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Women's Action Network, Cisco India

ConnectedWomen
LEADERSHIP FORUM

May 27th, 2009

ConnectedWomen Leadership Forum

Cisco Globalisation Centre, Bengaluru
May 27th, 2009

Agenda

09:00 – 9:30 am   <u>**Registration**</u>

09:30 – 9:40 am   <u>**Welcome**</u>

Cisco India Women's Action Network (WAN) Lead

09:40 - 10:15 am   <u>**Cisco Executive Address**</u>

Wim Elfrink, Chief Globalisation Officer, Executive Vice President, Cisco Services

10:15 – 11:00 am   <u>**Key Note Address**</u>

Hemu Ramaiah, Managing Director (Former CEO of Landmark) Shop 4 Solutions Pvt Ltd

11:00 – 11:15 am   **Break - Tea/Coffee**

11:00 – 12:30 pm   <u>**A Fireside Chat - Understanding Innovation from the Leaders**</u>

In an open discussion format, CEOs and senior leaders share their personal experiences as they transformed their organizations through technology and business innovation, creating value for employees, customers and shareholders.

Hemu Ramaiah - Managing Director (Former CEO of Landmark)
Shop 4 Solutions Pvt Ltd

Vani Kola - Managing Director (IndoUS Capital Advisors Pvt Ltd)

Usha Mohan - Managing Director (Triumph India Software Services Ltd)

Rama NS - Development Center Head, (Infosys, Bangalore)

Lance Perry - Vice President Information Technology (Cisco)

12:30 – 02:00 pm   <u>Lunch and Socializing</u>

Tour of Global Briefing Center at Cisco Campus: Experience how the network as platform is transforming the way we work, live, play, and learn.

Parallel tracks

02:00 – 3:15 pm   <u>**Innovation Processes & Practices**</u>

In a formal moderated panel discussion, Cisco leader Pallavi Muralidhara discusses with other senior leaders about how organisations build a culture to invent, innovate and commercialise.

Venkat Pullela - Director Software Development Cisco, India ISBU Engineering

Pallavi Muralidhara - Software Manager IPCBU India Engineering

Kaliraj T - Global Senior Test Strategist, Dell Labs

Vasanthi Hariprakash - NDTV

Saundarya Rajesh – Founder President, AVTAR Career Creators

02:00 – 03:15 pm   <u>**Leading Sustainable Innovation**</u>

In a formal moderated panel discussion, Cisco leader Jignasha Patel, discusses with other senior leaders about how their organizations, lead innovation and how they sustain it internally and externally in both traditional and non-traditional sectors.

Susheela Venkataramanan – Director, Internet Business Solutions (Cisco India)

Poonam Bir Kasturi - Industrial Designer, Facilitator, Entrepreneur, Mentor (DailyDump)

Madhura Chatrapathi - Founder (Ascent)

Nithya Ramkumar - Technology Head (Wipro BPO)

Jignasha Patel - Director, Human Resources (Cisco, India)

03:15 – 4:00 pm   **Coffee/Tea, Networking & Conference summary**

Connected Women Leadership Forum, 2009

Cisco believes that the network brings people together by removing boundaries and distances. This human network intensifies and expands the reach of our individual efforts and passions. When people connect and collaborate, ideas and opportunities can thrive.

Today, there is growing participation of women in this network around the world as engineers, scientists, sociologists, teachers, and students. It is with the hope of connecting all these women across the ecosystem that the India Women's Action Network of Cisco is launching the **'Connected Women Leadership Forum'** on May 27th, 2009 in Bangalore.

Key objectives of this event are, to:

- Establish and develop a network of professional women
- Share perspectives on topics such as, women as leaders in technology and as entrepreneurs
- Expand professional relationships by networking with colleagues and customers
- Share common interests and collaborate with other women in business and technology

The theme of CWLF-2009 is, *to celebrate women as innovators across different fields*. The forum promises to allow participants to learn from the speakers as well as from each other on how to create innovations, how to sustain them, and how to grow them into successful ventures or businesses.

On the human network, anything is possible because we are more powerful together than we ever could be apart.

Cisco India Women's Action Network (WAN)

As a technology company which believes in the power of the 'human network', Cisco recognises the importance of a very diverse work force. In line with its inclusive organisational culture, Cisco has a number of employee networks to support the development and growth opportunities of staff. The Cisco India Women's Action Network (WAN) was launched in November 2004 with the broad vision "to contribute to the strategic effort to enhance Cisco's success in attracting, developing and retaining talented women employees". Cisco views the WAN as an integral part of its business success.

