

## A novel initiative

# AN IIT-ALUMNUS, IN COLLABORATION WITH TWO OF HIS SCHOOLMATES, HAS COME UP WITH AN ENTERPRISING INNOVATION. AN ONLINE LIBRARY. SUDHIR SRINIVASAN FINDS OUT MORE

It is said that great ideas pervade the mind when least expected. In much the same way, it wasn't the long nights spent ruminating or the inspirational films watched that helped 24-year-old Amrutash Misra, an alumnus of IIT-Madras and his two friends (Suchitra Sastri and Sahil Gore), his school-mates at PS Senior Secondary School, Mylapore, create <http://www.iloveread.in>. In his words, "It was very simple. While in a conversation, Suchitra lamented about the lack about of libraries the idea in the owing city to , and doubts though , about we its had profitability reservations , we created one." Today, the website, an online library, is accruing about 100 books every week in order to keep up with the number of requests it's receiving.

"In New York, believe it nor not, there are about 800 libraries!" says Amrutash, sitting in the IIT-M office. "In Chennai, however, there are only about four libraries (including Connemara), which, in my opinion, can be better stocked." In a bid to add one more to the "abysmally low number of libraries" in the city, the website was created on December 23, 2009, after much deliberation. After all, Amrutash had a well-paying job at Hindustan Lever, following his graduation in Mechanical Engineering at IIT-M. As for his friends, Sahil was in Pune, and Suchitra was in the US, in equally well-paying jobs. However, the urge to create a business was too strong than the contentment of having a secure job, and hence, the website. "After all, we are young, and if not now, when?" he asks.

The online library, that has about 2,100 books presently (fiction, non-fiction and management books) is associated with a city-based delivery company, and door-delivers the books that one requests for. "We will go well beyond our comfort zones to get books that the members ask for, in case we do not have them," he promises. "One of our many USPs is that we don't require that members pay a deposit; something most libraries ask for," he explains. Amrutash also takes pride in the "personalised service" that he is able to offer. "For instance, I call this member in Mylapore periodically to suggest books for her child. When people picture librarians, they imagine them to be short-tempered and unapproachable. I want to change that image," he adds.

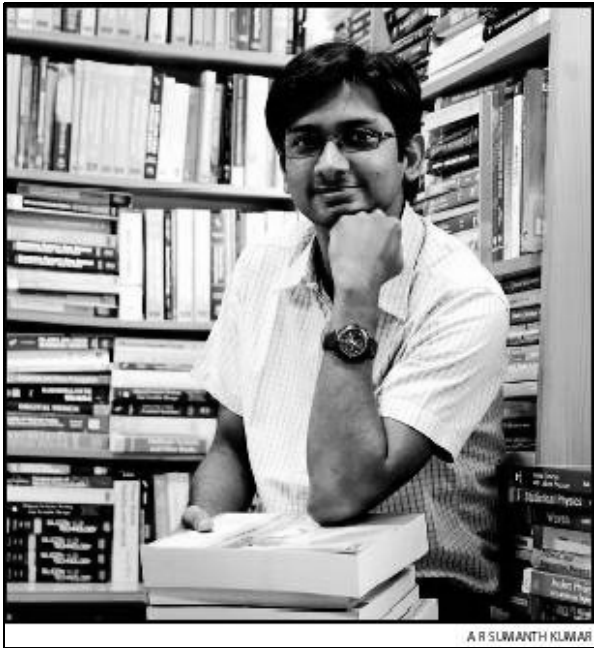
"While I take care of the executive aspects of the business from Chennai, Sahil takes care of the

technicalities of the website. Suchitra, meanwhile, is the company's strategist and long-term planner," he says. Almost a month old, the website seems to be going strong if its future plans are any indication. "We are presently negotiating with various schools in the city and are eager to make reading a pleasant experience for many children. We want to make their library-hours so much more fun and productive," says Amrutash. "Also, we want to clinch similar deals with corporate houses."

Amrutash admits that he took quite a risk when he decided to quit his job and begin this website. But he quickly justifies the decision with a Mark Twain quote. "Two decades from now, you will only regret what you didn't do. Not what you did."

For more details, visit <http://www.iloveread.in>

[sudhir.sreenivasan@timesgroup.com](mailto:sudhir.sreenivasan@timesgroup.com)



A R SUMANTH KUMAR