

Prateek Pashine enjoys playing sports in his spare time and brings this passion to the boardroom as well. “My love for sports permeates my work life too,” he says. “We organise an annual sports extravaganza called SME Olympics at Tata Communications, in which every employee has to participate. We have crafted rules that encourage teamwork.”

As president of Tata Communications’ small and medium enterprise (SME) operations, Pashine supervises the entire value chain of the business, including sales and marketing, product management, customer care, service delivery, service assurance, and billing and collections.

Explaining the focus on the SME segment, he says, “This is the fastest growing segment, especially for the telecom sector, owing to increasing IT adoption and penetration. India is at the cusp of significant changes where the role of IT is changing at a rapid pace. The new generation of Facebook- and Twitter-savvy entrepreneurs are changing the patterns of IT adoption and use in their companies. This, in turn, impacts the buying and consumption trends in these spaces.”

In the future, Pashine expects the segment to witness several technology and consumer-centric trends. “Indians have always shown a preference for services with a smart price tag. So, the pay-as-you-use model will come to the fore and SMEs will move away from a capex-intensive model. This will aid in the rapid uptake of cloud computing as well.”

Further, he believes that the availability of mobile-based high speed data services is slated to bring about a change in the way companies conduct their business. “We are set to witness the emergence of the second wave of the dotcom and applications businesses, albeit in a more refined manner,” he says. He maintains that the new generation is far more clued in to the social media revolution and open to adopting web-based business solutions.

Pashine is geared up to meet the business opportunities these trends will entail for Tata Communications. “I believe in an inclusive decision-making style where people can challenge their seniors openly without fear of recrimination. I like to believe that we have an open and transparent way of working where all decisions and updates are disseminated throughout the SME business segment.”

This approach seems to have worked, as he says that a few of these processes have been instrumental in the company's SME business being included in the Gallup global top quartile employee satisfaction survey.

So what are his other interests apart from sports? "I enjoy travelling with my family and doing mental maths."

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