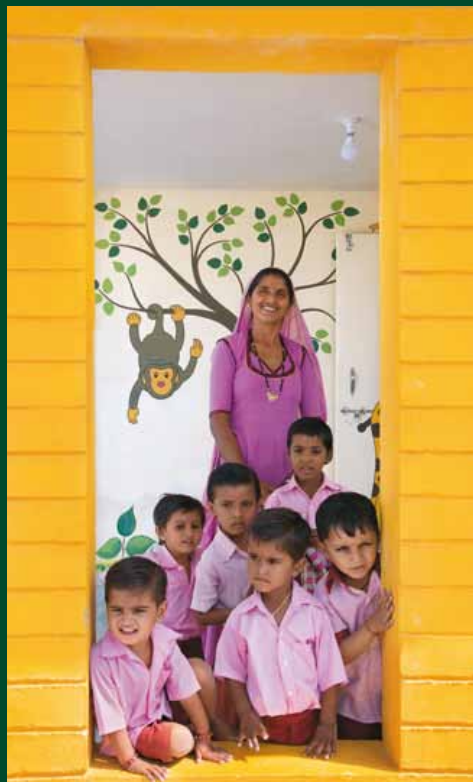




The india drive 2



OUTLOOK
BUSINESS
Think beyond. Stay ahead.



Transforming Lives with IT

Sonata Software is a global IT Solutions firm focused on catalysing the business transformation initiatives of its clients through deep domain knowledge, technology expertise and customer commitment. The company delivers innovative solutions for travel, retail and distribution and software product companies through IP based platforms, products, and services.

Sonata's solutions bring together new digital technologies such as Omni-channel Commerce, Mobility, Analytics, Cloud, and ERP, to drive enhanced customer engagement, operations efficiency as well as return on IT investments.

Sonata has been the fastest growing listed Information Technology company in India across revenues, profits and stock performance in the last five years. This has been due to a highly differentiated strategy which has now culminated in its proprietary approach towards digital transformation called 'platformation.'





Sonata has used cutting-edge technology in the form of content-rich tablets to encourage teachers adopt newer modes of teaching



Sonata is deeply committed to promoting the development of the country's rich art and handcraft tradition



Delivering Fruitful And Sustainable Benefits

Sonata Software's Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives are committed to delivering fruitful, sustainable and measurable benefits to partner organisations through both financial and technological support. Empowering beneficiaries with technology helps them scale and seamlessly integrate mainstream development activity and achieve goals that were hitherto not possible.

“In designing our CSR programmes, we have decided to focus on initiatives that have a long-term sustainable impact on society. The focus is on employment generation, education, entrepreneur development and the preservation of art, handicrafts and cultural heritage. We believe technology can play a key role in the transformation of society. With digital technologies becoming all pervasive and highly affordable, the creative use of technology in our areas of focus will achieve the desired impact. Hence our CSR efforts are mainly focused on implementing technology to achieve the desired results. This approach also enables our employees to directly participate in the company's CSR efforts and contribute their skills and experience to make an impact,” explains Managing Director and CEO, P Srikar Reddy.

Sonata's sustainability goal is addressed through the three-pronged approach of Economic, Environment and Social Sustainability and its CSR vision, 'Make a Deep Impact and Transform Lives', is an extension of its corporate vision - 'Go Deeper. Transform Business with IT'. In the form and manner of its CSR contributions, the three-decade old Bengaluru-headquartered software major chose to take the route less travelled. Apart from environment and education, Sonata allocates a substantial proportion of its contributions to organisations that work for the 'Preservation of National Heritage as well as Art and Culture'; and the 'Promotion and Development of Arts and Handicrafts'. During fiscal 2017, Sonata spent half of its corporate responsibility funds on two core themes - crafts and communities - in order to help create employment and growth as well as promote and preserve culture and heritage.