WAN India has more than 350 employees as members. The WAN's activities are strategised and executed by a core team of volunteers spearheaded by WAN leads, with the guidance of executive sponsors and thought leaders. The volunteers develop programmes in line with the business guidelines and employee-needs in the context of the local culture. The executive sponsors provide thought leadership, business direction and funding for such initiatives.

Like its other employee networks, Cisco's WAN in India maintains a business plan, with specific goals in several focus areas that support the company's business objectives.

These include:

- Business Partnerships

  The **Connected Women Leadership Forum** is an initiative to bring women from Cisco and corresponding leaders from our customers and partners to share business practices and learn from each other to build a stronger ecosystem in the industry.

- Recruitment and Development

  Through the **Network Academy initiative**, students are invited to visit labs at Cisco and attend workshops to get them enthused about careers in technology.

  The **'Girls in Technology'** programme focuses primarily on building an interest in technology among female college students.

  The **Mentoring Programme** helps in connecting junior women employees with senior managers for focussed mentoring sessions on career development at Cisco.

  The **WAN Innovation Initiative** allows groups of women engineers to work on the design and development of innovative projects across business units within Cisco, providing a platform for them to develop their expertise and collaborate across different functions within Cisco.

- Professional Networking

  The Role Model Leadership Series is an open event for all employees, giving them an opportunity to hear and learn from senior leaders at Cisco. Panel discussions, seminars, networking events like WAN outing and Women's Day celebration have helped build a strong network among women employees at Cisco. The WAN website and WIKI are key initiatives to sustain the growth and success of this human network.

- Critical Success Factors
  - A clear vision for the network
  - Alignment with business objectives
  - Involvement of human resources when required
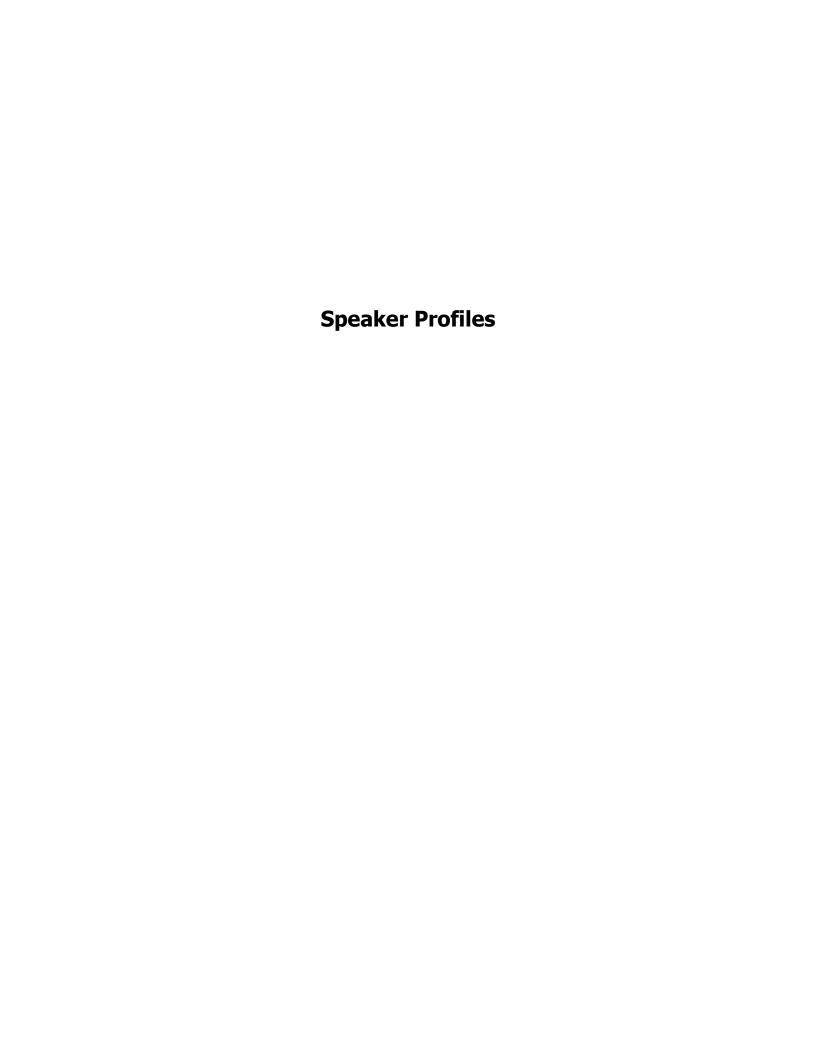 - Visible support from senior management

About Cisco

Cisco is the worldwide leader in networking for the Internet. Today, networks are an essential part of business, education, government and home communications, and Cisco Internet Protocol-based (IP) networking solutions are the foundation of these networks. Cisco hardware, software, and service offerings are used to create Internet solutions that allow individuals, companies, and countries to increase productivity, improve customer satisfaction and strengthen competitive advantage. The Cisco name has become synonymous with the Internet, as well as with the productivity improvements that Internet business solutions provide. At Cisco, our vision is to change the way people work, live, play and learn.

