VOLUME 01 . ISSUE 06

masters' union university

Scratch

UAE-India CEPA Council

Strengthens global ties with Masters' Union.

Akasa Air

Co-founder and CIO on execution, clarity, and control.

University Trek

Masters' Union students expand horizons across four US campuses.

FoodPharmer

Fights misinformation with transparency and purpose.



14 Days, 4 Countries

Global Immersion Programme takes UG students on a European learning tour.

DIWALI CARNIVAL Edition

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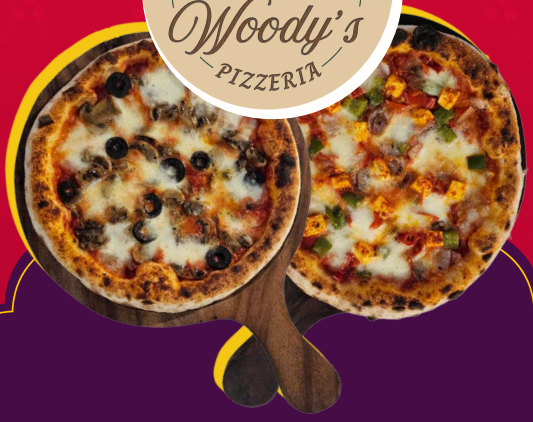
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Global Immersion Programme takes UG students on a European learning tour

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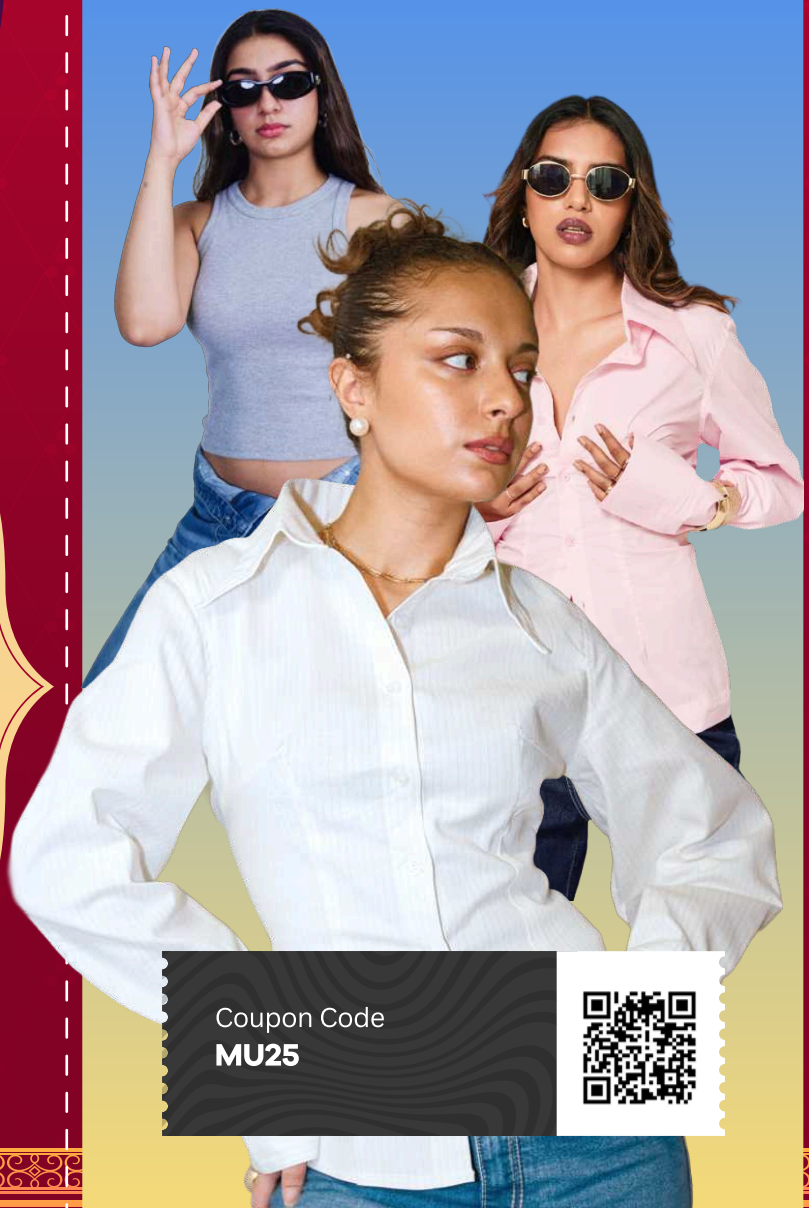
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Founder's Desk

Dear Reader,

This edition of Scratch feels different, not because of what's inside, but how far it travels. In the past few months, our students have carried Masters' Union across borders, industries, and mindsets, proving ambition here isn't confined to classrooms.

From walking the corridors of the **United Nations in Geneva** to winning the **Rocket Pitch at Babson**, they didn't just observe global institutions — they tested themselves against them. The **Global Immersion Programme** and **University Trek** weren't photo-ops; they were lived experiences of what it means to think in multiple currencies, cultures, and contexts.

Back home, the same spirit played out in boardrooms and demo days. The Venture Initiation Programme for our PGP Rise Cohorts 3 and 4 pushed founders to turn their ideas into investor-ready business models, judged with the same scrutiny they'll face in the market. Some won awards; others walked away with tougher lessons. Both outcomes matter. Because here, we build in beta, test in public, and learn forward.

This October also marked a milestone in scale, our first **Diwali Carnival**. Inspired by India's biggest e-commerce festivals, student-led startups launched their own, spanning fashion, food, lifestyle, and skincare. It isn't a campus project. It is a real Diwali Sale Campaign!

Internationally, our MoU with the **UAE–India CEPA Council** opened new trade pathways for student ventures. Watching undergraduates pitch to a bilateral council underscored a truth: you don't need to graduate to go global. You just need the courage to start.

Not every story is about scale or spotlight. As our Behind the Scenes feature shows, some of the most valuable lessons come from brutal feedback, pivots, and resilience. That mindset is mirrored in every corner of Masters' Union — from **Akasa Air's Anand Srinivasan's** teaching of execution over vision, to alumni proving that side projects can turn into careers at **Cisco** and **Talabat**.

So read closely. This isn't just a record of what we did. It's a map of where education is headed — borderless, entrepreneurial, and unapologetically ambitious.

Onward,
Pratham Mittal
Founder, Masters' Union



PGP Rise Cohorts 3 & 4 Demo Days

PGP Rise presents MVPs to investors, marking their entrepreneurial milestone.



The Boardroom

Students present strategies in a boardroom simulation, receiving critical feedback and insights.



Pg. 01

The MUnth That Was

Masters' Union partners with UAE–India CEPA Council, PGP Rise Cohorts 3 and 4 showcase their MVPs on Demo Day, UG students go on a University Trek, and some organise their first boardroom.

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Behind the Scenes

Six student founders share the unfiltered feedback they received that pushed them to refine both their pitch and their product.

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Series C

From aviation to honest nutrition: Akasa Air's Anand Srinivasan shows how clarity, consistency, and control drive success, while Revant Himatsingka tackles food misinformation with transparency and purpose.

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Off-Campus

Chai Point isn't just selling chai, it's engineering a consumer habit with tech, scale, and brand discipline.

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Cover Story

The Global Immersion Programme took Masters' Union students across Europe, where business lessons met cultural depth and policy insights.

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UG Orientation

Undergraduate Orientation introduced the Class of 2029 to campus life through simulations, workshops, and community events.

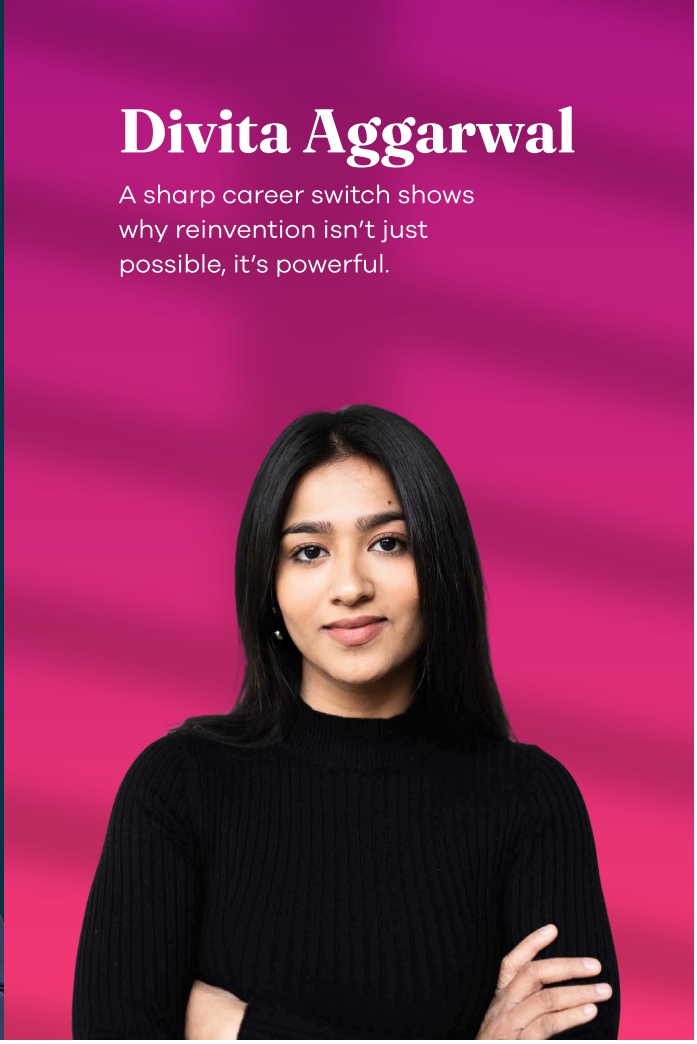
Chai Point

The future of chai isn't just hot. it's automated and branded.



Divita Aggarwal

A sharp career switch shows why reinvention isn't just possible, it's powerful.



WHAT'S INSIDE

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Alumni Spotlight

Masters' Union alumni Krishna Goyal and K. S. Badarinadh leveraged hands-on learning and setbacks to thrive at Cisco and Talabat.

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The Art of Pivot

Masters' Union alumna Divita Aggarwal swapped marketing for venture capital at Antler, proving bold pivots pay off.

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The Alumni Playbook

Alumni share the one litmus test that separates intent from real readiness.

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Masters of the Union

Professor Rajat Baijal breaks down risk management with global case studies, while Professor Malthi SS brings product strategy to life; students reflect on lessons that stuck.

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Life After Masters' Union

Panels, marathons, mixers, and matchpoints — Masters' Union alumni matched campus energy with action and engagement.

The MUnth That Was



Ahmed Aljneibi
Director,
UAE-India CEPA Council

Saksham Kotiya
Associate Director - Founder's Office,
Masters' Union

UAE-INDIA CEPA COUNCIL



Masters' Union Partners with UAE–India CEPA Council

- Bilateral agreement opens UAE market pathways for student-led ventures.

Masters' Union has signed an MoU with the UAE–India CEPA (Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement) Council, marking the start of a formal industry partnership aimed at helping our student startup founders expand into the UAE market. The signing took place at the Masters' Union campus in DLF CyberPark, Gurgaon, on 21st July 2025, with the Council's Director, Ahmed Aljneibi, and senior leadership present.

The UAE–India CEPA Council is a bilateral organisation backed by both governments. Its focus is clear: Strengthen trade and investment ties between the two countries, and enable ventures with cross-border potential to grow faster.

From MoU to Market: How the CEPA Agreement Supports Founders

The MoU signing at Masters' Union's Cyberpark campus was not only a ceremonial milestone, but it also set the stage for immediate engagement. As part of the ceremony, seven undergraduate startups pitched directly to the UAE–India CEPA Council:

- Guardex
- Cryptique
- Saaha India
- Spawn Right
- theGoodBrowser
- Khet
- Elite

The Council was impressed by the quality of the presentations and how each team adapted its pitch for the UAE market. That adaptability will be crucial as the partnership shifts from signing to execution.

Over the coming months, student founders can expect three key forms of support:

Market access with context.

Warm introductions work best when they reach the right decision-makers. The Council can help navigate procurement processes, identify pilot pathways, and connect with local partners to shorten sales cycles.

Policy and process clarity.

Expanding into a new jurisdiction involves navigating regulations and paperwork. The Council's guidance can help founders focus on customers instead of administrative delays.

Credibility at the first meeting.

Endorsement from a bilateral body signals seriousness and often secures a more meaningful first conversation with potential partners.

For Masters' Union, the benefit is cyclical. As founders engage with the UAE market, we gain sharper insights on cross-border execution, pricing in a dollar economy, building local trust, structuring distribution, and hiring in diverse markets. These lessons will flow back into the classroom, shaping the next generation of pitches.

In Frame: UAE–India CEPA Council leaders try out products created by Masters' Union student startups, getting a taste of how student ventures are innovating for consumers.



A Working Partnership

This collaboration is designed to be active, not symbolic. With direct access to market knowledge, policy guidance, and credible introductions, our founders now have the tools to test and grow in one of the world's most connected trade hubs.

For the Council, it's a chance to tap into a pipeline of ventures that combine operational rigour with global ambition. For students at Masters' Union, it's an opportunity to make international expansion a realistic path for their startups, right from the undergraduate stage.





Bare Elemnt

MVP Demo Day Winning Team
PGP Rise Cohort 3

Venture Initiation Programme for PGP Rise

- ₹70,000 in prizes, 9 judges, and two demo days that tested student startups.

This year, on 26th July and 2nd August, PGP Rise Cohorts 3 and 4 student startups moved from classroom experiments to investor-ready pitches through MVP Demo Day and Pre-Seed Demo Day.

The MVP stage lets founders test their ideas and get real-time feedback from mentors and industry leaders, while the Pre-Seed Demo day raises the stakes, giving select teams the chance to pitch to investors and secure early funding. Together, these events turn bold student ideas into ventures ready for the market.



MVP Demo Day

- On 26th July, student startups from Cohort 3 presented their MVPs for real-time expert evaluation.

