

# WHO WILL BE THE NEXT-GEN MURTHY?

## Arvind Rao & Mouli Raman | OnMobile

Founded in 2000, in California, but moved to Bangalore two years later

**Business:** Mobile value added services like ringtones, ring back tones, alerts, voice-based searches. More recently, introduced innovative products like Karaokephone that allows users to play karaoke with their social networks via mobile or landline phones, and RCS Phonebook, an interactive user address book that synchronizes all contact information, including friends on social networks, into one



central location for easy management and live access. Has onsite presence in 52 countries; has 105 million unique users every month. Rao, 52, who was in the venture capital industry in the US prior to forming OnMobile, says the company's strength has been its risk sharing and joint work with operators to make the products a success, instead of simply licensing its technology. Mouli, 42, who worked for many years in Infosys, says OnMobile frequently receives requests from developed market operators to teach them the things being done in Asia. "They are hit by Google and Apple (app stores), and they believe we can help them counter this." The company is now focused on providing multilingual content.

**Customers:** Most of the Indian telecom operators; Vodafone uses them globally; Telefonica of Spain

**Revenue:** Rs 537 crore in 2010-11; international revenues contribute over 27%. It's not official, but it's possible that OnMobile is today the world's biggest company providing mobile value-added services



India is a giant in software services, thanks in great degree to the extraordinary vision and work of N R Narayana Murthy, who retired this month from the company he founded, Infosys Technologies. There are sceptics who say that India will never be able to overcome this services mindset and move on to develop creative global products and platforms. We don't share that scepticism. We believe that the success of the software services industry has created talent that now has the desire, confidence and expertise to build global technology products. Thousands of such initiatives are in the works around the country. **Sujit John and Narayanan Krishnaswami** bring to you a sample of these, some that have reached a degree of maturity, others that have seen amazing success in a short period

## Rohit Singh | Sourcebits

Founded in 2006, in Bangalore

**Business:** App developer. The company has developed over 300 apps, 20 of which are in the top 100 in leading app stores. It has apps for iPhone, iPad, Android, BlackBerry, Palm Pre and Windows 7 mobile platform. Sourcebits most popular apps include Robokill, Knocking Live, Daily Deeds, Night Stand, Skyfire, and Beast Farmer. Night Stand, an app which converts the iPhone/iPad into an alarm clock, reached the number two spot for all-time top download on the iTunes App Store within four days of its release and has been downloaded more than 3 million times. Knocking Live, the first live streaming app for iOS, has more than 2.3 million downloads. Singh, 35, is targeting the gaming space next.

**Customers:** GE, Coca-Cola, Sling Media, P&G, Hershey's, MIT Sloan School of Management

**Revenue:** \$6.5 million in 2010-11

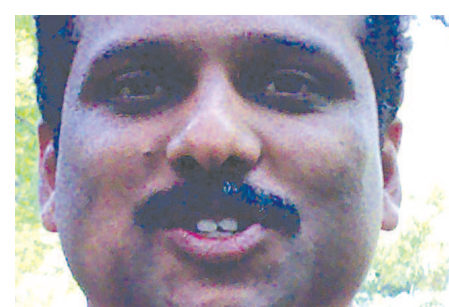
Sequoia Capital and IDG Ventures India invested \$10 million in Sourcebits in May



## Suresh Sambandam | Orangescape

Founded in 2003, in Chennai

**Business:** Orangescape was one of the early entrants into cloud computing. Its platform-as-a-service product allows businesses to build customized applications using a visual modeling interface. These applications may either be deployed locally or on public clouds — the Google App Engine, Microsoft's Azure, IBM's Smart Cloud or Amazon's EC2. Sambandam recognized the importance of part-



ners early on, and today works with application developers and system integrators like TCS, Wipro, 3i Infotech, Mphasis and L&T Infotech. "One of the most important things for a startup to survive is to start selling at the early stages," says Sambandam, who previously worked with HP and Selectica.

**Customers:** Unilever, Pfizer, Citigroup, Astra Zeneca, Ford, among others

**Revenue:** Over \$1 million

TiEcon 2011 recognized it among the top 50 global startups. CRN magazine featured Orangescape among the global top 20 coolest cloud platforms. Nasscom recognized it as a top IT innovator in India, for two successive years.