Cisco was founded in 1984 by a small group of computer scientists from Stanford University. Since the company's inception, Cisco engineers have been leaders in the development of Internet Protocol (IP)-based networking technologies. Today, with employees and development spread worldwide, the tradition of innovation continues with industry-leading products in the core areas of routing and switching, as well as advanced technologies in areas such as Home Networking, IP Telephony, Optical, Network Security, Storage Networking and Wireless LAN.

Cisco India Pvt. Ltd. commenced operations in 1995. With sales and marketing operations spread across 7 key cities in India - New Delhi, Mumbai, Bangalore, Chennai, Pune, Kolkata and Hyderabad and a Global Development Centre in Bangalore (largest outside of the US), Cisco dominates the networking market in core technologies of routing and switching, as well as WLAN and network security. The total India headcount is over 4000 employees, including R&D, sales and business support staff.

In October 2007, Cisco opened operations in India at the new Globalisation Centre Campus, which was inaugurated by Cisco's Chief Executive Officer Mr. John Chambers and the honourable former President Dr. Abdul Kalam. The centre also includes a state of the art Global Briefing Centre with the latest technologies from Cisco on display including the award winning Cisco Telepresence Systems.

For more information please refer to http://www.cisco.com

Speaker Profiles

Wim Elfrink
Chief Globalisation Officer, Executive Vice President, Cisco Services

Wim Elfrink has dual roles and organizations at Cisco.

As Chief Globalisation Officer (CGO), Elfrink is leading the next stage of the Cisco globalisation strategy, and as Executive Vice President, Cisco Services, he is responsible for Cisco Services worldwide. In his functions, Elfrink reports directly to Cisco CEO John Chambers.

The Cisco globalisation strategy represents a shift from a geographical focus to a business management focus on skill sets and talents. Cisco will continue to have a centralized strategy and decentralized implementation of this strategy, which is critical to remaining successful in a competitive, global marketplace. This approach touches nearly every facet of the company's operations and creates a new way to deliver information, products, and services.

As Chief Globalisation Officer, Elfrink leads Cisco efforts to become a truly global entity. Using innovative business models, he's in the process to globalise many business functions. As Cisco continues to globalise, it will begin to remove the geographic barriers between people and businesses through the use of enabling technologies such as Cisco TelePresence, which allows Cisco to transcend physical presence and reach more customers when and where those customers want.

Elfrink is also Executive Vice President, Cisco Services, which will be the first function to become fully globalised. The Services organization includes three businesses—Technical Support Services, Remote Operations Services, and Advanced Services—which form Cisco Services. At the heart of Elfrink's services strategy, the customer is still the focus: customers' needs continue to evolve toward requiring additional, targeted support services, delivered through specialized experts, leading practices, and tools. Cisco Services is a growing part of the overall Cisco business, with annual revenues in excess of US$5 billion.

Elfrink joined Cisco in 1997, and under his leadership Cisco Services has been and will continue to be dedicated to accelerating customer success with Cisco network technology and applications. Cisco Services has created and now delivers award-winning customer support.

Elfrink relocated to Bangalore, India in January 2007.

Hemu Ramaiah
Managing Director Shop 4 Solutions Pvt Ltd (Former CEO of Landmark)

Hemu started this exciting brand in 1987 and created a chain of eighteen stores across the country. Landmark is known for its well designed stores, a wide range of international products and legendary customer service which changed the way people buy in India.

Hemu was instrumental in getting Landmark the ISO certification which was a first in retail in the country. Landmark has a track record of continuous growth in sales and profits over the last 20 years. She also set up the one of the biggest e-commerce sites in books in India called landmarkonthenet.com.

She founded a distribution/import/publishing company called Westland Books to establish the supply chain. Hemu has always been a trend-setter whether in design, technology, concept or product. She now uses her wealth of experience in the retail space in Shop 4 Solutions her new consulting business. She is a venture partner with TVS Capital funds, a private equity fund specialising in the retail consumer space. She is the founder of an innovative design & interior firm called Ifrieze Design Solutions.

