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INDIA SCHOOL NEWS

The online school newspaper

LIT SKILLS Learning – Area of E-learning – Now in India

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Empowering teachers and Enriching students with quality English Enrichment Program

It was our pleasure talking to the CEO – Dr. Karthik Narayanan of **LIT SKILLS Learning Pvt. Ltd.** – (A Unit of LAZ Digital Learning Pvt. Ltd) – an Award winning **Authorized** Indian Partner for Learning A-Z – Cambium Learning Technologies – USA.



Dr. Karthik Narayanan – CEO and Founder

Learning A-Z – Education Software Services Company, based out of Tucson, Arizona, USA, has its global presence in 180+ countries worldwide, and listed ABCD in NASDAQ. Learning A-Z has won lot of awards and recognition in the field of education for the last 2 decades.

It's our privilege to feature his outstanding contributions in the field of “**EDUCATION**” (Education – the most indispensable asset in creating an impact on humanity). With his dedication, determination, focus and persistence, his contribution in the field of education is growing by leaps and bounds. We wish him all the success in his upcoming endeavours.

Dr. Karthik's approach towards teaching has a unique blend of conventional teaching using the outstanding digital products first offered by Learning A-Z by LIT SKILLS..

Many schools have transitioned their teaching and learning processes using Learning A-Z products and are pleased by the progress of their students and teachers as well. The proof is in the multitude of the appreciations and recognitions which he has received from many schools.

Achievements and Awards



Dr. Karthik Narayanan in House of Commons, London, receiving MAHATMA GANDHI SAMMAN award 2019 for CSR ACTIVITIES



Dr. Karthik Narayanan, CEO & Founder receiving Honorary Doctorate for Humanities from National American University for works undertaken for School Initiatives and CSR Activities- June 2019



Dr Krishnadas EN, Managing Director receiving Honorary Doctorate for Humanities from National American University for works undertaken for School Initiatives and CSR Activities -June 2019

Dr. Sakthi Ganesh, Director – Operations and VP – India Sales – LIT SKILLS Learning Pvt. Ltd.



“We can deliver dramatic changes in our ability as a country to attract more jobs from abroad, grow more businesses within the country, and ultimately support strong economic growth. All of this is why we have set out the ambition to become LIT SKILL Learning PVT LTD as the best education and Learning service in India. Our central vision is that, through adopting

a “whole-of-system” approach, the US education system, and learning system in Indian context should become the best in India.”

Excerpts from the interview:

Which classes are your products designed for?

Learning A – Z provides literacy-focused Pre K-12 resources for instruction and practice. We offer an array of online resources that help teachers to support every student, at every learning level by helping & developing the 21st century skills students need to succeed in the classroom today and workplace tomorrow. We provide award-winning resources that empower teachers to create amazing learning solutions.

Using Learning A – Z products, how effective is the way of teaching than conventional teaching method using blackboard/whiteboard?

Improve the development of language competence: Effective communication, through reading, listening, writing and speaking, is a fundamental life skill and there will be a particular focus on increasing competence in languages over the coming years.



Increase the use of ICT in teaching, learning and assessment: The Digital Strategy for Schools 2019- 2020 aims to realize the potential of digital technologies to enhance teaching, learning and assessment to help students become engaged thinkers, active learners, knowledge constructors and global citizens.

Deliver a “Step Change” in the development of critical skills, knowledge and competences:

The increasingly diverse and globally interconnected nature of our society and the world of work means that the proficiencies and abilities that help learners to develop the critical skills, knowledge and competencies necessary to contribute to society and the economy are changing. We are delivering a “step change” to the curriculum across the education and learning system, implementing a major program of system-wide curriculum reform: **Edutainment, (Education Thru Entertainment) & Gamification, Student Centric and Digital Activity Based (TAB Learning)**



Apart from English learning products, you have one Science A-Z product. Do you focus on teaching Science concepts as well, using English as the language of communication?

Yes we focus on teaching science concept by

- Providing online guided instruction, practice, and assessment of core science concepts and practices using text, audio, and interactive tasks
- Asking questions and challenge students to design solutions like scientists with Project-Based Learning Packs
- Selecting from the FOCUS book collection to read more deeply on high-interest science topics
- Taking students on virtual field trips or show them complex science processes in action

What are the products for teachers? How do the products help to empower them to effective teaching?

LIT SKILLS believe that teachers know their students best. We also believe that when given the right resources to inform and deliver effective differentiated instruction, every student benefits. With an extensive collection of incredibly powerful and flexible curriculum resources, our products fill the gaps identified in various learning environments. Without limiting their creativity, innovation, or individuality, we help teachers to provide the impactful instruction their students need to thrive. Our product meet the challenges of literacy instruction in today's world by assessing on various metrics

- Created for Teachers by Teachers
- Leveled Teaching Materials for Personalized Instruction
- Digital Delivery for Anywhere, Anytime Access



Are your products used by students only during school hours and how can the students and teachers reach you in case of any doubt?

