



Pulp Strategy, under the entrepreneurship of Ambika Sharma, has gained the distinction of being India's Youngest and most awarded agency with 45 global and national recognition

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Entrepreneurship is challenging but it is a passionate journey: Ambika Sharma, Pulp Strategy and Instappy



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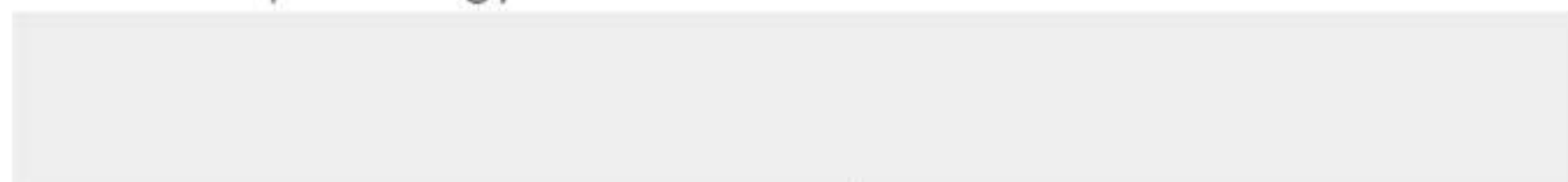
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Some consider me a serial entrepreneur. In my career of 17+ years, I have donned many hats, a technology evangelist, a marketing expert and an integration specialising in new-age marketing techniques and the integration of technology. I am the Founder and Chief Strategist at Pulp Strategy, multi-award-winning full service hybrid agency specialising in creating omni-channel experiences in the digital era. I am also the Founder at Instappy, a cloud-based rapid mobile application development platform. My role as an entrepreneur involves integrated strategic planning, implementation, and consolidation in the organisation as well as in giving solutions for brands.

My journey in marketing communications started after I finished my schooling and took up a summer job at a communications and strategy firm. I was extremely fascinated by the work, and knew then, on my very first day, that this was to be my professional calling.

I began my career in operations marketing firm and then moved on to Business in 2001, at a time when marketing communications was nascent India and integrated marketing was a rarity. In 2005 I moved to set up an interactive marketing agency with JPL. The market evolved focussed communications and interactive marketing, and as the digital medium grew, a combination of all three saw the emergence of techniques that would help in achieving a larger business goal for the brand. The 2008 slow down challenged the thought process of the industry, brands wanted value and effective solutions that focused on long-term transformational relationships with consumers. Digital and offline marketing programs infused with technology in harmony could create this value but an effective strategy needed an understanding of the clients business as well consumer intelligence. Only then creative story telling could translate into data driven effective marketing initiatives of scale. Instead of just domain expertise the need was of – marketing program creation, management, and execution expertise in one single ecosystem. This is the core of Pulp Strategy.



The vision behind Pulp Strategy is to build an agency that is medium neutral – focused on the brand goals and not the medium or platform. It has been our focus to create and deploy customized strategic engagement solutions, integrate creativity, consumer insight, technology, and practical campaign management to deliver measurable results for brands.

Being an entrepreneur is a challenging and stimulating task and any entrepreneur worth their salt would reaffirm this. I believe that if it's not challenging, then chances are that you aren't doing it right or doing enough. For me personally it has been a passionate journey. I understood that communication and interactive technology are highly people-oriented businesses; success depended, to a large extent, on the talent and ability of people to work together towards a common goal as opposed to a transaction. In discussions with several of my former colleagues and clients from marketing, advertising, media, and technology to get insights from both sides of the spectrum the need to go hybrid became crystal clear.

The key was to bring together a diverse set of functions and train to enable a common goal focus. However, we were confident that if done right, we could create a niche in the market. Over the years we have invested in expertise and talent, which allows for seamless planning and execution of custom solutions. The team comprises of Analysts, Creative strategists, engineers, product leads, marketing communication strategists, architects, experience designers, editors, producers, engineers for web, mobile, activation specialists, digital marketing experts, retail, training and ground program execution experts. The construct is set up to deliver comprehensive program management, which reduces waste, increases effectiveness and allows for constructive integration. This has been critical to the niche we wanted to carve for our selves. It is also an evolving and constant process. By design people have different work style focus. Engineers don't "speak" marketing and creative does not "speak" tech, business analysts do not always focus on the culture of retail and so on. We needed to not just enhance professional expertise but also build a cross function appreciation and focus towards a bigger program objective. So that it becomes a part of the culture and behaviour. It is also what has become our biggest strength.

My second venture, Instappy, was established in October 2015. Instappy is a cloud-based software platform for rapid mobile application development which allows businesses to build intuitive, stunning, and fully native applications for iOS and Android instantly. As a technology service company, custom mobile app-development was a part of our key service offerings. The demand for apps by businesses had been increasing considerably, and we sensed an opportunity to empower businesses and individuals by making the app development process easier and seamless. This was what led to the development of Instappy.

For me entrepreneurship is an attitude, its not a gender thing. However, it is true that women make up for a very small section of the entrepreneurial echelons, not just in India, but globally. To be an entrepreneur needs your undivided attention and commitment. Confidence and self-belief have a very large part to play in preparing you mentally to take that plunge. The social conditioning of women, which dictates them to stay-at-home play safe in "safe" roles, is changing today. Studies prove that businesses owned or run by women tend to grow steadily and also give back to society.

It is possible that faith from the outside may be a little bit harder to find for women entrepreneurs but I believe that as an entrepreneur one must not worry about how people perceive you. It's better to avoid being entangled in such trivial concerns and keep your focus on your plans and the product you are creating. To my fellow women entrepreneurs juggling several roles while simultaneously trying to manage different tasks, I'd say this – create something you are passionate about. It's very important to be honest to yourself and be unapologetic of your talent, creativity, and ambition. Just stay focused on your long-term goals and everything else will care of itself.

In the personal space, find time for any one passion separate from your work. It could be travel, martial arts, cooking what ever makes you tick. It will allow you to think dispassionately about your growth plans and business challenges. I pursue motorcycling and adventure travel. I ride a Harley Davidson Road King, and tour the country side every chance I get. It helps me unwind but more importantly is gives the clear space to think, unwind, plan, and address the tough decisions.

In the near future Pulp Strategy as a strong intellectual partner to its clients and a leader in the marketing communications and interactive technology industry with a diverse portfolio of services and products, I look forward to expand Instappy to more countries and ensure that the technology helps businesses in their journey of mobility at scale.

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