Shubhra Sinha
Managing Director, Marketing Globalisation, Cisco Globalisation Office

Shubhra Sinha is Managing Director, Marketing Globalisation, responsible for extending Cisco's global marketing strategy to increase efficiencies and accelerate growth. Shubhra is helping create a marketing services ecosystem, enabling the identification of new market opportunities and leveraging marketing resources to empower new initiatives and innovation. She represents Cisco's Chief Marketing Officer on the Central Globalisation Office executive board in Bangalore, India.

An IT industry veteran with over 21 years of experience, she has led global Solution Marketing and Services organisations in companies like HP, Mercury Interactive, Deloitte Consulting and many start-ups. At HP, she led the world-wide Services Oriented Architecture solution's marketing organisation. She built Mercury's presence in the IT Service Management space from being a non-player to a significant provider in less than a year and helped drive Mercury's ITIL solution sales from zero to $40 million in 1 year.

Shubhra recently moved to India after 15 successful years with leading organizations in the US.
She is a certified professional in a number of SAP modules and IT Service Management.

Outside of work, Shubhra is a professional exponent of India's classical dance form – Kathak, and also enjoys travelling, reading and motorcycles.

Shubhra has an MBA in International Marketing and a Bachelor of Science in Physics from Lucknow University.

Vani Kola
Managing Director, IndoUS Ventures

Vani Kola is a serial entrepreneur and visionary known for identifying emerging markets and building successful market-driven software companies. Most recently, Vani has partnered with Vinod Dham to co-found IndoUS Ventures, an early-stage venture capital firm, focused on investing in India. IndoUS Ventures is committed to investing in businesses that leverage India's accelerated, long-term growth prospects and capital efficiencies. This venture is dear to her vision of enabling world-class entrepreneurship in India.

Prior to founding IndoUS Ventures, over the last 10 years, she has been focused on founding and building her various companies. She was founder and CEO of Certus Software, a leader in the Financial Compliance Market with over 70 customers worldwide. Vani's personal commitment to excellence and integrity influences her approach to building companies, developing products and empowering people.

Prior to establishing Certus, Vani was the founder and chief executive officer of RightWorks, a successful e-procurement company that was acquired by ICG and subsequently by i2.
Before founding RightWorks, Vani held management and engineering positions at Consilium and Control Data Corporation. She holds M.S. and B.S degrees in electrical engineering.

Vani is profiled in numerous books and has been identified as one of the top 10 entrepreneurs in Silicon Valley. Outside of enjoying building high growth companies her interests focus on raising her two daughters and musing about finding the perfect balance between work and family. She is involved in various organizations focused on fostering entrepreneurship and women leadership.

Usha Mohan
Managing Director Triumph India

Usha Mohan has over 20 years of experience in the IT industry. She started her career in Andhra Bank, and later worked in Wipro Technologies as a systems analyst in their banking and finance solutions' vertical before taking up the responsibility of Marketing and Business Development at Triumph India. At Triumph she was responsible for their diversification into *Technical Writing and Documentation* as an outsourced activity.

As one of the senior *technical communications* professionals in India, she has pioneered the concept of offering technical writing as an outsourced service. Today, Triumph India is the largest pure play, 150 strong technical writing services Indian company having its offices in India, China and USA. Couple of things that herald Usha as the torch bearer of this industry:

- She brings extensive hands-on experience in executing large scale documentation projects. In fact Triumph carries the privilege of setting up large
  Offshore Documentation Centers for their customers (not principals) in India.
- She has also been instrumental in setting up the first Quality Management System (QMS) for documentation projects. The QMS setup at Triumph for this kind of outsourced project management activity is again first of its kind in the world.
- She is a member of the Society for Technical Communication.
- She has been instrumental in creating and nurturing the *technical communication* talent pool in India.
- In the career management context, she has envisioned and created roles like General Manager, Senior Manager, Quality Manager, Lead Writer – all in the realm of technical writing.

Apart from managing Triumph, she spends time on social initiatives. She is a member of the Rotary Club of RT Nagar and actively participates in their social initiatives.

A sports and nature enthusiast, Usha plays table tennis, tennis, and loves trekking! An amateur veena player and an avid reader, she loves to cook, play scrabble, and shoot pictures of her family!
Last but not the least, Usha is a Gold Medallist from Osmania University and holds an MBA degree from IIM Bangalore.

