



**Gunasegharan**  
*President, ISODA*



## Dear fellow ISODAIans,

Warm greetings of the season. Wishes for a Merry X'mas and Happy New Year from all of us at the management team.

"QUITE INTERESTING", "CAN BE IMPROVED", "EXCELLENT, AMAZING, FABULOUS WORK"; Few comments that started hitting my inbox for the last Interconnect. It actually made me more responsible to give a new dimension to the current issue with a theme to build around.

With piping hot ginger chai on a cold morning, I felt it is a perfect setup to write this presidential address. I always love to look out at the mountains and see the ups and downs that God has created. And then it dawned on me: "Ups and Downs". With the taste of tea on my tongue, my thoughts went on to the process of setting up this Interconnect with this as the theme. First request by mail went to our friend Harish Tyagi, an industry veteran, to write about ups and downs. I am sure you will enjoy reading this during your planned holidays for the season.

Here's a Quick update on the activities of the association. Our TechSummit Chairman along with his team is busy putting in place a knowledge-filled summit. Our Legal Advisor has released a document for us with respect to appointment orders for our employees. My sincere thanks to Capt.(R) Ashok of MikrozoL who undertook the vetting process. The Management Committee had a couple of conference calls to discuss potential for further improvement in the association's functioning. I am sure all these efforts will come as gifts to our members in the days to come.

With respect to meetings, the Ahmedabad chapter under the leadership of Jitesh did a great Regional Meet where members didn't mind travelling 4 to 5 hours from neighboring towns. West also had a fabulous Regional Meet organized by Ajay and it had great content. North team had an interesting meet with fantastic fellowship and sharing of knowledge among them. Hats off to you Atul. Pictures of the same are posted here for your eyes. While you read this, all of us might be preparing for the quarter-end numbers. I personally wish each one of you for a bumper quarter. It is also important for us to keep our housekeeping in check. Do reach out to the Tax and Legal consultants for your queries and keep them busy as well.

On a closing note all my prayers for well being in terms of health and wealth for the entire ISODA family. Praying for more ups than downs in the days to come.

See you all in the next Interconnect. Cheers.

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## Twenty years gone by and I'm still asking "Are we there yet?" *A stroll down memory lane.....*

**Harish Tyagi**

*Director and CEO - Taarak India Pvt. Ltd.*

*Disclaimer – The following is a true account of the past . I was asked to write about the ups and downs over the past thirty years. I have grayed prematurely but have not been in the industry THAT LONG, but easily 2 decades of updates, upgrades, Patches, and what not. SO here is my story.....*

*The beginning – 1997 – AV ruled! That was the time when using the term insert and floppy was necessary in business and not considered to be a cheap sexist remark. We used to churn them out by the 100's and dispatch the upgrades to customers. Tedious work but we did not know better. Then came the miraculous CD. It could hold so much data, the only trouble was some bank departments tried to stuff them in their 5 and 1/4 drives and say – chalta nahin, nikalta nahin!*

## The early WTF moments Circa late 1997.

Some things happen in life that no matter what, you still recall them as if it happened yesterday. These are a few of mine:-

### State of the experts

I once had made a call to a large corporate along with my tech guy ( I was motivated then) and in the process he (my techie) said "server down karna parega". Our man the IT head in the interim started calling for some people on the intercom, they started disconnecting the device and on my enquiring what was happening he very seriously replied "Yeh isko disconnect karke neeche lejayenge.....Wahan kar lijiye! And so the romance started.

### I'm not a witch Doctor

It was very rare that we were not questioned on how we were able to provide a solution to a virus that was just discovered. So end deduction..... I was the father of the virus, I launched him into the world to wreak havoc and then ..... I land up with my magic elixir (actually Magic bullet for those who are from my generation) and all clear. The world is saved once again!

### Y2K

Then came Y2K..... talk about KLPD (oops). Satellites were to fall from the sky, flight were to remain suspended perpetually, Systems were to breakdown, My digital watch was going to go back to the 1900 era. End result.....Nothing..... Nada, not even an upset stomach!! I had never felt so disappointed since I was stood up in the 6th grade by this beautiful girl at the ..... well that's another story altogether.

Those were the times when a Single user AV license would sell for 7500 rupees a PC and Server for 19500/- Windows and



“ If we discuss margins and practices, mics stop working or time flies like phone a friend on KBC! ”

Netware. Then came the firewalls, the intrusion detection, the UTM and basically we were the doctors of Doom. We thrived on scaring the crap out of customers by depicting scenarios which ultimately led to Digital death! Of course the smart ones would continue to accuse us of being the people spreading the disease citing the impossible possibility of us having a solution to an (add to the confusion) an unknown threat! Sadly I still get to hear that even today!

