cards of as low a denomination as Rs. 100 which has been made available at local

retail stores for student's convenience. Anyone can pay for a pre-paid card, log on and benefit from the vast expertise that the portal provides. It's a new innovative idea for sure in the burgeoning online education sector. The portal currently boasts of a registered users' base of no less than 4.16 lakhs. Interestingly, it charges Rs 1200 per year for providing expert guidance to its students. Next pre-paid card may come for...keep guessing and watching this space.

India Water Portal (Hindi) launched

India Water Portal's Hindi version has recently been launched on 18th Nov' 08 with the portal's vernacular version website



(<http://hindi.indiawaterportal.org>) going LIVE on the internet in which Digital

Empowerment Foundation also was an invitee. Earlier the English version went online in Jan' 07. The website has almost every water related fact on its pages and as Rohini Nilekani, President put it on the occasion, "it might inspire others to start water portals in other Indian languages too. If the portal doesn't reach ordinary person it has no meaning." Recently, India Water Portal (www.indiawaterportal.org) won the Manthan Award South Asia 2008 for popularizing e-Science and environment in India.

IGNOU plans dedicated science and technology channel

Indira Gandhi National Open University is planning to start a dedicated channel devoted to science and technology to give fillip to this important tool for overall development for society at large. Initially the programmes are to be transmitted in English and Hindi. There has been a long felt need of such a channel from different quarters amidst some reports suggesting that the number of students interested in pursuing science and technology at a higher level is dwindling in comparison to earlier times. So, IGNOU has taken the lead in rectifying the imbalance. The test transmission has already begun from Dec 23 '08 during 8pm to 10 pm timeslot.

Nokia-Siemens to foster ICT education in India

Nokia Siemens Network has entered into strategic partnership with three organizations to foster ICT enabled education under its 'Uniting Communities' programme. Under another of its programme, called 'Bridge the Gap', Nokia Siemens has forged connection with New Delhi Municipal Corporation to help students learn the basic information communication technologies so that they keep up to date with opportunities that await them in coming years. So many organizations are coming forth in spreading ICT literacy in India of late. Digital Empowerment Foundation is also doing its bit in spreading ICT awareness by establish-

ing Community Information Resource Centres (CIRC) in various parts of the country in conjunction with Intel India.

RComm starts Samachar

Reliance Communications, the leading mobile services providers, has started 'Samachar', news service on mobiles in Hindi and other vernacular languages. The service is being offered with content collaboration with www.webduniya.com. Instant even LIVE mobile updates are becoming increasingly popular these days. People are becoming quite dependent on their mobiles for many things and this offering to provide news content in local languages is in tune with the changing times and the need to know the latest on the go almost. Recently, we saw mobiles being used extensively to disseminate information during 26/11 Mumbai carnage. Other operators are also likely to follow suit and replicate the RComm model.

Send an SMS to buy train ticket in Mumbai

Standing in a queue to buy a train ticket isn't going to be necessity from January '09 in Western Railway's suburban lines as the railway authorities are experimenting with providing train ticket by simply sending an SMS to a specified number giving information about the origin and destination stations. Any commuter can thus now send the SMS even while walking towards his compartment in locals. The fare or the bill will be duly showing in next

mobile's bill or debited from existing pre-paid balance depending upon the type of connection, post paid or pre-paid. Interestingly, in UK too, a similar experimental service is just starting.

3G may make 500m by 2010 possible

The fast expanding mobile users' base in the country is expected to touch 500 million by 2010

aided by 3G services launched just recently in New Delhi. The figure stands currently at touching 400 m with 10m subscribers being added per month regularly as per TRAI figures. 3rd generation or 3G services facilitating seamless video rich content is obviously expected to be a major attraction to many Indians who might taste it first on their mobiles in coming months. Live streaming cricket can be a major factor in spread of 3G services here in India. Although similar experiences in other countries like South Korea is not so resounding as far as live TV on mobiles is concerned. The cost factor might determine its success here. Infra-structural facilities may also come into picture given the length and the breadth of our country. But it seems to have certainly created a buzz already in telecom circles in particular and general populace in general. We all will see soon.

AIR starts Bhojpuri News

All India Radio has begun a 5 minute news bulletin in the vernacular Bhojpuri language from its Gorakhpur station in U.P. at the 5:35 pm timeslot on popular demand. It will be relayed by Varanasi & Obra stations also. Bhojpuri is a major vernacular language spoken by a large population especially in the eastern part of the country who are sort of habitual immigrants to different parts of India and the globe making this unique language popular far and wide. www.bhojpuria.com, a website of the same vernacular won the Manthan Award for spreading e-culture in 2006. The bulletin is sure to prove popular among natives.