We build our platform in digital delivery mode which can be accessed anywhere and anytime, in school and after school also. Our customer Care support work for 24/7 and we have working document walk through our product which can easily eliminate the L1 support. For Schools we have Our Customer Service Team who shall visit NBD (Next Business Day) On site for any issues related to Technical or Teachers Delivery Model.

Do you conduct after school training programs for students and teachers?

Yes, we do conduct after School training program in our center and we build our own SCALE-UP (Student Centric Active Learning – Upside Down pedagogy) Classroom setup in our office which incorporate Project/problem Based Learning, Peer Learning, Blended Learning. Trainings are tailor made and we offer training for 45 minutes after school hours to 15 days exclusive FDP for faculty members both in house and external.

Which schools do you cater? Whether CBSE, ICSE, IB or state level?

From Govt. to IB Schools we work with all boards.

Our Elite School Clients Are:

- Sri Jayendra Saraswathi Golden Jubilee School, Tirunelveli*
- Schram Academy – Chennai – Tamil Nadu*
- Velammal Education Institutions – Chennai, Tamil Nadu (11 Schools)*
- Vikasa International School, Tuticorin*
- American School of Bombay – Mumbai – Maharashtra*
- Sreenidhi International School – Hyderabad – Telangana*
- Lead India Foundation – Mumbai – Maharashtra*
- Vels Public School, Tirunelveli*
- Vikasa International School, Tuticorin*

How do you convince schools to incorporate Learning A – Z products? What are the challenges you face?

We are especially pleased to see that our products RAZ PLUS, SCIENCE A-Z, Writing A-Z, Vocabulary A-Z and KIDS A-Z – all winning awards in multiple categories, speaks about the flexibility of our products and the robust collection of resources they offer. Since we are pioneer in the market, Schools trust our organization values and our client on a long run. Yes we do have challenges like- “Boiling Frog Syndrome” -Teachers don’t come out of their comfort zone of conventional

teaching, our induction & orientation demo play a vital role to have ice breaking momentum in personalized digital learning

Are your products charged one time or are they subscription based?

The product cost is One-time payment – renewed annually as per the needs of the Schools, however from the year 2019 we are also focusing on B2C Sales where parents can buy the access directly from us which is again web based and renewed annually. Our products are web based which is the primary focus as of now; we also do have the print model which is completely offline.

How affordable are your products by the state-run government schools? As we are aware, these are the schools in India where uplift is required in teaching and learning English language.

Most of the state run schools in India have shortage of Systems, Technology and Internet connections. Some Schools located in Tier 1 and 2 Cities have these facilities, but however even today the villages and towns – Tier 3 and Tier 4 – we still lack infrastructure and teachers who are skilled and passionate to teach English for the kids of these sectors. As we all know, India as a country, have more graduates passing out from rural areas than cities, and Rural Indian Graduates cannot speak good English which is the big challenge. Employability upon Graduation is the biggest burning problem in India TODAY and We as an Organization, are not talented or challenging the system or against the system that we will eradicate this issue, but we are always passionately curious to add and change the methodology of teaching in this 21st Century.



Now, in this type of system, we take pride in penetrating and working in these kind of schools and at grass root level we have shown a difference in the methodology of teaching English as a language and not as a subject. Especially the more focus and training and awareness is been done for teachers as Teachers Build Future Leaders of India.

Who are the experts in creating and designing your products?

Currently we sell and re-distribute Learning A-Z Products for Schools and Colleges and LIT Skills is more into Service Oriented Industry than just selling some random education products. We do have our own array of programs which will benefit the teachers and students and also have our In House Digital Classes program for all Age Groups.

How many schools have you catered so far and tell us about your expansion plans?

We catered to large number of schools from Kendriya Vidyalaya's to IB Schools, the list is bigger. As a distributor for Learning A-Z, the total number of schools we have covered is approx. 2500 with more than 1,50,000 students covered till date.

LIT SKILLS Learning Pvt Ltd-India Operations which began its India Operations have so far worked with more than 200 Schools across PAN INDIA. And we are now expanding our sales operations across South India focusing mainly on the rural sector of Tier 3 and Tier 4.

What is the feedback from the schools using these products?

Velammal Education Trust, Chennai

We thank the LIT SKILLS team to install the RAZ Plus Programme for our students. The programme has an assortment of reading materials that guides teachers to make the right choices for the students of the various levels. We have used the programme in all our schools and we aspire to make all our students read well through this wonderful assemblage of levelled books, fluency packages and benchmark passages devised and integrated in RAZ kids.

P. Navaneetham, Reading and Program Head, In-charge

American School of Bombay

The American School of Bombay is using RAZ Kids and A-Z Reading since several years. These digital resources are used by teachers as a classroom aid to support the English Language Learners. RAZ Kids is being used as additional resource from Kindergarten to Grade 2 which provides reading at their reading level.

Ms. Heeru Bhojwani, Information Curator and Coach/Head Librarian

The Schram Academy, Chennai

Teachers handling classes 1 to VIII underwent a one day (workshop) training session on the various intricacies of the on-line resource base RAZ PLUS. It was an extremely useful and interactive session with teachers getting hands on experience is using the tools in the product. All teachers unanimously agreed that the Learning A – Z product was indeed a boon in providing extensive resources and students enjoyed learning.

