

Tete-a-Tete

While there are industry professionals blabbering about ‘fighting and surviving the slowdown’ and sharing tips and tricks Bangalore based startup Aquilonis Technologies Pvt. Ltd. has surged above the clutter with an exceptional innovation. Run by two techies Rahuldev Rajguru and Devang Thakkar, Aquilonis Technologies have created unique software solutions for the telecom industry. We managed to engage Rahuldev Rajguru in a Q&A session. Have a look



What turned you from a techie to an entrepreneur?

We have a combined experience of more than 22 years together and have worked with some of the big companies as well as start-up companies during our career. We have also worked on all the popular mobile platforms. With this experience and having a deep understanding of the market, we identified a problem area for the end users of the mobile phones. We thought of addressing this problem by developing a technology which facilitates the mobile phone users to a greater extent. We believed in our idea and felt that there is huge demand for the same and thought of jumping in the pool. Also, we being originally from Gujarat, the entrepreneurship runs in our blood as we have seen lot of successful entrepreneurs from our homeland and that is one of the biggest motivation factors for us turning to entrepreneurship.

Could you take us through the Aquilonis product offering?

We are developing a cross-platform technology which runs across all the popular mobile platforms without user being worried about the make and model of his/her phone. Our technology allows a mobile phone user as well as an enterprise to embed user's professional and personal lifestyle to their mobile phone dynamically. Our technology allows user and enterprises to personalize the mobile phones dynamically to fit their needs. You would have observed IT policy and norms in most of the enterprises with which you are bound to operate and utilize their IT infrastructure within their policy. But have you ever seen such policy in an organization for the mobile phones? One of the features of our technology provides such facility to the enterprises to define and embed their mobile usage policy for their employees using company sponsored phones. The IT administrator can govern and control their employee's phones dynamically through a web based user interface as well as through MS-Outlook.

The other most important feature of our cross platform technology is to migrate the data and personalization preferences the user has embedded to their phone; from one phone to other phone

irrespective of the make and model. User can do this at just one click without installing any PC based software utility developed by the phone manufacturer and then install the same for other phone make and juggle around to see what happened to their important data. User can even be assured that their phone will not be mishandled or somebody can steal the data from their phone in case their phone is lost or stolen.

We have also filed a patent for our technology with the US PTO.

Aquilonis has grown at an astonishing 200% plus per annum. How was this possible? Any secret mantra?

There is actually no secret behind this. We have a habit to look at things from all different dimensions and that has helped us grow even in such an economic scenario. We identified the niche area and catered our solutions around that. We also identified the verticals which are not affected by economic downturn and fortunately our strategy worked. Also, the recession brought us lot of advantages in terms of hiring talented resources at an affordable cost. So, it worked like blessings in disguise for us.

Your major clients are from the US. Isn't the recession a deterrent for you business?

As mentioned above, we have identified niche area and the verticals which are least affected by the economic downturn. I personally believe that recession brings more opportunities for that who specializes in a niche area and that's what precisely we have done. One of the verticals we targeted was healthcare which was virtually not affected by the recession and that worked for us. Today we have clients in healthcare domain from US as well as Europe. Most of the people take a back seat in the recession whereas we took an aggressive approach as the counter attack and that worked in our favor. We got enormous amount of support and motivation from our clients.

Any competitors?

We do have competitors but most of them have their offerings tagged to one or selected mobile platforms rather than cross-platform. Also, they offer very limited feature sets whereas our offerings are platform agnostic and with broad feature sets.

What are your plans for the Indian market?

We do plan to bring our product and solutions to the Indian market as well. However, our product requires Internet on the mobile phone and such users are pretty limited in India. So, currently we are working out a strategy by which our product can be used by an Indian mobile phone user without having Internet on the phone. Also, majority of the mobile phone users in India fall under mid-range mobile phone category which is the range of phones which cost anywhere between Rs. 5K-10K. So, we are currently bringing down our feature sets which are supported by such phones. But we do believe the potential in the Indian market and we are trying to come out with the Indian version of our product for the Indian consumers who use mid-range mobile phones. However, our full featured offerings on Smartphones will be available for the Indian Smartphone users as well.

You will be launching your cross-platform suite for mobile management next month. Could you elaborate on the same?

Our current plan is to launch our first version of the product for the US/Europe market targeting only one specific user group out of our broad target customers. We will disclose more information about this sometimes later when we are all set for the launch.

Where do you see Aquilonis 5 years from now?

As per our current plan we see ourselves to be 150-200 people company with a user base of at least 1 million in the next 5 years.

Tips, tricks, cheats for budding entrepreneurs

I believe in only one thing, one should become an entrepreneur to build a company and a brand, which cater to the need of your customers rather than prioritizing ONLY on raising the money for your company. One should get into the self-sustaining mode as fast as possible in order to reduce the dependency on external funding.