



**HARSHAVARDHAN
GADDALAE**

MANAGING DIRECTOR, MEDHA RESEARCH & CONSULTING

**A PIONEER OF MARKET
ANALYTICS & STRATEGIC
CONSULTING**

₹150



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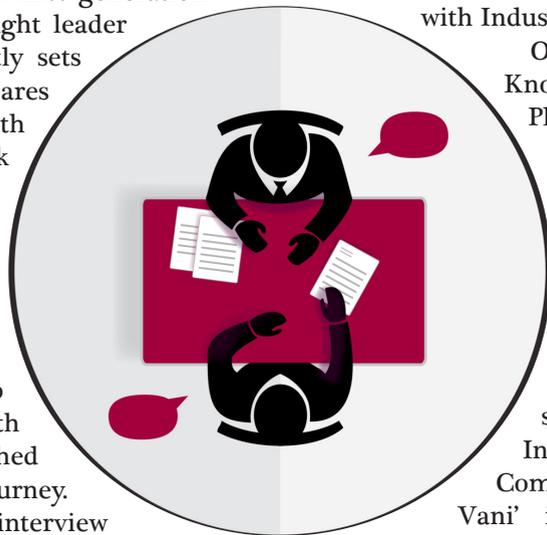
A researcher by training and an entrepreneur by choice, Harshavardhan (Harsha) empowers Market and Business Leaders to leverage the advantage of research-driven and actionable insights in strategic decision-making. Having been a trusted strategic business advisor for business leaders at leading firms such as SIS Infotech, TCS, IBM and Deloitte for over two decades, Harsha brings a unique thought leadership perspective across the Information and Communications Technology (ICT) and Automotive domains. He is an honors graduate in Science with Physics as the subject of specialization and also holds a Masters in Business Administration, with marketing and IT systems as specializations. In his current role as the MD of Medha Research and Consulting, Harsha helps businesses create,

execute and course-correct market and competitive campaigns, while helping Business School students learn, discover and apply management concepts to real-world business issues.

- **Hobbies:** Music. He loves to listen to melodies, sing and play a couple of Percussion instruments
- **Favorite Cuisine:** Harsha Loves to mix-n-match different cuisines
- **Favorite Book:** 'You are What You Think' by David Stoop
- **Favorite Travel Destination:** Charmady Ghat in Chikkamagaluru district of Karnataka
- **Awards & Recognition:** Consistently recognized and valued as a Trusted Business Advisor for over two decades

In the aftermath of the internet revolution and the subsequent social media revolution, the consumer behavior across the business realm has transformed for good. The consumer behavior is so dynamic today that even a discrete Tweet, Facebook/Instagram post or YouTube video can influence the purchase patterns and customer demands regardless of the industry vertical. Insights into critical behavioral patterns could do wonders for organizations. The iconic sports brand Nike introducing an AI-powered mobile application that enables customers to scan their feet to find the right fit, which recently helped them hold on to the online-market share, and Walmart spending \$11.7 billion on technology in a single fiscal year are merely the recent anecdotes of precise market research and analysis. But make no mistake, market research & analysis and informed decision-making are not a multinational corporate phenomenon. It's only that the SMEs and startup segment is underserved at the moment.

The key lies in finding the right information amidst a flood of it and interpreting it into engendering actionable insights in a timely manner that could help an organization hit the right nerve at the right moment. Needless to say, it's a pro-league of hardly a handful of experienced and knowledgeable aficionados. A pioneer among them is Harshavardhan (Harsha) Gaddalae, Managing Director, Medha Research and Consulting Pvt Ltd, a boutique Market Intelligence and Knowledge-advisory firm that democratizes informed decision-making, especially among start-ups and SMEs, while also simultaneously helping B-School students bridge the employability gap with Industry. Having dedicated his professional life to Market Research and Analysis over the past more than two decades, Harsha today is not only a successful first generation entrepreneur, but also a thought leader in the industry who constantly sets and resets benchmarks and shares his knowledge & wisdom with the leaders of tomorrow. 'Ask Medha', a unique Market Intelligence and Knowledge Advisory Practice Platform designed by Medha, which empowers business leaders to excel at strategic decision-making, is a strong premise to this. I recently got in touch with Harsha and he was happy to shed light on his professional journey. Below is an excerpt of the interview with him.



You started this journey more than two decades ago. How did it begin? Also, after all these years and experience under your belt, what drives you today?

Yes. My professional journey began at an interesting juncture in the business realm – towards the dawn of a new century. My first role as a Research Analyst in 1998 helped me connect with the fascinating world of 'meaningful and actionable insights,' which help business leaders formulate and drive the strategies for growth, something which I decided to pursue further as a career.

While I have stayed within the realm of Research Insights, my subsequent roles helped me understand

and build expertise in Market Analytics and Strategic Consulting. The sheer joy of working with businesses and leaders, helping them leverage the power of research-driven insights in their strategic decision-making is what continues to inspire and drive me.

How would you define Medha Research & Consulting as an organization? Also, amidst such a competitive industry landscape where is the company positioned? What is the unique proposition that your organization offers to its clients?

Medha Research and Consulting is a Market Intelligence and Knowledge-advisory boutique with twin objectives of empowering businesses to leverage the power of research-driven insights, while helping B-School students bridge the employability gap with Industry.

Our Market Intelligence and Knowledge Advisory Practice Platform ('Ask Medha') empowers business leaders to excel at strategic decision-making, leveraging the power of well-researched and actionable insights. Typical services offered under this platform include Market/Industry Analysis, Sector-specific Insights, Market/Industry Issues and Trends, and Competitive Intelligence. 'Research Vani' is a platform which helps B-Schools to interface with best practices from Industry, helping students bridge the gap in terms of employability skills.

