



Medical Tourism flies high with FlyforSurgery

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Vijay Vadlamani, the young co-founder spoke to us on what it takes to build a global enterprise and give shape to a dream

What does FlyforSurgery do?

FlyforSurgery is a medical tourism facilitator in India. We connect patients from US, UK and middle-east with potential doctors and hospitals in India. Patients from these countries want to travel to India for medical treatment because of two reasons; the cost of surgery in India is much cheaper compared to the cost in developed countries and hospitals in India provide high quality healthcare services at an affordable price.

How did you come up with the idea?

The idea came up in August of 2009 during a course called 'entrepreneur finance' in my school Singapore Management University(SMU). The idea was addressing two major pain points. And one of the cornerstones of making a good business is to identify pain points and work on them. The medical tourism market in India was very nascent when we came up with the idea, so we decided to give it a shot.

What are the services that you offer?

Our basic service is connecting the patient with the right doctor and right hospital. We have partnered with hospitals like Apollo, Fortis and Artemis. We also provide our customers with end to end services. We have tie ups with travel agencies like Thomas Cook which help us in providing patients with logistics solutions. For example, we book hotel rooms, we book flight tickets, we take care of ground transportation services, and we help find translators, etc.

How long have you been operational? Tell us a little bit about your team.

We officially incorporated the company in Feb 2010. Right now, we have two full-time employees. My co-founder Mohit Garg and I, work full time at FlyforSurgery. Both of us come from different backgrounds. Mohit takes care of marketing and management, I take care of finances and IT. But because we are a startup, most of the time our work overlaps. We also have a board of doctors who provide us with healthcare expertise.

How did you meet your co-founder?

I studied Information Systems Management with a second major in Finance at Singapore Management University(SMU). Mohit studied Information Systems Management, marketing



and management at SMU . We met at SMU and were very good friends. When I wanted to start FlyforSurgery, I asked him if he would be interested.

What is your outreach strategy?

We reach out to customers via social media marketing, SEO and Google advertisement. Second, we have tie ups with some lead generation agencies that refer us patients.

Are there other players doing similar things in India? Do you see scope for growth in this market in India?

This is a fragmented market with lots of small players. But, I see tremendous growth opportunities in this market. I believe this is just the start, India will gain immensely from medical tourism, if we make the right sounds around infrastructure and security.

What do you think is your competitive advantage?

I think it is our ability to deliver quality services and go the extra mile to meet our customer's needs.

What is your revenue model?

We get a cut from the hospitals. We don't charge the patients, yet.

How did you fund the venture?

We bootstrapped.

Do you have plans to raise money? If so, when?

We are boot-strapping now and have no plans to raise money, yet.

What were the challenges you faced while starting up?

Getting the first few doctors and hospitals on board was very tough and challenging. In the initial phases, we had to go through our relatives' contacts or doctors whom we knew personally. Once we signed up a few hospitals, it became easier for us. The entire process took us 4 to 5 months.

How do you plan to scale?

We intend to scale horizontally. For example, we have started offering consultancy services for hospitals to help them gain insight into the market and also to help them leverage the internet for their brand recall and to attract customers.

What advice would you give to young people who are starting up or want to start up?



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Most of the people I see, want to do something and they do something else. So I think it is very important to follow your passion, whether be it entrepreneurship or anything else. You give your best only when you do what you like. So I would say, follow your heart and do what interests you. Even if you end up failing, you would have learnt so much in the process, which is much better than not trying at all.

Anything else that you want to share with our readers?

We recently started our consultancy services for mid-tier hospitals. And why we started doing this is because, we realized that there are lots of small hospitals which are not very well known, but, have very good infrastructure and very good doctors. Such hospitals want to jump onto the medical tourism band wagon too. We are trying to help such mid-tier hospitals gain brand visibility. We do social media marketing and online strategy for mid-tier hospitals to help them attract more international patients.

How FlyforSurgery scales in India will be worth watching. While we will keep a track and bring you updates from them, you check out <http://flyforsurgery.biz>

[<http://flyforsurgery.biz>] (<http://flyforsurgery.biz/> [<http://flyforsurgery.biz/>]) and give us your feedback. Images, graphs or charts, if any, have been removed