

In conversation with **Paresh Zaveri**
Chairman & Managing Director – Aurionpro Solutions
K J Somaiya Institute of Management Alum Batch 1990-92



1. With a rich career of close to 30 years, what has been the most memorable moment so far in your career?

A. After all these years it becomes difficult to define things in a single moment. A journey is full of strings of those moments. Though if I had to pick one that would be the day, we started Aurionpro. Coming from a background where taking up a safe job after studies would be the norm; it was always a dream to have my own business.

2. You are one of the founding members of Aurionpro Solutions. What unseen opportunities did you see in the technological arena that prompted you to venture in this sector?

A. In the last 30 years, the world has witnessed a technology led transformation which has changed the way of human life. This opened up many opportunities for the new age entrepreneurs wanting to invest in innovation and tap business potential in new ideas. We could foresee the immense potential in the technology sector and decided to grab the opportunities in this sector. Nevertheless, any sound business idea always has tremendous potential. We started out as a partnership firm, there it was more about relationships than ideas, while technology was always in focus. What we are today is result of evolution, over the years, and we will continue to do so.

3. Since its foundation in 1997, how has Aurionpro kept pace with rapidly changing technologies over the years?

A. Our team and business are always about people who become core to the vision and then operations of the company. Starting from earliest day of simple website development to some of the most advanced products technologically today, it's all about core team, many of them are with the company over twenty years. We invest in people and focus on identifying, nurturing, rewarding and motivating the talent and to make them partners in the success of the organisation.

4. According to you, what are the values of a company leader? How do you ensure that these values are upheld by the employees?

A. It is very difficult to encompass values in one or two words, however, honesty, simplicity and values are the values that I hold dear. Over the years I have worked closely with my team, customers and I think most of the times people including employees reciprocate if they see honesty in dealings.

5. Is it essential to set a clear vision and objectives for a project that justifies the triple constraints of project management goals: scope, time and cost?

A. Yes, definitely. Scope clearly is almost the most crucial part of the equation. Most failed or over budget projects are overwhelming, the ones where requirements are half baked or ambiguous, which will always translate into higher time spent and hence cost.

6. What are some of the significant shifts that Aurionpro had to make as an organisation or otherwise, due to the current COVID-19 crisis?

A. The Covid-19 has changed the way of our work life. The organisation had to reframe its strategies to strike balance between continuity of operations and the safety of employees. Aurionpro had quickly adapted to this new normal. As with every other organisation we have adapted to work from home and virtual meetings. More than anything else, this just shows the fragility of the world that we have taken for granted. Operationally we have been invested in distance working with and within. I believe that this trend will continue for a long time to come.

7. Aurionpro Solutions is your brainchild. How do you vision the growth of the company in the next 10 years?

A. Aurionpro is a collective idea and dream of many. As we grow and mature as an organisation, we are looking at the future with a sense of excitement and boundless opportunities. Over the next ten years, I think Aurionpro will evolve with a focus on one core idea - where the company is the clear market leader.

8. What has been the most important part of your entrepreneurial journey and what kept you motivated?

A. Enjoyment and self-belief. Over the years this has been one of a roller coasters journeys with so many ups and downs that I have lost count. Through all these times, the thing that keeps you going and coming out of every failure is the thought that next time you will do better.

9. What major changes do you see in the way brands communicate digitally to customers, especially post COVID-19 scenario?

A. The COVID-19 has just accelerated the digital journey, from education to governance to everything in between will change for ever and become more digital. In such a future it is natural that communications with customers through digital channels will become a way of life.

10. Although the pandemic will end at some point in time, the impact will last much longer. So, what are the key areas that demand immediate attention interms of IT infrastructure?

A. Digitisation and migration to cloud are two areas where I see massive transformation in the IT landscape in the near future. While both cloud and digitisation have been around for over a decade in many companies' educational institutions and governments, they have been peripheral and Covid will change this for good. Increased digitisation would also require organisations to spend on IT security and building robust systems to ensure data protections.

11. If you have to relive your days at K J Somaiya Institute of Management, how differently would you like to live them?

A. Two years I spent at SIMSR were probably the best two years of my life. I have my best friends and best memories associated with those days. In the last few years, we had our own reunions remembering those times. I cherish my time there and I am not sure that I would want anything different, maybe just spending some more time with my friends.

12. What are some of the significant learnings you had in your two years at K J Somaiya Institute of Management?

A. We had some great professors and learning was fun. I still fondly remember my first brush learning marketing with Prof. Chandran. But I would say most important learnings came from all the discussions in class and outside amongst friends. Ability to appreciate and understand that there are so many different perspectives to a single issue are there and most of the times they are all right from the given point of view. This prepares you for a real life in the business world. Secondly all the events we organised and participated in those two years helped us a lot.

13. What would be your advice for the students/young Alumni who are starting their career?

A. Find your passion. Opportunities are so many and so varied, there are boundless opportunities all around you. The best way to be good at what you do is to enjoy the work that you do. Secondly, always believe in yourself since you will have more doubters than believers. Let others not define you through the challenges in your life.

Rapid fire questions

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| 1. Favourite hangout spot on campus: Canteen | 7. Biography would be titled: A journey into unknown |
| 2. Favourite movie: Lord of the Rings | 8. A technology that will transform the future: AI |
| 3. Favourite holiday destination: Tanzania | 9. An idea that changed your life: Starting a business |
| 4. Favourite cuisine: Indian | 10. Biggest strength: Family and friends |
| 5. Success mantra: Perseverance | |
| 6. Word that describes you: Stubborn | |

Interviewed & drafted by:
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