

autumn..  
...is in the air.

# THE PINE CHRONICLE

News, Views and Creative Expressions

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## FACULTY DESK

### Ways of Building Brand Transparency in a Post-Covid World

#### What is brand transparency?

Various dictionaries define transparency as the quality or state of being transparent. Transparency entails openness and readily available information coming from organizations, transparency is the opposite of secrecy. Business transparency is the process of being open, honest, and straightforward about various company operations. Transparent companies share information relating to performance, small business revenue, internal processes, sourcing, pricing, and business values. From the perspective of marketing and marketers, brand transparency could be described as “consumers’ perceived levels of a brand’s strategic communication effort to make information available - whether positive or negative in nature - for the purpose of enhancing their understanding and making a brand accountable for marketing practices.” In simple terms, brand transparency means ‘trust’, it means honesty, integrity, and openness.

#### Why does brand transparency matter?

Transparent corporate practices have been employed to build reputations, and deal with crisis-related scenarios. Covid-19, which is not only a marketing crisis, but a crisis of global order, calls for brand management with empathy and transparency to survive, and thrive in these difficult times. A recent survey finding showed that around 85% of customers say transparency is more important to them than ever before. Moreover, the aftermath of the pandemic has galvanized the emergence of ‘conscious consumers’. These days consumers make their purchase decision not only on the criteria of price and quality dimension but also based on their values, beliefs and lifestyle. They are interested in learning more about your products than just what’s in them. They want to know where you get your supplies from, your

## ABOUT NUKSA

*Nuksa The Pine Chronicle is the monthly news magazine of IIM Shillong.*

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## CONTENTS

|                     |   |
|---------------------|---|
| Faculty Desk        | 1 |
| Timeline            | 2 |
| Métier              | 4 |
| Off Beat            | 4 |
| Ode                 | 5 |
| Congratulatory Note | 5 |

production processes, organization culture, social responsibility etc. If you do not reveal what they want to know, they are willing to put more time and effort into unearthing that information. Also, the growing power of the Millennials and the Gen Z in the marketplace is putting pressure on companies to be more transparent and authentic in their business practices. The majority of these young consumers are willing to pay a premium for transparent brands and switch to other alternatives if they perceive otherwise.

#### Ways to foster brand transparency

##### **Build a more inclusive and trustworthy social media strategy-**

Start by doing your social listening right by leveraging your vast connections and networks on various social media platforms. Brands should authentically respond to their customers and not shy away from taking criticism. It will help them in driving customer engagement, and brand trust and build social currency, which will augment brand value in the long run.

##### **Don't disguise prices-**

Do not hide or manipulate your prices. Share as much as possible with regard to your pricing strategy. Avoid using confusing language or a complicated system to withhold price information. Give logical and business-based explanations for any price rise during the current situation, customers are as understanding as all of us are and can be reasonable.

##### **Do not tell, show your social and environmental commitments-**

Brands should show that they care about their various stakeholders in the post-pandemic world. First, take care of your employees by being empathetic about their work and life experiences. Companies should build a robust support system to manage employees’ physical and emotional stress. Further, brands should show their commitments and solidarity to society at large by contributing positively through various programs aimed at the vulnerable, marginal and weaker sections of society. Promoting causes like gender equality, poverty reduction, education, climate change mitigation, and well-being would not harm their transparency efforts in this challenging time.

##### **Encourage two-way communication-**

Be it an internal memo, a blog post, an advertisement, or a product description, be authentic and encourage queries, and feedback from the other party. Brands should communicate to admit their mistakes, respond honestly to customers, and share information about the production, supply chain, and marketing practices to exude transparency.

**Showcase the human side of branding-** Brands should develop real human connections in their day-to-day operations to build transparency. They should connect with the emotional sides of customers by demonstrating their brand values, culture and people that make their mission a reality. The right level of brand openness helps you to reveal your business' human side, which your customers can relate to.

Last but not least, do not look at your transparency efforts just as a tool for sales and marketing but consider it as a multi-level organization-wide strategy to deliver transparency in its true sense. The more customers know about you, your accomplishments and your setbacks, the greater will be the respect and bond with your brand. Whether it is by force or by choice, the Covid-19 pandemic and its aftermath have reshaped what and how brands communicate with their stakeholders. Its imperative for brands to seize this opportunity by increasing their transparency and gaining consumers' trust and loyalty to best navigate the post-pandemic marketplace.



