



 **Astral** Consulting Limited
J O U R N E Y

THE JOURNEY

Two roads diverged in a wood, and I—
I took the one less travelled by,
And that has made all the difference.

[The Road Not Taken : Robert Frost]



Mr. C N SRIVATSAN
[Founder]



Mrs. GITA SRIVATSAN
[Co-Founder]



The journey of a thousand miles begins with one step
— Lao Tzu

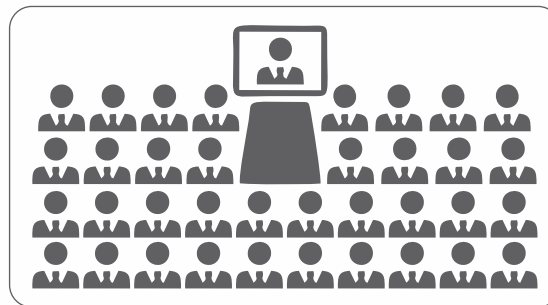
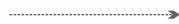
The history of Astral is an entrepreneurial saga of achievements and struggles against all odds. It is about being steadfast, systematic and ethical during changing times. Today, the company has a lot to be pleased about - be it a committed team of staff, low attrition, a clientele that has a mix of local, national and international corporates or a unique management style.

It all began in 1982, when **Mr C N Srivatsan and Mrs Gita Srivatsan** - both Chartered Accountants, decided to pursue their vision of becoming entrepreneurs. Having no entrepreneurial background and minimal financial support, Mr Srivatsan took a small loan from the bank and started the firm at his house. There was no looking back then on! But, there is always a way to do it better and Astral emerged in 1992.

Years later, the company had its headquarters in Coimbatore with a very modern set up and a very novel work atmosphere in those times.



1992



2017

JOURNEY BEGINS



BLAZING YOUR OWN TRAIL

Go the extra mile, it's never crowded...

Taking new initiatives was a routine that differentiated Astral from other similar firms -

- **First** firm from Coimbatore and one of the very few firms of India to focus entirely on Internal Audit.
- **First** to start a BPO way back in early 90s, when India did not have any clue of what a BPO was.
- **First** firm from Coimbatore and one of the very few firms of India to focus on Information Systems and Security
- Probably, the **First** Audit firm who got an ISO certification in Coimbatore
- Developed CAATALYZE – **First** indigenous data analysis and audit tool
- **First** audit firm from Coimbatore to bring an in-house quarterly magazine - 'Expressions'
- **First** firm in Coimbatore to introduce Organizational Health Check-up for the members of various industrial associations
- **Founded** Coimbatore Internal Audit Forum for sharing of knowledge among like-minded professionals
- **Founded** Coimbatore IT Audit Forum in association with ISACA Coimbatore Chapter

1992

"Astral Management Consultants Private Limited" was formed

1994

First In-house magazine "Expressions" was released

1995

Set up the first off-site office in Cochin

1996

Started a separate wing for Management Advisory

1997

First Technology Update Workshop was conducted

1999

Established the office with clear desk facility

2000

Started separate wing for Information System Services focusing on ERP Implementation and Information Security

2002

First Annual Executive Meeting was held at Taj, Coonoor

2003

Started a JV - SKP Astral Consulting Private Limited in Mumbai

2005

Changed the name to Astral Consulting Ltd

2006

Started a JV - Alsabti Astral in Riyadh

2007

Change of guards – Founders handed over to the new leadership team

2010

Became a member of GGI – sixth largest professional network in the world

2010

Started an IT company - ITARA IT Solutions Pvt Ltd

2010

Obtained ISO 9001 Certification

2011

Started office in Hyderabad and New Delhi

2012

Started office in Kolkatta

2013

Started office in Bangalore

2014

Consolidated all the joint ventures and spread its presence over 40+ locations in India through associate offices