## Subash Menon | Subex

Founded in 1992, in Bangalore

**Business:** Products that allow communications service providers to improve their operational efficiency and deliver enhanced service experiences to subscribers. It has solutions for revenue assurance, cost management, fraud management, provisioning automation, data integrity management and more. The company started by providing fraud management solutions and its product Nikira became the No.1 fraud management solution in the world. A series of global acquisitions has enabled Menon, who started the firm with a Rs 20,000 loan from a former employer, to offer a wider portfolio of solutions

**Customers:** 16 of the top 20 wireless operators worldwide and 26 of the world's 50 biggest telecommunications service providers. The company has more than 300 installations across 70 countries. Almost all telecom service providers in India are customers. T-Mobile, Verizon, Telefonica, Comcast, Sprint are among customers in the Americas.

**Revenue:** Rs 492 crore in 2010-11

Awarded the Global Telecoms Business Innovation Award 2011 along with Swisscom for the industry's first successful Risk Reward Sharing model for Fraud Management.



## Pallav Nadhani | FusionCharts

Founded in 2001, in Kolkata, when Nadhani was 16

**Business:** Charting products. Nadhani had begun by writing a charting component using Macromedia Flash, which enabled animation and interactivity in charts. He also



wrote articles detailing this work for a technology publication that got him \$1,500. "That became the seed capital for my company," he says. His biggest learning has been that customers do not look for features, they look for benefits. The company has been profitable from day 1. Barring some advertising in technology magazines in the US and Europe, marketing has been through free online options and customer recommendations.

**Customers:** 18,000 customers, including Google, Facebook, Microsoft, Intel, IBM

**Revenue:** \$4.5 million in 2010-11

Winner of the Deloitte Fast 50 India 2009 award and Nasscom's emerging company 2009 award.

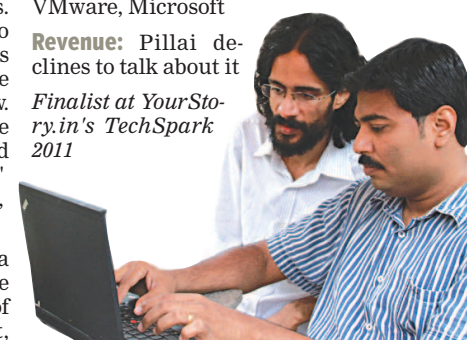
## Saju Pillai & Aaditya Sood | Idea Device

Founded in 2009, in Bangalore

**Business:** Data centre management products. Automates processes in the data centre so that the systems work faster, with fewer faults and greater security. And everything can be viewed and managed from a single window. Competitors include BMC, HP, CA. "But we do it better than them. We have competed against them and we have won every time," says Pillai, 31, who together with Sood, 30, had previously worked in Oracle.

**Customers:** 6 customers, including Astra Zeneca, UK, Endeavour Tech, one of the world's biggest stock exchanges, and one of the world's biggest banks. ISV to RedHat,

VMware, Microsoft Revenue: Pillai declines to talk about it Finalist at YourStory.in's TechSpark 2011



## Manav Garg | Eka Software

Founded in 2004, in Bangalore

**Business:** Products to manage risks in commodity trading. Commodities markets are notoriously volatile. A bad crop in Brazil or Vietnam, currency fluctuations, geopolitical situations—anything can affect an organization's ability to deliver. "A Nestle cannot tell customers they don't have coffee to sell. They have to manage country risks, quality risks, risk of shipments, risk of suppliers, to ensure they have enough coffee all the time," says Garg, 37, who saw the opportunity for such a software product when he worked with Singapore-based G Premjee Group in their commodities trading business in the late 1990s.

**Customers:** AWB (formerly Australian Wheat Board); Louis Dreyfus, Geneva; CHS, an US agricultural cooperative; New Boliden, a Swedish mining and smelting company; and more

**Revenue:** \$10 million

Winner of the Nasscom Innovation 2009 award. Was in the Deloitte Technology Fast 50 for India in 2009.



## Atul Jalan | Manthan Systems

Founded in 2004, in Bangalore

**Business:** Analytics products for the retail industry. The products analyse customer behaviour; merchandizing, supply chain performance, supplier performance and a host of other parameters and help retailers decide where to set up a store, what kind of products to stock in a store, where to stock them, which products should be placed together to optimize sales, identify the right promotions. "These are decisions that were earlier taken on the basis of gut feelings and hearsay," says Jalan, 41.