Indian tele-density is to touch 50% by 2010

Indian booming telecom sector is expected to see a broadband explosion soon on the back of a whopping investment of Rs. 1,30,000 crore by 2010 when the tele-density is expected to touch 50% from its present 34 per cent.

Digital Content new lifestyle now

People the world over has begun to accept & even prefer digital content in a way that reveals that their lifestyle habits are changing fast. It is the new reality according to a survey conducted by IBM recently. No longer are people satisfied with one day old newspaper when the TV in their house is transmitting LIVE developments and the internet has updates on this one day news plus latest happenings. Even the FM radio blares out the most important developments even as we



travel. And the mobile is a powerful tool in our hands which is keeping us all engaged all the time. So, digital content has not only invaded our lives but is definitely the new lifestyle mantra for many of us. And the tribe is growing doubly fast. So not only are our signals and gadgets getting digital, the whole lifestyle is making a digital metamorphosis.

Raw truth: Blogging, Internet scoring over radio/TV

New media tools like blogging, flickr, twitter are instantly scoring over the traditional media like radio/TV. It was again brought home rather strongly during the recent 26/11 Mumbai carnage where even before channels could put 'Breaking News', many inside the hotel had already updated others through twitter for example. Even simple SMS proved faster than most good old media. The word Mumbai was googled a record number of times all over the world to know the latest happenings proving the www's power like never before. So, though howsoever tragic and traumatic the events were, it also brought home a raw truth and rather starkly that new age media tools are here to stay and perhaps for ever. Traditional media tools radio/TV/newspapers, watch out you have stiff competition. And it is going to grow more. Cheers from dContent team!

Send SMS to Google

To increase the benefits of the Internet to about 100m SMS savvy people in India and

thereby bridge the digital divide, Google Inc has launched a service whereby by simply sending an SMS people can search something on the Internet. It potentially has huge significance in India where the mobile phone enabled population easily outscores the internet savvy population, who also are increasing at a much faster clip than net loving persons. Because of the composition of the Indian society such, this service enables a larger section to the benefits of the internet as far as searching is concerned. This area is sure to catch the fancy of the people as operators come up with more innovative ideas to ease the process for the general population. Right local content in return to one's SMS might be the key to its success here.

Broadband in all Gram Panchayats by 2012

In an effort to address the imbalance in urban and rural tele-density, the Government of India has planned to provide broadband connection to every Gram Panchayats, Govt. Higher Secondary Schools and Public Health Centres by 2012. These governmental efforts are aimed at bridging the vast digital divide inside India itself where the metro and big cities boast of high connections up to 3G level, in the rural parts a simple landline connection or at best a mobile represents their connectivity to the wider world. Having broadband connections in the grassroots' institutions like gram panchayats, schools and hospitals, the government is seemingly on track to address

this imbalance. The move is also in sync with over 1 lakh broadband enabled Common Service Centres being opened in different parts of the country mainly in hinterlands. All these efforts from the government and the NGO/corporate/private sector combined are likely to make every Indian feel 'Connected Indians' as Intel, a DEF ally, says in one of its similar programmes. Indeed that is the challenge for all of us digital enthusiasts.

Technology is seriously changing our lingo

With technology playing a bigger and bigger role in our lives, it is seriously affecting the way we converse in our daily lives. None of the words youth of today speak are generally found in traditional dictionaries. This digital intervention in our lives is making us adopt a new fast lingo for the common use and invariably it is bound to percolate down to the written word sooner or later. Already particularly in metros, elders are finding it difficult to fully comprehend in what language their grand children are conversing with one another. It has a serious ripple effect as people using the traditional good old English might be termed old fashioned by the emerging generation like some archaic words we come across in literature, no longer in general use. Is it digital content for development? Depends on your perspective and which side of the fence you find yourself on, old or the new.

27% more online Indians

than 2007

Amidst a 14% increase for Asia Pacific region in 2008 as a whole compared to the year 2007, 'Indians Online' grew fastest by 27%. As of now more than 28 million users are logging on in India to the world wide web.

PCO are fast becoming Past Call Offices

Amidst the ever falling mobile tariff rates, the Public Call Offices (PCOs) are fast becoming a thing of the past. PCOs once gave a huge fillip to Indian telephony sector, now as more and more find talking on the mobiles cheaper. One can randomly see how many PCO booths are being replaced with either mobile accessories and cards stores or given an altogether different business hub with mobiles becoming ubiquitous and with calling to other parts of the country, previously the main source of revenue for PCO booths falling to as low as 50 paise per minute, the business model is simply not happening for booth owners in these inflationary times. Even those STD booths in rural areas where the mobile penetration is not so high find borrowing a mobile and calling occasionally more prudent than going to the STD booth to call nationally. The sum of the matter is that like landlines, STD booths are for sure not so hot in these changed times and becoming more of a Past Call Offices.