

The Innovator

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Newsletter from Technopark Technology Business Incubator Trivandrum

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T-BIC: The winner that creates winners....

SunTec : Incubated in Technopark when business incubation was yet to be incubated!

The young engineer, full of energy and enthusiasm, nurturing a dream to turn entrepreneur at the earliest opportunity, wasted not a moment when his employer, KELTRON, offered a 5 year leave of absence from work for anyone on its rolls to go and set up an IT unit in the new-born software technology complex in Karyavattom, Trivandrum, namely Technopark.



K. Nandakumar

“Keltron was in trouble, and in any case I wanted to become independent, strike a different path”, recalls Sri. K. Nandakumar, founder-Managing Director of SunTec, a brand name today closely associated with electronic billing systems the world over. “I got SunTec registered in Technopark, but operated from a room at home as a one-man show, to save on rentals, salaries and petrol.”

SunTec’s first payment cheque was from Technopark’s Park Centre for successfully designing and installing the software for its financial accounting

system. That was in 1990-91.

“They are still using that same system”, a proud Nandakumar told The Innovator. “Technopark was the great anchor for the likes of me who needed encouragement, support and handholding to pursue the dream. SunTec probably was the first unit incubated in Technopark, a good one and a half decade ago, when business incubation as we understand it today was a non-existent concept.”

Side by side with that, SunTec signed a contract with the Dept. of Telecommunication for its software needs. It was a Rs. 1 lakh project which Nandakumar agreed to implement for Rs. 75,000, and managed to get a Rs. 25000 advance on it, the first real seed capital of SunTec, a company worth over US \$ 150 million today!

“For some time initially it was a one man show, and then a physics graduate was taken to help me.” Putting in 18 hour workdays, Nandakumar delivered the DoT work on time and got three more contracts.

“Three more assistants, and then DoT

came forward to buy our C-TRA, a billing and accounting system, specific for them and still being used by BSNL.” points out SunTec’s founder-CMD. “This was followed by TBMS, another product, a true convergence billing and customer care system specific for telecommunication. This is being used in several European countries today.”

A Malaysian order worth US \$ 5000 in 1995 proved the turning point for SunTec. Once the order was serviced there was no looking back for Nandakumar & Co. UNISYS of the US, one of the largest IT companies in the world commissioned SunTec to develop a product for their Asian market. From then on growth has been consistent.

Today SunTec has 8 offices and development centres spread across the world and as many as 20 non-Indians are on its pay rolls. In Trivandrum, while he operates from a gleaming new office building near Kawdiar, Nandakumar still has the umbilical chord with Technopark intact, and believes that, that first cheque

from Park Centre was signed by the then-CEO, G. Vijayaraghavan at an auspicious moment.

“But for the advent of Technopark and the generous support from its founding-team, SunTec would never have been born”, says Nandakumar. “SunTec was the first enterprise incubated in Technopark, and our success story should serve as an inspiration to all those technology students and graduates who seek the umbrella of incubation from Technopark. This world belongs to those who dare and venture. We of SunTec have proved it, along with several others in the Campus.”



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