Watershed Moments In Digital Learning

Sonata's education initiative has brought waves of happiness to hundreds of children like those from impoverished hamlets around the 450-acre Rishi Valley School in Andhra Pradesh's Madanapalli region. Its partnership with the non-profit Rishi Valley Institute for Educational Resources [RIVER] has created a highly acclaimed pedagogical innovation - a multi-grade, multi-level teaching tool called 'Ladder of Learning'.

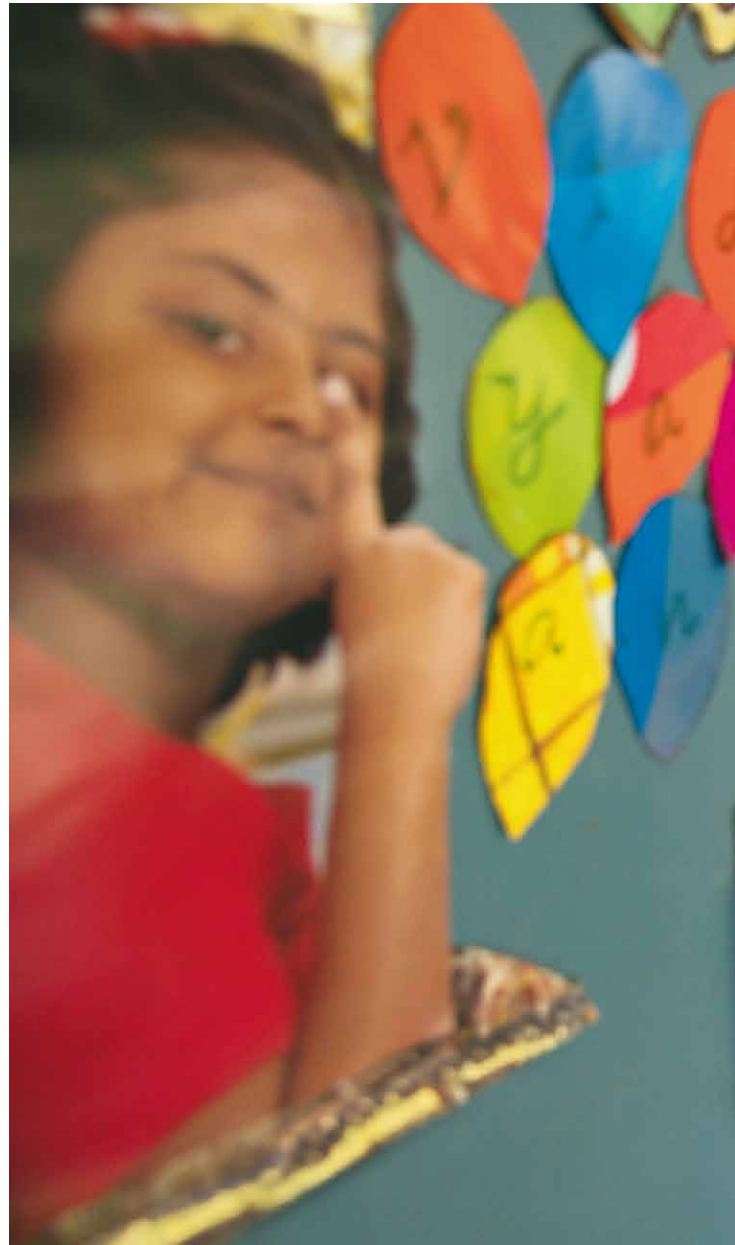
The company's army of software engineers is creating a watershed moment in digital learning helping teachers like Kala Jyothi and her

students stay on top of the 'RIVERbank'. "Technological support from partners like Sonata help up-scale our efforts to reach a wider audience," say RIVER co-directors and creators of this unique learning model, Padmanabha Rao and his wife Rama.