Venture Initiation Programme | Cohort 3 | Minimal Viable Product

The judges' panel included:

Dr Sabine Kapasi
Advisory to Global Strategy Team, United Nations

Dr Ashish Panghal
Healthcare Strategy Expert & Partner, Enira Consulting

Dr Tania Nijhawan
Senior Vice Chair, YFLO

Ankit Aggarwal
Founder & Chief Executive Officer, Unstop

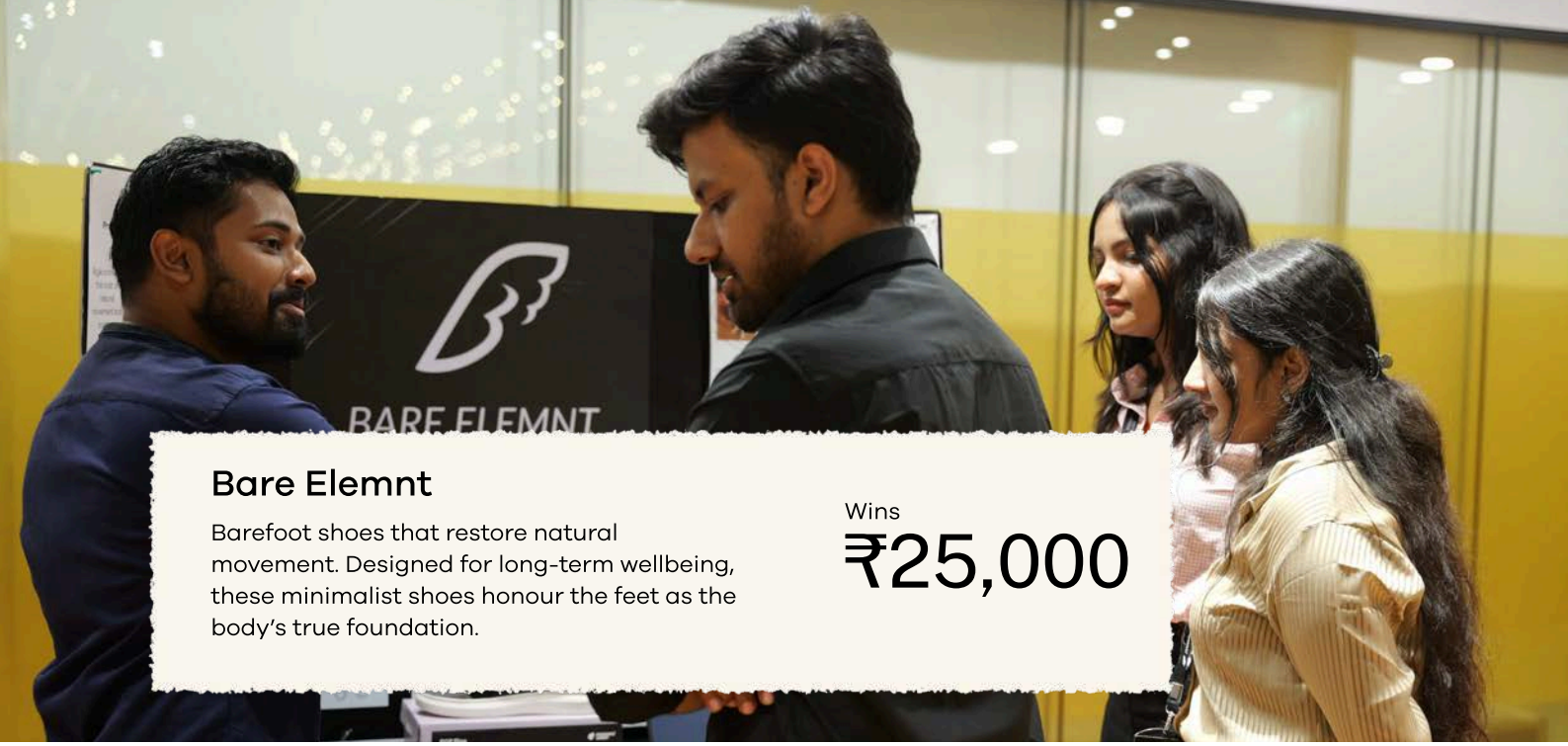
Sarthak Rastogi
Associate Vice President, Huddle Ventures

Neha Malhotra
Founder and Managing Partner, MeritX Ventures

Each pitch was more than a presentation; it was a trial by fire. Questions came fast, feedback cut deep, and ideas were sharpened in real time. The day wasn't about celebrating half-built products; it was about testing which of them could truly stand the market's scrutiny.

Recognising the Standout Ventures

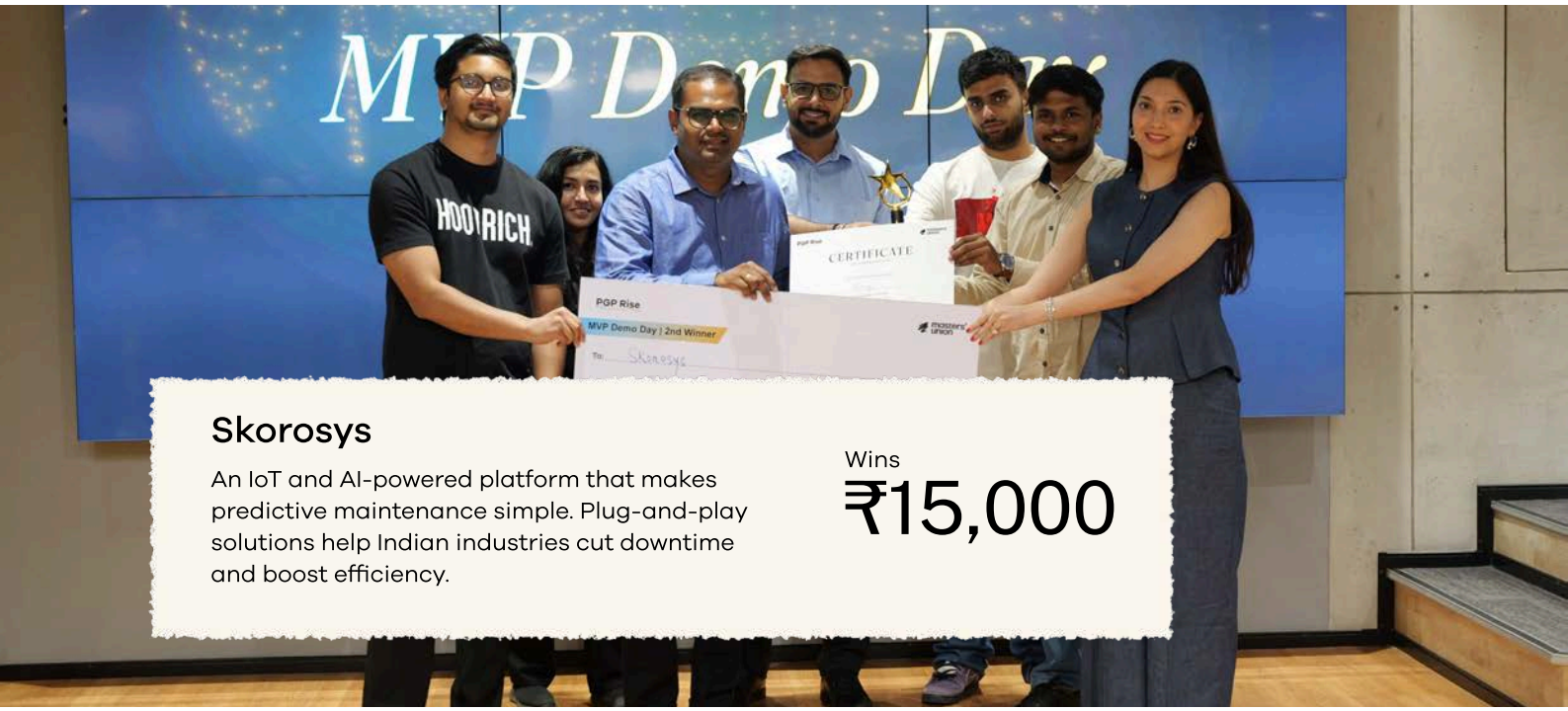
This Demo Day also highlighted ventures that stood out for their product strength, scalability, and market performance. The jury awarded the following teams:



Bare Elemnt

Barefoot shoes that restore natural movement. Designed for long-term wellbeing, these minimalist shoes honour the feet as the body's true foundation.

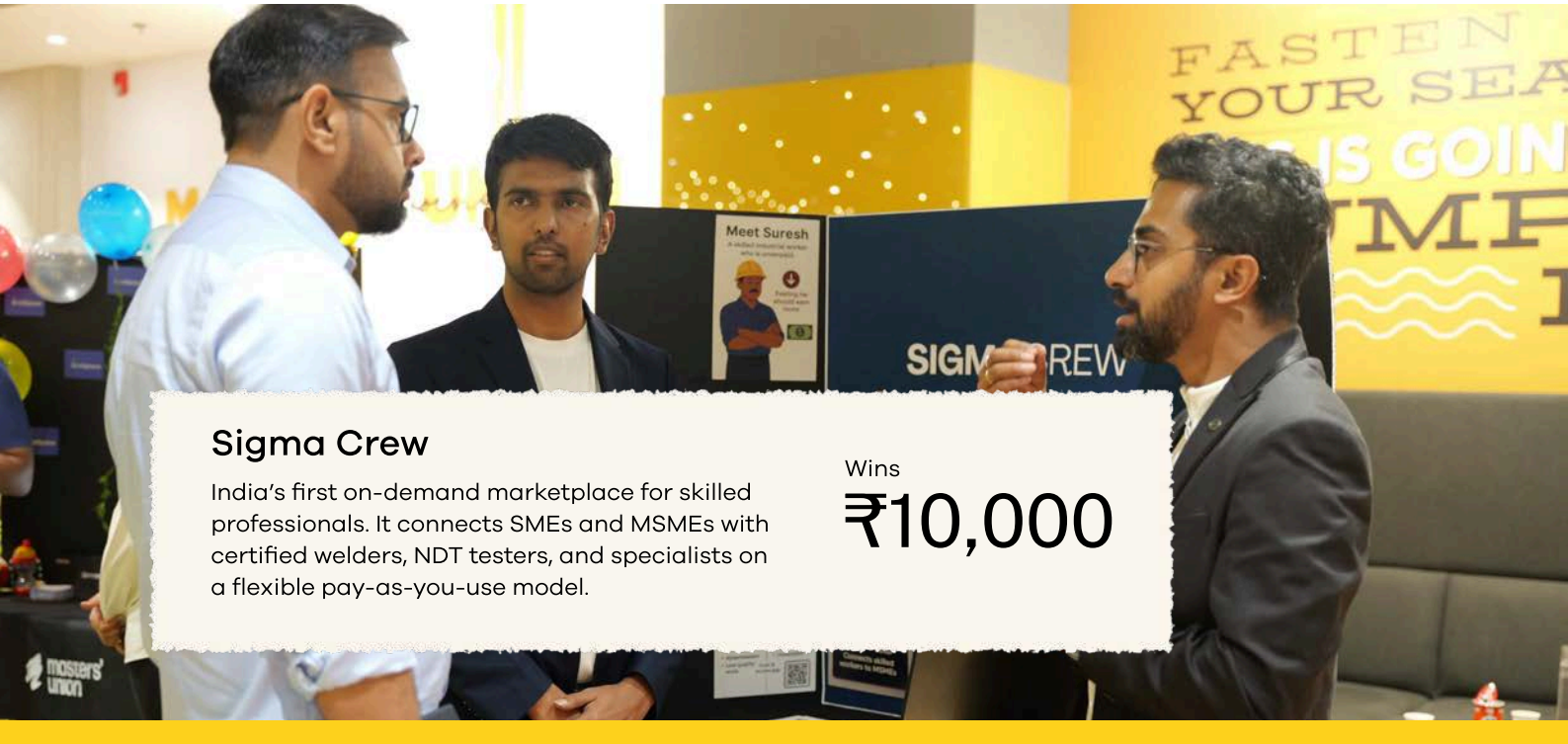
Wins
₹25,000



Skorosys

An IoT and AI-powered platform that makes predictive maintenance simple. Plug-and-play solutions help Indian industries cut downtime and boost efficiency.

Wins
₹15,000



Sigma Crew

India's first on-demand marketplace for skilled professionals. It connects SMEs and MSMEs with certified welders, NDT testers, and specialists on a flexible pay-as-you-use model.

Wins
₹10,000

Pre-Seed Demo Day

Venture Initiation Programme

Cohort 4

Pre-Seed Round

Student startups move from experiments to investor-ready pitches, with fellowships and funding on the line.



The Venture Initiation Programme (VIP) conducted its Pre-Seed round for Cohort 4 students on 2nd August with its flagship Demo Day, where student founders presented their ventures to a panel of investors, mentors, and alumni. What began with early experiments and market trials ended in the high-pressure setting of a three-minute pitch, judged with the rigour of a real boardroom.

The Road to the Stage

Preparation was structured and demanding. Over the course of a month, teams submitted three graded assignments: an operating plan, a pitch script with accompanying video, and a final investor deck. Workshops on product–market fit, rehearsals, and personalised mentoring sharpened their delivery. The rules left little margin for error: three minutes to present, three minutes of questions, and no tolerance for cluttered slides or vague business models.

The Jury

The panel brought together investors and operators with deep venture experience:

Arindam Mukhopadhyay

Partner, India Accelerator

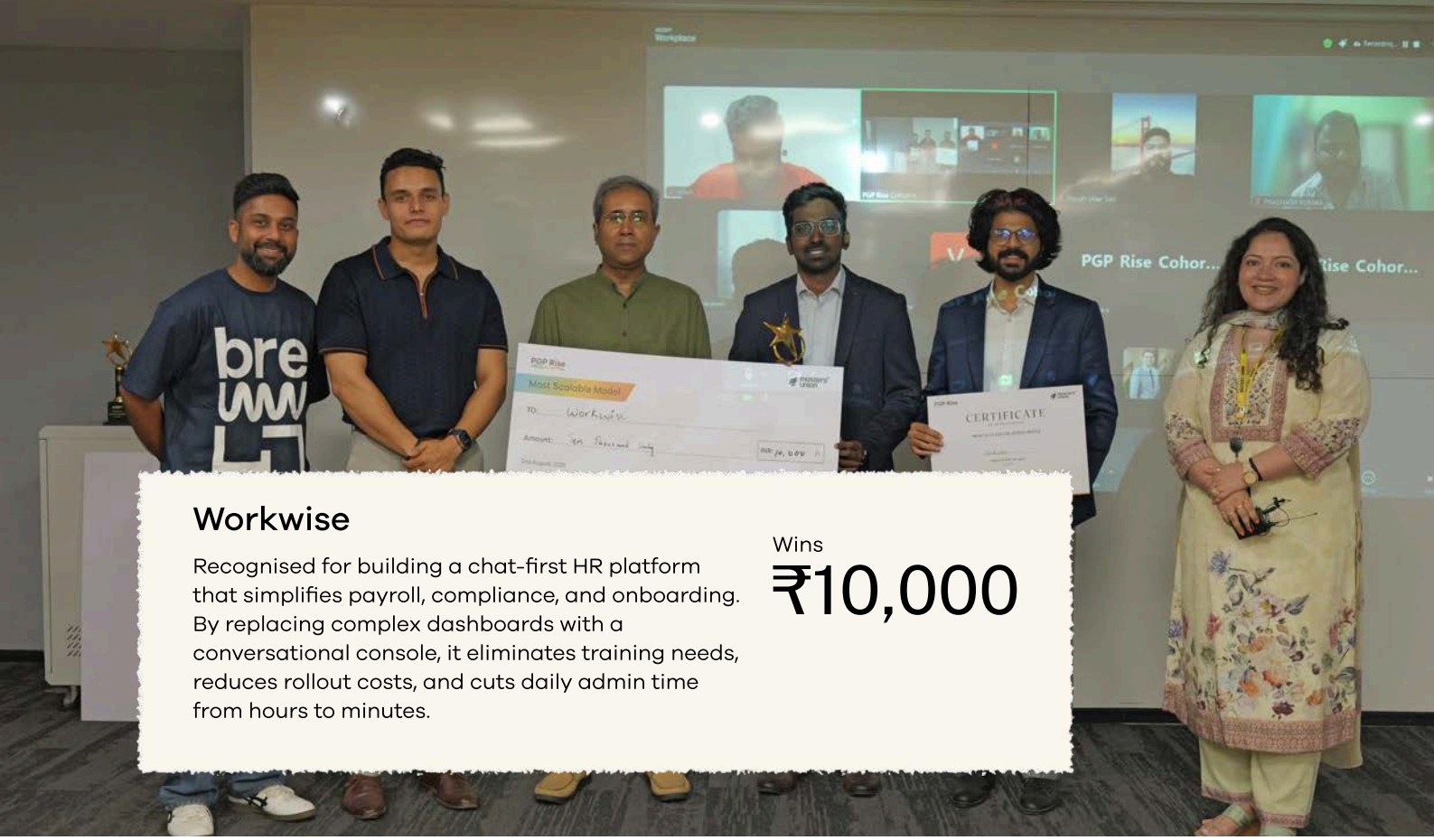
Ankit Agarwal

Founder, Breww 47

Navan Jaiswal

Co-founder, CirclePe

Their feedback was direct and uncompromising, with a focus on traction, clarity, and discipline in execution to the winning teams.



Workwise

Recognised for building a chat-first HR platform that simplifies payroll, compliance, and onboarding. By replacing complex dashboards with a conversational console, it eliminates training needs, reduces rollout costs, and cuts daily admin time from hours to minutes.

Wins
₹10,000



SupplyWise

Awarded for its B2B SaaS tool that enables fashion brands and suppliers to collaborate in real time. By replacing Excel and WhatsApp workflows with automated dashboards, it prevents stockouts, reduces deadstock, and improves revenue.

Wins
₹10,000

Beyond Awards

For most founders, the real value lies in candid feedback from seasoned investors. These Demo Days tested business models under pressure and offered a glimpse of the standards expected in venture capital — a rehearsal for the road ahead.