Rama NS
Head, Product Engineering Unit & Development Center Infosys Bangalore

Rama, is the Delivery Head for the Product Engineering unit and Development Center Head for Bangalore. She brings in decades of engineering and system design experience. She has a strong R&D experience in telecom and has worked in the areas of core switching, wireless and wire-line communications, networking, satellite communications, microwave and radio equipment development.

She has managed and grown accounts of the world's leading business software providers and for blue chip communications OEMs and service providers. All along, she has been responsible for building and nurturing some of Infosys' best delivery processes, knowledge management practices and customer interfacing capabilities. It was under her leadership that Infosys - Nortel Offshore Development Center received an award for outstanding quality and service.

She was responsible for bringing state-of-the-art digital M/W technology into the country during the 80s. She has managed telecom and non telecom programs with customers like HP, AT&T Philips, Siemens, NEC, NSW, OKI, Alcatel in the US, Japan and UK when she was with ITI and Satyam.

In her role as DC Head Bangalore she is working towards the improvement of traffic conditions of roads leading to Electronic city. She has focused on better work life balance for employees and employee engagement activities

Rama has also contributed to many internal Infosys initiatives and has served on policy formulation committees. She has participated in technology forums & events. She plays an active role as a core member of IWIN (Infosys Women's Inclusivity Network) activities. Her initiative was instrumental in the setting up of a crèche in Electronic City.

Rama is a gold medallist from Mysore University and is one of the first few women engineers in Karnataka.

R. Lance Perry
Vice President, IT Customer Strategy and Success, Cisco

Lance Perry leads Cisco's Information Technology Customer Strategy and Success (IT CS&S) team in creating trusted partnerships with Cisco customers worldwide by sharing IT architecture, system, and application best practices. Under Perry's direction, IT CS&S collaborates with development groups inside Cisco in driving innovation and integration of product and systems that enhance customer success.

Perry joined Cisco in 1995 and has extensive experience in the global delivery of technology resources and services while building strong alignment between IT and the business. As a trusted advisor for infrastructure, executive liaison to multiple business units, and the IT representative on cross-functional Cisco business councils, Perry shapes IT policy and process and serves as a member of the IT senior leadership team at Cisco.

Most recently serving as vice president of Infrastructure, a post he held for more than five years, Perry is credited with increasing employee productivity through the design and deployment of a multitude of innovative technologies. Previously, he was senior director of IT Enterprise Operations and Hosting, where he made significant contributions to Cisco's worldwide enterprise resource planning (ERP) upgrade, built a worldwide data center infrastructure, and increased IT's focus on continuous improvement to drive service levels up year over year.

Previous to his career at Cisco, Perry held senior IT management positions at Apple Computer, Incorporated, Goldman Sachs Group, Incorporated, and Communication Sciences, Incorporated. Perry resides in Northern California and is married with three children.

Venkat Pullela
Director – Engineering, Cisco India

Venkat Pullela has been a key contributor and a core team member of Women Action Network (WAN) in Cisco from 2004 to 2009. During this time WAN membership grew from 80 to current membership of 270 employees. Venkat provided thought leadership and direction to many WAN initiatives over the years.

Venkat, leads Cisco's flagship product line Catalyst 6500 in India. Venkat is responsible for both development and testing of software features. He received Pioneer Technology award from Cisco in year 2000 for his contribution to Catalyst 6000 design. To date he has filed 25 patent applications, with 13 approved so far. In 2006 Venkat was featured in Silicon India / SmartTechie magazine as one of the Top 10 innovators in India.

Venkat has over 17 years of international experience in networking industry, out of which 13 years have been with Cisco. After his move from San Jose to India in 2003 ISBU India team grew from single digit size to the existing size of 150 under his leadership. Before joining Cisco, he worked in CMC, Synopsys and UB Networks.

Venkat's interests include Green, Talent Development and Mentoring. Venkat started Green Council in Cisco India which was instrumental in reducing 3.5 tons of plastic waste in the year 2008. Venkat is also driving an initiative to mentor 1000 student projects across 30 top engineering colleges in India.

Venkat holds an M.Tech in Computer Science from IIT Kanpur and a B.Tech in Electronics and Communications from NIT Warangal.

Vasanthi Hariprakash
NDTV

For four years, it was her voice on radio that made every morning a `Goood Morning' for Bangalore, but with her move to NDTV 24x7, Vasanthi Hariprakash entered the visual medium in a national way. She is now Special Correspondent at NDTV's Bangalore bureau, covering Karnataka as part of her assignment. Fondly titled `Bangalore's Sunshine Girl' by her listeners, Vasanthi was officially declared India's `Best English RJ of The Year' in June 2007 by the India Radio Forum.

