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NO HALF TRUTHS

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'Others concentrate on space, we focus on the joy of working'

Vatika Hotels Pvt Ltd President **Vineet Taing** speaks to Millennium Post about the customised solutions the company provides to all kinds of businesses ranging from start-ups and SMEs to large multinational corporations and outlines his vision for the next five years

How did Vatika Business Centre come into being?

In 2004, we realised that a lot of people are opening start ups, especially the IT companies and what they faced was a lot of uncertainty. They required space for their staff, there was the issue of signing legal agreements and registrations, furnishing the place, hiring consultants, architects, and contractors with restriction of nine-year tied up lease that didn't allow them to leave. Then, there were heavy security deposits. This made them settle in residential areas.

Some MNCs were offering office complexes but their services were poor. That is when we thought of venturing into business centres. We opened the first centre in Gurgaon in First India Place. We brought up a huge space, set up world class facility, high end secretarial and security services. We offered various configurations in the form of single cabins, shared offices, even virtual offices where one can work from home while the office cabin will receive and forward the calls and email, and meetings can be done in the office space. The idea was to nurture entrepreneurs and help them grow.



What are the problems most office complexes face and how is Vatika Business Centre solving these?

The biggest problem most office complexes face is expansion. At several occasions, expansion maybe spontaneous and unannounced so they need to be prepared. The quality of infrastructure and services becomes another big issue where a small team of people cannot afford high-end office equipments, especially if they need it for a short while, and here we provide it for them with zero investment. The office location needs to be at a premium location where security issues needs to be fulfilled

with CCTV cameras, trained security guards, and administration staff. We, at Vatika Business Centre, have organised ourselves for this. We provide all these services and most importantly, when it comes to dealing with these infrastructural issues, we provide them with a responsible and hassle free platform.

Tell us more about the three new centres that are to be launched in New Delhi, Noida and Hyderabad.

We have been very selective about our locations. The Hyderabad location is in Kondapur, where google has the adjoining building to us. It is a phenom-

enal building called Divyashree Omega. It is called Tech city flooded with IT companies. We have 90 seats sold out of 269 in less than ten days before the opening of the location. There are talks on for 100 more seats. Likewise, for our Noida location, we have already sold 145 seats out of 270 seats and in the New Delhi Connaught place location we have sold 50 seats and talks are on for 200 when there are really only 189 seats. So we'll have to resort to first come first serve basis. The Connaught Place centre is at primary location and is actually the gateway to Connaught Place. The fire safety and security standard from CISF is of British standards whereas Noida centre is in a gold certified lead building and is actually called the IT hub of Noida.

What according to you how does the hospitality industry in India fare today?

The services in India are far warmer than our western counterparts. We take our work religiously, we care about our customers and we follow our tradition to work with all our heart. People abroad work for money and the services thus

lack the personal touch. We are far better in our country when it comes to delivering a wholesome customer experience. But we need to improvise upon our infrastructure.

You've worked with the Vatika Group for over 13 years, how has the experience been?

I have seen Gurgaon evolve. I have worked with eminent brands in the past. I joined Vatika Group when it had just started. It was just an Rs 50 crore company and now we are a Rs 5000-crore organisation in 13 years. Real estate has played a major role in this exponential growth of ours. Besides real estate, we have diversified ourselves in other businesses like hotels, resorts, restaurants, business centres, facility management, health care and education.

I would say the growth of the corporates have been faster than the infrastructure. The government needs to work towards it to retain them.

As far as Vatika group is concerned, we were the first ones to get Westin into India. We plan to open hotels in Manesar, Faridabad, Jaipur and a five-star

deluxe resort on Chennai Pondicherry road with an intention to open India's first golf beach and water sports resort. We have always tried to be the best. While our competition in business centre focusses on their global network, Vatika Business Centre believes in delivering experiences. They believe in making spaces while we believe in creating joy of working. We have also moved into airport lounges. Our presence can also be seen at airport lounges in Bangalore's domestic and international airports where we have joined hands with Bird group.

You have penned two books on hospitality and management. What advice would you give to young hospitality industry graduates?

You know, with the IT industry coming to the picture, hospitality experience is dying. IT pays more than hospitality so a lot of young graduates are moving towards it. But this is a short term thing; hospitality is for the long run. IT is monotonous while hospitality has liveliness and excitement. There is tremendous growth in hospitality and it is my advice to stay in hospitality.

You are pursuing a PhD in Green Hotels. What do you think of green offices?

Well, the future is green. We should all be working towards reducing our carbon footprints and contribute to mother nature. I have been a keen learner and believe that I owe this to myself, my organisation and the world to learn about a sustainable world. I am on the verge of completing my thesis.

As far as green offices are concerned green is not inexpensive but the operational expense will cover up by savings besides our responsibility to respect the environment. We will be coming up with greener offices in sometime.

Lastly, where do you see Vatika Business Centre in the next five years?

We were eight centres four months ago and currently we have 12 centres. There has been almost 50 per cent growth in four months. We are planning to add five to six centres every year making it to 42 centres in five years. The company turnover is currently 80 crores whereas with 30 more centres in five years we should be somewhere around 300 crores.