Akshat Mohan Awasthi

Moderator & Chairperson,
Committee on Corporate Engagement
and Policy (CCEP)

The Boardroom at Masters' Union: A Corporate Simulation for Grades 8–12

Inside the flagship event, where school students learn to think, argue, and act like CEOs under pressure.

It starts with silence. Rows of students, blazers pressed, placards ready, eyes fixed on the front of the room. Then the first bid cuts through, fifty crores, seventy-five, a hundred. Hands shoot up. Industries are bought, sectors claimed, alliances forged in whispers. This is not a classroom debate. It is The Boardroom, Masters' Union's flagship simulation that turns school corridors into corporate battlegrounds.

Over two days, students from Grades 8-12 step into the roles of chief executives, policy advisors, and media professionals. They bid for industries, defend companies against sudden crises, and negotiate with a jury that holds their fate. What emerges is part strategy contest, part live newsroom — and a crash course in how the real economy bends under pressure.

What Makes the Boardroom Different

The Boardroom is designed to mirror the intensity of real corporate decision-making. Participants don't argue abstract ideas; they fight for market share, defend reputations, and respond to crises that can upend an entire sector in minutes.

Advait Rohatgi from **The Heritage School** reflected, "It was truly a unique experience for me. The integration of business with MUN experience is what made me participate in the boardroom. I enjoyed presenting my views as well as learning from other people's perspectives on crisis situations. Overall, it was an enriching event where I was able to learn speech delivery and so much more!"

The Mechanics of Pressure

Day One begins with an auction. Teams receive notional capital to bid for industries across automobiles, tech, pharmaceuticals, and energy. The stakes rise quickly. Once industries are secured, teams issue industry statements, explaining how their sector plans to navigate the opening crisis and why it matters to the economy.

The spotlight then narrows to company statements. Individual delegates defend their chosen firms — Tata Motors, Infosys, Sun Pharma — outlining not just survival strategies but the knock-on effects their company could have on other players and on the broader economy.

Day Two changes the tempo. A confidential 'Prime Minister's Office briefing' lands on every desk. The latest twist: India pivots oil imports towards the Middle East to ease tensions with Washington. Russia fumes. Beijing threatens to cut off critical supplies of semiconductors and pharmaceutical ingredients. The country is caught in what the note calls an economic pincer.

Participants are forced to make hard choices. The dilemmas feel real because they are drawn from the kinds of trade-offs that define policy and business. An auto team frets about semiconductors; pharmaceutical companies argue over dependence on Chinese APIs (Active Pharmaceutical Ingredients); IT firms panic about Dollar contracts that could be frozen overnight.

Industry Leaders at the Boardroom

- **Pranay Roy:** Head of Marketing at Nothing and IIM Kozhikode alumnus
- **Gaurav Mehta:** Former CMO of Noise
- **Swati Ganeti:** Director, Masters' Union - UG, ex-Bain & Company, IIT Delhi, and Wharton alumna
- **Dr Bhaskar Malu,** Social Psychologist and Faculty, Masters' Union

Their role was clear: to push students beyond textbook thinking and force them into the mindset of decision-makers.

- **Path A:** double down on the West, accepting higher energy costs and the risk of a Chinese supply freeze.

- **Path B:** reverse course, secure cheap Russian crude, but risk American sanctions. Each industry must weigh the impact, lobby for its interests, and justify its stance before a jury acting as government.



In Frame: A glimpse of winning faces at The Boardroom 2025 of Masters' Union.

The 2025 Edition

The 2025 edition brought schools from across India, with many travelling beyond Delhi NCR. It was led by Masters' Union undergraduates **Seerat Virk, Suhas Pulluru, and Jeet Shah** from the Class of 2027, who spent a year shaping the event.

The simulation ran on two tracks. The **Committee on Corporate Engagement and Policy (CCEP)**, chaired by **Akshat Mohan Awasthi**, focused on lobbying and strategy. The **Amplify Studio** gave students the role of journalists, producing news reels, editorials, and media spins to influence the outcome.

Recognition went to those who showed adaptability under fire. In Amplify Studio, **Shweta Kataria** took Best Delegate, with **Krish Chauhan** and **Vaibhav Duggal** earning High Commendations. Special Mentions went to **Vaani Sharma** and **Lakshay**.

Meanwhile, in the CCEP track, **Nykaa (led by Advait Rohtagi)** was awarded Best Company, **ITC (represented by Tisya Gupta)** secured Outstanding Company, and Textiles — powered by **Advay Saha**, **Adit Upadhyay**, **Shom Vishwakarma**, **Saksham Gupta**, **and Kashvi Rastogi** — took home Best Industry.

Lessons in Realism

For Masters' Union, the idea of a Boardroom is the essence of "learn by doing." It doesn't ask students to imagine themselves as CEOs. It puts them in the chair, then throws at them the problems that keep CEOs awake at night.

The distinction is sharp. Where a debate rewards rhetorical flourish, The Boardroom rewards pragmatism, speed, and coalition-building. It teaches not just how to argue, but when to pivot.

When the final gavel falls, there are winners and commendations. But the deeper impact is subtler. Students in Grades 8-12 leave with a rare glimpse of the tensions that boardrooms and ministries juggle daily — the uneasy balance of economics, politics, and perception.

The Boardroom is more than a simulation. It is preparation for the future.



Dr Anushree Poddar

Lead - Outclass Experiential Learning,
Masters' Union

Along with Babson Build Program team



Global Classrooms: From Harvard to Babson, Masters' Union Students Learn on the World Stage

A July 2025 journey across America's leading universities and entrepreneurship hubs.

July 2025 marked a defining summer for Masters' Union undergraduates. Four esteemed American institutions — Harvard, Illinois Tech, Fordham, and Babson College — opened their doors to the cohort, where students not only absorbed the energy of one of the world's leading entrepreneurship hubs but also **won the Rocket Pitch Competition**.

This was learning you could feel. Students faced real challenges and made rapid decisions. By the end, they hadn't just seen a global hub, they had tested their place in it.

Harvard Business School: Walking Through a Legacy

The trek began at **Harvard Business School, July 2025.** Few campuses carry the weight of history quite like Harvard's. For Masters' Union students, the tour of Harvard Business School was not just about architecture or the red-brick halls — it was about stepping into a space that has shaped leaders for centuries.

There were no formal meetings, no speeches, no grand ceremonies. Instead, the day was built around an unhurried walk, conversations in smaller groups, and quiet reflection. Students paused at lecture halls where case method debates had once set global standards, and faculty noted how culture and environment can inspire intellectual ambition.

The symbolism mattered. Standing at Harvard was less about a checklist moment and more about experiencing the living benchmark of academic excellence.

It left an everlasting mark on the students. As one of them later noted:

"It reminded us that education is not only what you study, but also where and with whom you study."

Illinois Institute of Technology: Pathways and Partnerships

From Boston, the cohort moved to **Chicago**, visiting **the Illinois Institute of Technology (Illinois Tech)**, Unlike Harvard's symbolic immersion, Illinois Tech was about structured collaboration. Here, students and faculty deepened the existing **3+1 Pathway** — a programme that allows Masters' Union undergraduates to complete three years in India before finishing their degree at Illinois Tech. The meeting with **Fareine Suarez, Associate Vice President for Undergraduate Enrollment**, brought clarity to this long-standing academic bridge.

Equally memorable was the tour led by a transfer student from India. His perspective added texture — what it means to move across continents, adjust to a new academic culture, and thrive in a global classroom. For Masters' Union students, it was less about admiration from afar and more about imagining themselves in those very corridors.

Illinois Tech's message was clear: inclusivity, mobility, and opportunity. It showed how partnerships extend beyond paperwork into lived student experiences.

Fordham University: Building Two-Way Bridges

The third stop was **Fordham University's Gabelli School of Business, New York**. If Harvard represented heritage and Illinois Tech represented pathways, Fordham stood for dialogue.

Here, the cohort met **Dr Francis Petit, Associate Dean for Global Initiatives and Partnerships**. The discussions explored more than traditional exchanges. They ranged from **study tours** to **advanced degree pathways**, with a focus on building two-way bridges — Fordham students coming to India, and Masters' Union students experiencing New York's vibrant business ecosystem.

Dr Petit's emphasis on blending executive education with real-world immersion resonated strongly. New York, with its intensity and diversity, was positioned not just as a backdrop but as a living laboratory. What made the visit memorable was Fordham's genuine eagerness to collaborate. Hospitality was warm, but more importantly, ambition was shared.

Babson Build: Winning on a Global Stage

If the trek was about exploration, the **Babson Build Program** was about performance. Held at **Babson College, Boston**, the week-long bootcamp gathered students from more than **25 countries**. Babson, long regarded as a crucible of entrepreneurial thinking, set the stage for collaboration, ideation, and competition.

Masters' Union cohort did more than participate — they excelled. In the **Rocket Pitch Competition**, the team of **Kabir Singh Ahuja**, **Parth Jain**, **Sanat Goyal**, **and Harshvardhan Singh** emerged as winners. Their venture was not only imaginative but also grounded in practical execution, a balance that caught the eye of peers and faculty alike.

Sessions led by Babson's faculty elevated the experience further. Professors like **Wendy Marcinkus Murphy** delivered insights on leadership, negotiation, and management — topics that blended academic rigour with practical wisdom. For students, it was a rare opportunity to engage directly with teachers who view entrepreneurship not as theory but as lived practice.

The learning extended beyond the classroom. Late-night discussions with peers from across continents, exposure to unfamiliar perspectives, and the intensity of working in diverse teams shaped the experience. Winning the competition was the headline, but the real story lay in the confidence and clarity that students carried home.

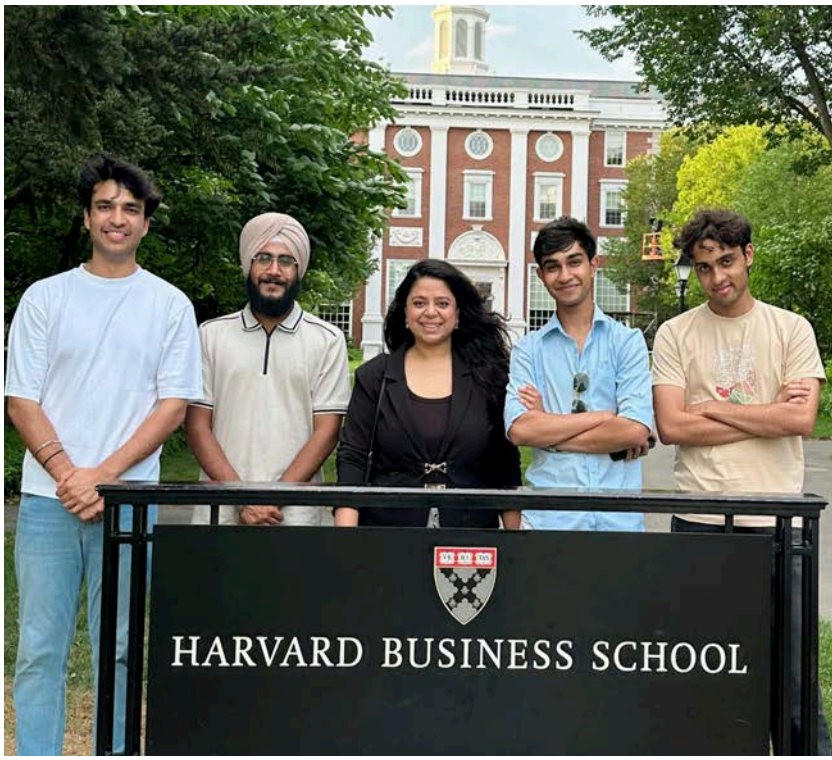
Lessons Across Borders

What unites Harvard, Illinois Tech, Fordham, and Babson is not geography but perspective. Each institution offered something distinct: heritage, pathways, dialogue, and performance. For the students, this was not an academic tour in the conventional sense. It was a set of lived experiences that stitched together global ambition with local grounding.

International exposure is often framed as a résumé line. This trek proved it is much more — a way to test oneself in unfamiliar settings, to see how ideas travel, and to understand that education is both global and deeply personal.

In Frame: Standing at Harvard, they saw history; at Illinois Tech, they saw possibility; at Fordham, they saw partnership; and at Babson, they proved capability.











Anubhooti Jain

PGP TBM Cohort '25,
Founder, Mom's Mixes



Lessons From the Feedback That Redefined Young Founders

- What's the most brutal but valuable piece of feedback you've received while pitching, whether it was a deck, a PPT, or any kind of presentation, and how did it change the way you approached it next time?

Six student founders open up about the feedback that hit the hardest, and how it changed the way they think and work. From blunt questions by investors to candid comments from customers, each piece of feedback challenged them to pause, rethink, and adjust their approach. These moments weren't easy, but they pushed the founders to sharpen their pitches, identify gaps, and rebuild their ideas from the ground up.

Their experience shows that honest, sometimes uncomfortable feedback isn't just criticism; it's a crucial part of learning, refining, and turning raw ideas into stronger, more market-ready ventures.

Read their experiences.

During a presentation, a business owner once cut straight to the point: 'I think this is cool, but it doesn't exactly solve the problem. Nobody cares about your journey. What's in it for me?' It pierced. But it made perfect sense. Now, I force myself to think like the user, not the founder. Each time I present, I focus only on what genuinely matters to the person across the table. That shift keeps me grounded.

Aashwin Dev
UG TBM Cohort '28



In my first three months of college, I spent late nights buried in research, interviewing parents, counsellors, and teachers to shape Akara. I felt I was going deeper into study, but no closer to execution. A fellow founder finally told me, 'Do whatever it takes to make it happen, just execute.' That stuck. That feedback shifted me from planning to action, leading Akara's first pilot, co-founding the Board of Education Fellowship, and partnering with schools in Bangalore.

Muskan Agarwal
PGP TBM Cohort '25



For me, the most piercing feedback didn't come from investors but from customers at pop-ups. They liked the perfumes but asked: "Where's the Indianness you talk about? You feel like every other brand." The comment stung. Online, the brand looked flawless; in person, it felt hollow. That gap forced a tough decision: to delay our online launch. It pushed the team to confront what was missing and rebuild. The result was Khet: an identity honest, authentic, and strong enough to scale.

Madhav Narang
UG TBM Cohort '27



The toughest feedback was that our pitch deck looked too basic and wasn't investor-focused. Initially, it hit hard; we'd poured immense energy into the content. But it taught us a vital lesson: design and structure matter as much as the idea. Since then, we've rebuilt our decks to be sharper, more visual, and investor-centric, ensuring every presentation balances our passion with polished execution and communicates our vision clearly to potential investors.

Anubhooti Jain

PGP TBM Cohort '25



A year ago, an investor told me, "Ahsan, it's almost suicide going up against the giant fashion schools. You'll struggle to attract good talent." Fast forward, and 80% of our founding cohort at Pixel SOF comes from Tier 1 fashion schools, mostly NIFT graduates. It reminds me of our faculty Dr Bhupesh's words: "Nobody will ever understand your customer's pain points better than you. Build for them. The time is now." That's exactly what we did.

Ahsan Afroz

PGP TBM Cohort '25



An investor told me bluntly: 'You're pitching a tool, not a revolution. Why should I care?' I realised I had buried my idea in features instead of the bigger problem he wanted to solve. Next time, I led with the mission: Fixing a broken fundraising system and making it faster, smarter, and more human. That single shift changed how people connected with my idea, not just as a product, but as a movement.

Arjav Jain

UG TBM Cohort '28



Series C



Anand Srinivasan

Co-founder and
Chief Information Officer,
Akasa Air

Akasa Air

Building Akasa Air with Clarity, Consistency, and Control

From execution and cost discipline to first-time flyers and aviation culture - Akasa's Co-founder & Chief Information Officer, Anand Srinivasan, shares what it takes to grow in Indian skies without chasing the spotlight.

On a Sunday morning, when most people are thinking about brunch, Anand Srinivasan is thinking about flights. Sundays are the busiest, most unforgiving days in aviation — crews stretched, passengers impatient, weather unpredictable, and the margin for error at zero.

