

# 'Domestic BPO units offer good career opportunities'

Knowledge of English, vernacular languages helps a lot, says Sparsh

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Coimbatore, March 23

From an extremely fragmented industry, the domestic BPO sector, which was mainly focused on providing out-bound telemarketing services, has started to provide cutting-edge outsourcing solutions.

According to Ms Gayatri Balaji, Chief Operating Officer (South India operations), Sparsh, 'The needs of both-domestic and international markets are similar. Both look at partners who can drive process excellence and become an extension of their business processes.

The domestic BPO space is primarily voice-based and includes the back-office work. Outbound calls are made for telemarketing, follow-up of orders and sales, while inbound calls could be for customer inquiry and complaints or response calls for a particular marketing campaign.

The work includes providing business-enabling front-office and back-office services to companies across various verticals.'

'The growth drivers are the telecom, banking and financial services and insurance verticals. Captive call



Ms Gayatri Balaji

centres of banks and telecom companies still account for a lion's share of the pie. Other emerging verticals are retail, aviation and government,' she said.

Sparsh BPO Services Limited, the domestic subsidiary of Intelenet Global Services (P) Ltd, with a workforce of about 18,000 across 18 centres in eight cities, offers services in English, Hindi, Punjabi, Bengali, Marathi, Gujarati, Kannada, Telugu,

Malayalam, Tamil, Assamese, Oriya, Haryanvi, Nagamese, Mizo and Dogri.

Excerpts from an interview:

**How different is a domestic BPO from an international one?**

The Indian BPO industry was extremely fragmented with small players providing outbound telemarketing services and was not viewed in the same vein as international work outsourced to India.

Bigger players were hesitant to enter the Indian market because of lower margins and the disorganised market dynamics that existed here.

This perception has now changed. Today, the needs of both -domestic and international markets are similar.

It is predominantly voice-based here.

However, unlike international BPO players, this industry has and continues to provide opportunities to non-English speaking people, thus increasing the employment rate in the country.

Sparsh also provides career opportunities to non-English speaking people through its domestic practice.

**What kind of educational background would an entry level job seeker need?**

The candidate that we look forward to can be graduates and undergraduates depending on skill sets needed for the job. Domestic BPO also offers job to candidates with linguistic capabilities.

Ideally, the candidate should know English with an expertise in two or more regional languages.

At Sparsh, we hire for attitude and train for skills.

**Are the candidates in semi-urban towns prepared to work in a BPO?**

Since the sector offers good package, provides career growth and opportunities to learn new skills, working in the BPO industry has become the choice of people.

This industry is capital-intensive and plays a very important role in employment generation for various segments not just in metros but even in smaller cities and towns.

**What has been your growth rate year-on-year?**

Our market share is currently 12.5 per cent and our domestic revenues account for about 25 per cent of our overall revenues.

**How do you visualise the future in view of the present uncertainty about outsourcing business?**

The growth of the domestic BPO market and the need to service customers in every part of India is driving more BPO players to set up operations in Tier II cities.

Infrastructure development is improving, thus decentralising operations from metro cities to Tier II cities.