Then came the guys with the heavy artillery. Firewalls, Intrusion Prevention, Patch management Encryption and the waters just got murkier. The stakes rose, as did the feeling of the customer putting a stake in our hearts at the time of negotiations. But we have survived. Possibly by reason of luck, perseverance but probably predominantly because we don't know how to do anything else. You know what they say.... You can't teach an old dog new tricks.....but you can kick him around every now and then.....

## When Principals had Principles and Partners had value

In the early days, Principals would visit the country and ensure they met us all. We were invited for partner events around the world to discuss their offerings and gratitude for the value we brought. They would invite us to exciting locales and they even footed the bill! Airfare, Lodging, F&B and door to door pick up and drop.

Now,(today) we're lucky if they bless us by their appearance, we are expected to pay our own Airfare, get on the bus if we're lucky, wait for a check in for about 6 hours from landing till we get a room, be subjected to CIA like brainwashing via flashy ppt's and videos and of course wear the colours as there is going to be a photo op in 30 minutes so Smile! If we discuss margins and practices, mics stop working or time flies like phone a friend on KBC!

We used to call them Principals and that is exactly what they had 'principles' Now a days they have become OEM's (Over Eager Marketers) where the selling proposition could put a stripper to shame. In minutes they are willing to shed all and pick up the deal and of course our margin is the first to be sacrificed. Amazing what a weekly target and a monthly EMI can get them to do!

While the above is just a glimpse of some fleeting moments, there is a lot more to be told and it will be..... wait for the book.....but the interesting part is I would not want to be doing anything else. Possibly also the reason being I don't know anything else

But yes, when I got into the business I had some goals and that is why I am constantly asking myself .... Are we there yet? A question I would ask my parents as a child sitting in the back of the car repeatedly on those long drives.

This ride too with an ever changing landscape, sometimes fogged out windows where you can't see outside has been a long one. Memorable but with its dips and bumps. But yes, the greatest Up of this ongoing trip has been meeting people along the way, forging friendships, counting on some while being hurt by others. Learning new things, trying to forget bad habits and I owe it all to the people who touch my life and continue to do so, including the ones who asked me to write this article and you the readers too.

So I thank you all for the ride of my life and look forward to many more miles.....

# Making Of TS9 – Business Edition ...so far

**L Ashok**  
*TechSummit 9  
Business Edition Chairman*



"Do you want TS9 to be in India or Abroad (India/Abroad)"; my journey started in February '18 with a survey shared with fellow ISODA'ians on this question. Surprisingly, the majority chose 'abroad' as the generic destination option.

As the TS9 Chairman, one thing I wanted to do was to create a change in the midst of challenges. The key challenge was the cost of the event. We are under pressure to get more than 50% from sponsors. South Asian countries are comparatively cheaper but most of the destinations have already been exhausted, except a few where we don't have direct flight connectivity. While exploring the possibilities, I landed in Delhi for the WoW Awards – a flagship MICE event organised by a tourism aggregator. Thanks to Tushar for referring me to this event, where I met over 50 destination marketers and understood the various cost structures related to the event. Post this event, I came up with the RFP and sent it to Dubai, Oman, Qatar, Bahrain, Indonesia and Hongkong. It was a tough task to get responses from these countries. We got a good response from Oman, Qatar and Hongkong. Dubai put us onto third parties that did very little to provide us complete details. From the beginning, Qatar Tourism worked very closely in providing detailed information as a single point of contact. That was the time Marriot, Mumbai called me and wanted to work with us directly. They provided many choices. It was more or less finalised between Oman & Qatar as TS9 destination options. While Oman provided a comprehensive quote, hotels were not flexible in providing us with rates and facilities. Costs were very high. That is how we have zeroed-in on Qatar. They provided us with subvention, good rates and all coordination required by us. We shortlisted Sheraton & Ritz Carlton as the event hotels and landed in Qatar for recce. We stayed for a day at the Sheraton and another day at the Ritz Carlton. It was tough to decide between Sheraton and Ritz Carlton. But finally, all three of us unanimously decided to go with Ritz Carlton. Thanks to Mr. Manish @Baywatch Travels, working with us as a consultant and execution partner for the event. He came up with all details that need to be discussed with the hotel and other partners. With his experience over two decades, he has been completely guiding us step-by-step in all our execution efforts towards the event.

In parallel, my colleague Christal Deepa (who did most the work for me from February onwards) and I were in touch with Qatar Airways to get a good deal. They came to my office and I did my part of selling the event to them. But in spite of that, the rates they quoted were very high. We then needed to fall back to Qatar Tourism to put pressure to Qatar Airways after which we landed with reasonably good prices. The Indian embassy provided us with a support letter as part of Qatar Tourism's proposal which has opened a new avenue to talk to HE PP Kumaran (Indian ambassador to Qatar) and seeking his support to make this event successful.

