

Vish Iyer

Vice-President, Service Provider Business, Cisco, India and SAARC

The desire to learn has guided Vish Iyer, vice-president of Cisco India and SAARC's service provider business, throughout his career.

He explains, "In the early days of its introduction, I wanted to learn more about the internet. In those days, Cisco was probably the leader in the internet space and telecom majors such as Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited used to purchase only Cisco gear, since we were the only prominent player in the field. My mindset was to learn all that I could from a company that was pioneering the internet revolution in India."

Iyer brings to the table over 17 years of experience in the IT industry. He started his career at Cisco in 1998 as a systems engineer and is today responsible for growing the company's service provider business. Prior to joining Cisco, Iyer worked with HCL Comnet in the satellite communication and data communication space.

Iyer, who has an engineering degree from Banaras Hindu University's Institute of Technology, counts his passion for technology as both his strength and his weakness. He says, "I am a very technology-oriented person; I get swayed

by new and innovative technology very easily. The telecom field is deeply entrenched in technology and the idea is to figure out a viable business model that highlights how both are dependent on each other and how they apply to customers and various markets."

However, his passion for technology sometimes also becomes a weakness. "In our space, products and services are indispensable, and so, I overestimate the potential of a technology in terms of its ability to unleash value for customers. I must figure out the secret sauce which makes the server and new tech adoption a success, both from a business and value-metric proposition," says Iyer.

Meeting customer expectations, he says, is the biggest challenge before him. "I feel that the job we are involved in today is very demanding. The biggest challenge is to build a scalable, capacity- and capability-rich network for our customers and partners."

When asked about the likely short-term trends in the telecom space, he says, "The Indian telecom market is a vibrant one, with a lot of new products already available or on the anvil. For example, the most anticipated technologies are 3G and Wi-Max, while several new applications are expected to be introduced by operators. In addition, a number of new entrants will serve to heighten competition and make the market more dynamic. All in all, if you look at it closely, there are two clear trends we can expect in the future in telecom – innovation and competition." ▲

