

SIDDHARTH BANERJEE

LEADING UNIVO'S MISSION TO MAKE HIGHER
EDUCATION FUTURE-READY

Kaushal Kumar | The CEO Magazine

In today's fast-changing higher education landscape, UNIVO Education stands out for making quality online learning accessible and future-ready. Led by the CEO, Siddharth Banerjee, the company has partnered with leading universities to empower learners across 115+ countries. In a conversation with The CEO Magazine, Siddharth shared UNIVO's journey, impact, and vision for a learner-first, technology-driven future.

TCM: PLEASE SHARE A BRIEF HISTORY OF YOUR COMPANY AND ITS JOURNEY SO FAR. SHARE A FEW MILESTONES, SUCCESS STORIES, OR PROUD ACHIEVEMENTS THAT DEFINE YOUR COMPANY'S IMPACT SO FAR.

Siddharth: At UNIVO Education, our journey has been driven by a single vision: to make world-class higher education accessible, future-ready, and impactful. In a short span, we have become a trusted partner to leading universities, enabling them to offer online degree programs that combine academic excellence with real-world relevance. With a strong focus on innovation and a learner-first approach, we have empowered more than 1,60,000 learners across 115+ countries so far to pursue their ambitions without boundaries.

Our growth from INR 50 crores in FY23 to over INR 250 crores in FY25 reflects not just scale but purpose-driven progress. Being ranked 4th in TIME World's Top EdTech Rising Stars 2025 is a proud milestone that reaffirms our commitment to transforming higher education and mainstreaming online degree programs globally. At UNIVO, we are transforming online higher education in India by enabling universities to offer quality online degree programs.

TCM: TELL US ABOUT YOUR PERSONAL JOURNEY. WHAT INSPIRED YOU TO LEAD THIS COMPANY, AND HOW DID YOUR PROFESSIONAL PATH UNFOLD?

Siddharth: My career journey has been driven by curiosity, learning, and a deep desire to create meaningful impact. After completing my MBA, I shaped my career with Unilever, where I learned the fundamentals of growing strong businesses, understanding consumer behaviour & building my leadership skills. Over the last decade, I had the privilege of working with leading organisations such as



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Vodafone, Facebook, Games24x7, and Pearson, across diverse sectors from FMCG to telecom, digital media, gaming, and education. Each of these experiences taught me how technology, innovation, and human-centred thinking can transform how people live, connect, and learn. Across my 25 years of consumer tech experience, I have been deeply immersed in how technology and innovation can reshape industries and unlock new business opportunities. My role at UNIVO allows me to accomplish 3 key themes – firstly, contribute to Nation Building - at present, India's Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) in Higher Education is around 28%, and the Government has articulated a goal of 50% GER by 2035 to support the 2047 "Viksit Bharat" vision.

I believe that online education, and UNIVO in particular, will play a major role in achieving this. Secondly, leading UNIVO is about making a meaningful difference to learners and empowering working professionals, first-gen graduates, women, and entrepreneurs to get career-ready and high-quality learning experiences via Online Degrees from our Partner Universities. And thirdly, it is my shared ambition with my UNIVO team to build one of India's most sustainable and respected Online Higher Education companies in the Indian Education Ecosystem.

TCM: WHAT ARE THE CORE SERVICES OR SOLUTIONS YOUR COMPANY PROVIDES TODAY?

Siddharth: At UNIVO, we partner with leading universities to responsibly scale their online degree offerings, enabling them to deliver world-class,

career-relevant education to learners globally. Our model provides end-to-end support from program planning to technology enablement, content development, learner engagement, and industry alignment. What truly differentiates UNIVO is our unwavering focus on delivering quality outcomes, empowering learners, and enhancing their employability.

We bridge the industry-academia gap by facilitating collaborations between our partner universities and leading organizations such as HCLTech, TCS iON, and KPMG, and enable universities to co-create specialized online degree programs in high-demand areas like Artificial Intelligence, Cyber Security, Data Analytics, and Machine Learning, among others. These partnerships ensure that our learners don't just earn degrees from our partner universities; they graduate with the skills, exposure, and confidence required to succeed in the future workplace. At its core, UNIVO's mission is to make quality online higher education both accessible and industry-relevant, empowering universities and learners to thrive in the digital era.

TCM: WHAT MAKES YOUR COMPANY STAND OUT IN A COMPETITIVE LANDSCAPE, AND WHAT KEY STRATEGIES SUSTAIN YOUR DIFFERENTIATION?

