

Start-up hits the road to map biking trails



Trails of India's platform helps bikers connect with others in the community

Ambika Sharma, an avid biker, faced many challenges when she decided to take a 14-day trip from Delhi to Kanyakumari with her father in tow. Connecting with fellow bikers, planning the trip, creating trails, ruling out unhygienic pit stops — the problems seemed insurmountable.

“That was a turning point for me. Though I have been on the road with my dad several times before, I realised the route from the North, via Western India and with the Ghats to the South was challenging, and would necessitate several pit stops,” she said, adding that questions persisted whether she would get good parking and where she could get the right gear.

The trigger was to solve the issue faced by fellow bikers, and to provide a platform that would connect passionate motorcyclists who could share information on the go. Thus was born Trails of India. The social and lifestyle platform for the biking community helps create trails and share fascinating biking adventures, and even provide after-market biking parts and accessories.

Garnering over 1 lakh active users from 300 cities was just the start for this nine-month-old company, which has also ventured into the retail segment, making available biking merchandise from brands such as Alpinestars, AGV, Scala, Diesel and Michelin.

Every journey that a biker makes teaches something that could be shared with fellow bikers, she says.

“As an early entrant in to the motorcycle community, I realised the business potential since this is a high-end community.

“Most bikers are passionate, but it is a tight-knit community, connected only with small social groups. Bikers don’t want to be unnecessarily marketed to.” Trails of India is a crowd-sourced community and lifestyle utility platform where bikers can connect with others in the community, share details of journeys, discuss interesting places found on the way, advise on the precautions to take on a particular route, and exchange notes on biking-related gadgets, gizmos and technology.

This is Ambika’s third venture. With an experience of 15 years in marketing and advertising, Ambika also runs Pulp Strategy, which provides brands with integrated solutions combining brand strategy, creativity, consumer insight, design and technology.

A trained software professional, Ambika’s second venture was Instappy. It is a cloud-based rapid mobile-application development platform that allows businesses to build applications “for iOS and Android instantly with no coding skills needed”.

Instappy currently operates in 13 countries, she said.

Along with its website, Trails of India Android and iOS apps allow users to chronicle their ride experiences, plan new trails and track live-trails via checkpoints and pit stops.