The Raos - who are education experts and have been the recipients of several honours including being named Asoka Fellows, met Srikar Reddy while they were attending a World Economic Forum (WEF) in China. It was here that Sonata decided to 'set sail' with the RIVER education outreach. "I met Dr Rao at the WEF in China a few years ago," says Reddy. "We were very impressed with the work the RIVER Foundation was doing in creating a new curriculum that was focused on resolving the ground level challenges of implementing educational reforms and also making the whole learning process very engaging. We discussed an area in which we could collaborate and have started an initial engagement around creating a knowledge sharing platform," he explains. "Sonata's technological inputs and their key collaboration have helped us take our outreach to hundreds of government and non-profit-run schools across Andhra Pradesh and other parts of the country," adds Padmanabha Rao.

Committed to being a responsible corporate organisation that delivers a positive impact on society, Sonata's CSR objectives are aimed at leveraging its technology expertise to a range of community-oriented initiatives. From providing the software to bring more children back to government primary schools and encouraging school teachers to deepen their commitment to teaching to elevating the livelihoods of disadvantaged artisan communities, Sonata's CSR approach is in sync with India's development agenda.

Sonata believes that the true measure of growth, success and progress lies beyond financials or conventional economic indices. It is reflected in the difference that business and industry make to the lives of people.





Left: Social Sustainability - focusing on helping to create employment and growth. This page: A class in progress in Rishi Valley School - making the whole learning process very engaging

Adapting Curricula For Local Content

Recognising that overburdened teachers have little creative control of classroom content and teaching methodologies, Sonata used cutting-edge technology in the form of content-rich tablets to encourage teachers adopt newer modes of teaching and thus help bring down government school dropout rates. Government curricula is adapted for local context and customised to each student's learning ability. So, every one learns at the same time and each in a self-directed way.

Sonata designed and created a Teacher Collaboration Platform to facilitate communication, collaboration and content sharing. The responsive website enables teachers, administrators and subject matter experts to share best practices and knowledge with each other. Capabilities include a digital repository of learning materials and a collaboration forum accessible to a closed-user group. The platform facilitates chats, training and discussions among members of the forum.

Piloted among 54 primary schools in Andhra Pradesh, the platform will subsequently be rolled out in over 1,000 schools in the state. This means that teachers like Kala Jyothi can now plug into Sonata's technological contributions to embellish their pedagogical offerings in addition to using cards, charts and songs more innovatively.

Technology has also helped to increase the scale of use. The plan is to reach a million teachers who can replicate this model to lakhs of schools in multiple languages across the country or even around the world. "This is a family and not a school," says Jyothi, "and that is one reason why the children - 40 of them at this school called Vidyavanam - flock to us so lovingly." The children are given mid-day meals that keep their bodies strong as well as tech-enabled tablets that keep their curiosity and desire to learn alive.