2017

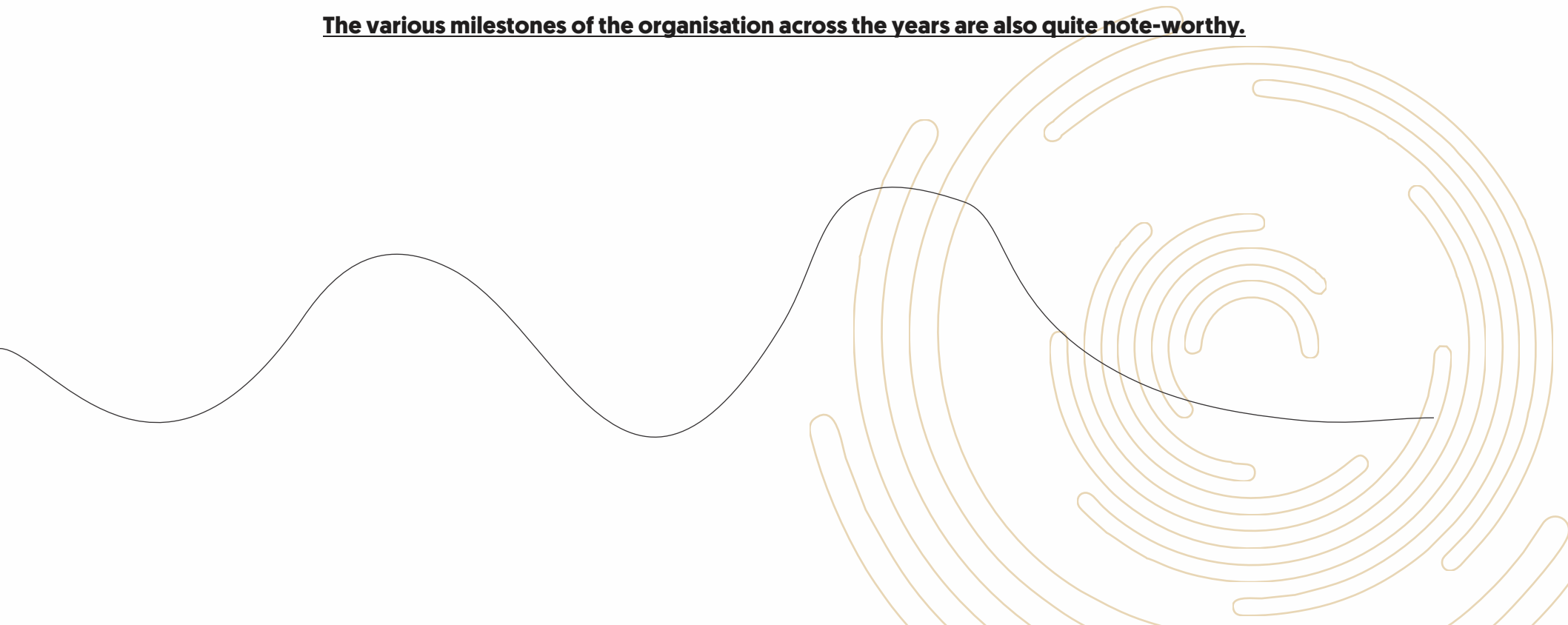
Launched new Single Window services comprising more than 70+ Services

EVOLUTION AND MILESTONES

Astral focussed on internal auditing and believed in helping companies to excel in their processes. The coverage was not just confined to financial books but span across all areas – from Top floor to Shop floor. All aspects were process driven to ensure baseline quality.

The services provided by the company branched onto other areas based on customer demands. The customers were more than happy to outsource other projects from different domains to Astral. The level of comfort and confidence they had in the company was that high!

The various milestones of the organisation across the years are also quite note-worthy.



WHAT ASTRAL STANDS FOR...



BALANCED SCORECARD

“What gets measured gets done” – Brian Tracy

Astral introduced Balanced Score Card with 32 internal performance measures that was the first- of-its kind in the region itself. This systematic process oriented tool enabled to further enhance quality in all processes.

Rain or shine, one day in a week and one week in a year was devoted for employee training. Apart from mandatory monthly training, the staff had a week of training every year that was both full of learnings and great fun too. Technology moves so quickly and Astral always thinks ahead. To this end, the most eagerly awaited annual Technology Update Workshop helped in continuous learning and raising the bars.

GOOD, BETTER, BEST

“Perfection is our goal, excellence will be tolerated” – J. Yahl

Enjoyable work, challenging goals, rewards and recognitions was a natural process that drove people scaling to new heights. Astral systematically conducted performance assessments of every individual in the organisation. The system of Self-Assessment, 360 degree appraisal, Employee Engagement Survey, etc. is a part and parcel of the organisation’s onward growth trajectory.

