

Online Communication & Training for the Modern Mobile Workforce



Ruchit Garg - CEO

9Slides is the leading online communication & training solution for the modern mobile workforce. Headquartered in Redmond WA, 9Slides enables training leaders to publish rich video content to the cloud directly from their mobile devices. This on-demand content can then be served to an audience based anywhere, at any time, using any device. The flexibility and robustness of this solution has made 9Slides a platform of choice for companies across multiple different industries, including retail, construction, automobile manufacturing, education and many more. 9Slides is growing rapidly, with global customers based in the USA, Europe, Asia and Australia.

Interview conducted by: Lynn Fosse, Senior Editor, CEOCFO Magazine

CEOCFO: Mr. Garg, what is the concept for 9Slides?

Mr. Garg: The core concept behind 9Slides is being able to communicate much more effectively online. There are millions of documents and PowerPoint presentations get shared online everyday over email, Dropbox, SharePoint etc. but we do not realize that when we are sharing a presentation slide, our intent was to share presentations but we are sharing just slides. The presentation is much more about the story behind text and images. I thought, how about we provide a way for our users to communicate complete story behind the text images you have on your documents and presentation slides. We ended up creating this online service, which has now evolved into a b2b application for training and communicating within an organization as well as outside organization.

CEOCFO: How does it work?

Mr. Garg: The way it works is pretty simple. Imagine that you have to send a presentation to your remote counterparts in Sweden. Take that presentation, import it into our iPad app (or windows app), and simply press 'record' button to start recording your audio and video narration to your slides. When you are done recording, you hit publish. This published content can be watched on any device anytime without requiring any software download.

CEOCFO: Who tends to be using your services today? Is there a particular type of client?

Mr. Garg: 9Slides is finding great resonance amongst wide range of industries and several use cases. We are getting great traction from Human Resource department for using 9Slides as training and communication tool. We have many other very successful companies who are using it for key executive messages, sales support and beyond.

CEOCFO: Have people been looking for a better solution?

Mr. Garg: With business going global and offices more dispersed than ever, it has magnified the need of communication and training tools which can help connect remote workers without being in the same room or online at same time. It is very typical for us to get responses from new customers "Wow, why has someone not done this before?" Better communication impacts positively both top and bottom line of any organization. We have disrupting the way we share documents online, by letting our users add their story and personality behind text and images on the documents such as presentation slides.

CEOCFO: What is your revenue model?

Mr. Garg: It is a subscription-based model, where our customers sign up for recurring monthly or yearly terms. One can try it out for free for first 30 days as much they want. For larger enterprise deals we do have custom pricing offers as well.

CEOCFO: Are there particular departments or segments of businesses that have been using 9Slides? Are there some areas that have not paid too much attention that really should?

Mr. Garg: The areas where we are getting great deals of traction are from Human Resource, Training and from communications departments of global businesses. There are many other areas where people have started using 9Slides. This will continue to grow as many more segments realize and understand the potential of our offering.

CEOCFO: What is your geographic reach today?

Mr. Garg: Interestingly, we do have customers all across the globe. We have customers in the US, the UK, Europe, Australia as well as India. Beauty of doing business online.

CEOCFO: *Would you tell us a bit about the analytics you provide?*

Mr. Garg: We do provide deep analytics today. We do allow you to measure your effectiveness of your online communication on 9Slides platform. We can provide how many people came and watched your content. We can track who actually saw the content, how much time a person in your company had spent on a particular slide etc. We can also help you measure comprehension of your audience by letting you show quizzes at the end of your content.

CEOCFO: *Have you done follow up? Do you know if many people are taking advantage of the analytics or is that more secondary to having a good presentation?*

Mr. Garg: Most of the businesses who work with us today, are finding analytics very important part of our offering. Some scenarios such as training customers pay more attention to the reports, and there are some other scenarios such as executive messaging aggregate analytics information is good enough.

CEOCFO: *Would you tell us about the ease of use?*

Mr. Garg: It is very, very easy to use. It is actually one of the strongest points that we see our customers liking. Traditionally, people used to spend many days to put together a video presentation, spend thousands of dollars to do that and then publish it. Now, we have super simplified that process using our modern tools to just few minutes. All businesses are in this constant pressure of reacting to market as fast as they can, and our tools can help them communicate quick and efficiently within organization and even outside pretty well.

CEOCFO: *How is business?*

Mr. Garg: Business is great! We are a startup, and by its nature growing fast. We have customers talking to us up from all across the globe and some of them are household names. We are very excited about the trajectory.

“Designed for today’s mobile workforce, 9Slides helps you communicate & train employees on the field.” – Ruchit Garg

CEOCFO: *How do you reach potential customers?*

Mr. Garg: Mostly word of mouth. We have started to tap into customers actively searching for better training tools by Google adwords, but most recently we have started sharing all the knowledge we have in the form of thought leadership blogs, ebooks, info-graphics which helps our potential who eventually also becomes our customers.

CEOCFO: *What has changed since you first developed the app and now when people have started to use it? What are some of the tweaks you have made?*

Mr. Garg: A ton of stuff! It is constantly evolving. Part of building a startup is finding the perfect market fit. For a simple example, when we started in 2011 we were messaging our solution as a presentation software, which is still true, However, based on what we saw how the users were using it; we found that our customers people are using 9Slides for mostly training and communicating with partners. Its eye opening how people react to same things differently to message tweaks.

CEOCFO: *You mentioned increasing your staff. What else is ahead? How will things be different a year from now?*

Mr. Garg: This is still early but growth year for us. We plan to be 7-8 times of our current size, mostly ramping up on our sales and support due to global opportunities lining up. By next year, we will have much larger team, much larger number of customers and potentially I guess I will be travelling lot more on business trips.

CEOCFO: *Why should people pay attention to 9Slides today?*

Mr. Garg: They should pay attention to us because 9Slides is a leading online communication and training solution designed for today’s, mobile workforce. If you have a remote workforce and a growing team and you want them to be working much more to be effective, you should take a look at 9Slides.

BIO: Ruchit Garg is serial tech-entrepreneur and is currently Founder & CEO of 9Slides Inc. Prior to 9Slides, Ruchit has spent several years working with Microsoft on some very successful products like XBOX Live.

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**2711 152nd Ave NE
Redmond, WA 98052
888-716-2560
www.9slides.com**