While Vasanthi's breakfast show on Radio City and her weekend Kannada show `Bengaluru Talkies' packed in high energy with lilting music, the issues and interviews she featured on them showed her socially-sensitive side. She has also had the privilege of interviewing legends of Indian cinema music including Asha Bhonsle, Manna Dey and the Mozart from Madras, A R Rahman.

Nominated by Infosys Mentor Mr Narayana Murthy for representing India as the Global Young Leader at the prestigious Salzburg seminar in Austria in December 2007, Vasanthi also won the Radio City CEO Excellence Award to be sent to London in August that year to study international best practices in UK's radio space. While there, she was interviewed by BBC Birmingham on her perspective as an Indian Radio DJ.

Graduating in electronics & then venturing into literature and mass communication, Vasanthi Hariprakash was a committed mainstream journalist & film reviewer with the New Indian Express, before she became a radio anchor (RJ).She was also involved with the setting up of the Bangalore chapter of the Network of Women in Media, India (NWMI), an informal network of women from print, radio & television media.

Vasanthi is a singer passionate about Carnatic music, devaranama – M S Subbulakshmi and John Denver being her all-time favourites. She speaks over five languages, loves reading travelogues, having herself traversed through 16 Indian States & countries abroad. Her favourite pastime though is to spend time at home with her 12-year-old son Anirudh.

Saundarya Rajesh
Founder – President, AVTAR Career Creators

Saundarya Rajesh, winner of SCOPE Woman Exemplar Award 2006 & Yuvashakthi Entrepreneur of the Year award 2007, completed her Masters in Management from Central University Pondicherry and is a gold medalist in English Literature from Madras University.

Mother of 2 teenagers and wife to a busy professional, Saundarya identified with the thousands of Indian women who had to give up their careers mid-way in response to a work-life balancing need. Her consulting firm, AVTAR, works with over 4800 women managers who are part of the AVTAR I-WIN network – Interim Women Manager's Interface Network.

AVTAR works in the space of creating flexi-careers, while also providing consulting services to companies in 'Flexidizing and Unbundling' jobs – concepts which are the brainchild of Saundarya.

AVTAR I-WIN was showcased as an 'India innovation' in Outlook Business 2008 List of Top 10 niche services, as also in the Diversity & Inclusion conference at Hong Kong 2008.

Kaliraj T
Global Senior Test Strategist Dell Labs

Kaliraj has been with Dell for last 7 years and has held management roles in their *Validation Engineering Organization*. He is currently in the role of Global Test strategist.

Kaliraj has an engineering degree from Madras University and completed the executive general management certification from IIM Bangalore. He has over 15 years of experience in the IT industry with expertise in *storage* and *systems management* domains. Kaliraj has worked with companies like Aditi and Cybercash prior to joining Dell India.

Starting in 2004, with an invention disclosure related to the practice of *incremental innovation from the user perspective* – which adds value to end customers, he has to his credit 5 information disclosures till date.

In 2005 his team recorded the highest number of disclosures in Dell Lab's Bangalore development Center, 2 of which were filed as patents in the US.

As head of innovation practice in Dell India, Kaliraj has over the last 2 years, defined a framework for driving the culture of innovation across the organisation.

His reading interests include books on people management and leadership skill development. Listening to music and playing golf are his hobbies.

**Pallavi Muralidhara
Senior Manager Cisco India**

Pallavi Muralidhara is a Senior Manager in IP Communications Business Unit at Cisco. In her current role, Pallavi is the India site lead for IPCBU India and responsible for a large Engineering team working on VoIP softswitch.

Pallavi brings with her 18 years of industry experience that ranges from support, testing and development of Operating Systems, Telecom and networking products. Pallavi has been with Cisco for over 10 years. Prior to Cisco, Pallavi worked in Pulse point communication, a Voice messaging software company. Pallavi started her career at Wipro and during her 6 years in Wipro, she worked on projects for various clients in their off-shore centre.

Pallavi successfully started the Women Action Network, an ERG which addresses gender based diversity initiative at Cisco India. Pallavi is an active member of this ERG and has lead many career development and students focused initiatives. Pallavi is passionate about training and mentoring.

Pallavi received her Bachelors degree in Electronics and Communications from Mysore University.

Pallavi is a native of Bangalore and has 2 kids. Her husband is a senior Engineering Director in Dell. Pallavi loves to travel, read, blog and watch movies.

