

What is "Rural" Information Technology?

Science is man's search for answers to the human condition. In order to be meaningful, science must account for the entire ecosystem in which it has to operate – the time, space, society, culture, and economics. The creation of technology is the process of making science viable in a specific environment. At Thinvent, we have applied these principles to the creation of IT products that are specially suited to the Rural Indian scenario.

Today, Rural India is emerging as the largest and most viable consumer segment on the global scene. Governments, NGOs, businesses, and corporates alike are making a beeline for the villages. Products and services are being reinvented and redesigned to suit the needs of the end consumer – the peasant.

Rural IT efforts have perpetually aimed at placing the cheapest possible computer in the hands of the peasant. Over our past 15 years of experience with numerous IT projects across India, we realise that one cannot simply replant the seeds of western IT into the soil of

rural India, and expect a healthy harvest. And hence Thinvent was born, to cater to the end consumer – the peasant – by enabling the organizations that operate in the rural space. We create Information Technology products that assist you in your quest to satisfy the needs of the rural consumer.

How is Rural IT different?

Erratic power, heat, dust and unreliable connectivity, are as much a feature of urban India as of rural India. However, traditional urban methods to counter these problems, such as uninterrupted power supplies, air condi-

tioning, dust proofing, and redundant connectivity, are simply not viable in the rural context.

If we are to build all the infrastructure that traditional IT demands, can we achieve the cost efficiencies that the value-oriented rural customer demands? By enclosing ourselves in a pristine environment even in the rural settings, do we not alienate ourselves from the very men and women we strive to serve?

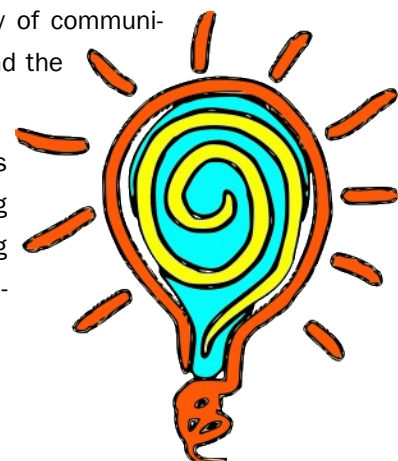
What IT products and services do you need to operate in the rural space?

IT is a set of tools that enable business delivery. Businesses don't need the fastest computers. They need faster turnaround times. Your business applications should enable your staff to serve more customers, achieve greater customer satisfaction, and be more satisfied employees. IT should deliver you meaningful information that lets you know, plan, scale and execute. And all this should happen within the desired cost.

How can Thinvent help your business?

By applying the principles of appropriate technology, Thinvent has created IT systems that make themselves at home in Rural India. Our products and allied services are designed to specially address your business concerns around power availability and consumption, unreliability of communications networks, the heat and the dust!

Our power efficient computers do not require air conditioning and are dust proofed. Relying entirely on cutting edge tech-



nologies, we deliver IT services such as POS, ERP and HRM, to field locations where connectivity is a big issue.

What will it cost?

We are happy to state that in large volumes, our solution has one of the cheapest acquisition costs in the world. What's more, we also dramatically reduce your operational expenditure.

At a peak power consumption of less than fifty watts (monitor, computer, UPS overhead – all inclusive), our computers operate for a whole day from just a car battery. In just a few hours of charging from the grid, you can store enough power to drive your computer for a full day, saving you the cap-ex of solar or genset power. It also puts solar computing within the reach of small and medium initiatives.

We offer a three-year warranty on hardware and software. Packaged, our system is only twice as heavy and bulky as a laptop carton, enabling hand-carriage. With zero moving parts inside, our equipment is vibration-safe. Two of our customers take them village to village in a van – and they are powered on and running while the vehicle is moving.

The hardiness of our hardware and software will enable you to derive maximum value from every rupee spent.

And the proof of our success?

The Indian Railways! The size, scale, and magnitude of operation of the Indian Railways needs no introduction. Turn-around-time per transaction and uptime (availability) of the IT system are two crucial parameters for their success. And against all benchmarks of quality and reliability, our products have exceeded the Railways' expectations.

We have delivered automated ticket vending, unreserved and reserved ticketing, crew management and parcel management, at remote locations. We provide computers, kiosks, biometric authentication and smart card solutions, high-availability servers, remote management and monitoring, automated breath alcohol testing, and location aware handhelds. Many of these products were

developed by us from scratch, when none of the existing commercial solutions met the requirements of the Railways.

Whether the stations have erratic power, unreliable connectivity, poor maintenance or no local IT support, we help the Railways achieve the impossible – ticket after ticket after ticket!

Key Features:

- We handle a mixed **network** of dial-up CDMA/GPRS, WiFi, Ethernet and DSL.
- **Remote management and monitoring** is built into every component of the system. The health of the entire network is monitored from a central location. SMS alerts are sent directly to rural operators when their computers are unreachable.
- All critical **system status** are displayed as a colour swatch on the task bar. Various possible faults with the computer, the operator's network, and the central servers, are identified.
- **Bundled software** includes browsers, voice, video and chat communication, office applications, media players and graphics programs.
- Support for a wide variety of printers, digital cameras, and other common **peripherals**.
- A bouquet of carefully selected **central services** – email, collaboration, voice and chat switching, spam and virus control, content management, document management, knowledge sharing portals, educational portals, video streaming, Internet access control, centralised backup, and many more.
- Unique methodology of **state preservation** using centralised backup of system configuration, and periodic backup of user data to secondary storage. This minimises hassles when replacing faulty hardware.

To know more, please call us, or visit our website, where you can find white papers and case studies on our rural IT solution.

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