Siddharth: UNIVO stands out because of our clear focus on delivering quality outcomes, empowering learners, and enhancing their employability. In a fast-evolving higher education landscape, we differentiate ourselves by truly keeping the learner first. Every initiative we drive – from program design to technology integration – begins with the question: How will this



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help the learner succeed? Our strategy at UNIVO combines three pillars. First, academic excellence at scale, through deep partnerships with leading universities to deliver high-quality online degrees.

Second, strong industry collaboration, working with organisations such as HCLTech, TCS iON, and KPMG to enable universities to co-create high-quality curricula aligned with industry standards and evolving job market needs. And third, technology and data-led innovation, enabling personalised, engaging, and outcome-driven learning experiences. Together, these elements make UNIVO not just an enabler of online education but a catalyst for building a future-ready, employable generation.

TCM: HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE THE COMPANY CULTURE AT YOUR ORGANISATION?

Siddharth: As one of India's leading online higher education enablers, UNIVO has built a culture rooted in collaboration, innovation, and shared purpose. We see ourselves as partners in progress, working alongside universities, industry leaders, and learners to shape the future of online education. Our teams thrive in an environment that values ideas, agility, and accountability. We believe work is more than tasks; it's about community, celebration, and collective success. Through engaging events, weekly leadership connect sessions, and continuous learning initiatives, we ensure every UNIVATOR feels informed, inspired, and heard.

TCM: WHAT'S YOUR APPROACH TO ATTRACTING AND RETAINING TOP TALENT IN AN INCREASINGLY DYNAMIC WORKFORCE ECOSYSTEM?

Siddharth: We focus on hiring team players who are passionate, curious, and driven to make a difference. As their journey with UNIVO progresses, we invest in their continuous development through on-the-job training, upskilling programs, & cross-functional learning. Our people-first culture, transparent communication, and recognition-driven environment ensure that every UNIVATOR feels valued, heard, motivated, and empowered. In a dynamic workforce ecosystem, our strongest retention strategy is simply to empower people to grow with the organisation and find meaning in what they do.

TCM: HAVE YOU ADOPTED OR INTEGRATED AI, AUTOMATION, OR OTHER EMERGING TECHNOLOGIES INTO YOUR OPERATIONS OR OFFERINGS? IF YES, HOW HAS IT IMPACTED YOUR BUSINESS?

Siddharth: AI is transforming education and will redefine student learning in this decade. UNIVO is building an AI-ready ecosystem to make learning adaptive, personalised, immersive, and career-focused. An example of a tech-enabled innovation is Professor AMI, India's first AI-powered 24/7 virtual assistant, launched in 2023 and now upgraded to Prof. AMI 2.0, a Socratic Virtual Assistant offering personalised course-specific support, working closely with our key University Partner, Amity University Online. UNIVO has also worked with our University Partner and key digital partners to co-build an AI-powered Career Services Platform with about 100,000 job listings, an intelligent resume builder, and simulated interviews.

As technology evolves, we continue to build AI use cases across the entire value chain at UNIVO. AI-driven analytics help us monitor learner performance, optimise content delivery, and improve program outcomes in real time. On the operational side, automation has streamlined workflows, ensuring speed, accuracy, and scalability for our university partners.

TCM: WHERE DO YOU SEE YOUR COMPANY HEADING IN THE NEXT THREE TO FIVE YEARS? WHAT'S YOUR VISION FOR THE FUTURE?

Siddharth: At UNIVO, our next chapter is defined by scale, innovation, and measurable impact. Having played a pivotal role in making online degrees a credible and mainstream choice in India, we are now focused on deepening this ecosystem by strengthening university collaborations, enhancing technology infrastructure, and driving learner success at scale. Over the next three to five years, we aim to empower millions of learners and improve career outcomes through industry-aligned degree programs, adaptive learning models, and robust learner support systems.

In alignment with the 50% GER vision for 2035, our focus is on bridging access and employability gaps across every smaller part of India by enabling affordable, high-quality online education. With a strong operational trajectory from INR 50 crores in FY 23 to INR 250 plus crores in FY 25 and looking to touch INR 350 crores in FY 26, UNIVO continues to advance sustainably on the three pillars of good governance, good quality, and good learner outcomes, paving the way for a future where online higher education in India is accessible, impactful, and globally respected. ■