Praise is best shown by open hearted and instant appreciation. Towards this end, the management introduced the system of recognizing the staff who have excelled in their performance. Their names are displayed prominently with their photos at the front office and

ETHICS FIRST, BUSINESS NEXT

“In any moment of decision, the best thing you can do is the right thing. The worst thing you can do is nothing.” - Theodore Roosevelt

While quality takes Astral to the next level, ethics keeps it there. Doing what is right, without exception has even resulted in losing probable clients. But there was no looking back.

GIVE BACK WHAT YOU GET

“Success should not be measured by how much you have but by how much you give back.” – Danny Villanuera

Astral strongly believed in giving back to the society. During the staff week, one session was devoted to community development on unique projects. A sense of togetherness also developed during these projects when all of the employees worked for a common cause that produces visible results. Astral has also taken care of the auditing of several NGOs at a very subsidised rate for years together.



WHAT MAKES ASTRAL UNIQUE?

Differentiation is progress...

Astral has over 30 years of specialization in Internal Audit/Operations Audit. The organisation has consciously focussed on Cost Reduction and Process Excellence which has resulted in substantial benefits to all the stakeholders.

The well documented audit methodology that the company rigorously adopts is in line with the international best practices. Personnel with excellent knowledge base and audit experience to conduct information technology security and controls audit is a great advantage.

The team has developed more than 1500 risks and controls for process and 2500 + risks and controls information system security. All audits are done through the computers and not around the computers. Best audit tools are available with the team and are usually customised to fit the needs.

Astral adopted certain standard and international procedures much before anyone in the region did so. Needless to say, even today Astral is approached by renowned consulting firms for the possibility of joint ventures and tie-ups. It is a combination of multiple, unique and personal examples that truly depicts how different Astral is!



MORE THAN JUST A PLACE OF WORK

It's always the team, not an individual...

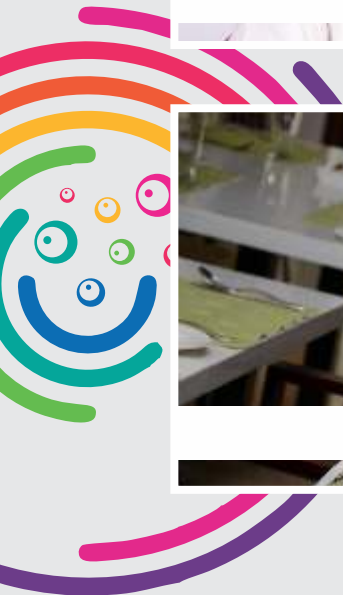
Working at Astral is not just challenging, it also provides a right environment to bring out the best in people and help them grow as a team. Culture is a powerful element that makes your work enjoyable and work relationships stronger. Proof of this is in the long list of people who are at Astral for more than a decade. Astral recognizes such individuals for their contribution during the Annual Day.

On-going sports events, team outings, festival and Annual Day celebrations along with the families makes Astral more than just a place of work.





B Balamurali (Director)



RELATIONSHIPS OVER TRANSACTIONS

What you do, speaks for itself...

Relationships built with clients years ago is still strong because of the way Astral manages its businesses. Another proof of this aspect is that 95% of the clientele is through word-of-mouth or referrals. A mere 5% only is through cold calls - not very surprising! In today`s hyper-connected, knowledge sharing economy, customer service is marketing. How this is achieved is no secret but a well-oiled process with years of hard work and effort.

Tailored solutions to meet the distinct needs of clients through well documented methodology which are in line with the international best practices has been a norm. Relationship management by ensuring maximum satisfaction for customers is in the blood of the company. Employees with decades of experience and expertise provide the right blend of consultants for the clients. These three aspects proved to be a dynamic mix for the company to soar towards greater milestones. The company invested in technology, talent and lean processes to amaze all stakeholders.



8. HANDING OVER THE BATON

*'Growing talent from within'
equipping for the challenges of
today and readiness for tomorrow*

The succession planning at the company is very structured and seamless. The founders started developing the next cadre of management much in advance. In this company, merit was given first accordance along with the value system. Employees were given an opportunity to become part of the management based on various objective and subjective parameters. Needless to say, when the founders retired, they ensured that processes are in place along with a strong team of leaders to take Astral to greater heights. Even now, the current top team is nurturing the next line of top management - a truly different culture and methodology.



