

PRESS RELEASE

FICCI and Facebook announce partnership to help Indian SMEs harness the power of the social media

New Delhi, March 20, 2012 - Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industry (FICCI) and Facebook announced a partnership to enable Indian small and medium enterprises (SMEs) to harness the power of the internet and social media. This unique partnership will expand Facebook's global Small and Medium Business (SMB) Boost programme in India and provide Indian SMEs with educational resources and free advertising to help them get started and grow their businesses online. This program will also aid numerous member SMEs of FICCI in exploring and utilizing social media for their business promotion and consumer outreach activities.

India presently has around 6400 industrial clusters, of which nearly 6000 are "**low tech**". Poor technology adoption remains a major cause for poor operational and marketing competitiveness in the sector. Facebook and FICCI aim to make technology a driving factor for enhancing the global competitiveness of the Indian SME sector through this collaboration. FICCI has already identified Innovation as one of the key themes for strengthening Indian SMEs and in recent past has strenuously strived to highlight innovative practices from the world over and adapt them in the Indian context.

Recent studies have shown that social media has the potential to drive economic growth and help businesses grow. Social media benefits not only brand promotion, but also in improving the brand itself. It makes it easy for an organization to dynamically understand its customers and thereby plan and anchor a better marketing outreach program. Other areas where SME's benefit through the use of Facebook and social media include image building, recruitment and retention, business associate acquisition, research, product development and procurement.

A study by Deloitte Consulting of Facebook's impact in Europe showed that Facebook adds an estimated €15.3 billion value to the European economy and supports more than 232,000 jobs across the region. Deloitte estimated that the increased business participation through advertising, customer referrals and enhanced brand value is worth around €7.3bn. **According to McKinsey**, over the last 17 years, in the US and globally, 65% of the jobs created have been created by small business, so enabling small businesses to grow is critical to the economy.

Facebook has 46 million users in India and offers a significant growth option for Indian SMEs here, just as it has in Europe. Facebook, through its unique platform for developers and tools for businesses, is committed to helping promote growth, jobs and skills around the world. Today's partnership with FICCI brings that commitment to India.

Announcing the partnership, Marne Levine, Global Vice President of Global Public Policy at Facebook said, "**The SME sector has proven to be the growth engine of most global economies. Social media has the potential to drive tremendous economic growth and job creation in India. As we've seen in the United States and Europe, social media is generating growth in the economy, creating new jobs and redefining how businesses interact with their customers. It is this experience and insight that we would now like to bring to India through our partnership with the MSME and FICCI.**"

Facebook also unveiled a series of 'Facebook for Business' tutorials, which they will run at FICCI tradeshows and conferences. Participating SMEs will receive hands-on training on how they can use Facebook to create an online presence, build and maintain a Facebook Page, engage

Facebook users and access customers through Facebook's global user base of more than 800mn. Participating SME's will also get the SMB Boost voucher, which will give them an advertising credit for free advertising on the Facebook platform.

FICCI Secretary General, Dr. Rajiv Kumar said, **“FICCI is delighted to be the anchor partner for Facebook in India to run its global SMB Boost program. The SME sector is an area of critical focus for FICCI considering its impact to innovation and growth. In addition to working with Facebook to provide this Boost to our members, FICCI and Facebook will also integrate training sessions on online marketing through social networks in its tradeshows and Conferences for SMEs”.**

Already, several Indian small and medium businesses use and benefit from social media. Sharing his experience with Facebook, Devin Narang from Freeplay Energy India, a SME engaged in the manufacturing, marketing and supply of clean, dependable energy products says, “Facebook has helped our business significantly in reaching out to newer customers and enhancing the image of the company. It has also helped us get feedback on our products and it therefore allows us to make informed decisions based on user responses”.

Another small business owner B.G Chakroborty, President of the Indian Small Tea Growers Association, who uses Facebook says, **“Over 70% of the tea growers are young and educated and have access to the internet and social networking sites. Facebook has proved extremely useful in helping us understand global markets and has also helped us identify new markets within India, thereby opening up new vistas for Indian tea growers“.**

About Facebook

Founded in February 2004, Facebook's mission is to give people the power to share and make the world more open and connected. Anyone can sign up for Facebook and interact with the people they know in a trusted environment. Facebook is a privately held company and is headquartered in Palo Alto, Calif.

About FICCI

FICCI is the largest and apex business chamber in India. FICCI draws its membership from the corporate sector, both private and public, including SMEs and MNCs. FICCI has an indirect membership of over 2,50,000 companies from various regional chambers of commerce. FICCI provides a platform for sector specific consensus building and networking and as the first port of call for Indian and the international business community. FICCI is industry's voice for policy change.

Contact:

Mr. Hemant Seth
Joint director, MSME FICCI
FICCI
T: +91-9811615552
E: msme@ficci.com

Samiran Gupta
Executive Director
APCO Worldwide
T: +91-9999019631
E: sgupta@apcoworldwide.com

Taresh Arora
Media Relations Officer
Tel : 23736307 & 23357392 (Direct)
9899115719 (Mobile)
23753119 (Fax)