Susheela Venkataramanan
Director - Internet Business Solutions Cisco India

Susheela Venkataraman is Managing Director, Internet Business Solutions Group, responsible for strategy consulting for key clients of Cisco. In about 25 years of consulting experience, Susheela has worked with clients in several industries, assisting them realize superior business performance, working with them in areas ranging from strategy through to implementation.

Prior to Cisco, Susheela was Partner, IBM Global Business Services India and was leader, Financial Services and Financial Management practices.

As Partner at Coopers & Lybrand / PricewaterhouseCoopers, she led several large scale enterprise transformation engagements with her clients. Key projects have included Strategic Process Redesign, Supply Chain Optimization, Organizational Performance Management, CRM Processes and Risk Management. A few clients she has worked with are Tata Steel, Bharat Petroleum, Bharti, Essar Steel and Canara Bank. Susheela was responsible for thought leadership and practice development.

After graduating from Faculty of Management Studies, Susheela spent 8 years at International Computers Indian Manufacture (ICIM) in Systems. During this period, she was involved in end to end systems integration projects. She then spent 4.5 years at Digital Equipment India Limited, in a variety of roles, in enhancing the impact of technology.

Susheela holds a Master of Science in Physics from the Indian Institute of Technology, Delhi and an MBA from the Faculty of Management Studies, Delhi University. She is working on her doctoral thesis on "the global strategies of emerging Indian multinationals".

Susheela is a Carnatic music vocalist and maintains a deep interest in photography, painting and spirituality. She enjoys visiting places and meeting people. She is a Trustee of SGBS Trust, a not-for-profit involved in holistic development of society. Her favourite project is Unnati which imparts vocational training to the underprivileged. As a Rotarian, she is involved in several projects for community and society.

Jignasha Patel
Director - Human Resources, Cisco India

Jignasha Patel joined Cisco in August 2008, as the Director of Staffing for Asia Pacific and Japan. This is a newly created role that provides overall leadership for the staffing discipline in support of all Cisco businesses and functions in Asia Pacific and Japan. The creation of this role represents an exciting and positive step towards increasing Cisco's capability to provide career development opportunities for our existing employees and to attract the very best talent available in the APAC/Japan marketplace.

She joined Cisco from Freescale Semiconductors where she was the Director of Global Diversity and Inclusion and Director of Global Talent Staffing. Prior to Freescale, Jignasha worked for Dell in Global Diversity and Sales Operation.

Jignasha has a Bachelor's Degree in English and Spanish Literature and a Juris Doctor from the University of Miami School of Law. She is also a member of the board of directors for The Miracle Foundation, a non-profit organization dedicated to helping orphaned children living in India.

Poonam Bir Kasturi
Industrial Designer, Facilitator, Entrepreneur, Mentor DailyDump

Poonam is an Industrial designer, facilitator, entrepreneur and mentor. She graduated from the National Institute of Design, Ahmedabad India in 1986, specialising in Product Design. She began her career designing and prototyping a variety of products even as she managed Sur Engineering – a family firm manufacturing machine tools.

Her latest project – DailyDump – involves the design, manufacture, distribution and servicing of products related to home composting. This product–service system is based on an open-source platform and is meant to encourage micro-enterprise formation and collaborative product development. It uses craft skills to address a primarily urban issue. Daily Dump's purpose is to reduce the waste generated by households, and thus reduce the pressure on the already-far-from-perfect public waste management systems. Daily Dump has been selected as one of the "Top Nominees" for the INDEX Design award 2007.

Poonam is passionate about design education. She was one of the founding faculty at Srishti School of Art, Design and Technology Bangalore.
As an entrepreneur she founded IndusTree Crafts in the early 90's, and Playnspeak – in 2000. IndusTree Crafts works with craftspeople to design, manufacture and retail/ export Indian crafts for contemporary customers. Playnspeak offers craft-based products for the home and office, products that poke fun at the values and ways of human beings, and also products that provoke reflection. Since 2000, Poonam has spent a lot of time writing papers on Design and how it impacts Development.

Poonam lives in Bangalore, with her husband Anand, and works out of her studio (popularly know as 'the shed') sharing the space with students, terracotta composters and the spirit of the raintree that is the canopy of this space.