Speaking at a Series C session at Masters' Union, he put it plainly: 'It's not about the vision. It's about execution. That's what makes the difference, every day, and twice on Sunday.'

In aviation, Sundays are high-pressure days. That's when execution matters most, and for Srinivasan, it's the only thing that truly scales. He doesn't reach for big claims or industry clichés. He talks about what holds under pressure, and why, like a good flight path, a career can't be mapped too far ahead, but can be navigated one clear decision at a time.

From IIT to Aviation: No Master Plan, Just Momentum

Anand Srinivasan didn't grow up dreaming of running an airline. Like many students, he followed his exam rank, landing in **chemical engineering** at **IIT**.

He chose chemical engineering simply because that was what his JEE score allowed. A master's in operations research at **Purdue University**, **USA**, followed — not part of a grand career plan, but because the subject genuinely interested him. At the time, he wasn't thinking about jobs and was focused on completing his assignments.

His first job was with **Sabre**, the tech arm of **American Airlines**, without knowing much about the company. 'I liked solving problems. That was enough.' That focus on problem-solving carried him through roles at **Dell**, **Cisco**, and **GoAir**. In 1999, well before it became a buzzword, he was **Chief Data Scientist**. If there's a pattern to his career, it's momentum, not a master plan.

> You don't chart out 25 years. You figure out your next best move.

Execution is the Real Discipline

Operations aren't glamorous, but Srinivasan respects them for the quiet, repetitive, behind-the-scenes rigour they demand. At Akasa, every department follows standard operating procedures down to the smallest task. From baggage handling to flight safety, nothing is left to interpretation — there is no room for ambiguity, and every process is executed meticulously.

Even cabin crew, often seen as the face of in-flight service, are trained far beyond hospitality — emergency landings, medical scenarios, water evacuations. They are prepared to handle extraordinary situations, including delivering babies mid-air. For Anand Srinivasan, it is simple: if you cannot manage the details, you should not be managing operations.

Scaling without Chasing the Market Share

Akasa may be growing quickly, but it isn't in a race. Market share isn't the metric Srinivasan wakes up thinking about.

The airline has already inducted 20 aircraft, with another 56 on the way. But the numbers, he explains, aren't about outpacing rivals - they're about keeping up with demand.

In a sector where everyone assumes competition is cutthroat, Srinivasan offers a different view. Growth, he says, doesn't have to come at someone else's expense. 'Just because your share changes doesn't mean your business is shrinking.'

In a country where millions are flying for the first time, there's enough sky for more than one airline to grow.

> We've never had a market share target. We add capacity. We open new routes. That growth will reflect where it needs to.

Value Over Price

Srinivasan challenges the common belief that Indian fliers are driven purely by low fares. In reality, consumers are value-seeking — if price alone mattered, boutique cafés and fully booked hotels in Goa during peak season wouldn't be thriving.

For Akasa, this insight is foundational. The airline doesn't aim to undercut — it aims to offer consistent, reliable value.

This approach is paying off. According to Srinivasan, **50% of their passengers are first-time flyers**, and the discretionary spend on travel is only rising. With India's average annual flights per person still at 0.5 (compared to the global average of 2.5), the runway for growth is clear.

Building Akasa: Culture First, Then Aircraft

For Anand Srinivasan, the heart of Akasa isn't its fleet — it's the mindset. The company's founding principles aren't just words on paper; they are lived, visible, and consistently reinforced. Cost discipline, a culture of service, and employee centricity form the foundation of uncompromising safety.

This clarity shapes everything from hiring to operations. Internally, teams are expected to treat one another like clients, with IT supporting operations and marketing depending on data. Respect isn't just outward-facing — it's baked into the culture.

He's quick to dispel the idea that cost and service are opposing forces. While cost focus and a service-oriented culture might seem at odds, the best airlines — like Southwest — combine both. At Akasa, that combination isn't an aspiration; it's the baseline.

On Entrepreneurship: Set a Stop-Loss

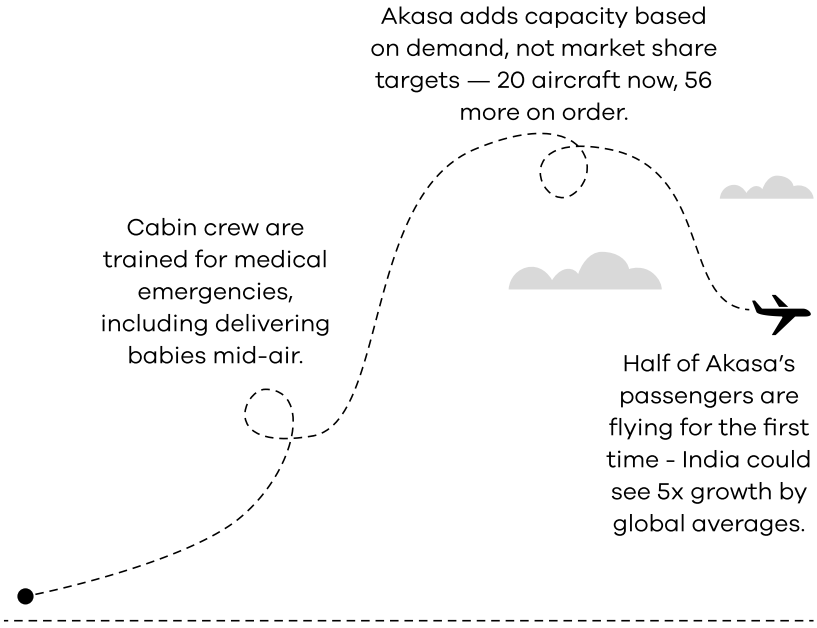
Before Akasa, Srinivasan built and exited his own analytics startup. His reflections on that chapter are anything but romantic.

The company was stable, but it wasn't scaling. That, for Srinivasan, was the cue. He shut it down and moved on - with clarity, not regret.

He stresses the importance of having a stop-loss. At some point, he realised certain ventures weren't going to take off, and it was better to move on. He remains wary of flashy startups built on investor burn and customer giveaways. A real business, he believes, should do both: serve customers and reward those who support it.

> Don't get into entrepreneurship because it's cool; it's painful. It's lonely. And for every one startup that makes the news, there are ninety-nine that don't.

Akasa Air *Growth, Explained by* Anand Srinivasan



Focus on Depth, Not Appearances

When asked what students should really focus on, Anand Srinivasan doesn't mention electives or competitions. He talks about retention and depth.

'It's not about what you take. It's about what you remember.' He advises students to pick a handful of topics and go deep, well beyond what the syllabus demands. In his view, surface-level prep might get you through an interview - but not much further.

'Interviews last 30 minutes. You can bluff your way through those. But you'll get found out fast.' He recalls walking out of a job interview early in his career - one that could have led to a software role. He simply told them it wasn't for him. Today, he heads the IT function at Akasa. Some lessons, it seems, take their time to land.

Looking Forward: A Sky Full of Opportunity

Half of Akasa's passengers are first-time flyers, and if India simply reaches the global average for flights per capita, the market could see fivefold growth. But that opportunity won't lift everyone.

In a volatile industry, Srinivasan circles back to the same three words: execution, planning, and depth. The same principles that keep Akasa steady on a Sunday are the ones he believes will carry it through the decades to come.

> Badly run businesses will die. That's a given. But if you plan well, stay focused, and take care of your people, you'll thrive.

Series C



Revant Himatsingka

Social Media Influencer,
Aka. FoodPharmer

FoodPharmer

Fix the Label, Rethink the System: Inside FoodPharmer's Fight for Honest Nutrition

- McKinsey consultant turned food activist - Revant Himatsingka on challenging misleading health claims in India's food industry, using public trust and radical transparency.

At a Series C session at Masters' Union, former McKinsey consultant Revant Himatsingka took the stage to speak about a fight most people don't even realise is happening. In an industry where packaging often sells more than the product itself, he has become an unlikely disruptor. Neither a nutritionist by profession nor a food manufacturer by legacy, his digital alter ego, FoodPharmer, has become one of the loudest and most influential voices calling out misinformation in India's food ecosystem.

And he's not just naming names. He's building a business on his own terms.

From McKinsey to the Masses

Revant Himatsingka was once the kind of consultant who helped packaged food companies find new markets. At McKinsey, he sat in closed-door meetings, building strategies for multinational clients. The brief was familiar: the West was slowing down. India was where the growth would come from.

That, he says, was the turning point.

> The US market is saturated. There's no more growth left in the West. So now, all growth must come from India.

On paper, it was sound market logic. But the implication was clear: processed food companies were preparing to scale aggressively in India, regardless of nutritional impact. For Revant, who'd studied **Public Health and Nutrition** during his time at **Wharton**, the idea wasn't just uncomfortable. It was unacceptable.

He left the firm. He left the visa. And he came back to India with no plan — except to speak up.

From Anonymous Upload to Five Million Followers

His first video was simple. A short explainer showing how a popular "health drink" wasn't actually healthy. He made it for his friends, and it went viral.

One video turned into hundreds. The audience ballooned. Under the name FoodPharmer, Revant began decoding the fine print behind India's best-selling snacks, drinks, and supplements — breaking down ingredients, pointing out misleading claims, and asking a simple question: If this is supposed to be healthy, why doesn't it say so clearly?

It wasn't long before companies started pushing back.

Four Legal Notices in Forty-Eight Hours

Within 48 hours of a particularly direct video, Revant received four legal notices. "If you don't take it down, we'll sue you for ₹2 crores. You could face six months of imprisonment."

Some were from major players. Others were less known. All carried the same message to back off. He was accused of defamation. The brands didn't want their logos shown or their product names mentioned.

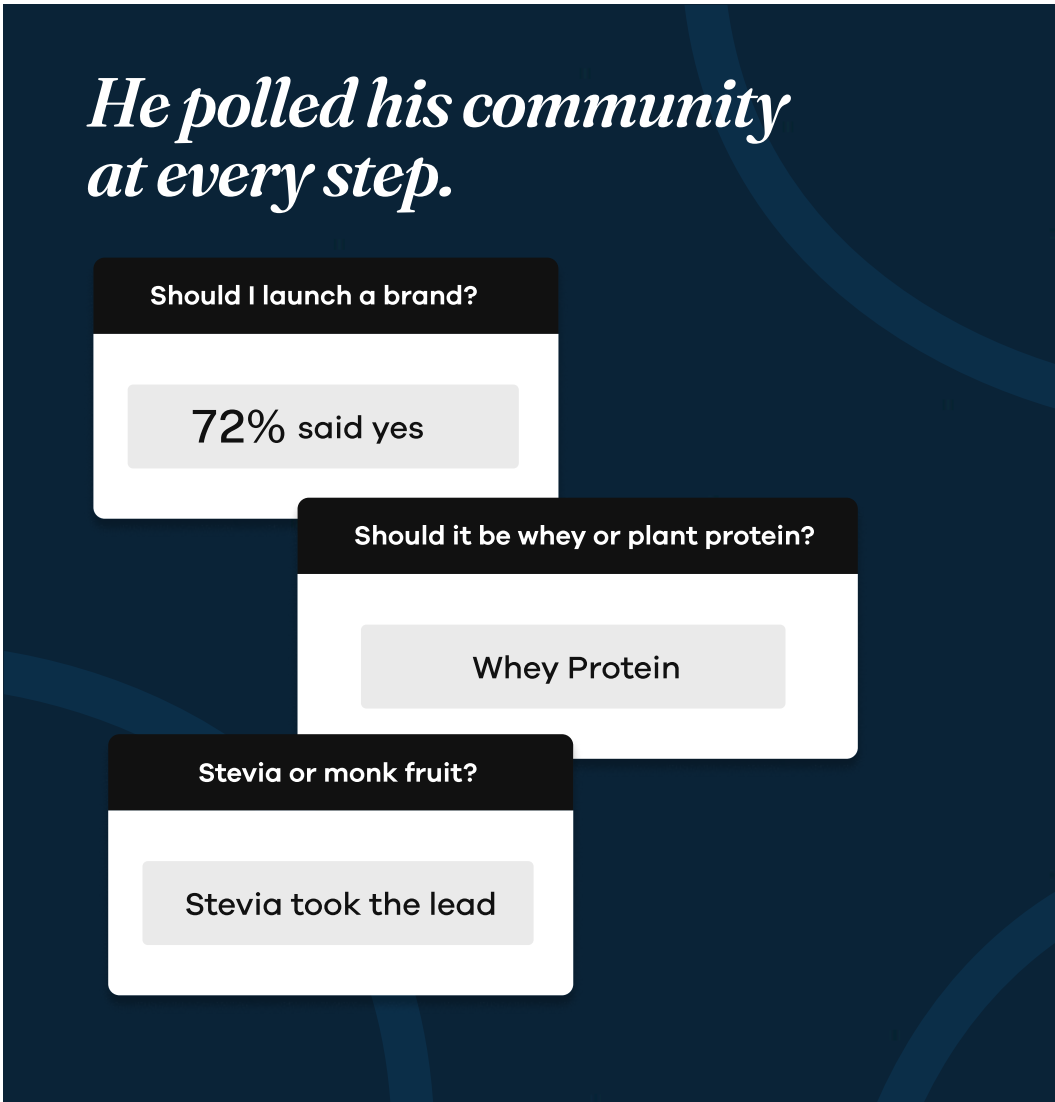
His response was equally clear: No blurring, no euphemisms. 'Lawyers told me to use code words. Say "Juiced" instead of "Boost". I said no. I'll say Boost.'

He didn't have a legal team at the time, but he kept posting. He wondered why he couldn't review a food product when people reviewed films. He wasn't trying to be provocative; he was trying to be accurate and honest.

A Brand That Doesn't Pretend to Be Perfect

As his credibility grew, his audience became more than viewers — they became stakeholders. They started asking: If most of these products are unhealthy, what should we actually buy?

Instead of creating a product behind closed doors, Revant did the opposite.



He didn't try to be a clean-eating messiah. He simply chose to be transparent, putting everything on the front of the pack — no fine print, no false claims. And it worked. People weren't looking for perfection; they just wanted the truth. That's the foundation of his startup: transparency, not perfection.

Why Education isn't Enough

Revant isn't interested in shaming consumers. His argument is simpler: Most people don't know how to read a food label. And that includes the well-educated.

He points out that everyone is educated, super educated, yet few are truly health literate.

He's delivered talks at IITs, IIMs, NYU, and Wharton. But whether in Delhi or New York, even top-tier students and professionals struggle with basic nutritional understanding.

He's now building low-cost (and often free) online courses. He's also lobbying to have food literacy added to school curricula.

> We study history, geography, integration, and differentiation, but not health.

In Frame: A student asks Revant Himatsingka how young consumers can spot misleading health claims, prompting a practical discussion on food literacy, labelling laws, and the role of digital awareness.

The Endorsement Problem

Brands don't just sell food — they sell aspiration, often amplified through celebrity endorsements. A big part of the problem, he says, is image: some of the least healthy products are the ones promoted by famous faces.

He recounts a visit to an NGO-run school where a student believed Sprite was healthy. Why? Because it was clear like water and endorsed by a celebrity. He's seen the same confusion in high-income schools, where students drink imported energy beverages because they're endorsed by American influencers.

It's not just rural India. In South Bombay and Delhi, teenagers queue up to pay ₹1,000 for imported energy drinks like Prime, because Logan Paul drinks it. The logic is global. The marketing is relentless.

He adds that the obsession with the West runs deep. An American accent can make someone seem more credible. This influence goes



beyond branding; it shapes perceptions and behaviour, conditioning people to equate foreign cues with authority and trust.

The ₹2 Crore Endorsements He Said No To

With millions of followers came offers of endorsement deals, investor interest, and collaboration requests. Revant declined nearly all of them, especially from food brands.

Some offers were as high as what a cricket team captain might earn, but he didn't want to risk bias — not even with clean brands.