**Prof. Prasanta Kr Chopdar**

## TIMELINE

### Interaction with H.E. Mr. Freddy Svane, Ambassador of Denmark to India

On the 16<sup>th</sup> of September 2022, The Indian Chamber of Commerce (ICC) held an exclusive interactive session with H.E. Mr. Freddy Svane. H.E. Mr. Freddy Svane serves as the Ambassador of Denmark to India. Apart from H.E. Mr. Freddy Svane, the session was also graced by the presence of Mrs. Smita Bajoria, Honorary Consul of Denmark, and Mr. Atanu Sen, Chairman, ICC National Expert Committee, among other dignitaries.

The session was based on the topic of 'Europe's economic outlook post the continuing conflict between Russia and Ukraine and the Advantages Danish technology offers for green energy for non-dependence on fossil fuels'. The session began with a warm welcome address by Mr. Atanu Sen, who spoke about the synergies between India and Denmark that can be used to develop growth and prosperity of both nations. Mrs. Smita Bajoria introduced H.E. Mr. Freddy Svane and spoke about his decade's old connection with India. At the session, His Excellency spoke at length about the adverse effects of the Russia-Ukraine conflict and prayed that the war ends as early as possible. He spoke about establishing collaboration between the Indian companies and Danish companies for the development of green hydrogen. He praised India at length, commended the digitalization efforts of India, spoke about India's power as the largest democratic nation, and commended India's ability to innovate. He urged India to continue to be an active participant in the world affairs.

With a brief Q&A session, H.E. Mr. Freddy Svane gave insightful answers to the pertinent questions raised by several online and offline attendees of the event. This included students from universities such as IIM Calcutta and IIM Shillong. Ishan Kapse, a second-year student in the PGP program at IIM Shillong raised a question as to how the youth, especially the ones from top Institutes such as IIM Shillong, can go about solving the regional developmental challenges while being mindful of the nation's development goals and working towards the same. H.E. Mr. Freddy Svane provided insights on how India can capitalize on its 'Unity in Diversity' principles and work towards coming up with innovative solutions that serve the interests of both the nation and the region.

The session ended with a vote of thanks and mementos presented to the diplomats of Denmark.

### Visit by Dr. Mohan Lal Agarwal

Prof. Mohan Lal Agrawal, Professor of Business, Director of Experiential Education & Training at International Horizons College Dubai took a Guest lecture session on "**Insights using Marketing Simulation Software,**" for the PGPEX batch of the Institute.

He is also President-Indo Gulf Management Association, UAE Golden Visa Recipient, Co-lead-Humanistic Management Network Switzerland, GCC Chapter, Leader- UAE Golden Visa Forum.



Ranked as an experiential educator, trainer and domain expert in class and online faculty in business and Marketing of services, Dr. Agarwal has authored several business cases in Dubai and internationally that have been published and presented in several research seminars and conferences keynote speaker.

### Mental Health Counselling Session at IIM Shillong

MBA education is filled with rigor, and it is easy to fill overwhelmed by the stress of daily activities. IIM Shillong took a wonderful step for its students by conducting a free 2-day Counselling session for its students on 21st September 2022 and 22nd September 2022 at IIM Shillong's Umsawli campus. The session was conducted by Dr. Sonali Shinde Tesia (MD Psychiatry, NIMHANS, Bangalore, and Consultant Psychiatrist, Mind & Wellness Clinic Shillong. Many

students from the PGP and PGPx batches of IIM Shillong attended the session. The session covered the reasons that students feel pressure in such a rigorous course, the symptoms that showcase mental health issues, and ways to overcome the same. The students truly appreciated the sessions and felt that they were better prepared not just for the MBA course, but also for their careers ahead.

## IIM Shillong PGPEX student Divya Mohan received the "All India Women Achievers Award 2022 (AIWAA)"

**Divya Mohan**, student of IIM Shillong MBA program Post-Graduate Program for Executives (PGPEX), has received the All India Women Achievers Award 2022, India's Largest Women Empowerment Awards an initiative of the Twell Magazine held in Bangalore on 25th September 2022.

