

Business Analyst Hardik Parikh Talks

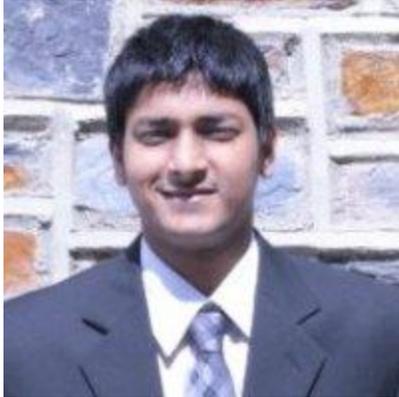


About His Work For MaxPoint

MEMP Alumnus

2011

By Ajay Krishnan and Keertana Guduru
Copy edited by Margaret Kuleshova



A recent Duke MEMP graduate, Hardik arrives to the office at 8:30 in the morning, settles down in his desk, and opens his marketing campaign resolution queue tool to identify any red flags. There are multiple campaigns running, so he has to quickly analyze the alert severity and prioritize his personal resolution. Activity prioritization is key to time management for Hardik every day at MaxPoint, so he spends at least one hour on it if he wants to get it all done that day. Once he has his priorities sorted, it's time to reach out to account and campaign managers to schedule and evaluate resolution methods.

Hardik did his bachelor degree in electronics and communication engineering at Bombay, India, where he was also involved in the local theater circus. Keen interest in theater led him to co-found media company Silly Point Productions. Wanting to leverage his creativity and engineering foundations, Hardik enrolled in the Duke MEM Program. CDAR representative, Ajay, has scheduled and informational interview with Hardik today.

“Hi, Hardik, how have you been?” Ajay says over the phone.

“I’m doing great, Ajay. Somewhat busy, but I’m glad to be doing this.”

“All right, then I’ll get straight to it. How did you become a Business Analyst for MaxPoint?”

“A few key courses defined my career path, such as Competitive Strategies, Marketing, and Operations Management. I think my ability to showcase the merging of creativity and business alongside a strong analytical thinking ability helped me secure my position.”

“Would you mind telling us what MaxPoint does and your responsibilities at the company?”

“Yes, absolutely. MaxPoint’s key service is online advertising. The organization is focused on using data analytics to identify and monitor key marketing performance measures. I have two core responsibilities: interfacing with account managers to gather client requirements to design online campaign strategies and resolving active campaign issues using data analytics tools for clients. Being a start-up, the organization has provided me with immense opportunity to take on additional responsibility and learn exponentially over the last two years. This has contributed greatly to expanding my overall skill-set and knowledge base.”

“Good to know. Many Duke MEM Students want to pursue a career in start-ups, while others may even plan on launching their own start-ups after graduation. How would you describe the culture at MaxPoint?”

I have two core responsibilities: interfacing with account managers to gather client requirements to design online campaign strategies and resolving active campaign issues using data analytics tools for clients.

“I would describe it as business-informal. People are very approachable and it’s all about getting the job done. Of course there are organizational hierarchies, but there are no set protocols. From a performance management perspective, the organization has evolved since the time I joined, especially considering the doubling of headcount to 80 employees. The organization tries to incentivize opportunities for its employees and is very close-knit. I believe students could definitely consider working for start-up organizations to tap the exponential learning curve they offer.”

“You seem to really enjoy your current job! What are some skills that you apply daily at work and value the most?”

“I enrolled into the MEM program as an undergraduate student with limited professional experience. The program taught me some very essential transferable skills such as networking and conflict resolution while working in teams, as well as time management. I believe core courses such as Finance and Marketing are fundamental courses which students could focus on as these help provide a high level business sense in a professional situation. Understanding cash flows and marketing contribution as well as calculating ROIs are some of the skills I developed during MEM and ones that I use on an almost daily basis.”

Understanding cash flows and marketing contribution as well as calculating ROIs are some of the skills I developed during MEM and ones that I use on an almost daily basis.

“Many Duke MEM Students are interested in acquiring a position like yours. What advice do you have for them?”

“Networking is a fundamental skill in the business world. Opportunities go by without notice if students cannot cultivate and leverage this skill. As a student at Duke, I made use of the numerous resources such as the career fair, seminars, and faculty experience to identify a career focus. I would strongly recommend connecting with faculty from across schools at Duke to obtain an eclectic perspective on various career options and help establish steadfast career goals.”

“How can students with little or no work experience go about their job search?”

“For students without work experience, the practicum opportunities at MEM expands horizons in terms of teamwork, accountability, professionalism and some much needed real world business experience. As far as the job search process is concerned, I would recommend being active in online career platforms and linking with professionals (via Duke and personal contacts) to weave a web of professional connections.”

“Any word of advice for students interested in the online advertising industry?”

“Online advertising is a great space to be in right now with the growing involvement of social media marketing strategies for firms across industry. I believe that students could explore such industries/services as it offers speedy career progress.”

“Thanks. This brings me to my final question: what do you expect from your career five years down the line?”

“I’m not too sure. My career objective has always been to find a job which involves analysis and strategy in a start-up or boutique firm so I can contribute more and have higher visibility in the space I am working in. Positions in boutique consulting firms have always excited me. However, I am currently at a position at MaxPoint where I am involved with core marketing strategy and also marketing analytics which fits my career objective. Also, the firm is the ninth fastest growing technology company and I believe this would benefit me in terms of growth and opportunities within the firm. Alternately, I am contemplating looking at corporate development and corporate media management. I believe this weaves in my experience here at MaxPoint and also my passion for media. So, in five years, I would probably like to be in a mid-senior management position in the corporate development space.”

“Thank you so much, Hardik! It was an absolute pleasure talking to you, and we really appreciate you taking out the time from your busy schedule to offer advice to current Duke MEM students. I’m certain they will find this advice very useful!”



© 2014 by Duke University
Master of Engineering Management Program
Professional Development Committee: Career Development and Alumni Relations