

IT start-ups to connect with IT majors; gain early adopters

fe Bureau

Pune, Nov 2: Most start-ups face problems while attempting to attract funds to kickstart their ventures. Usually, their products are yet to be tested at a customer site and it is very difficult for them to even attempt to convince potential customers to try these. As a result when the actual customers do turn up, they end up facing the same problem—has their product been tested at any site? Added to their problem is the absence of mentoring and lack of exposure to the markets and therefore when the venture capitalists turn up, these companies find themselves

unable to convince them of the viability of their product.

Software Exporters Association of Pune (SEAP) in association with TiE and Pune Open Coffee Club has decided to bridge this gap and extend help to these companies through PuneConnect2011.

"The attempt is to connect start-up companies with established companies giving them an opportunity to get experienced advisers and mentors and also get early adapters and beta customers for their products," Gaurav Mehra, president, SEAP said.

"Pune has the second largest number of product

companies after Bangalore. In the last couple of years, software startups have been mushrooming all over," he said, pegging the number of start-ups to around 300 in the city.

SEAP has selected 12 start-ups from Pune allowing them to present their business ideas at PuneConnect2011 on November 5. One such start up includes serial entrepreneur Shirish Deodhar who set up Frontier Software in 1998 and went on to get acquired by US based Veritas. His company Innovize Tech Software, a firm that is on the Red Herring 2011 list of Asia's Top 100 technology companies will pilot its

product with Saba Software and SAS. Similarly ReliScore another start-up and interactive web portal that enables job seekers to showcase their technology skills across domains has found a beta customer in Saba Software.

Moti Thadani, head-research and development, SAS said it is difficult for companies as well to find new products and an effort of this kind would make it easier for established companies to connect with start-ups as well. Navin Kabra of Reliscore says most events are about funding. Here the focus is early customer adoption, he said.

These companies will be selected by designated panel of SEAP and TiE members. Vishwas Mahajan, president-Elect, TiE Pune said TiE runs a similar mentoring program and currently mentors around 300 start-ups in the country. Select few ideas will have a chance to participate 'Advantage Pune', a large event being organized in Pune in December 2011 by Zinnov Consulting. The companies short listed for 'PuneConnect2011' are AdMogul, ApplyEzee, BizPorto, CoTrakr, Déjà vu 3D, DroidCloud, InnovizeTech, Kpoint, Reliscore, Vaultize, World Without Me and intouchid.