AIWAA is a programme to recognize potential women who have been making remarkable progress, Mompreneurs, and Homepreneurs and bring them to the limelight. The AIWAA award aims to empower and encourage the efforts of women and showcase their super-power.



Divya has received recognition in the "Outstanding Professional Women" category for her professional career as well as for pursuing her MBA even after beginning her motherhood journey. She is passionate about empowering women and spreading awareness of the value of education.

## Lead Corporate Interaction

IIM Shillong PGPEX students organized and hosted several industry leaders in the exclusive LEAD series at IIM Shillong. **Mr. DVK Ramesh, Senior Vice President at Reliance Jio** addressed the batch on the subject "**Application of Project Management in executing Mega Projects**". Participants had an opportunity to gain first-hand experience in project management through this session.



This was followed by another signature event on "**Trends for the Automotive Industry 2022**," wherein **Dr. Venkat Srinivas, Senior Vice President at Mahindra** addressed the batch on the subject of Product Development.



The participants were further benefited by an insightful session on "**Digital Transformation and Trust**" by **Mr. Monil Gala, Partner at PWC**. The batch had a first-hand experience to dive in deep into the world of Digital Transformation across various domains.



## LEAD Speaker Series

*"Digital Transformation and Trust"*

Event Presented by **PGPEX22**

SPEAKER NAME:

**Mr. Monil Gala**

Partner - Tech Assurance



1 Oct. 2022 | 6:30 pm (IST)



## Hindi Pakhawada

IIM Shillong organised its annual Hindi Pakhawada / fortnight celebrations with teaching, non-teaching staff and students of the Institute participating in various competitive events including Sangeet, Antakshari and Extempore.



## भारतीय प्रबंध संस्थान शिलाँग में हिंदी पखवाड़ा का उद्घाटन



The inauguration marked the commencement to promote the use of Hindi as an official language.

## "Ganpati Bappa Morya, Pudhchya Varshi Lavkar Ya!"

IIM Shillong observed Ganesh Mahotsav 22, emphasizing the importance of tradition in today's fast-paced world. It began with Ganesh Pratima's Sthapna and ended with Visarjan. Bappa devotees performed morning and evening aarti every day and cared for Akhand Jyoti.



The successful celebration resulted from the students' devotion and love for our beloved Bappa. Dance, music, and colors were an integral part of the celebration which brought students from various programs together to learn and get involved in Indian culture from around the community.

## METIER

1. **Chopdar, P.K.** (2022). Adoption of Covid-19 contact tracing app by extending UTAUT theory: Perceived disease threat as moderator. *Health Policy and Technology*; Vol.11, no.3; p. p.1-12.
2. Sutar, Goutam, **Dhalmahapatra, Krantiraditya** & others (2022). Performance assessment of Dairy Cooperative Societies (DCSs): an AHP based composite index approach. *Annals of Operations Research*, vol. 316, no. 2; p.p. 1-32.

## OFF BEAT

### "Long Distance Relationship with my Daughter: Video Call from Bengaluru to Shillong"

Being a "Mother" is hard and it wasn't a subject I ever studied. But when my daughter was born, the phrase changed for me. It was one of the most magical days of my life. Having a child puts the whole world into a panorama. Everything else disappears.

The day I decided to start a new journey of executive MBA from IIM Shillong, I felt excited, but the feeling of leaving behind my 4 Years old daughter for a year started pulling me back from excitement to nervousness. Emotions go on a roller coaster ride, whenever you leave your baby overnight. In my case, the feeling was hard to sketch as this separation was for 1 long year, or the journey to

which I said yes to it may be more than 1 year. Since her birth, I never lived a single day away from her. Although the job I did earlier was transferable, I did have the privilege to have my baby along with me wherever I was transferred.