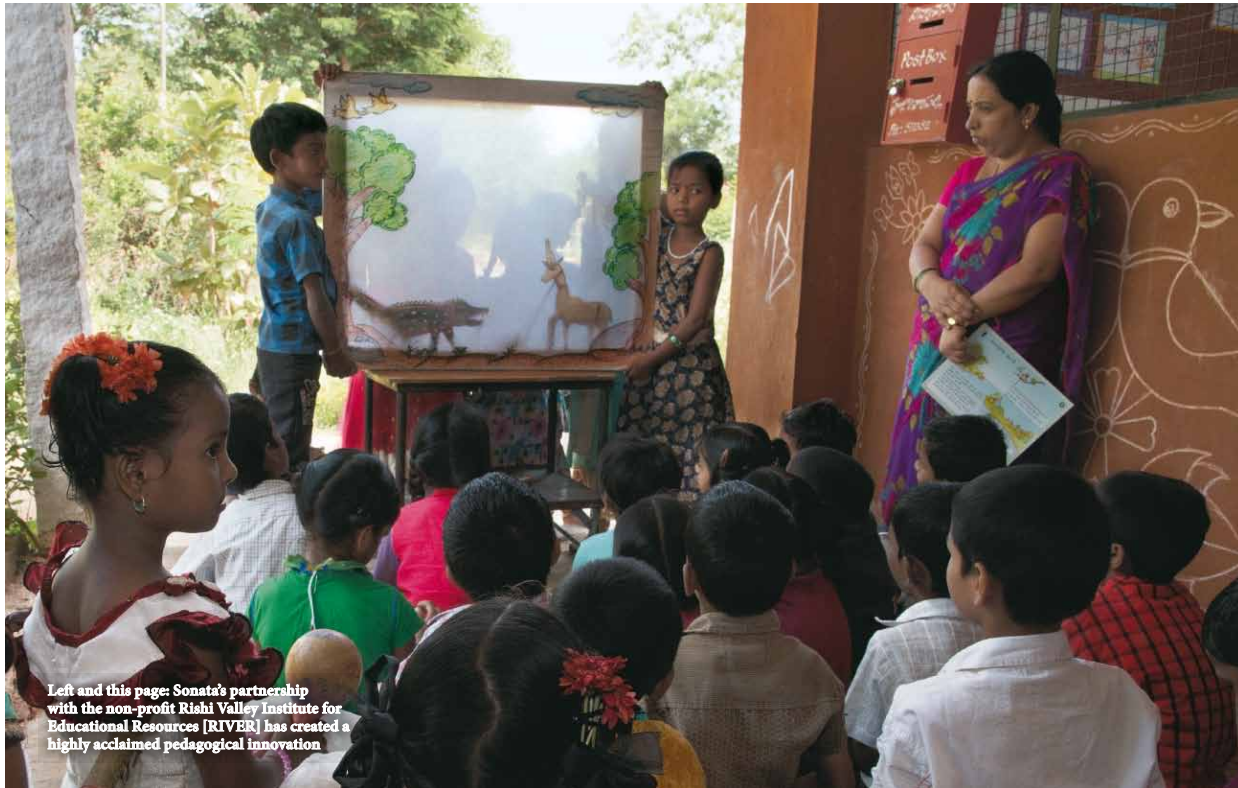
Sourcing local content and local knowledge has a way of bringing the community together. "Our effort is to harness local knowledge, traditions and folklore and plough this back to the next generation by a combination of aural, video and experiential learning," explains Rama Rao. Sonata's technological platform RIVERbank will bring the teacher to the forefront by enabling and motivating him or her to facilitate a child's learning. It will also help the thousands of schools and their pupils in Andhra Pradesh and other states in the country that have embraced this new learning tool. Because technology is such a great leveller, Sonata wants to ensure that the advantage of computers and tablets reach villages across the country. "You can also pack a lot more work into a small tablet," says Rao. Sonata CEO, Srikar Reddy is of the firm belief that Sonata's technological push will not only amplify innovative, out-of-the-box educational models but will also bring thousands of children to school. More importantly school dropouts will be back in a classroom where they belong.

Taking its education initiative further Sonata associated with Sense India in 2014-15. The first national NGO in India to support the development of comprehensive services and training for deaf and blind persons as well as individuals afflicted with multi-sensory impairment (MSI), Sonata's initial financial contribution helped meet expenses towards student education, skilling of teachers and improvement of infrastructure.

Enriching The Lives Of Rural Craftspeople

Apart from education and environment, Sonata is also deeply committed to preserving India's heritage and its arts and culture as well as promoting the development of the country's rich art and handicraft tradition. The company has taken several steps in this direction using its vast technological expertise to facilitate craftspeople and artisans. In rural India, an estimated 60 million artisans - half of them women - are engaged in the creation of traditional crafts and handloom weaving. The women who work out of their homes have little or no access to markets, lack working capital and have no design or production up-skilling. Most have to count on middlemen to sell their products thereby getting a pittance for their hard work. Believing that even one artisan who gets a leg-up would have a positive cascading effect on the supply chain, families and communities, Sonata provided opportunities for the innovative use of resources towards skilling, financial and digital training. This has had a measurable impact in social and economic terms.