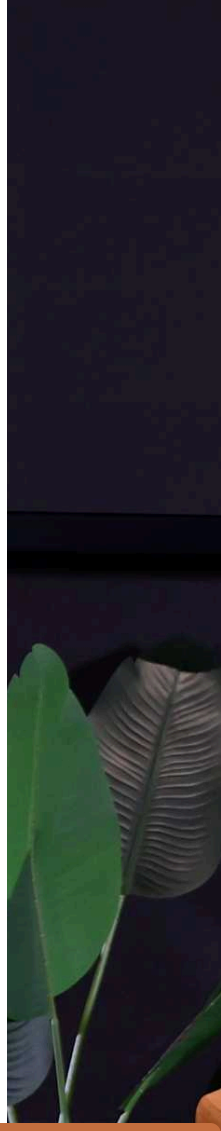
Why? Because even the "clean" brands weren't always clean. Some used jaggery but claimed radical health benefits. Others played with portion sizes to mask the sugar content.

He knew that promoting these brands would make it hard for people to know who to trust. His business model isn't built on sponsorships — it's built on public trust, and he wasn't willing to compromise that.

Health isn't Just Food Anymore

For students and aspiring founders, Revant offers a broader thesis: Don't reduce health to food alone.

Even air conditioners could market air purity, and mattresses already sell on back support — everything is getting "healthified." The implication is clear: consumer wellness is no longer a niche; it's becoming the baseline.



In Frame: Revant Himatsingka speaking to the Masters' Union cohort on food transparency, urging future founders to prioritise consumer trust over quick wins, and to challenge misleading labels head-on.

The 3 layers of health

What goes inside your body

supplements · protein · water

What goes on your body

skincare · cosmetics · clothing

What supports your body

air · sleep · furniture · posture

A Final Note to Anyone Building Anything

Before wrapping up the Series C session, Revant leaves the room with a final piece of advice — one he wishes he had heard earlier.

'At 18, I was obsessed with building my CV, joined clubs that looked good on paper, and took roles I thought would help me get a job.'

Now, after walking away from that job and turning down more lucrative ones, he sees it differently. 'There's nothing worth doing for months just for a bullet point. Build a life, not a resume.'

Coming from someone who stepped off the path most would have stayed on, it didn't feel like a line rehearsed for impact. It felt like a lived experience. And it leaves you wondering, if we can rethink the way we choose our food, can we also rethink the way we choose our lives?



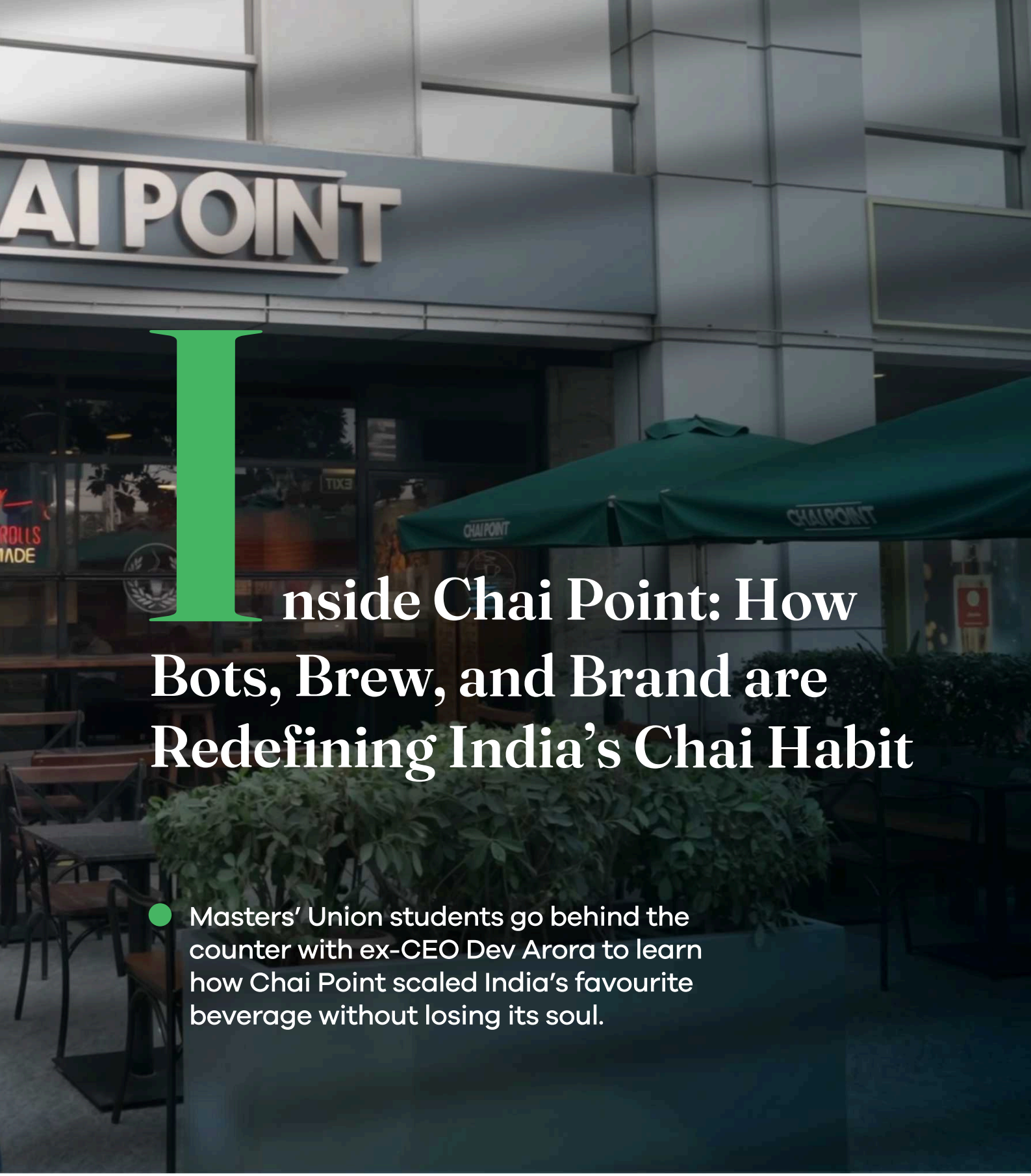
Off Campus



Dev Arora

Ex-Chief Executive Officer,
Chai Point

chai point



Inside Chai Point: How Bots, Brew, and Brand are Redefining India's Chai Habit

Masters' Union students go behind the counter with ex-CEO Dev Arora to learn how Chai Point scaled India's favourite beverage without losing its soul.

India's relationship with chai is deep and layered, part nostalgia, part habit, and part necessity. Over nine billion cups are consumed every month, yet for decades the out-of-home experience barely evolved: roadside tapris, often beloved but rarely hygienic, and vending machines, more functional than flavourful.

Chai Point stepped into this gap with a promise — to keep chai personal, hygienic, and consistent, while making it accessible wherever customers are.

When a group of students from Masters' Union met Chai Point's former CEO Dev Arora,

what began as an off-campus visit quickly turned into a behind-the-scenes exploration of product design, distribution thinking, and category creation in one of India's most habitual spaces.

Brewing at the Intersection of Taste and Tech

At the heart of Chai Point's model is a simple but deeply cultural insight - chai is personal.

Chai is a deeply personal beverage, and Chai Point recognises that everyone likes it in a certain way. To match that individuality, the company invested in personalisation through its app. Customers customise their cup with milk, spice, and sweetness, then scan a QR code at the store, sending the order straight to a bot.

The process requires no human intervention — because each order is personalised, the bots know exactly how to prepare the tea to match the customer's preferences.

This automation ensures every cup is made to preference with consistency. The company's digital stack eliminates friction. It also builds loyalty by remembering customers' specific preferences, making repeat orders seamless.

Hygiene is Non-Negotiable

No matter how much people love their chai at tapris, hygiene remains crucial — even the most devoted tea lover would hesitate to visit a roadside tea stall.

Chai Point addresses this through strict cleanliness protocols, including daily temperature checks, hand sanitisation, gloves, and surface cleaning routines. From kitchen to counter, hygiene is embedded in every touchpoint.

The hygiene commitment isn't just about health. It's central to the brand's value proposition. It signals trust, which is critical for scaling a product so personal. And it opens the door to new environments such as offices, campuses, tech parks, and hospitals.

> We are trying to resolve hygiene issues not only for us, but for a lot of other tea sellers.

By raising the bar, Chai Point is not just selling tea; it's reshaping consumer expectations.

Inside the Bot Strategy

At Chai Point's office, students saw the second-generation brewing bots in action — machines that brew authentic chai and filter coffee.

Serving size

80–120 ml,
with **90 ml** as the most common

Cost to corporate

₹6–6.50 per cup,
reducible to ₹5

Bot cost

₹15,000–₹16,000

Sales per bot

80–100 cups daily,
~2,400 cups monthly

Selling price

₹18 per cup

Monthly revenue per bot

₹43,200

Cost share of equipment + beverage prep

20% of total



Wherever You Sip, **Chai Point** is There

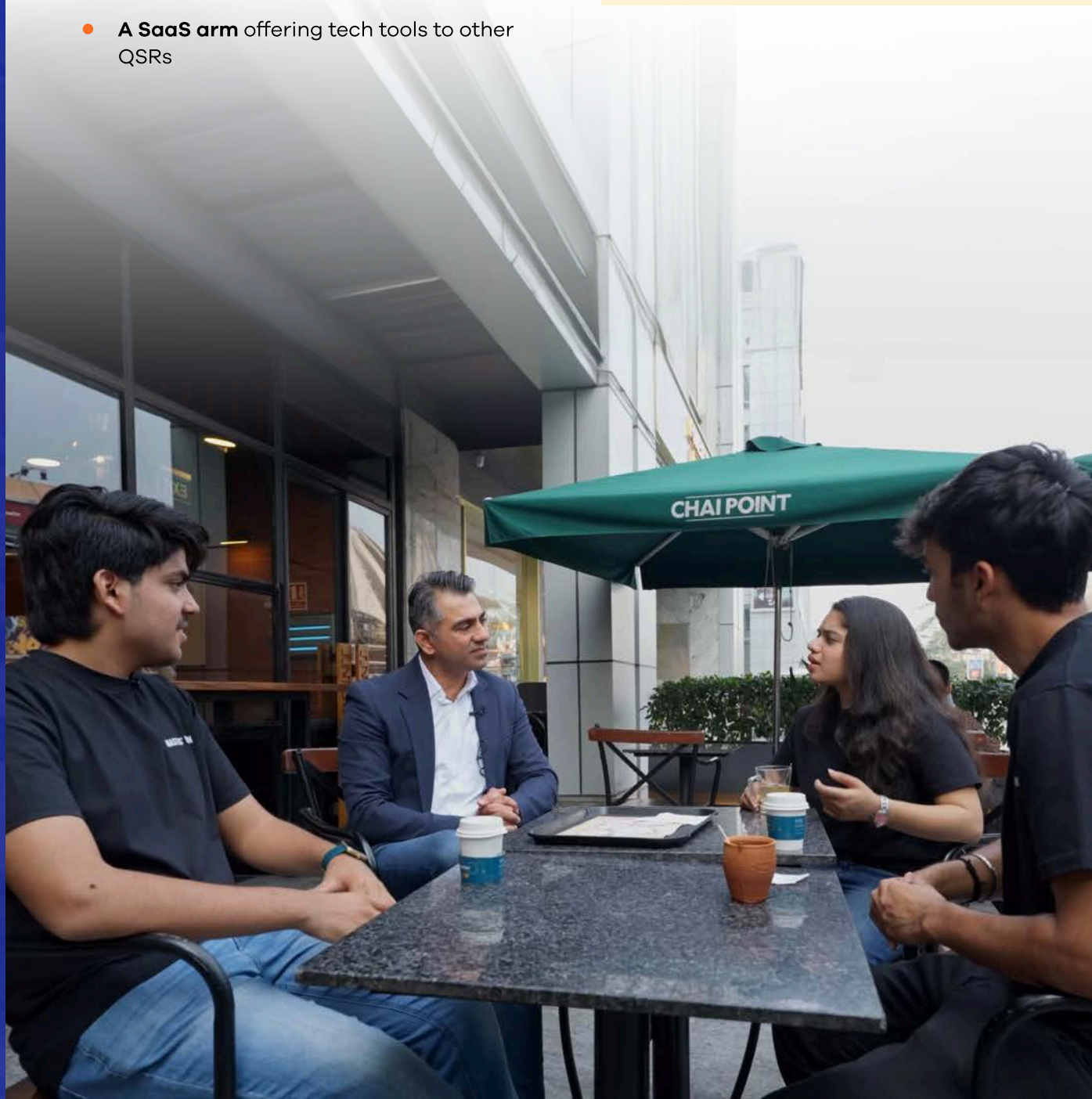
Chai Point operates across multiple verticals:

- **Retail cafés** for dine-in and takeaway
- **Brewing bots** as its largest scale driver
- **Consumer packaged goods** for chai-related products
- **A D2C platform** (shop.chaipoint.com) for home delivery
- **A SaaS arm** offering tech tools to other QSRs

The business is split roughly 50:50 between retail and office vending, while the D2C and SaaS segments are still growing, contributing around 6–7% to overall revenue.

This omni-channel approach allows Chai Point to meet the customer wherever they are — at work, at home, or on the go. Each channel builds a feedback loop that informs the others, and together, they support a unified brand experience.

In Frame: Masters' Union's UG Class of 2027 engages with Chai Point's ex-CEO, exploring the brand's journey and vision over an insightful discussion on India's chai culture.



More Doors, Same Experience

When asked if vending machines might take customers away from retail stores, Arora explained:

> The purpose of every business is not only to find its consumers but also to get the product they need at their arm's reach.

A customer might first try Chai Point at a vending bot in a co-working space, then later visit a café, or the other way around. This approach builds a strong bond, as the channels complement each other.

Staying Ahead Without Rivalry

He doesn't see other players as competition, recognising instead that they have built the industry. For Chai Point, the focus is on **thought leadership** — identifying a market need, creating the delivery network, innovating with bots, and staying ahead in technology.

Chai Point doesn't position itself against competitors; it aims to grow alongside them.

What's Brewing Next

Arora explained that the entire ecosystem revolves around chai, with foods and offerings designed to elevate the experience. This includes curated snacks, ambient settings, and digital integrations that reflect the same care as the beverage itself. Still, his priorities remain clear:

If a chai shop doesn't serve great chai, no food offerings will draw customers in. Chai Point's growth strategy is built on one principle: never let expansion dilute the quality of the core product.

Chai, Reimagined for the Modern Consumer

For Masters' Union students, visiting Chai Point was a lesson in disciplined execution, customer-centric design, and category leadership.

Its success lies in solving three core constraints — hygiene, consistency, and accessibility — through systems that honour personal preference. Retail, bots, and digital platforms work as connected touchpoints, not competing channels.

In a category often overlooked for its familiarity, Chai Point has rebuilt the infrastructure around India's hearty beverage. For a country that consumes over nine billion cups of chai a month, that contribution is not trivial. It is foundational.

In Frame: Sipping chai with ex-CEO Dev Arora, Masters' Union students get an insider view of Chai Point's journey to scale without losing its essence.



The Stats Brewing

Behind the Brand

₹43,200

monthly revenue per bot: 2,400 cups at ₹18 each, with ₹5 cost per cup — delivering consistent taste and strong margins.