Since her birth, we as a duo witnessed and lived a lot of buoyant moments. I have been thinking that after the disunion, will she be able to smile in the same way, as she did in my company? The timing of the separation was also not favorable. My daughter entered the second phase of her life. She got admitted to the school in Bengaluru. I know, she will find a new environment, she will make new friends, and will develop new hobbies. It is rightfully said that "life doesn't come with a manual, it comes with a mother." In this journey of hers, I needed to be with her, but in the situation in which I am, I will not be on her side. Being a mother, it does feel awkward to leave your child alone, but, yes in some way it helps her to grow as an individual. She will be exposed to some uncanny situations, where she will miss me, but her mind will prepare her for the solution to the situation.

I feel fortuitous to be living in a generation of social media. Technology has helped both of us to get over our separation. Video calls with her have ensured that her smile is the same as before. Helping her with her homework, and knowing about her day makes me feel positive and boosts my energy for a whole day. Destiny has set us apart, but this parting will make us more powerful as an individual. It is rightfully said that "With great power, comes great responsibility". Here our responsibility is to continue this divine relationship through video calls. Although a long distance, but relatively closer by heart.

**Swastika**  
PGPEX 22-23

ODE

बचपन ही अच्छा था

पूरी स्कूल लाइफ, सुबह सुबह मम्मी ने ही उठाया है,  
अब अलार्म के भरोसे उठता हूँ, आज भी चार बार सूज़ दबाया है ।

बिना नाश्ता किये, मम्मी घर से निकलने नहीं देती थी,  
कैंटीन में कुछ खाने के लिए, पैसे अलग से देती थी ।

अब नाश्ता स्किप होकर, सीधा लंच का नंबर आता है,  
मेस में एक बंदा है, खाना वही बनाता है ।

आज आलू परांठा बना था, परांठा फिर से कच्चा था,  
मैं खामखा ही बड़ा हुआ यार, बचपन ही अच्छा था ।

बस टेस्ट की टेंशन होती थी, या होमवर्क निपटाने की,  
न मीटिंग्स वाली दिक्कत थी, ना पॉलिटिक्स सुलझाने की ।

नींद भी चैन की आती थी, और सपनों में खो जाता था,  
बिन बात की बातों पे हँस के, कई लीटर खून बढ़ाता था ।

अब कॉर्पोरेट स्माइल देता हूँ, तब का मुस्काना सच्चा था,  
मैं खामखा ही बड़ा हुआ यार, बचपन ही अच्छा था ।

दोस्त भी तबके सच्चे थे, जान भी हाज़िर रखते थे,  
ज़्यादा मार्क्स पर चिढ़ जाते थे, पर मुँह पर गाली बकते थे ।

कॉम्पटीशन तो तब भी था, बस स्ट्रेस के लिए जगह न थी,  
हर रोज़ ही हम लड़ लेते थे, पर लड़ने की कोई वजह न थी ।

अब दोस्ती भी है हिसाब की, किसने किसपे कितना खर्चा था,  
मैं खामखा ही बड़ा हुआ यार, बचपन ही अच्छा था,  
बचपन ही अच्छा था

**Sudhanshu**  
PGPEX 22 – 23

Congratulatory Note

In September 2022, Tally Solutions launched Tally Bizwiz, a case competition open to students from premier business colleges

and universities in the country. Tally Bizwiz invited students to present innovative business solutions for challenges from the Product Management and Business Development categories. Participants were given the option to choose one or the other category. **Team TrueHarmony from IIM Shillong were declared as the National Winners** of the Tally Bizwiz competition in the Business Development category. Team TrueHarmony included all 2<sup>nd</sup> year PGP students from IIM Shillong – Anusree Nandy, Amit Shete, and Suraj Agarwal.



## CONGRATULATIONS!

**Team Aspirants**



Akriti Kulshrestha



Amit Saxena



Sharad Agarwala



**NATIONAL ROUND  
WINNER**



**The  
Governance  
Challenge**

The Governance Challenge 2022 is India's first national governance case competition. The Governance Challenge was launched by Samagra Governance, a consulting firm that works with different state governments across India on challenges across various public service domains. The Governance Challenge 2022 was supported by the Government of Haryana. **Team Aspirants from IIM Shillong were declared as the National Winners of The Governance Challenge.** Team Aspirants includes all 2<sup>nd</sup> year students from the PGP program at IIM Shillong – Akriti Kulshrestha, Amit Saxena, and Sharad Agarwala.



























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