

SEMINAR ON TECHNOLOGY AND TECHNOLOGY FINANCING FOR MSMEs - Ahmedabad

After an encouraging turnout in Hyderabad and Faridabad, the third of the series of six cities seminars was successfully organized by FICCI with support of Gujarat Chamber of Commerce & Industry (GCCI) in Ahmedabad on December 08, 2012. The seminar was attended by over 150 MSME representatives from Ahmedabad.

Easy access to finance and increased usage of latest technological tools by MSMEs was the highlight of the inaugural session. The welcome address in the inaugural session was given by Mr. Jayendra Tanna, Hon. Secretary, GCCI. Mr. Girish Luthra, Member, FICCI MSME Committee and Chairman, Gujarat Enviro Protection & Infrastructure Limited delivered the opening remarks. A special address was given by Mr. Somenath Ghosh, Chairman & Managing Director, National Research Development Corporation (NRDC). Mr. Ravi Prakash, General Manager, State Bank of India, Ahmedabad Circle, Mr. Sunil Kakkad, President- GESIA and Mr. Arvind Patwari, Director – MSME DI, GOI also addressed the audience.

The chief guest of the occasion was Mr. Ravi Saxena- IAS, Addl. Chief Secretary, Department of Science & Technology, Govt. of Gujarat. He talked about the four means of IT applications available for MSMEs i.e. usage of IT just to make communication faster, stand alone applications, ERP applications and applications for decision support system. The more an MSME will use IT applications in its business the more advantage it can take from the same. He pointed out that the Cloud computing is the most economical IT application for minimizing the cost of business in all areas. He also mentioned that our MSMEs use Jugaad as the synonym of Innovation. However, he said that Jugaad can only be called as innovation when it is scalable, replicable and sustainable and not otherwise.

The inaugural session was followed by a panel session on 'How to bridge Finance and Access Gap?' The session included a panel of experts from mainstream nationalized banks such as SBI (Ms. Varsha A. Mondkar, Deputy General Manager (SME), State Bank of India, Ahmedabad Circle), financial organizations focused on SMEs such as SIDBI (Mr. K.C. Bhanoo, General Manager, SIDBI) and also from Venture Capital Organization (Mr. Mihir Joshi, MD, Gujarat Venture Finance). The panelists shared their views on the parameters that MSMEs should keep in mind while approaching financial institutions and the various products that financial institutions can offer to help MSMEs meet their long and short term financial requirements.

Thereafter sessions on Leveraging Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) for ease of Business operations of MSMEs were conducted. As part of which Mr. Pramod Tailor, FEM - Cloud Solutions, Microsoft Corporation, focused on "Office on the go – Be productive anywhere anytime". He talked about the package of office 365 and provided a holistic view of its utility which covered from creating one's own website, audio & video conferencing, document sharing to office web applications.

Apart from this, a live workshop was hosted by Facebook for the attending SMEs. Mr. Vikas Bhasin, SMB Marketing Specialist, Facebook and Ms. Preeti Shivane, Advertising Specialist, Facebook educated MSMEs on how to use the Facebook platform to drive awareness and engage with their target demographic. During this session, the four steps to success on Facebook were discussed to show MSMEs how to build a Facebook presence, connect with their target demographic, engage with their fans, and influence customer decisions.

The seminar was followed by networking dinner.