Neelam Chibber and her husband Jacob's example is just one story of Sonata's success in this area. Graduates from the National Institute of Design [NID], Ahmadabad, Chibber had launched Industree Foundation a design company aimed at helping rural artisans sell their work to an urban audience. Her field study in Bastar had showed that much of a rural artisan's work goes unnoticed in the urban sector.



Left and this page: Sonata's partnership with the non-profit Rishi Valley Institute for Educational Resources [RIVER] has created a highly acclaimed pedagogical innovation

The idea behind Industree was to elevate the overall living standards of artisans in the hinterland by providing them with technical, capital and marketing support. The vision: to turn low-income artisans into owners and entrepreneurs through grassroots community enterprises.

Sonata's association with Industree has helped the Foundation in many ways. Today, every artisan's work can be viewed online on a special app or a special page where you can see the entire history or timeline of the creative work of art. If you are buying a *Kalamkari* sari from Karimnagar in Telangana, for example, you will not only get to see the finished product but also be able to take a quick peek into the sari production timeline. In 2015, Sonata, leveraged its expertise and experience in the digital transformation of enterprises through its unique 'platformation' concept, to build an end to end e-commerce platform for Industree to enable direct market linkages for its producer companies to enhance their visibility and profitability.

An End To End E-Commerce Platform

The platform offers customers facing features as well as back-end facilitation features such as order fulfilment, invoicing modules, inventory management and third party integration for invoicing and delivery execution. Manufacturers can also access critical back-end data related to inventory levels, receivables, shipping and accounting. The scope of the project has expanded to target and impact one million artisans, over a 10 year period, under an Industree initiative called 'Mission Creative Million'. Following the re-think, the platform was rebranded as 'Hastti' and the technology interface was revamped to reflect the new personality. Says Navin Jacob Mathew, Head-Planning, CSR and Program Management, Sonata, "The partnership that Sonata has with Industree is unique. The digital e-commerce platform will enable Mission Creative Million's vision of Industree





The open-air classroom, called Vidyavanam where children are sitting cross-legged on a small hilly mound, waiting for their teacher to lead them in a discovery-oriented, knowledge-sharing journey.



This page: Craft items for sale.
Right: Teachers in an outdoor discussion

assist artisans in developing products and reaching markets. This will bring greater transparency and traceability to otherwise opaque supply chains in this sector.”

Artisan-owned enterprises connected via a digital collaboration network are key to maximising margins and driving scale in Creative Million. Products sold on Hastti are traceable across their value chain, rich in stories of the makers, production processes and their cultural ties, showcasing unique skills and the authenticity of material. Tractability and ethical sourcing create better working conditions for artisans and more wholesome products for consumers, who know exactly what they’re buying and who made it. This allows products by creative producers in India to retain their authenticity, and for the producers themselves to stay in the regions where these crafts can best flourish. This is a unique selling point for global export markets. Says Chibber, “The B2B platform (Hastti) that Sonata is helping Creative Million build to enable producer-owned enterprises showcase their work, is the first of its kind in India. It will have a huge impact on revenues earned because there will not be any intermediaries involved. This platform will be 100 per cent owned by producers and so any profits that sales yield will be shared amongst them. This will facilitate great strides in economic empowerment.”

Preserving Art And Heritage

Sonata’s focus on the use of technology to help preserve our national heritage is well demonstrated in its custom-built portal that enables market linkages for the alumni and students of The Handloom School run by Women Weave in Maheshwar, Madhya Pradesh. In 2012, Sonata partnered with the Bengaluru Chapter of the Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage or INTACH by building a self-guided walk application. The app, available across IOS, Windows and Android formats in both English and Kannada leads visitors through heritage neighbourhoods, highlighting points of interest through interactive maps and audio guides. Sonata has supported the conservation efforts of the Deccan Heritage Foundation and the UNESCO- affiliated Indian Heritage Cities Network in drought-prone Bidar, Karnataka by building a virtual walkthrough of a restored medieval underground water distribution network.

