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Case Study

Making Rural BPO a reality

Sai Seva Business Solutions has set up a BPO unit in an Indian village, creating a new business model that could help rural citizens find jobs and improve their quality of life.

Despite a boom and improving employment opportunities in India over the last many years, there has been an insignificant change in the rate of employment. This is largely because the state of rural employment remains unchanged. There has been virtually no improvement in the state of employment opportunities in villages, with most development and jobs getting focused around India's metros, Tier II and III cities and townships.

Yet rural India continues to be a significant but untapped resource for skilled manpower. Organizations with vision can leverage this resource and provide a sustained source of income to rural citizens. A strong rural business model can ensure empowerment, self sufficiency and an improved lifestyle for Indians residing in villages and at a broader level, improve the national economy.

A BPO with a difference

Sai Seva Business Solutions is one such company. Recognizing this opportunity and seeing a need for corporate India to connect with talent residing in villages, Sai Seva Business Solutions, with a mission to "Serve and Inspire simple Employment for Rural Advancement," set up a BPO in a tiny hamlet in Andhra Pradesh in 2006. The two-storied, fully air-conditioned center with state-of-the-art infrastructure was set up in Puttaparthi, 140 km north of Bangalore. Home to around 50 young citizens, who stay within a 10-15 km radius of the center, the BPO provides a host of services to domestic and overseas customers. These include form/image-based data entry, data/format conversion from PDF, back-office transaction processing, application processing, e-mail marketing, data mining, data imaging and formatting document archival and retrieval.

The Center is not only enabling village youth to pursue their ambitions and dreams, it is also giving them a chance to study further and gain new skills. Even people who were unable to study beyond Class XII are now enrolling for Bachelor of Computer Application degrees in colleges and open university, owning to the encouragement provided by the BPO.

Set up by the management students of the Sri Sathya Sai University, the BPO aims to help rural youth live a life of dignity without destroying the cultural fabric. The idea is also to staunch rural migration to cities by providing young people employment at the local level.

Building a roster of reputed customers

Sai Seva Business Solutions' customer list includes names such as the HDFC, MATRIX, Royal Sundaram and Rea Source, a US-based mortgage firm, among others. The Center received a major boost when the HDFC bank decided to outsource part of its work on data capture and profiling of new account details to it. Today, customers opening new accounts at HDFC are likely to have their personal profiles and details indexed at the Sai Seva BPO!

HDFC is initially outsourcing around 30,000 applications to the BPO, a figure that may scale to three lakhs over the next few years. Currently, the bank's data capturing and indexing of customer details is being done by around 1,000 in-house employees spread over Mumbai and Chennai. According to Sai Seva sources, the BPO is offering customers a significant cost advantage of around 30-40 percent as compared to a similar facility in a larger city. The good news about the BPO is that there are no night shifts and attrition too is non-existent.

Around 80 percent of its employees are graduates, with the remaining having passed class XII. Sai Seva Business Solutions provides free computer training for potential employees and also sponsors them for higher education programs.
Clearly, Sai Seva Business Solutions, with its innovative business model, is offering a new employment solution to rural India.

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