**Customers:** Over 76 customers, most in the \$1-20 billion revenue range, including McDonald's, Prada, Bally, SM Group, Hagen, Crocs, Ecco and Robinson's.

**Revenue:** Approx \$18 million

IDG Ventures India, DFJ ePlanet Ventures and Fidelity International have invested in Manthan



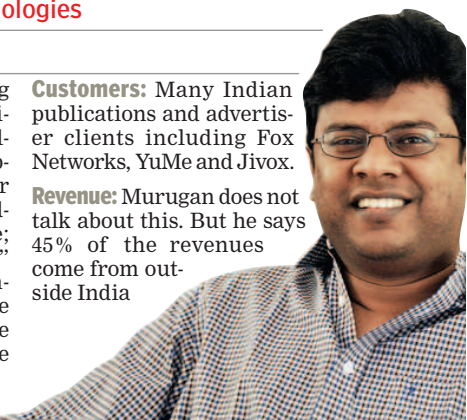
## Subbu Murugan | Ventuno Technologies

Founded in 2006, in Chennai

**Business:** Video management and publishing platform. It's a platform for video interstitials. It video enables your websites, and allows you to easily organize, customize, publish, distribute, analyse and monetize your video assets. "The market for internet advertising in India is nearly Rs 1,000 crore; 8% of that is dedicated to video advertising," says Murugan, 39, who did an MS in computer information systems in Georgia State university, US. The company has a presence in 15 countries, mostly in Europe and the Americas.

**Customers:** Many Indian publications and advertisers including Fox Networks, YuMe and Jivox.

**Revenue:** Murugan does not talk about this. But he says 45% of the revenues come from outside India



## Aneesh Reddy & Krishna Mehra | Capillary

Founded in 2008, in Kolkata, but soon shifted to Bangalore

**Business:** Capillary's solution captures data about those who come to shop in a store or for a brand, analyses them, and offers them discounts in real-time. "Even as they are at the billing counter, they would be sent a discount message on their cellphone based on their age, past purchases, etc. These customized real-time offers translate to much higher conversion of discount and loyalty offers than the generalized offers that are typically made," says Reddy, 26, who studied together with Mehra, 26, in

IIT-Kharagpur. **Customers:** Madura Garments, Raymond, Indus League, Levi's, Pizza Hut, Puma and more. Over 40 brands use the solution.

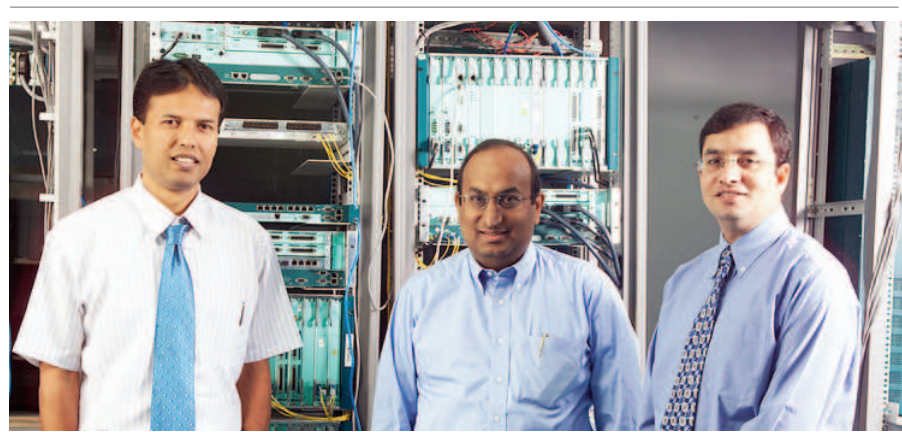
**Revenue:** Not disclosed. Capillary reaches over 10 million consumers in over 5,000 stores in 400 cities.

Winner of Qualcomm QPrize 2009 and finalist at YourStory.in's TechSparks 2011. Qualcomm has invested in the company, as have angel investors Harminder Sahni, Rajan Anandan and Venkat Tadanki.