Both projects leveraged technology and digital tools to shine a light on restoration and rehabilitation efforts and raise public interest in India’s national heritage assets. Sonata’s CSR roadmap for the next five years will continue to focus on long-term engagements and creating a sustainable impact rather than ‘point engagements’, where the use of technology for creating a social impact will be the key element. The areas of focus will continue to be employment generation, preparing people for better futures through quality education and the preservation of art and heritage, with the development of Indian handloom and handicrafts being a major thrust area. ■



EYE WITNESS

Rural learning centre: It’s a bright Tuesday morning and about 30 young children are sitting cross-legged on a small hilly mound, waiting for their teacher Kala Jyothi to lead them in an hour of a fun-filled, discovery-oriented, knowledge-sharing journey. The open-air classroom, called Vidyavanam, begins with a short devotional prayer before the kids drown one in loud Telugu folk music. These are children from the impoverished hamlets around the 450-acre Rishi Valley School in Andhra Pradesh’s Madanapalli region. Thanks to an innovative school-in-a-box educational toolkit developed locally, rural learning centres like Vidyavanam are seeing a surge in attendance.

Unique tech platform: Sonata is launching a first-of-its-kind digital platform that is completely artisan owned for Industree Foundation. This platform called Hastti is like a Flipkart or an Amazon e-commerce platform but for artisans and artistes only, points out Sonata CEO Srikar Reddy. Says Neelam Chibber of Industree Foundation, “A partnership with a company like Sonata Software gives us additional technical capacity, which is essential when it comes to creating a relevant social impact. Social innovation means staying on the cutting edge of new technologies and this is what Sonata is giving us.”

Helping the specially challenged: Sense India’s association with Sonata has helped the deaf, blind and multi-sensory impaired. Says Rajesh, Programme Manager, Sense India, “Sonata Software’s support has helped us strengthen our advocacy which has resulted in the recognition of ‘deafness and blindness’ in the recently passed ‘Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act-2016’. Its contribution is nothing short of a lifeline, as we work with Sonata through every transition in life.”

An Industree success: Rajalakshmi, 34, was just an office assistant to Neelam Chibber. Today, she is a floor supervisor with eight artisan producers working under her. Wares are deposited at a single platform with Industree being the chief facilitator and Sonata providing a strong pillar and foundation of technological support.



Srikar Reddy,
Managing Director,
Sonata Software

Sonata's CSR vision is to, improve quality of life through technology. The focus is to create long term sustainable development initiatives. Our focus is on employment generation, skill building, education and entrepreneur development. The aim is also to ensure employee participation in the CSR initiatives. Companies are expected to have a clear vision on what they want to solve. Companies should not spread themselves thin or only pursue mainstream initiatives . The primary objective for a business enterprise company is to ensure that endeavors are facilitating sustainable growth . Technology companies can identify needs in the society where the usage of technology can give wider access to people's produce, or enable a wider access to a learning platform , or improve awareness about specific arts , handicrafts and Indian heritage and then link it with core competencies of the organization to cater to the social gaps and not solve transient problems.



**TRADITIONAL ARTS,
TEXTILE AND
HANDICRAFTS**

**TECHNOLOGY
INCUBATION &
ENTREPRENEURSHIP**

**EDUCATION AND THE
ENVIRONMENT**

**PRESERVATION OF
OUR CULTURAL
HERITAGE**



This book highlights the CSR initiatives leading companies have made in addressing social and developmental issues. Their programmes are now aligned with national priorities such as public health, education, livelihood, water conservation and natural resource management

Publication Partner



SONATA SOFTWARE