9 billion cups of chai

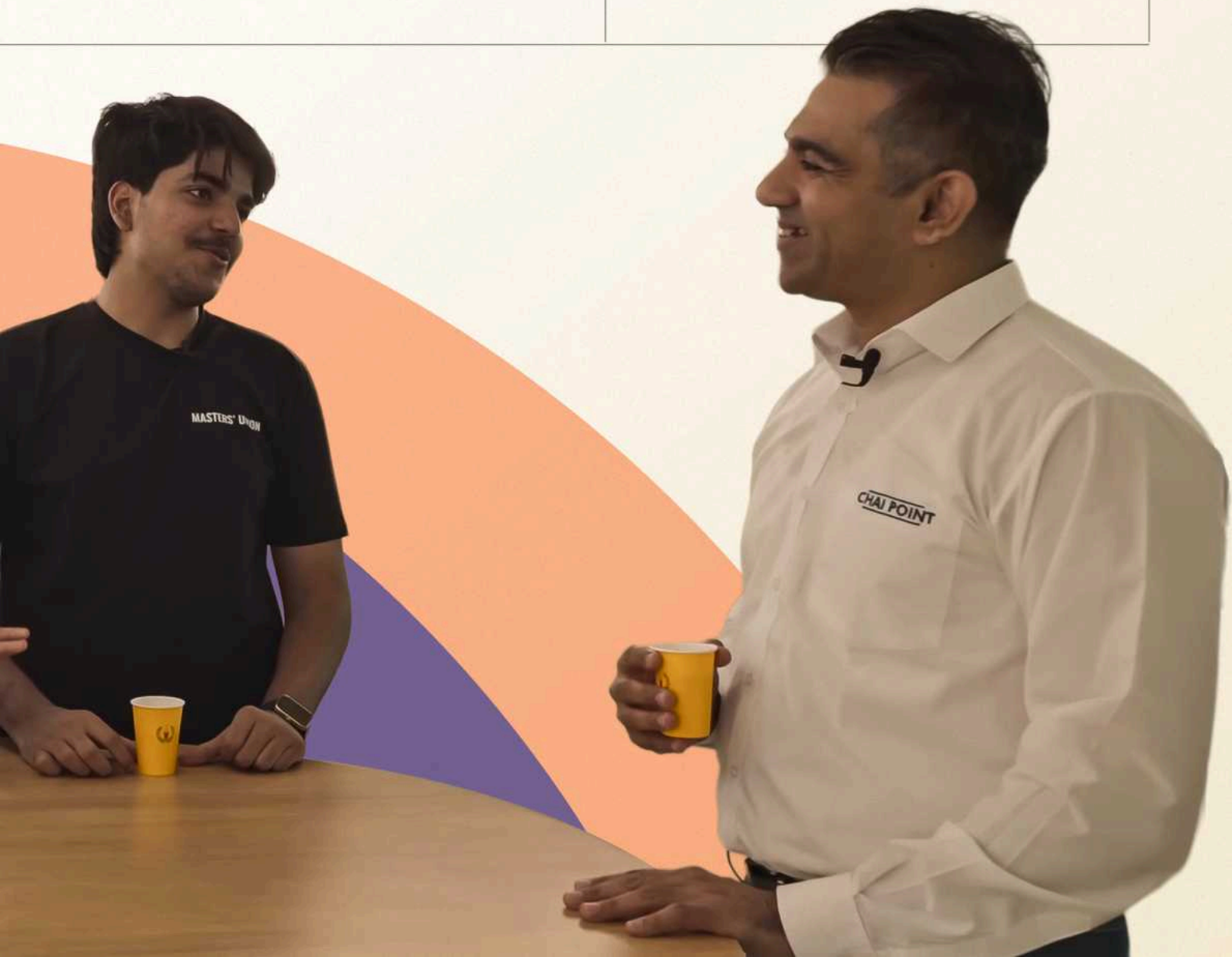
are consumed monthly in India; Chai Point addresses hygiene gaps with personalisation tech and brewing bots.

50:50 revenue split

between bots and cafés; D2C and SaaS contribute 6–7%, expanding reach without channel conflict.

Hygiene-first operations

gloves, sanitisation, bots — enable service in offices, hospitals, and tech parks with safe, touchless consistency.





Global Immersion Programme

Undergraduate excursion group



Learning Without Borders in Europe

- 14 Days, 4 Countries: From the United Nations to Mercedes-Benz, the programme fused academic learning with corporate practice and cultural depth.

For Masters' Union students, the Global Immersion Programme (GIP) is more than an international trip. It is a carefully designed journey that places them inside boardrooms, campuses, and factories where the world's most significant decisions, innovations, and ideas take shape.

In 2025, Europe became the classroom — a class in motion. It opened in **Switzerland**, where students stepped into the Assembly Hall of the United Nations in Geneva and walked the corridors where global security and humanitarian priorities are debated.

ITINERARY

28 July | Monday	9:15 PM	Depart from Delhi Airport
29 July | Tuesday | Geneva	7:20 AM	Arrive in Geneva
	9:00 AM	Hotel check-in
	10:30 AM	UN Headquarters Visit
	1:00 PM	Rest at Hotel
	4:00 PM	City Tour: Lake, Old Town
	7:00 PM	Geneva Networking Dinner
30 July | Wednesday | Paris	8:30 AM	Train to Paris
	12:30 PM	Hotel check-in
	3:00 PM	Louvre Museum Visit
	6:30 PM	Arc de Triomphe, Champs-Elysées & Notre Dame
	8:30 PM	Dinner
31 July | Thursday | Paris	9:00 AM	Eiffel Tower
	1:00 PM	Visit to World LPG Association / Musée de Parfum
	2:30 PM	Visit to EDF Office
	5:00 PM	Picnic by the Seine
	7:30 PM	Dinner
1 August | Friday | Paris	9:00 AM	IESEG Campus Tour
	2:00 PM	Visit Station F
	5:00 PM	Seine River Cruise
	7:00 PM	Networking Dinner
2 August | Saturday | Paris	-	Visit to Bordeaux Vineyard Tour / Disneyland Paris
3 August | Sunday | Amsterdam	8:00 AM	Train to Amsterdam
	2:30 PM	Zaanse Schans Windmill Village
	5 PM	Hotel Check-in
4 August | Monday | Amsterdam	10:30 AM	Heineken Experience + Canal Tour
	3:30 PM	Rabobank
	5:00 PM	Trip to Rotterdam, The Hague
5 August | Tuesday | Frankfurt	Morning	Train to Frankfurt Hotel Check-in
	4:00 PM	Frankfurt Walking Tour
	5:00 PM	Old Town Tour
	7:00 PM	Cultural Activity & Group Dinner
6 August | Wednesday | Stuttgart	7:00 AM	Depart for Mercedes-Truck Factory
	9:00 AM	Mercedes Factory Visit
	2:00 PM	Stuttgart City Walk
	6:00 PM	Porsche Museum Visit Return to Frankfurt by night
7 August | Thursday | Frankfurt	-	Day at leisure / Optional outlet mall visit
	10:00 PM	Night Flight to India



At the **Paris networking dinner**, discussions spanned energy markets, communication, and cross-border enterprise. Guests included:

Khalid Yousafzai, S&P Global — analyst of African downstream oil, fluent in six languages.

Prathipa Pal, EDF — engineer and bid manager with deep experience in nuclear projects.

Théophile Choquet, Télécom Paris — public speaking coach shaping the voices of entrepreneurs and engineers.

Devansh, Entrepreneur — Indo-French entrepreneur straddling IT consulting, retail, and education.















FRANCE

Paris offered the longest stay and the broadest canvas. Students toured the **Louvre**, the **Eiffel Tower**, and the **Seine**, before moving into high-impact corporate engagements. **EDF** (Électricité de France) opened doors to its sustainability and nuclear strategies; **IESEG School of Management** provided an academic exchange; **Station F** showcased Europe's start-up ecosystem.

Bordeaux vineyards and **Disneyland Paris** extended the learning to energy use and sustainability in unexpected settings.



SWITZERLAND

Geneva set the tone. At the **Palais des Nations**, students entered the Assembly Hall and Human Rights Chamber, the same rooms where multilateral cooperation is negotiated. The city tour — from **Lac Léman** to the **Old Town** — revealed the understated character of a city built on discretion.

The evening networking dinner carried the essence of Geneva: ideas moving beyond borders.



Inside UN HQ



Broken Chair



UN Assembly Hall - With Heer, Seerat, Gayatri



Among those present:

Simon Ford-Coron, Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue, with experience in the International Crisis Group and the Red Cross, he now works on US–China nuclear dialogue and Europe–Asia stability.

Dr Bilal Hassan, Les Roches and UCL — a researcher of brain sciences, with a career spanning healthcare, events, and entrepreneurship.

Dr Albian Albrahimi, Les Roches — financial accounting scholar, applying analytics to hospitality and service industries.

Andreas Hitzig, AISA Automation — board member of a Swiss precision firm manufacturing packaging machinery for global brands.



NETHERLANDS

Amsterdam underscored how heritage and progress coexist. At **Zaanse Schans**, a UNESCO-recognised windmill village, students explored conservation and traditional craft, followed by the **Heineken Experience** and a canal tour illustrating how history continues to shape Dutch identity.

Industry visits deepened the learning:

Rabobank introduced its cooperative model and leadership in sustainable agriculture financing.

Philips R&D Headquarters demonstrated how a global brand integrates technology, healthcare, and sustainability into its innovation pipelines.



Zaanse Schans



Rabobank



Philips R&D HQ



Amsterdam Canal Tour



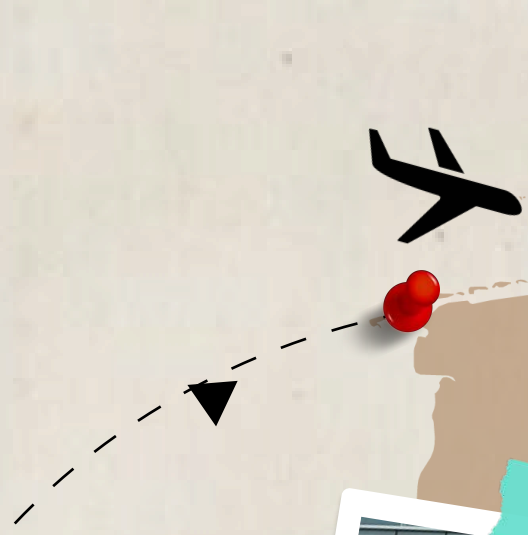


GERMANY

The final leg combined cultural history with industrial precision. In **Frankfurt** students walked through castles, bridges, and old towns that have anchored European trade and politics for centuries.

In **Stuttgart**, the focus shifted to modern industry. The **Mercedes-Benz Truck Factory** opened its production floors to show lean manufacturing and Industry 4.0 practices in action. At the **Porsche Museum**, the lesson was brand heritage — how storytelling and engineering excellence sustain one of the world's most recognised luxury marques.







Porsche Museum Visit



Mercedes Factory Visit





What Masters' Union Students Took Home from **14 Days Abroad**

Gayatri Kadavkar

UG TBM 2029

The Europe GIP was less about crossing borders and more about crossing perspectives. From debating global issues at the United Nations in Geneva, to exploring innovation at Station F in Paris, to learning from history at the Eiffel Tower and Stuttgart's Porsche and Mercedes museums, every stop shifted my understanding of leadership. This journey convinced me that boundaries are only lines on a map. For those willing to learn, the world is open.

Nikita Yadav

UG TBM 2027

The Global Immersion Programme was a journey filled with lessons and memories. Geneva began with the UN Assembly and Paris deepened our exposure through networking dinners, ISEG, and cultural visits like the Louvre. Amsterdam's windmill village highlighted tradition, while the Eiffel Tower and Parisian streets gave us unforgettable moments. The mix of academics and culture made learning seamless. What stood out most was how well everything was managed, leaving us free to focus on growth and discovery.

Sasyak Singh

UG TBM 2028

The GIP Europe experience took me through Geneva, Paris, Amsterdam, and Frankfurt. Walking the halls of the United Nations in Geneva was eye-opening, while Paris offered exposure to EDF and the World LPG Association. Amsterdam stood out with its heritage at the Zaanse Schans windmill village. Beyond the academic and corporate visits, it was about living Europe; its culture, history, and people. The immersion gave me perspective both inside and outside the classroom.

M Akash

UG TBM 2029

The European GIP was transformative. Geneva offered a front-row view of global diplomacy at the United Nations. Paris enriched the journey with networking dinners, sessions at ISEG, and cultural icons like the Eiffel Tower and Louvre. Amsterdam added depth with its heritage at the Windmill Village, while Germany's automotive hubs showed industry at scale. From company visits to cultural walks, every moment broadened my perspective. It was a rare balance of academics, exploration, and global exposure.





Education today must evolve from being transactional to transformational. The Global Immersion Programme in Europe was not merely about visiting institutions — it was about situating learning in lived realities. When students walk through the UN chambers in Geneva or the factory floors of Mercedes-Benz, they begin to see how governance, innovation, and culture intersect in shaping societies. This is the true exposure the next generation needs: the ability to decode complexity, question assumptions, and contextualise theory in practice. Such immersive education moves beyond producing graduates; it cultivates global citizens capable of leading with empathy, adaptability, and vision in an uncertain world.



Dr Anushree Poddar

Lead - Outclass Experiential Learning,
Masters' Union

Lessons from *Outclass*

- **Applied learning:** Students discover what it means to move from idea to execution. Ventures are tested in real markets, where consumer response and market forces shape outcomes more effectively than any case study.
- **Profit with purpose:** Every decision, from sourcing and pricing to branding, carries a sustainability lens. Students learn to balance commercial viability with social and environmental responsibility, building businesses that create impact beyond profit.
- **Systems mindset:** Through projects and immersion, students learn to read the interplay between governance, innovation, and culture. They are trained to decode complexity, connect disciplines, and see business as part of larger societal systems.

That evening, a networking dinner gathered diplomats, educators, and business leaders around the same table, offering students a rare glimpse into how policy and dialogue converge in practice.

Paris, the longest leg, blended heritage with the future. Students engaged with EDF on sustainability, explored start-up ecosystems at Station F, and exchanged ideas with peers at IESEG. Visits to Bordeaux and Disneyland provided unexpected case studies in energy and operations, while cultural landmarks reinforced Paris's role as a hub of global influence.

Amsterdam offered contrast — a city where heritage and modernity coexist. The windmill village at Zaanse Schans highlighted conservation, while Philips R&D and Rabobank opened windows into technology and sustainable finance.

The programme closed in **Germany**, where industrial precision defined the learning. At the Mercedes-Benz Truck Factory and Porsche Museum in Stuttgart, students saw how engineering, automation, and brand heritage combine to sustain global leadership.

At every step, the purpose was consistent: to merge academic foundations with lived experience. By engaging across borders and disciplines, students built the global mindset that Masters' Union seeks to cultivate — leaders prepared for a connected, complex world.

Dr Anushree Poddar: Leading Outclass at Masters' Union

For Dr Anushree Poddar, sustainability is not a course to be taught but a practice to be lived. At Masters' Union, she leads **Outclass**, the institution's flagship experiential learning





programme, which asks students to step out of the classroom and test their ideas in live markets.

Under her guidance, students have launched **Sustainable Development Goals (SDG)-aligned dropshipping ventures**, created **sustainable snack brands**, and consulted with **rural entrepreneurs**. The projects are not theoretical case studies but real businesses that require students to embed purpose into every choice — pricing, supply chains, even marketing narratives.

Dr Poddar frames Outclass as "systems thinking in action." Each project is designed to dismantle the false binary between profit and responsibility. A bamboo toothbrush, for instance, became more than a product when her students linked it to **SDG 12 on responsible consumption** and built a digital campaign that educated consumers while driving sales.

This year, she took a cohort of **25 students to Europe** as part of the Global Immersion Programme. The journey added a cross-border layer to Outclass, exposing students to how sustainability is practised inside boardrooms and policy circles across Switzerland, France, the Netherlands, and Germany.

By weaving sustainability into entrepreneurship, Dr Poddar has turned Outclass into a proving ground. It is where Masters' Union students learn that business impact is measured not only by revenue but by relevance, resilience, and responsibility.

Undergraduate *Class* of 2029

Four days. Endless firsts. And a campus alive with energy. The UG Class of 2029 didn't just meet leaders; they designed apps, traded in the Dalal Street Challenge, and clashed in fraternity face-offs. They shared candid conversations with Sahiba Bali, host of Shark Tank India; Siddharth Jhawar, Country Manager, Moloco; Varun Chaudhary, MD of CG Corp Global (Wai Wai); and Sanjiv Singhal, MD, BanyanTree. Executives from Kyndryl and Capgemini turned lectures into live strategy sessions. Evenings brought dinners with peers and a talent showcase that transformed strangers into family. Orientation wasn't an introduction; it was a launchpad.