Thanks to ISODA'ians for the overwhelming response to registration motivated by daily feeds from our RS, Mr. Pradeep Daga. We now have 87 paid-up registrations.

With all the above-mentioned, we have crossed the ½ way mark, still a long way to go, mainly from the sponsorship buy-in efforts and content perspectives. Strategically, we have on-boarded CRN – Indian Express as our media partner. They have started promoting this event and have also been using their contacts to raise funds. I need everyone's support to sell this event. After all, this is the largest partner event organised by partners for partners.

As far as content, I am working with a few coaches and trainers to make this more activity based & interactive. We will send you the agenda once it is ready. Look forward to content rich and business networking sessions.

Rest, in TS9....

See you all at DOHA.....

## Mumbai Regional **Meet**

**ISODA West conducted its Regional Meet on 12th December 2018 at Sahara Star**  
The agenda was as below

Registrations & Networking

Internal Meeting for ISODA Members

How we can help customers manage their  
ever-exploding data  
Sponsorship slot - Technobind

Marketing - Perception versus Reality  
External Speaker - PLUGN Marketing

Networking and Dinner



## Ahmedabad Regional **Meet**



## Legal & Taxation **Snippets**

### Momentous changes to the Maternity Benefit Act of 1961

The Maternity Benefit (Amendment) Act of 2016 ("Amendment Act"), was passed by Parliament on March 9th, 2017 and the said act has introduced particular momentous changes to the Maternity Benefit Act of 1961 ("MB Act"). The said Amendment Act which received Presidential assent on March 27th, 2017, came into effect from April 1st, 2017 except for the provisions that require an employer to provide a creche facility. These are scheduled to become effective from July 1st, 2017. As per the said Amendment Act, it becomes imperative for employers now to enhance/ increase the maternity leave period to 26 weeks from the previous 12, for a woman employee, for the first two children. A few highlights from the said act are as follows :-

- a. Women working in the organised sector will now be entitled to paid maternity leave of upto 26 weeks from the erstwhile 12 weeks.
- b. The bill further provides a maternity leave of 12 weeks to mothers adopting a child below the age of three months as well as to commissioning mothers (hereby defined as a biological mother) who uses her egg to have a surrogate child. In such cases, a 12 week period of maternity leave will be calculated from the date the child is handed over to the adoptive or commissioning mother.
- c. It is also made mandatory for every establishment with more than 50 employees to provide for crèche facilities within a prescribed distance. The women will be allowed four visits to the crèche in a day. This will include her interval for rest.
- d. The new law will apply to all establishments employing 10 or more people and the entitlement will be for only up to first two children only and for the third child such entitlement will be only for 12 weeks and not more.
- e. Furthermore the bill also has a provision whereby an employer can permit a woman to work from home, if it can be permitted depending upon her nature of work and the duration of the same can be adopted by virtue of a prior agreement between the woman and the employer after the period of maternity leave.
- f. As to whether the said amendment will apply to consultants is a bit murky because although technically it

may not apply, in certain types of engagement it may do so in the light of certain judgments.

g. The Amendment Act only enhances the period of maternity benefit, without changing the manner in which such maternity leave can be taken. Therefore, Section 5(3) of the Amendment Act which prescribes that not more than eight weeks of maternity leave should be availed by the woman preceding the date of her expected delivery, and the remaining eighteen weeks following the delivery would still be relevant.

### GST : What gives?

It seems change is the only constant when it comes to the Goods and Services tax Regime in India.

With taxpayers now becoming comfortable with the GST form filing mechanism and firms becoming adept with aligning business processes with the GST system, it seems that the stability is only short lived as the government has notified 1st April 2019 as the date for notification of new forms (the format for which was introduced a while back)

Not all is dark however, a silver lining in this dark cloud is the 'one way matching system' which relies on the supplier to upload the invoice to be accepted by the purchaser. This implies that the purchaser merely has to accept / reject / modify the invoice uploaded by the supplier rather than upload the details all purchases and then match with the sales details uploaded by the supplier. The return forms will have a space to upload the details of the sales done during a particular period and purchases will be auto populated based on supplier's upload. This process will ensure that a very large part of the return is automatically filled based on the invoices uploaded by the buyer and the seller, thereby making the entire process less hectic. Another positive step is the provision to allow dealers with less than INR 5 crore turnover to file forms quarterly.

The challenge here is that accounting and tax staff will have to be 'trained' on the new system of filing which may result in some short term pain. However with the proliferation of online learning platforms (including youtube), assistance in filing the forms now seems only a 'click away'.

Watch this space for more updates on the changes in the upcoming changes in the GST system.