## Sanjay Nayak, Arnob Roy, Kumar Sivarajan | Tejas Networks

Founded in 2000, in Bangalore



**Business:** Developing intelligent network technologies, networks that not only transport data between two points, but also do it at the precise speeds that customers require, rerouting traffic when any one lane is choked or disrupted, and clean up disrupted signals. "It's like a bus that behaves according to the nature of its occupants. If it knows that its occupants are students, then it behaves in a particular way, and if it knows they are tourists, it behaves differently," says Nayak.

**Customers:** Tejas solutions are deployed in

all major telecom networks in India. It also sells in 60 countries. South Korea, which has the most advanced wireless broadband network in the world, has its backhaul (intermediate links) running partly on Tejas equipment.

**Revenue:** Over Rs 750 crore

Tejas was initially funded by Gururaj Deshpande, and then by Intel Capital, Mayfield Fund, Battery Ventures, Goldman Sachs and Sandstone Capital

## Yusuf Motiwala | TringMe

Founded in 2007, in Bangalore

**Business:** Browser-based voice application. Unlike Skype, this requires no downloads or installations. You just need to open a browser, log in and start talking. Motiwala, 38, provides the application programming interfaces so that anybody can integrate the voice application into their browsers. TringMe handles the backend network, technology and data centre, and charges for each minute of call that passes through the system. The technology also allows communication amongst multiple voice sources — web, mobile phone, instant messenger. "Skype has the first mover advantage. But we have significant advantages over them," says Motiwala, who previously worked in Lucent Technologies and Texas Instruments and who started the business with Rs 5 lakh.

**Customers:** Over 120 enterprises, including IBM, Infosys and AOL

**Revenue:** Not available. But TringMe handles over 42 million minutes of calls per month, and serves over 11 million users. The call minutes doubled in the last one year.

Winner of Nasscom's most innovative startup 2009 award



## Varun Shoor | Kayako

Founded in 2001, in Jalandhar

**Business:** Help desk solutions to deliver better customer support. The company's flagship product brings all communications and support channels — tickets, email, live chat, self-service, calls and remote desktop support — on one platform. Another product is a comprehensive live chat and visitor monitoring solution that helps deliver real-time support. "Using our products, one can centrally manage all customer support channels. Our tools empower employees," says Shoor, who developed the technology and started the business when he was only 17.

**Customers:** Over 30,000, including GE, NASA, Virgin Mobile, FedEx, SEGA and ICANN.

**Revenue:** It's in multiple million dollars.



## Sriram V Iyer & Arun Samudrala | United Mobile Apps

Founded in 2009, in Bangalore

**Business:** Mobile platform development. The company's flagship product is UConnect, a connection management solution; if cellphone traffic on an LTE network is clogged, it offloads traffic to another available network such as WiFi, so that the connection is not cut. UManage is a device management solution, helps device vendors (USB dongles, mobile phones, tablets, even TVs and set-top-boxes) to fix/configure their devices even after it reaches the customer. Currently, the only way to upgrade is by connecting them to a PC or taking it to a service station. "There have been even instances of large scale recalls of devices to address problems. With our solution, such recalls will become unnecessary," says Iyer, 32, who previously worked with Samudrala, also 32, in Beceem Communications.

**Customers:** Broadcom. Working with two of the world's leading semiconductor companies/ODMs to bundle UConnect with their LTE devices.

**Revenue:** Rs 1.5 crore expected this year

Finalist at Qualcomm QPrize India 2010, finalist at Microsoft BizSpark India Startup Challenge 2011, finalist at YourStory.in's TechSparks 2011

## Abdullah Khan & Mohamed Saliya | iWave Systems

Founded in 1999, in Bangalore

**Business:** Embedded hardware, semiconductor platforms. The company provides integrated solutions for developing innovative products or systems in the areas of data communications, consumer electronics and multimedia. Khan previously worked with Tata Elxsi and C-DoT, and Saliya in Philips Semiconductors and ISRO.

**Customers:** GE Healthcare,

Honeywell, Continental, Visteon, Japan railways, Panasonic, and many more

**Revenue:** Not disclosed.

Microsoft awarded iWave the Windows Embedded Partner Excellence Award in 2009. The award recognizes visionaries and organizations around the world that use technology in an innovative and creative manner.