At Masters' Union, ambition doesn't wait. *It begins the moment you arrive.*

ORIENTATION



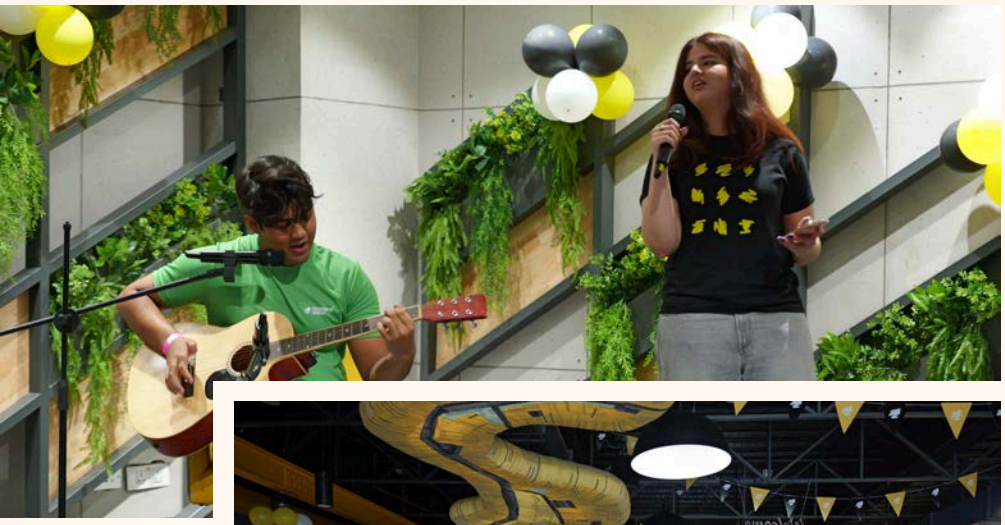






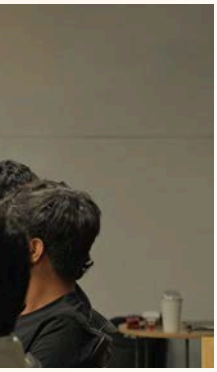


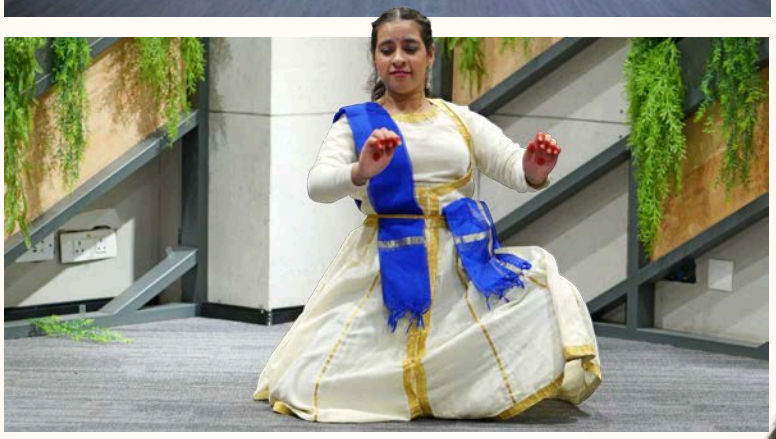







Welcome to the
Orientation
UG Class of
2029








Netflix

Alumni Spotlight

Turning College Experiments into a Cisco Career

Krishna reflects on failures, faculty, and the unconventional lessons that shaped his path from campus to Cisco.



"One day, you'll realise that no one was really watching, and you could have done whatever you wanted."

This is something Krishna Goyal quotes and carries like a compass every day, while his other inspiration comes from - "It's funny how day by day nothing changes, but when you look back, everything is so different. You find your rhythm when you realise that even the steps backward were part of the dance."

For him, these aren't just words on a page. They are reminders that growth rarely announces itself — it hides in the ordinary, in the missteps, and in the freedom to act without fear of judgment.

Krishna Goyal
Product Manager,
Cisco

Learning Beyond Textbooks

Krishna credits Masters' Union's **Venture Initiation Programme** (VIP) as the foundation of his professional journey. It not only gave him the confidence to secure multiple job offers but also paved the way for his transition from Marketing into Product Management.

Ironically, he never took a classroom course in product management. Yet today, he thrives as a Product Manager at Cisco. The bridge between ambition and achievement was not theory but practice. 'Building products and living the entire journey first-hand taught me more than any class ever could,' he recalls.

Failure as a Training Ground

The startups that didn't succeed weren't wasted effort. For Krishna, they became rehearsal spaces for resilience and problem-solving. Each failed idea was less an endpoint and more a lesson in iteration.

'Those challenges forced me to think differently, adapt quickly, and keep moving. They gave me the persistence I rely on today,' he reflects.

The Hidden Value of Side Ventures

Even smaller experiments — dropshipping, the Creator Challenge, and early startup attempts — proved invaluable in hindsight. At the time, they felt like short-term projects. Today, they serve as credibility markers in conversations with peers and recruiters. 'Back then, I didn't realise the value. But a year later, when I mentioned I'd run a dropshipping business, been a LinkedIn creator, or launched a startup, people were in awe. That's when it struck me how valuable those experiences were.'



In Frame: Cherishing his win, Krishna poses with his award for winning the Consulting Garage Challenge at Masters' Union.

A Faculty Influence That Endures

Among the many courses, one stands out: **Marketing & Retail Analytics**, taught by **Professor Raghavshaam Ramamurthy**. It was here that Krishna was introduced to **KNIME**, a tool that reshaped his professional toolkit.

KNIME allowed him to automate complex Excel workflows that normally consumed hours of effort. In practice, it became a career-defining differentiator.

At Cisco, while colleagues needed two days to complete a task, Krishna could deliver the same output in minutes. During his interview, he even demonstrated KNIME's power to his prospective team.

'My manager told me, "If I had the sole authority to make the hiring decision, I would hire you on this call itself." That moment validated everything I had learnt.'

From Campus to Cisco

Today, Krishna leads as a Product Manager at Cisco, applying lessons learned during his years at Masters' Union. The resilience built from failed startups, the credibility of side ventures, and the technical sharpness from faculty guidance all converge in his current role.

Lessons That Travel

Looking back, Krishna Goyal's time at Masters' Union was less about classrooms and more about experiments that carried weight beyond the campus. The failures taught resilience. The challenges taught execution. And one course equipped him with a tool that continues to set him apart.

Today, he still draws on those foundations — proof that education's most lasting value often comes not from the textbooks, but from the experiences you didn't realise were teaching you until much later.

Alumni Spotlight

Masters' Union to Dubai: An Alum's Analytics Leap

- How K. S. Badarinadh pivoted industries, embraced resilience, and is thriving as a Senior Analytics Specialist at Talabat.

"Everything happens for a reason." For K. S. Badarinadh, this isn't a casual saying. It's a grounding principle — one that shaped how he approached setbacks, embraced opportunities, and built a career in analytics from a non-technical background.



talabat

Kakaraparthi Sri Badarinadh
Senior Specialist- Strategic Accounts, Talabat, Dubai

Learning Through People, Not Pages

What stood out at Masters' Union wasn't just the curriculum but the community. For Badarinadh, walking into a classroom filled with an ISRO scientist, an MBBS graduate, CAs, CFAs, lawyers, and entrepreneurs was itself an education.

'I learnt more about industries from conversations with my peers than I ever could from a textbook,' he reflects. That network was complemented by **CXO sessions**, where seasoned entrepreneurs shared their insights on navigating the zero-to-one and one-to-ten phases of growth. Layered on top were hands-on projects — from dropshipping ventures to consulting assignments and startup building — that ensured every term delivered real-world practice.

Teachers Who Taught Beyond Theories

Badarinadh credits much of his professional and personal growth to a handful of faculty members whose lessons stretched beyond the syllabus. **Akshay Sir's Corporate Finance** gave him confidence in a subject he had no prior exposure to.

Malthi Ma'am and **Ashank Bhandari Sir** broke down the intricacies of Product Management, lessons that later helped him in high-stakes interviews.

Tushar Sir demystified statistics, making it both engaging and accessible. **Vipin Sir's** case-driven **Corporate Strategy** provided frameworks that he still applies in his role today. 'They didn't just teach content — they taught me how to think in first principles, simplify complexity, and communicate effectively.'

In Frame: At Talabat Dubai, Badarinadh's persistence in analytics earned him Employee of the Month.



The Marathon of Placements

The transition from college to the corporate world is rarely straightforward, and Badarinadh's placement journey was proof of that. He applied to multiple roles, tailoring his resume for each company and preparing meticulously for every interview.

The placement team at Masters' Union became a cornerstone of this journey — offering referrals, connecting him with industry mentors, and providing detailed feedback on resumes and mock interviews. The **GetPrepped** portal and structured career counselling ensured he entered each round with sharper preparation.

The hard work paid off when he received his offer letter from Talabat, a moment he recalls as 'pure validation.'

Breaking Ground at Talabat

As Senior Analytics Specialist for Strategic Accounts at Talabat, Badarinadh partners with some of the largest restaurant groups in the MENA region, translating data into strategies that drive retention and growth. Within seven months, he earned **Employee of the Month** recognition not just for delivery, but for impact. The role sharpened his adaptability, pushing him to juggle performance frameworks, dashboards, and boardroom conversations with equal speed and precision.

Lessons for the Next Cohort

For future cohorts at Masters' Union, Badarinadh's journey leaves a reminder: consistency compounds, curiosity opens doors, and networks matter as much as knowledge. Step outside your comfort zone, lean on peers, and trust the process. In time, persistence and preparation will always carry you forward.

The Art of Pivot



Divita Aggarwal

Associate,
Antler

ANTLER

From Marketing to Venture Capital: Divita Aggarwal's Career Pivot at Antler

Masters' Union alum on breaking into Venture Capital without a finance background and shaping investments across AI, health, and consumer tech.

Divita Aggarwal has lived through two distinct worlds. She began in marketing, shaping consumer narratives and building brands. Today, she sits on the other side of the table at Antler, one of the world's most active early-stage venture capital firms. Her career pivot was not driven by balance sheets or financial models, but by conviction, curiosity, and a willingness to test ideas in rooms where decisions matter. As she notes, quoting **Susmit Patodia, former Associate Partner at Antler**: 'Curiosity is the root of humility.'

Breaking in Without a Finance Badge

For Aggarwal, the hardest part of entering venture capital without a finance pedigree was not the work itself but the perception. At Masters' Union, that barrier was dismantled by treating venture capital as thesis-driven problem solving, not a modelling contest.

The **Venture Initiation Programme (VIP)** became her proving ground. Building a consumer brand, refining a pitch, and pressure-testing it with more than twenty Tier-1 venture capital firms forced clarity. Faculty with operator-investor backgrounds sharpened the lens further. The habit formed was simple: define the thesis, interrogate unit economics, understand the customer, and ask what must be true for the market to break open. That mindset travelled well. It helped her contribute at Antler across consumer AI, kids' health, and senior-tech, where structured thinking mattered more than a perfect financial model.





In Frame: From making her mark during the VIP Challenge at Masters' Union to representing Antler at Google's Women Founders event.

What Shaped the Craft

Two experiences at Masters' Union left a lasting mark on Aggarwal's journey. Mentorship with a **Vice President** at **Peak XV** instilled discipline in evaluating founders and markets, with conversations anchored in judgement rather than jargon. The VIP Challenge added another layer, where building, pitching, and iterating in public created muscle memory for clear narratives and investor-grade rigour.

Learning to Decide Under Ambiguity

Marketing chases proof in audience data. Venture often moves before proof arrives. Masters' Union's bias towards live projects mirrored that reality. Market maps, founder assessments, and problem deconstructions were done without perfect information. The lesson held: ask better questions, prioritise signal over noise, and know when 'good enough to decide' beats 'perfect but late'. That mindset underpins early-stage calls at Antler, where many investments happen pre-traction.

Career Prep that Moved the Needle

Placement support did more than open doors. It shaped Aggarwal's story. Mock investment committees, targeted resume clinics, and warm introductions helped her position her strengths as a founder-operator and storyteller. Conversations with funds like Antler became natural because the narrative was honest and specific.

Inside the Job Today

At Antler, her work spans the arc from pre-idea to seed. Highlights include anchoring the firm's first kids' health deal that later scaled with **Fireside Ventures**, partnering with founders on AI-native consumer products such as **Wonder**, and supporting global expansion for senior-tech companies. **She also co-led the AI Residency and contributed to Antler India's $75 million raise**.

The steepest learning curve came from working with more than a hundred founders in under two years. Pattern recognition improves, as does respect for outliers. The constant is execution under pressure.



A playbook for students aiming at Venture Capital

- **Do not over-optimise for finance skills.** Focus on reading people and markets with clarity.
- **Bias to action.** Publish theses, map spaces, and speak to founders — conviction shows in output.
- **Leverage the Masters' Union network early.** Mentors, guest faculty, and peers often become your first deal flow.
- **Be in the room.** Observe how conviction is formed, challenged, and tested in real-time decisions.

For Divita Aggarwal, the move from marketing to venture capital was less about switching industries and more about shifting mindset. She learnt to embrace ambiguity, sharpen conviction, and trust judgment over perfect data. At Antler, those lessons now play out daily across markets and founders. Her story underlines a simple truth: careers do not pivot on credentials alone — they pivot when curiosity meets discipline.



Deep Bhatia

PGP TBM Cohort '24,
Associate - Investment Banking,
Axis Capital

Evaluating Readiness: Alumni Share The Key Question for Aspiring Candidates.

- If a student told you they want to ‘get into your role,’ what’s the one question you’d ask them to test if they’re really ready?

?

In this section, alumni from diverse industries reveal how they judge if a student is truly ready for the real world. They don’t just look at grades or technical skills; they focus on problem-solving, clear thinking, adaptability, and the ability to perform under pressure. The questions they ask provide a window into what separates genuine readiness from mere intent.

Through these insights, readers can learn how top professionals spot potential, evaluate real-world capabilities, and identify the qualities that make a student prepared to step confidently into demanding roles.

Here's what these 6 alums will ask you.

I'd ask a student to describe a complex problem they've faced and walk me through their process: identifying the core need, gathering critical information, and proposing a solution rooted in data, even if imperfect. What matters is not the polish of the answer, but the clarity of thought and ability to structure ambiguity. Strong candidates know how to separate noise from signal and act with conviction despite uncertainty.

P.V. Raj Vineeth
PGP TBM Cohort '22
Senior Product Manager
Nielsen

An MBA or Master's in Sports isn't your entry ticket; skills and execution are. To test readiness, I'd ask: 'Which past project of yours would you implement in Indian sports today, and why? What could cause it to fail in the first 100 days, and how would you pivot?' For beginners, it would be: 'If you had to pick one Indian sport and build a business around it, how would you win your first 1,000 users or ₹50 lakh in revenue?' In sport, execution always outpaces intent.

Kashyap Kapoor
PGP TBM Cohort '23
Associate - Partnerships & Sponsorships, Sports Marketing
Roundglass Sports

My question would be: 'Can you put in the hard work to master a domain deeply, and then, when the situation changes, have the humility to unlearn and start from zero?' This role isn't just about knowledge — it demands adaptability, discipline, and relentless focus. Time is scarce, decisions are made with incomplete information, and the pressure rarely lifts. The real test lies in balancing speed with precision, aligning diverse stakeholders, and still keeping the larger vision intact.

Sowjanya Naidu Nelli
PGP TBM Cohort '24
EA - Senior Manager to Chairperson - CSR
Lloyds Metals and Energy Pvt Ltd



When students mention investment banking, I ask: 'Why this career, and how will you add value?' Technical skills like modelling and decks matter, but culture fit decides interviews. Your story, who you are, why investment banking, and the perspective you bring, must shine in MD rounds. Balance credibility with authenticity. Networking is just as crucial: many lateral roles aren't listed; interviews often hinge on who can get your CV to a VP or higher.

