

Stubiz



HARSHA P.J

AJAY HEGDE

# AN 'I' FOR DETAIL

**A**n engineer by profession, 23 year old Harsha P.J. is now pursuing his MBA from the Bhavan-Marshall Institute of Technology at Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Bangalore. It was quite by accident that he started his rather offbeat business about a year ago with his friend Ajay Hegde, a doctor from KIMS who is currently pursuing his internship. The following is an excerpt of a candid interview with Harsha, the co-founder of iRepair.

**When was iRepair conceptualized and by who?**

iPod Repair India was started by me and my close friend Ajay Hegde in September 2008. It was started with the sole intention of helping fellow Indians and students in general fix their damaged iPods at very reasonable prices compared to the exorbitant prices charged by Apple. With the passing of time, we slowly branched out into iPhone repairs too and gradually evolved into iRepair – a one-stop solution for all iPod and iPhone related problems in India.



## What inspired you to come up with an idea like this?

It so happened that my own iPod of 4 years suddenly went dead one day in August 2008. This was immediately after I passed out of Electrical and Electronics Engineering from Bangalore Institute of Technology and was thinking of pursuing my MBA. Ajay, a friend, suggested we open the iPod in our own and check out if we can repair it ourselves since our trip to the nearby Apple store made us realize that their solution was going to burn a big hole in our pockets.

This later turned out to be our first encounter with iPod Repair. Following this success, we decided to search on the internet to see if there were any private service providers for iPod repairs in India. The search showed us that there was nobody to do this job at a reasonable price anywhere in India. We decided to use this opportunity and started iRepair.

## Tell us about the various services iRepair provides.

At iRepair, we provide all kinds of hardware and software solutions across all models of the iPod and the iPhone. We replace everything from damaged LCDs and batteries to casings and motherboards for all iPod and iPhone models. We specialize in fixing iPods and iPhones which have all sorts of physical damages and water damage issues, something even Apple-authorized service centers do not provide anywhere in the world. We also provide simple software solutions like Firmware updates and **unlocking iPhones** for usage in India too.

We provide these services at very reasonable and competitive prices like any similar private organization across the world. Our main interface with customers is through our full fledged website [www.irepair.in](http://www.irepair.in). Through a very efficient and organized problem ticket system, all our customers get to interact with us on a one-on-one basis through which we provide them dedicated solutions to all their

iPod and iPhone repair queries.

## What would a regular day at iRepair be like?

A regular day starts with Ajay and I attending classes in the morning followed by customer meetings in the late afternoon and evening. It is not uncommon to find either of us meeting customers and fixing iPods or iPhones on the move around Bangalore, most of the time in Café Coffee Days or Baristas around the city. And what they say is true. In our business, a lot actually happens over coffee!

## How many people do you have working under you?

Currently we are two people running the complete show at iRepair. We have hired a specialist technician who assists us in complex problems related to iPhone repairs.

## How satisfied are your clients?

Our clients are an extremely satisfied group and as proof of it, they all come back to our website and leave us their testimonials on a Customer Testimonials page which keeps growing. A major reason for their satisfaction is because of the fact that we also offer our customers a six-month replacement guarantee for all spares of iPods or iPhones replaced by us.

## How did you fund your business in the initial stages?

Our initial investment was only into designing a good website and getting fliers, posters and visiting cards printed for the purpose of advertising our venture. This we could manage with our own pocket money during our graduation days. All spares for repairs of iPods and iPhones were bought only after confirmed orders with advance payment. Thus, we started off with a very low capital investment of just a few thousand rupees.

## How are you able to balance work and studies?

Balancing studies and work is proving to be an easy job at the moment. I am able to relate to quite a few things I study at B-School everyday into the business and I try to implement many things I learn at college into improving the way iRepair is run. We believe that in this way, we are slowly making iRepair a very organized and professionally run organization.

## Where do you see your company 5 years from now?

We see the name iRepair becoming synonymous with iPods and iPhones in the years to come. We are confident that in 5 years we will be among the best service providers for such repairs all over the world. We also hope to become a one-stop service centre for all niche consumer electronic products around the world.