Madhura Chatrapathi
Founder Ascent

Madhura has been a practitioner and spokesperson for entrepreneurship – especially in the women's sector for over two decades now. She has earned a world-wide name as a business and social entrepreneur who has inspired other women to become successful entrepreneurs. Her company, Food Associates in Bangalore, has emerged as a leading ingredient manufacturer with domestic and international markets. She was among the first to obtain know how from Defense Food Research Lab and supply dehydrated foods to defense forces for remote operations. Through Asian Centre for Entrepreneurial Initiatives (ASCENT), she promotes group enterprises, clustering, incubation and entrepreneurship development in Asia, Africa, and other developing countries. She has authored/co-authored handbooks and training manuals on entrepreneurship. She is invited to present papers on entrepreneurship and the food industry in national and international forums. Apart from giving talks, motivating and inspiring the younger generation, women, and other entrepreneurs, she also provides business and career counseling.

Nearly 600 artisans - handcrafted leather footwear makers - in Belgaum district have benefited from her work in promoting entrepreneurship, and got training in technical and business skills. They now have their company ToeHold Artisans Collaborative that produces Kolhapuri chappals that have captured international markets with exports touching US $100000.

Madhura has been providing expert advice and leading workshops in over 40 countries, for variety of International organizations including UNDP, ILO, UNIDO, World Bank, International Trade Centre, Economic Commission of Africa, ESCAP, and EU etc. She serves on the Governing Boards of Institute Social and Economic Change, is an Adviser for Trestle Foundation in Geneva and is also on the board of Digital Empowerment Foundation. She is the first woman Rotary Governor in South Asia and the first International Training Leader from Asia, for Rotary International. Her efforts have been recognized by both State and Central agencies, to name a few:

- A R Bhat Award for Outstanding work in Entrepreneurship Development by Entrepreneurs International 2006 Rajyothsava Award, highest award of the Government of Karnataka for civilians for the contribution to the development of the state 2002
- Distinguished International Visitor Alumna Award by State Department, Government of USA, Wash DC – 1999
- "Service above Self" Award the highest honor conferred by Rotary International –1996
- Kempegowda Award, from the Mayor of City of Bangalore City award for the contribution to self-employment in the city

Nithya Ramkumar
Technology Head Wipro BPO

Nithya is the technology head, WBPO for Wipro Technologies. Her primary responsibility is to drive process standardization and value creation across all the BPO engagements through base, a business process optimization platform. She has 18 years of experience in rolling out innovation across IT and BPO solutions in Wipro.

Nithya's experience spans the breadth and depth of various divisions across Wipro, including, telecom, healthcare, financial services, energy and insurance. In her current role as Technology head, Wipro BPO, she has built the entire technology division from scratch, her directive being to roll out standardization across all the BPO customers from the BP execution perspective and increase the value offered to customers.

Nithya has conducted CXO level workshops for customers like BBC and Telia. She is also the co-inventor of patents in the area of autonomous business process management.

Nithya holds an engineering degree from Pondicherry University.

Deepa Parthasarathy
Manager – IT & WAN India Lead, Cisco

Deepa Parthasarathy is a Manager in IT infrastructure at Cisco. She comes with over 12 years of industry experience. Prior to joining Cisco, she worked with many companies across industries including IT, Utilities, Insurance and Banking. Deepa has also done a lot of work with non-profit organizations.

As a core team member of WAN, Deepa lead the CWLF-2008 and is WAN India lead for 2009. She is passionate about women leadership development and also involved with University relationship.

Born and raised in Bangalore, she has a Bachelor of Engineering degree from RVCE, Bangalore in India and a Masters in Business Administration from WLU, Ontario in Canada. Deepa returned to India 5 years ago after spending 7 years in North America.

Married to Srikanth, Deepa has a 5 year old daughter Avani. She balances time effectively between home and work, driving both with similar and personalised focus. She enjoys travelling, spending time with her daughter, friends and family.

Vidhya Vinay
Software Manager & WAN India Lead, Cisco

Vidhya Vinay is the QA Manager in the Security Technology business unit at Cisco. In her current role, she is responsible for the Cisco Security Agent and Cisco Secure Desktop products. Vidhya has over 14 years of experience mainly in product development and test.

In her 9 year stint with Cisco so far, Vidhya has worked in Network Management and Security management products, prior to the current endpoint security products. Vidhya started her career in systems programming at Informix India Development Center in Mumbai in 1995. On moving to Bangalore, she joined Aspect Development.

Vidhya is the co-lead of the Cisco India Women's Action network, a volunteer organization that aims at retaining and developing women talent at Cisco India. As the lead of the Cisco India Women's action network in 2007, she received the Cisco APAC inclusion and diversity award.

Vidhya holds a Bachelor's in Computer Engineering from University of Pune.

Based in Bangalore, Vidhya loves travelling and reading.