Deep Bhatia
PGP TBM Cohort '24
Associate - Investment Banking
Axis Capital

For students eyeing venture debt, my question would be: 'How would you lend to a fast-growing, loss-making startup?' The role goes beyond spreadsheets; it's about balancing risk with conviction. Top professionals dig into unit economics, burn rates, and investor backing, protecting downside while enabling upside. Curiosity about both finance and founders sets the best apart, revealing who can make disciplined yet strategic decisions in high-growth, high-risk environments.

Hrushikesh Brahma
PGP TBM Cohort '23
Principal Associate
Stride Ventures

Consulting is speed with structure. Build a T-shaped skill set: depth in one area, fluency across finance, product, data, and storytelling. Practise 48-hour sprints — frame the question, pull just-enough data, draft an answer, and stress-test it with a skeptic. My question to students would be: 'You have 48 hours to diagnose a client's flat growth. What metric do you own, which trade-offs do you test, and what's your week-one deliverable?' Readiness is turning ambiguity into clarity.

Avnish Kaur
PGP TBM Cohort '22
Management Consultant
Accenture





Rajat Baijal

Teaching: Fundamentals of Risk Management

Malthi SS

Teaching: Product Strategy and Innovation

masters' union

Masters of the Union

- Meet the Masters' Union faculty guiding students in Risk Management and Product Strategy.

Professors Rajat Baijal and Malthi SS bring decades of real-world experience into the Masters' Union classroom. Professor Rajat teaches Fundamentals of Risk Management, guiding students through the complexities of identifying, assessing, and managing risks in real business scenarios. Professor Malthi leads Product Strategy and Innovation, helping students tackle real-world product challenges and think like strategic decision-makers. Together, they ensure students don't just understand theory; they learn to apply it, make decisions under pressure, and solve problems confidently, preparing them for the unpredictable world of entrepreneurship and business.



Rajat Baijal

Teaching: Fundamentals of Risk Management,
Adjunct Professor, Columbia University

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY
IN THE CITY OF NEW YORK

The challenge of cracking complex problems is what first drew me into risk management, even though I never planned on making it my career. Over time, I realised it's about far more than numbers. It's about being the steady hand that helps a business grow while navigating uncertainty.

In my 20+ years across the US and UK, at **Cantor Fitzgerald** and now **The Clearing House**, I've seen how getting risk right creates real, lasting success.

At Masters' Union, I teach Fundamentals of Risk Management the way I've lived it — with global case studies, real-world stories, and a focus on turning theory into tools you can actually use.

Building Fit-for-Purpose Frameworks

One of the biggest challenges in enterprise risk management is avoiding the pitfall of relying on generic frameworks. Every organisation is different; its business model, culture, and management style all shape how risk should be approached.

Inside the organisation, my job is to design something that fits. Outside, it's about managing the expectations of regulators, rating agencies, customers, third parties, and shareholders. Balancing both requires precision and diplomacy, as well as politics and modelling in equal measure.

Innovation Without Losing Control

In risk, there's always a fine line between enabling innovation and enforcing controls. The key is clear governance. I've long been a supporter of the "three lines of defence" model, which ensures everyone knows their role, and there's transparency between enabling and oversight functions.

When the boundaries are clear, the business can move forward with confidence, knowing there's a structure that protects without slowing it down unnecessarily.

AI and the New Risk Landscape

AI brings incredible efficiency, but it also opens the door to new risks like bad actors and cyber attacks. We need to treat it like any big change: start with stronger approval processes, then keep checking in with regular assessments and clear risk signals. AI doesn't replace the basics of risk management; it makes them more important.

Over the next 5–10 years, risk leaders will need to be sharper than ever. It won't be just about technical know-how; understanding the business and thinking strategically will be what sets great leaders apart.

I believe in sharing knowledge openly, on LinkedIn, in panels, and through mentoring. Risk managers need to keep their eyes and ears open to global developments and learn from peers and academics. because learning from

others and sharing your own knowledge is the key to thriving.

Inside the Fundamentals of Risk Management

Fundamentals of Risk Management introduces the core principles of risk management across various industries, including financial services, manufacturing, technology, and others. Students will learn how to identify, assess, measure, monitor, and report material risks within organisations.

The course draws on industry case studies to examine major risk events and extract lessons from real-world failures and recoveries. As part of risk measurement, students will be introduced to a "toolkit" of methods and models that can be applied directly to entrepreneurial ventures or corporate settings.

The course also explores emerging risks — AI, cybersecurity, and climate, among others — to prepare students for challenges that lie ahead. Designed for those with little or no prior exposure to finance or risk, the only prerequisite is critical thinking.

What I Recommend

For anyone starting out in risk or looking to sharpen their approach, I recommend:

- Studying the "three lines of defence" governance model.
- Following reputable thought leaders on emerging risks like AI and cyber.
- Staying close to industry developments through conferences and peer networks.

Risk will always evolve, but its essence remains the same: guiding businesses through uncertainty with clarity and control. For me, that's what makes teaching it both a responsibility and a privilege.

> "Professor Baijal connects risk theory directly to market practice.
>
> **Saurabh Gupta**
> **PGP TBM Cohort '24**



Professor Rajat Baijal's Fundamentals of Risk Management course is extremely relevant for anyone navigating uncertainty in business and finance. Even from the courseware, I could see how his structured approach — covering the Risk vs Reward trade-off, toolkits like Key Risk Indicators and Risk Control Self-Assessment, and case studies from the 2008 crisis to Silicon Valley Bank — offers practical lessons that translate directly to trading. As someone with a finance background, I found the emphasis on identifying emerging risks, operational resilience, and ESG particularly insightful, since they mirror the unpredictability of financial markets. A highly recommended course for decision-makers.



Malthi SS

Teaching: Product Strategy and Innovation,
Former Director of Product Management,
PayPal

I didn't set out to become a product manager. I started in engineering, thinking that product was just project management with a fancier title. But the moment I began building and owning products, something clicked. Over the years - at **PayPal**, **Intuit**, and **SAP**, I've come to see product management not just as a role, but as a craft — one shaped by people, systems, and thoughtful decision-making.

Today, I run **SparkProd Consulting, host Product Talk with Malthi,** and spend time teaching at **Masters' Union**, a place I've been proud to call home for the last four years. What I love most is how much the culture values the concept of "learning by doing". It's hands-on and just the way the product should be.

Teaching by Doing in the AI Era

I've always believed that product management isn't something you can fully grasp through slides- you've got to build. In my classes, we tackle real case studies, solve messy product challenges, and work on capstone projects that push students to think like actual product managers (PMs). I bring in voices from the industry, share lessons from my journey, and make space for curiosity and honest conversations.

It's not about getting the textbook answer; it's about practising customer empathy, making trade-offs, and learning to navigate grey areas with confidence.

AI has changed the game. It's no longer just about tools - it's about understanding the system, designing responsibly, and making smart calls in fast-moving environments. The basics, pricing, costing, and customer insight are still critical. If anything, they matter more.

Why Product Strategy Matters?

Product Strategy & Innovation is a course designed to prepare students for advanced topics like growth, analytics, and design thinking.

Why so critical? Because survival is no longer guaranteed — 87% of Fortune 500 companies have either been acquired, merged, or disappeared in the last 50 years. Strategic thinking is now non-negotiable.

The course equips students to:

- Build and execute product strategies.
- Prioritise innovation as a growth engine.
- Master monetisation and pricing models.
- Align cross-functional teams and manage stakeholders.

For aspiring entrepreneurs, the lessons are equally relevant — helping them design resilient strategies and build app-based ventures in volatile markets.

Making Broken Product Strategies Work

Through my consulting work, I've seen product strategies fall apart — not because people lack intent, but because the system isn't built to support clarity. I see it often: shifting priorities, no aligned vision, confused teams. Startups especially tend to move too quickly, building fast, validating little, and ending up with feature-packed products that miss the mark.

My time in fintech taught me that a product lives in the spaces between teams. Legal, finance, engineering, compliance — they all matter. You can't build in isolation. As PMs, we're not just decision-makers, we're connectors. It's less about volume, more about clarity.

Product Talk with Malthi

When I launched my podcast named Product Talk with Malthi on YouTube and Spotify, I wanted to create space for honest, grounded conversations with people who've been in the thick of it. What's made it so rewarding is how open my guests have been sharing tough lessons, thoughtful frameworks, and the real stories behind the decisions that shaped their products.

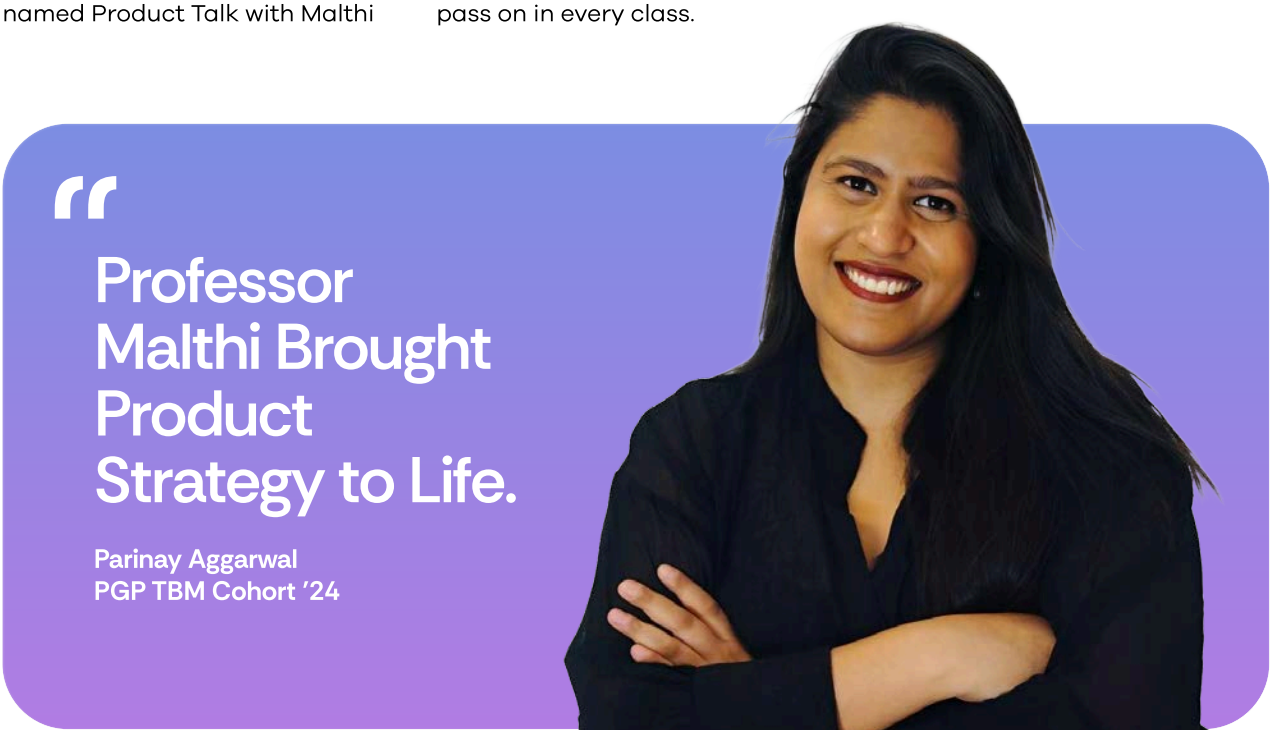
What I Recommend

If you're beginning your product journey, I recommend:

- Inspired by **Marty Cagan**. It remains one of the best foundational books on product management.
- Product School's video content which offers excellent tactical guidance.
- And of course, Product Talk with Malthi - where we go behind the scenes of real product challenges.

Teaching has become one of the most rewarding parts of my journey. It's a chance to share what I've learned, and to keep learning from every student, project, and conversation.

Product management is evolving quickly, but the heart of it remains the same: understanding people, making tough calls with limited information, and solving problems that matter. That's what I hope to pass on in every class.



Professor Malthi SS brought product strategy to life with her practical approach and deep industry insights. From idea validation to frameworks like RICE (Reach, Impact, Confidence, and Effort) for prioritization, every class was hands-on and eye-opening. She gave candid, experience-backed advice that pushed us to think beyond textbooks. Her exercises and assignments made concepts stick, and her mentorship helped me shape my startup product step by step. The course was inclusive and engaging for everyone, not just engineers, and ultimately inspired me to pursue product management as a career.

Life After Masters' Union

The spirit of Masters' Union thrives well beyond the campus. Alumni and students came together across cities and formats to explore careers, sharpen skills, and strengthen community ties.

Alumni return to campus to guide current students, share industry insights, and mentor on career choices. Across cities, mixers and events bring graduates together, building networks that are personal as much as professional. Whether it's resume marathons, career panels, or sports-led meetups, Life After Masters' Union captures how the bond between alumni and students strengthens over time, creating a vibrant, lifelong community.

Career Pathways Panel

Along with a few industry leaders, alums returned to campus to decode careers across Sales, Consulting, Finance, Product, and more. They shared raw insights on skills, market realities, and growth paths, right when students were making some of their most decisive career choices.



Day 1

(L-R): Tanya Jain, Host, Masters' Union; Hetal Sonpal, Former Head Strategic Alliances, Intel Tech; Pradyot - Growth & Strategy, Cashfree; Shahrose Bhatt, Associate Director, Tetr Admissions and Counselling.



Day 2

(L-R): Abhishek Chawla, Assistant Director, EY-Parthenon; Jeneesha Singh, Head of Strategic Initiatives, Masters' Union; Anil Taneja, Head of Special Projects, Masters' Union; Aman Aggarwal, Senior Associate, BCG; Tanya Jain, Host, Masters' Union.



Day 3

(L-R): Gopika Kumar, Host, Masters' Union; Aditi Jaitely - Measurement, AI Product Strategy, Google; Suhani Ahuja, Marketing Manager, Shiprocket; Kashyap Kapoor, Associate, Sponsorships & Partnerships - Sports Marketing, Roundglass Living; Pritish Gupta, Lead Marketing, Masters' Union.



Day 4

(L-R): Vinita Kaur, Host, Masters' Union; Mamidi Sreevardhan, Senior Consultant, Fractal; Anand Tuli, Founder, Quantacus; Ronak Khandelwal, Data Scientist, DronaMaps.



Day 5

(L-R): Radhika Goyal, Host, Masters' Union; Gautam Kumar, Founder's Office, Masters' Union; Saumya Garg, Chief Executive Officer, Switz; Apurv Rathore, Strategy Manager, Sprinklr; Vidhu Goel, Head, Career Prep, Masters' Union.

Resume Marathon 2025

The new postgraduate cohort sharpened their professional narratives at Resume Marathon 2025, with 35 alumni mentors offering industry-driven feedback. Beyond structure, sessions stressed storytelling, positioning, and recruiter expectations, strengthening career readiness while deepening alumni-student connections at Masters' Union.



Pune Alumni Mixer

The first-ever Pune chapter of Alumni Mixer organised at TOIT, Pune sparked lively conversations, laughter, and warmth among Masters' Union alumni. The evening was concluded with a birthday celebration that set the tone for building a close-knit community.



Chennai Alumni Mixer

At The Beach by Madras Square, Chennai's first Alumni Mixer unfolded with energy and ease. From beach strolls to career chats, alumni across cohorts bonded over memories, ambitions, and future plans, capturing the spirit of an open, vibrant Masters' Union community.

OnGround by Masters' Union x Offlyn

On 21st June 2025, OnGround was kicked off at **Backyard Sports Club**, **Bangalore**- a new community experience blending sport with networking. Alumni rallied over pickleball, padel, and badminton, building connections beyond campus and career hustle.

Hosted with **Offlyn**, **founded by Masters' Union alumnus Ayush Sinha**, the event set the tone for building vibrant connections both within and beyond the Masters' Union community.

Continuing on 5th July 2025, the second edition of OnGround took place at **GoRally Pickleball**, **Agara**, **Bangalore**. With more courts, more matches, and even more energy, the event brought alumni, founders, and friends together for a vibrant morning of sport and networking.

It then arrived in **Gurgaon** on 19th July 2025, accompanied by a fun-packed evening of pickleball and badminton at **The Horizon**. With multiple courts buzzing, the event brought together Masters' Union alumni for spirited games and meaningful conversations off-court.









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