Ensuring an 'impact through relevant value to the client' has been the cornerstone of strategic decision-making at Medha. Given that a significant percentage of our clients are startups, we emphasize the importance, rather criticality of 'working with' a client, rather than 'working for' them. This approach translates into a strategic partnership with the client, resulting in involvement and ownership at every single phase of the project or assignment.

In most instances, this translates into bringing up independent point of views which empower the clients to focus on realistic market/industry scenarios through an unbiased lens, enabling course-

corrections in strategy and implementation towards ensuring a higher impact.

At Medha, we understand that RoI is a unique metric for each client, given their strategic positioning in the industry/market. We actively partner with the client, helping with appropriate research-driven and actionable insights at each stage of their marketing/competitive campaigns.

What are the major challenges you have experienced in your journey so far? How did you overcome them and what did you learn from them?

Being a first-time entrepreneur, I have had my share of learnings from hurdles such as getting the positioning alignment right, convincing early clients to look beyond the measure of team size, and boosting the morale of my team through the pandemic. Entrepreneurship has been the best B-School in my life, having taught me the finer nuances of sales, marketing and operations - a key take-away being the lesson that 'It's not about being the first; it's about being able to understand the client's requirement while not being afraid to bring an independent and balanced point of view'.

In your professional journey so far, which are the milestones that bestowed you with utmost satisfaction – both as an individual and as an entrepreneur?

A transition of a business relationship maturing from being a 'research and analysis services vendor' to my early clients, to currently being 'a Trusted Business Advisor and Strategic Partner' has been a most cherished milestone – both as an individual and MD of Medha Research and Consulting.

On the Business School Platform, successfully training more than 2500+ MBA graduates in practical application of business and marketing skills, and following their progress across industry has personally been a satisfying milestone.

What is your mantra towards finding the right balance of your personal and professional lives?

I believe in a single life concept and thus personal and professional lives are not two air-tight compartments, but driven by passion and priorities. Health and Family are as important to me as



work and productivity. I enjoy conceptualizing and implementing insight-driven strategies for my clients as much as I enjoy listening to my favorite music or spending quality time with a family member. The only mantra is to ensure that we have fun - whether in personal or professional aspects of life.

Going forward, what are the changes in market behavior that you anticipate and what are the opportunities that you foresee?

These are exciting times to be in the TMT and Automotive domains. Be it the ubiquitous move to digitalization, the need to prioritize new definitions of value for clients in a post-lockdown era, ever increasing focus of cognitive intelligence models into almost every sector, or simply the way we reposition our personal and professional lives in response to the new norms - new opportunities are evolving which demand research-driven insights.

In the Management Education sector, I have been observing a greater collaboration between academia and the industry, a push towards revised curriculums which prioritize skill and application of management concepts, a lot more engagement of management students with industry and market leaders, and a proactive push by management of institutions towards prioritizing skills.

I foresee further opportunities to engage with management students on a more regular basis, sharing my learnings in market research and strategy

consulting, while gathering significant insights from them about the behavior, priorities and approach of new age leaders.



What is the future roadmap planned for Medha Research & Consulting? What is the kind of role that you intend to play?

Given that Medha is still a fledgling organization, I currently play the roles of a Rainmaker and Research Consultant, besides being a 'mentor' to my team of (freelancer) analysts.

Given my expertise and experience in the advanced technology arena, I envision partnering with business and market leaders in the TMT and Automotive domains, providing research-driven and actionable strategic insights specific to the AI, ML platforms. We have been speaking to boutique technology start-ups in the banking and medical domains to explore opportunities to deliver specific research-driven insights regarding the latest trends, issues and of course, competition.

While the initial focus has been on building brand Medha with our key target clients start-ups we will be prioritizing expansion of the analyst team to ensure that we service larger and steady stream requests from mid-tier businesses. The year 2021 will also witness a more active engagement with Business Schools through the Research Vani Platform.



In the light of your strong experience of more than 20 years in the market research domain, what advice would you give to the budding entrepreneurs?

Effective communication is the art of understanding what isn't being explicitly said. Go beyond the mere requests for market/industry analysis, competitor insights. Make a sincere effort to understand the strategic priorities of the client. This helps connect the relevant research-driven insights to the client's strategic priorities, making them meaningful to the top management and thus actionable.

“THE SHEER JOY OF WORKING WITH BUSINESSES AND LEADERS, HELPING THEM LEVERAGE THE POWER OF RESEARCH-DRIVEN INSIGHTS IN THEIR STRATEGIC DECISION-MAKING IS WHAT CONTINUES TO INSPIRE AND DRIVE ME”

As a first-generation entrepreneur, I have experienced what leading business and market leaders have always cautioned - self-doubt kills more dreams than failure ever will. Thus, while it is always good to size up competition, don't let the routine and often frustrating focus on yours being a relatively small team, and a new brand hold you back from ensuring value for your clients! [@medha](#)

LEADERS IN MARKET RESEARCH



LEADERS IN MARKET RESEARCH 2021

CEO *Insights* TOP 10
LEADERS IN MARKET RESEARCH 2021

CEO *Insights*
IS PROUD TO PRESENT
HARSHAVARDHAN GADDALAE,
Managing Director, Medha Research & Consulting
AS ONE OF THE
Top 10 Leaders In Market Research - 2021
in recognition of the holistic market research solutions and services led by experienced and renowned leaders and the inspiring leadership stories

Sujith
Sujith Vasudevan
Managing Editor