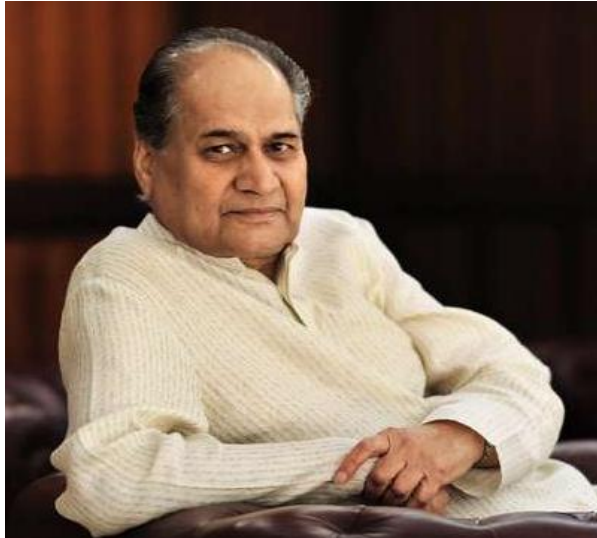


alumni **Rahul Bajaj**, in Outlook's "India's 50 Greatest CEOs Ever"

The group ranks among India's top ten, with footmarks beyond auto: home appliances, travel, insurance, financial services and iron and steel.



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Forbes Billionaire List 2016

net worth USD 3.86 billion

Rahul Bajaj

BA Eco Hons 1958 St Stephen's
Chairman
Bajaj Auto Ltd

A distinctive feature of the Indian business landscape is what may seem an anachronism to modern management theorists: the survival of the traditional family-owned enterprise. But success is its own emphatic vindication and, to sceptics, all one needs to cite is the adaptive brilliance of the native pool. For an exemplar, look no further than Bajaj Group chairman **Rahul Bajaj**, 78. The grandson of Jammalal Bajaj, a Marwari businessman-philanthropist, Rahul took over the reins of the flagship company, Bajaj Auto, in 1965 and the entire group three years later. Under his stewardship, straddling the licence-permit raj era and the post-reforms days, the turnover of Bajaj Auto has risen from Rs 72 million to Rs 46.16 billion. Now with interests ranging beyond automobiles to home appliances and financial services, insurance, iron and steel and travel, it ranks among the top 10 business houses in India.

Armed with a quiverful of degrees, Bajaj managed to establish several manufacturing units during the challenging pre-reforms days itself. Back in the 1980s, Bajaj Auto was a top scooter producer and its Chetak brand was famously said to have had a 10-year waiting period. Bajaj, known for his outspokenness, started as the head of the famous Bombay Club, which opposed liberalisation. Indeed, the entry of foreign players, the rise of rival Hero Honda and a shift in consumer preference for motor-cycles hit Bajaj Auto sales for some time.

The recession and stock market collapse of 2001 also hit the company hard. But it reinvented itself with Bajaj Pulsar motorcycle, backed with R&D, a world-class factory in Chakan, Maharashtra, and the old Bajaj virtues: affordability and durability. "The purpose of business is to satisfy the needs of the customer," Bajaj had once said. "If you make motorcycles and nobody buys them, you will go bankrupt like companies which are not customer-centric." A Padma Bhushan (2001), a rank of 722 in the Forbes billionaires list in 2016 with a net worth of \$3.8 billion, a sojourn in the Rajya Sabha, it's quite the stalwart's resume.

alumnus **Sanjeev Bikhchandani**, in Outlook's "India's 50 Greatest CEOs Ever"

Quitting a corporate job, Bikhchandani started Info Edge and Indmark, working out of a servant's - quarter for which he paid his dad Rs 800.



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Sanjeev Bikhchandani

BA Eco Hons 1984 St Stephen's
Founder and Executive Vice Chairman
Info Edge India Ltd

net worth R 4285cr

Sanjeev Bikhchandani's may be our classic modern fable—a norm-defying childhood dream, a long and lone struggle, and then a leaping success. As a 12-year-old, when most boys dream of fighter jets or gladiatorial sport, Bikhchandani dreamt of becoming an entrepreneur. He navigated through the economics-plus-MBA route (his parents wanted him to become a doctor or engineer) and quit a well-paying corporate job while still in his 20s. Pursuing an independent business, he started Info Edge and Indmark, developing them while working out of a servant's quarter, for which he paid his dad Rs 800. One did surveys and the other was a database of trademarks; both aggregated valuable information.

If Info Edge doesn't ring a bell, think Naukri.com. India's leading job portal was an idea that came to Bikhchandani during his days at HMM (now GlaxoSmithKline), where he saw his colleagues devour *Business India's* jobs section. His idea was simple: tap the universal interest in the job market and cash in on the lack of organised listings. The time was momentous: the internet had just arrived in India. For a long time, Bikhchandani pumped money from other businesses into Naukri.com. He lived off his wife's income and later took up jobs as a teacher and a journalist while still working on his own. He says he lost touch with many friends as he couldn't afford the lavish bills and holidays they enjoyed.

In May-June 1999, Naukri.com received its first investment and soon became the first internet company to get listed on the Indian stock exchanges; one of the few that weathered the Y2K meltdown. Bikhchandani now also runs other popular websites, including Jeevansathi.com, 99acres.com, Brij.com, Allcheckdeals.com, Naukrigulf.com, Shiksha.com and Firstnaukri.com. As of January 2016, with a net worth of Rs 4,285 crore, he is one of India's richest 100. Yes, he has re-established contact with his old friends.