

## NEC flag bearer

Technology infrastructure solutions in the fast emerging ICT (information communication technologies) enabled teaching/learning environment, represents a big business opportunity for IT (information technology) majors, who are scrambling to create techno-savvy campuses and classrooms across the country. "Investment in IT and allied services in the education sector will double every three years, so the opportunity and potential is really huge. The rapid spread of technology in education is unprecedented, with classrooms turning into virtual worlds and digitised content and interactive white boards becoming normative. IT labs, networking, 3-D projector systems and simulations are changing the way education is delivered," says Rajiv Bhalla, country head (marketing and sales) of the Tokyo-based NEC Corporation (annual sales revenue \$40 billion or Rs.180,000 crore), which planted its flag in India in 2006 as NEC India Pvt. Ltd.



**Bhalla: huge potential**

Offering customised solutions in education, hospitality and security, NEC India is engaged in constructing large-scale, reliable, and flexible IT network and security and surveillance systems, IP telephony solutions, private network solutions (enterprise and exchange wide EPABX, IP telephony, KTS), IT products such as servers and storage, and multimedia products such as projectors and signage display products. "We are partnering with curriculum and content development companies in the education market and also looking at government schools to actively participate in unfolding the ICT revolution in learning institutions. Currently we provide IT infrastructure solutions to over 3,000 schools across the country in partnership with several ICT companies," says Bhalla, an alumnus of Mumbai University with an MBA from IMI, Delhi who served with Microsoft India (2004-08) where he acquired first hand experience of the technology environment in Indian education.

Given that of India's 1.80 million schools only 80,000, mainly in the private sector, have started integrating ICT into their classrooms, Bhalla is confident that government schools will start wiring up soon. "NEC has already established its footprint in India and our classroom projectors enjoy the largest share in the nascent education market. But since NEC is relatively new in the Indian marketplace, partnering with strategic players including the Central and state governments is a priority. Our strength is in our wide products and services portfolio, and especially the display projectors that Indian education institutions need," says Bhalla.

Looking ahead, NEC is committed to increasing its strategic investments in India, particularly in the social services sector and education. "With a mere 110,000 projectors in use in India, the demand is likely to double in the next three years. You'll find us filling that need in a big way," says Bhalla confidently.

Welcome!

**Autar Nehru (Delhi)**