**CHARTERED
ACCOUNTANTS (CA)**

**CERTIFICATION IN
CONTROL SELF-ASSESSMENT (CCSA)**

**CERTIFIED INFORMATION
SYSTEM AUDITORS (CISA)**

ISO 27001 CERTIFIED IMPLEMENTERS

**CERTIFIED
INTERNAL AUDITORS (CIA)**

ENGINEERS (BE & ME)

**CERTIFIED ETHICAL
HACKERS (CEH)**

**CERTIFIED FRAUD
EXAMINERS (CFE)**

**INFORMATION SYSTEM
AUDITORS (ISA)**

**COST
ACCOUNTANTS (CWA)**

**MASTER OF BUSINESS
ADMINISTRATION (MBA)**

9. THE COMPLETE TEAM

*“Individual wins games,
but teamwork wins championships.”*
– Michael Jordan

Team Astral is a complete perfect team that is well equipped with various competencies. The company has always maintained a lean and mean organisation structure - a small team of competent and committed people. Trust and transparency have played a large role in shaping up this perfect circle.

The leadership of the company inspired employees to optimally perform which also made the employees feel that they are genuinely cared for. Many of them have stayed for years together at Astral. Some of them who left for various reasons are today with world class corporates and other international organisations like the United Nations.

The organisation has adequate exposure to international management practices and frameworks such as COSO and CoBIT (From IIA & ISACA). It has its own knowledge centre and is part of

Value Addition through
Best Practices and Proactive approach"

forums like ISACA Coimbatore Chapter, Coimbatore IT Forum, Coimbatore IA Forum and other industrial associations that further strengthens the knowledge base of the people.





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10. ASTRAL TODAY

Apart from its core competencies, Astral anticipates and provides holistic, long term solutions for upcoming requirements of corporates. Whether it is about establishing new IT infrastructure or advising about corporate restructuring or implementing a new technology, there are experts associated with Astral who can provide these value added services.

Through its strong network of associates, Astral is a one stop shop for all corporate services. Astral has launched a single window system that could effectively provide about 70 services typically needed by all companies. Clients welcomed this new approach whole heartedly, since it was easier, quicker and trust-worthy.

Consulting

Audit and Assurance

IT Assurance & Advisory

Outsourcing

Software Solutions

Corporate Advisory & Assurance

COUNTRIES SERVED














INDUSTRY VERTICALS

Astral has rich experience in the following sectors

-  Manufacturing - Discrete
-  Manufacturing - Process
-  Supply Chain Management
-  Trading
-  Service
-  Education & Training
-  Software Development
-  Dairy Farming
-  Project Management
-  Agriculture and Plantation
-  Automobile
-  Chemical
-  Dairy
-  Construction & Real Estate
-  Engineering
-  Flour
-  Granite
-  Textiles
-  Pharmaceuticals
-  Power generation
-  Poultry
-  Tea/Rubber plantations
-  Sugar
-  Retail
-  Telecom