Co-ordinator Coach/Head, Librarian

LIT SKILL's team is dedicatedly focused in realizing Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modiji's dream of Make in India, Digital India and Clean India. You had also received the most prestigious award in 2019, NATIONAL SWACHHATA SUMMIT – 2019 , New Delhi – For Cleanliness Initiatives at Schools. Would like to ask few questions on this.

- **Please tell us about this initiative. Did you carry out any project or awareness program towards cleanliness in schools and which schools did you cover?**

This Initiative was a Voluntary Initiative carried out by Team LIT SKILLS, and we had chosen, Sri Jayendra Saraswathi Golden Jubilee School – Tirunelveli students and teachers under the guidance of Mrs. Usha Raman and Mrs. Nirmala for this Cleaning Drive. Mrs Usha Raman – School Head was already heading and was a part of Cleanliness Drive Campaign in Tirunelveli, for Cleaning the River Bed of Tamarabarani river which was a huge large-scale operation project which was executed successfully.

Team **LIT SKILLS** started – Awareness program for school level kids on keeping the school premises clean and neat, washroom etiquettes, handwashing techniques, and keeping the outside area and premises plastic free by clearing all the waste and planting saplings around the area.

Apart from this, we also installed a RO water large unit serving more than 5000 girl students studying in Sarah Tucker Hr Sec School – Tirunelveli as a part of CSR activity for free of cost. This was also a part of Swachh Bharath Mission – School Initiatives – 2018.

- **What were your contributions towards cleanliness and hygiene at schools?**

Building Eco Friendly Toilets – Installing Bio Urinals at Sri Jayendra Saraswathi Golden Jubilee School – Tirunelveli.

- **How did you identify the schools to carry out this initiative?**

Schools which were in need of basics and schools which were a part of Swachatha Campaign of our Hon'ble Prime Minister – Shree Narendra Modiji's vision for Clean India. Most important factor was Oct 2nd, 2019 – is the 150th Birth Anniversary of Mahatma Gandhiji and focusing on that we started this initiative.

- **How was your company nominated for this award?**

Since I have been voluntarily involved in CSR activity for cleaning and maintaining religious places of worship in Kerala – Sabarimala temple right from 2009 onwards, much before Swachh Bharath was initiated in India. I have cleaned and converted all the dirty filth places to floral gardens and cleaned toilets in Sabarimala and have done many more.

In the article of LIT SKILLS, which was featured in one of our previous editions, we were informed about upcoming LIT SKILLS Centers. Please tell us about these Centers. What do they cater?

LIT SKILLS Centers primarily focus on Early Learning Centers for Kids in rural sectors, and Center Of Excellence for English Enrichment Program across rural Indian market where the main focus will be on teaching English in a Digital and TAB based method using the latest 21st Century Skills in an affordable price where even a farmer can afford for the fees for his son/daughter.

We have also planned and executed Teachers Training Program Centers across Rural Indian sectors, where teachers are taught and trained on various innovative methodologies on how to teach English language as a language and not as a subject.

These are the two on going long term models we have come up with and we are currently in the pilot phase.

How does LIT SKILLS Learning stand out from other Edu-tech companies?

'The Systemic Dilemma' states , *“21st Century Kids are being taught by 20th century adults using 19th century curriculum and techniques on an 18th century calendar”*

LIT SKILLS envisioned the state of art delivery approach in the following ways:

- Methods to Move from Passive Learning to Active Learning Incorporated
- Scale-UP and Electronic Classrooms Designed and Implemented (Physical Design of Facilities along with Training to Faculty Members from Experienced Professionals from the US/India)
- Instructional Designers Studio Set Up for Hybrid Learning (Infrastructure & Personnel)
- Projects Identifying for PBL cutting across curriculum in Several Urban and Rural Schools
- Peer-Teaching Assessment and Brown Bag Book Club for Training Instructors Established for Best Practices
- Teaching Innovation Project Grants Initiated (and culture of proposal writing/peer evaluation introduced)

Please tell us about the award of Honorary Doctorate for Humanities by National American University.

It was for my voluntary initiatives towards mankind. We have set up a Multi Kitchen – Food Bank System called as “Anbudan Sapadu” where fresh home cooked food is prepared every day and served to people who are left out on roads, railway stations, platforms and who are basically been ignored and rejected and left out in the society. We serve more than 450 hot meals every day and we have volunteers who go out and reach those who are in need. Currently we are operating this in 2 Cities in Tamil Nadu and expanding all over shortly. We don’t collect any kind of money or materials from any individual and we do not encourage collecting left over food also, that’s the best part of this whole thing.

The award was also in recognition for Sabarimala activities and towards Swachata Awards for cleanliness initiatives at schools.

It was also for my all school related activities in Teaching English Language using latest technology and imparting 21st Century Common Core Skills for Teachers and Students, by Empowering and Educating, using a Unique Game Based EduTainment methodology (Education thru Entertainment) method.

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