

HILMI QURAISHI
Co-Founder & Chief Learning Technology Officer
ZMQ Software Systems

Hilmi Quraishi is a Co-Founder and Chief Learning Technology Officer of ZMQ Software Systems, New Delhi, India; which was created in 1998. ZMQ is an innovative software solution provider specializing in developing eLearning, Gaming and Edutainment solutions with a focus on knowledge management human performance.

Hilmi Quraishi is one of the twins, was born on 18th November 1969 in an eminent family of academicians and educationists of Delhi. The family has a history of over 250 years of imparting education and training. Hilmi has done Master of Engineering in Computer Science from Georgian Technical University (former USSR). He is an innovator in the field of educational technology, and has created numerous innovative solutions to entertain and educate the minds.

Hilmi Quraishi heads *House of Learning*, social initiative program of ZMQ Software Systems, which develops world-class learning and edutainment solutions for semi-literates, under-privileged, physically handicapped and out-of-school children in wide variety of technologies from Internet based community learning systems, Intranet based closed net learning, stand-alone learning to compact learning on hand-held & mobile devices.

One of his first initiatives was an edutainment platform called *Virtual Gandhi Ashram*. It was to bring live Mahatma Gandhi and his ideology in an animated virtual reality mode for users to have hands-on interaction with Gandhi to learn the principles of equality, justice, non-violence and democracy. The project was later re-done to disseminate through mobile phones under the initiative called *Mobile Mahatma*. He is the innovator of *Mobile Yoga Classroom* to teach yoga in a self-learning classroom on the mobile devices. It was designed to promote local regional content. Mobile Yoga is currently being adapted in multi-lingual mode. He has also worked on numerous social health programs and literacy campaigns using technology.

Hilmi was the prime architect of Freedom HIV/AIDS program. It is the largest social awareness program using technology. Started with 4 mobile games on 13 million devices, now reaching out to over 30 million devices in India. He is currently focused on designing various tools and solutions on HIV/AIDS for Corporate and the Youth. He is currently developing a cheap educational non-connected hand-held device to take education to the grass-root levels in Asia and Africa. He is also engaged in designing mobile applications and games for visually challenged.

Hilmi regularly appears in newspapers and magazines. He is a prominent speaker at educational technology and social development conferences and forums. He is the winner of 2 Golden Manthan Awards for the best e-Content for the year 2005 in the category of e-Science and e-Entertainment instituted by World Summit on Information Society (WSIS).

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TECH-TAKE

These Vaishali (Pitampura) based twin brothers are pushing new frontiers by turning ideas and concepts into innovative and interactive solutions that educate and entertain the mind



DINESH BHATT

engineer education." The brothers are running an organisation by the name House of Learning and are concentrating on producing CD-Rom based edutainment products comprising animated and interactive games. Recently, they have come up with a CD called Cricket India where you get to meet your favourite Indian cricket players

interaction with animated character of Mahatma Gandhi and learns about his life, his concept of non-violence, equality and human rights. Then there is a CD on HIV AIDS under their global e-training programme. It is designed with customized region specific popular content like plays, e-puppet shows and e-folk stories to spread awareness about AIDS.

Says Hilmi, "The reason why we came up with the concept is that millions of people living in rural areas have no access to formal education and even if any learning material is available it is not up to scratch. The 'engineering education' concept would help make learning simple, interesting and exciting." Subhi chips in, "Engineering education concept is self-evaluative and in which the success of a learner can be monitored." This learning process, according to him, is beneficial not only for the poor but also for adolescents, adult learners and physically

handicapped. Both the brothers, however, feel that to accentuate the acceptability of this learning process, the methodology and the priority areas need to be looked at. In the methodology aspect, the brothers have whittled down the choices to five like (i) Identification of problem and its validation; (ii) learner's needs analysis; (iii) technology selection; (iv) dissemination of training and (v) monitoring and assessment.

Both Hilmi and Subhi are workaholics and spend as much as fourteen hours daily working on their concept, designing, planning and meticulous execution. They get a lot of encouragement from their mother who is a senior reader in DU. Hilmi is married with two kids.

They are also working on the concept of mobile classroom teaching for Indian villages containing subjects as varied as yoga, Indian epics, sports and other knowledge related themes. "We are sure things would fall in place in a few months," said Subhi as Hilmi beamed a smile.

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Aditya Mukherjee

THESE twin brothers are possessed by the idea of doing something innovative. They were pursuing their six-year integrated course in M.Tech (Computer Application) from Russia, when in 1998, in a sudden quirk of fate, both of them had to come back to India after the death of their father who was teaching political science at South Campus in DU. For the thirty-four-year olds Hilmi Quraishi and Subhi Quraishi of Vaishali, Pitampura, the thought of producing educational CDs for the semi-literate and

children stayed pulsing strongly in their imagination. Says Hilmi Quraishi, "Once back in India, we thought why not put our expertise to best use by doing something educative for the general masses. Our purpose is to use technology to

Engineering education

- Making learning simple, interesting, exciting
- Learner's needs analysis
- Technology selection

and play virtual games with them.

According to Subhi, the organisation is developing learning and training needs for the semi-literate masses by "effectively integrating technology in every aspect of learning for multi-lingual and multi-cultural use." Both believe in the efficacy of content research as a powerful tool to reach out to the masses.

The Quaraishis, who have a website (www.house-of-learning.org), are setting their eyes on the Hindi belt to crystallise their concept. In 'Virtual Gandhi Ashram' a user has a hands-on