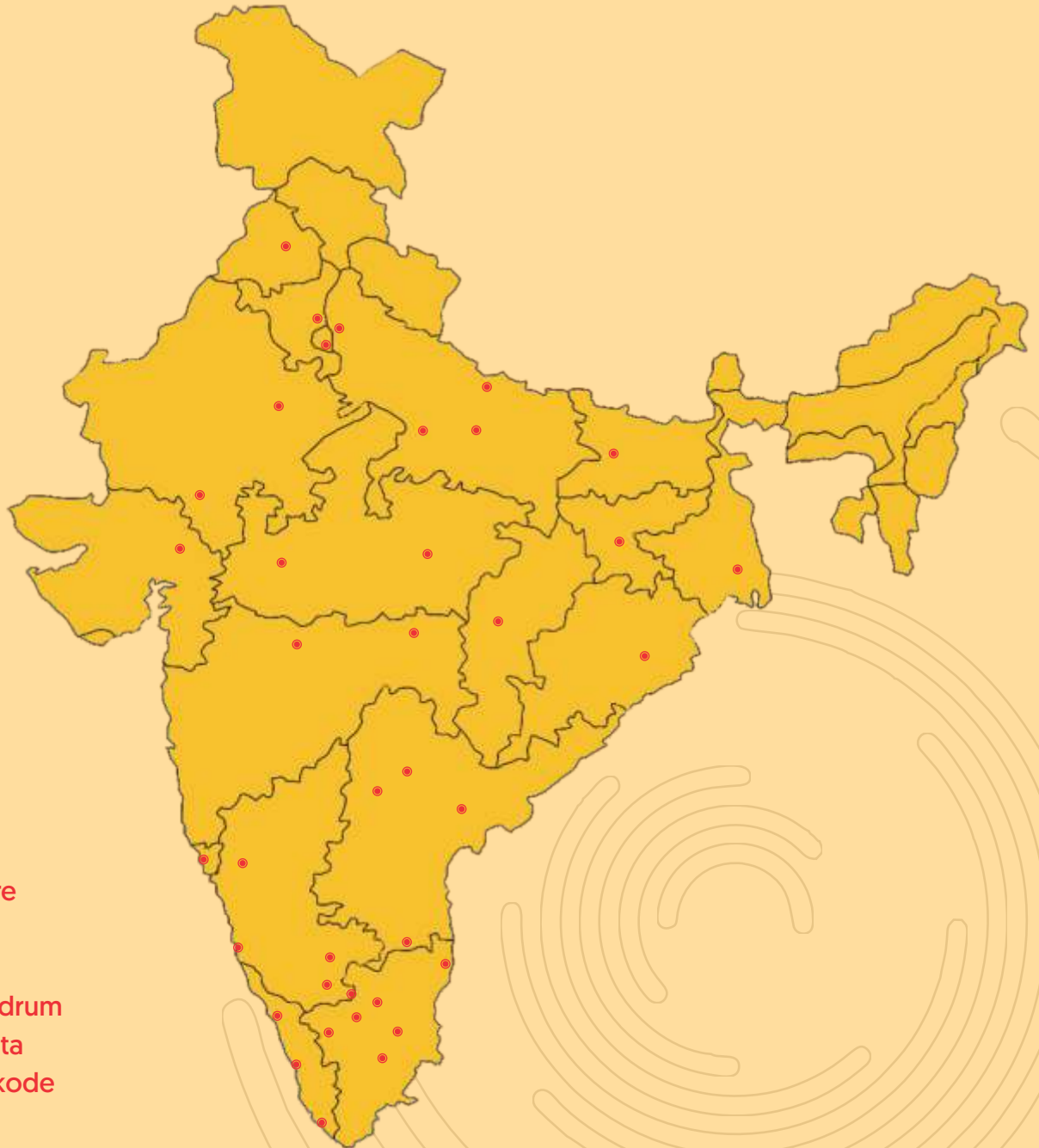
Astral has provided its services in many countries as appended

-  BANGLADESH
-  JAPAN
-  TAIWAN
-  DUBAI
-  MALAYSIA
-  NIGERIA
-  EGYPT
-  PAKISTAN
-  SINGAPORE
-  HONG KONG
-  RIYADH
-  MOSCOW
-  INDIA
-  SOUTH AFRICA

GEOGRAPHICAL SPREAD

For clients who have multiple offices in different locations, Astral offers quality services through their associate offices who share the same culture and processes as the parent organisation. Today, Astral has 40 associate offices throughout the country. Be it Gujarat or Maharashtra or Rajasthan, services could be monitored and controlled from the client`s central office through Astral`s subsidiary services. This is a very attractive proposition to many organisations and inspires clients to take up challenging decisions with confidence!

- Ahmedabad
- Aurangabad
- Bhubanshwar
- Calicut
- Chittoor
- Faridabad
- Ghaziabad
- Hubli
- Indore
- Jabalpur
- Jaipur
- Kanpur
- Ludhiana
- Madurai
- Nagpur
- New Delhi
- Patna
- Raipur
- Ranchi
- Secunderabad
- Udaipur
- Vijayawada
- Bangalore
- Chennai
- Coimbatore
- Erode
- Goa
- Hyderabad
- Kochi
- Mangalore
- Mysore
- Salem
- Trichy
- Trivandrum
- Kolkatta
- Kozhikode
- Hosur
- Lucknow



11. THE JOURNEY CONTINUES...

The journey of Astral has not been without the usual struggles, upheavals and learnings. It has weathered storms and stood like a beacon of light amongst struggles. The strong ethical stand point along with high level of precision in documentation has helped the organisation tide over many negatives. Time and time again, Astral had proved its stance and come out with a clean chit even in the middle of controversies. The organisation has been commended by agencies of the government on the quality of work they did in various projects. The values and culture has been successfully percolated to every employee at all levels. Astral continues to quietly and efficiently change people, processes and organisation for a better tomorrow. The organisation helps to change ambiguity into possibility and rapid change into enduring progress. Astral`s values strongly resonates with the words of Gandhiji,

Be the change that you wish to see in the world!

- Mahatma Gandhi

And the journey continues....





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