

Training, Good Advice Pays Off: Company's Sales, Revenues Soar

The last couple of years have been difficult for business, but Prince Niyyar didn't get the memo. Sales at his company, Commdex Consulting, more than doubled in 2009 – to over ten million dollars. Revenues have increased more than 1,200 percent since 2006. Employment has grown to 44, with 11 new employees joining last year.

Niyyar started Commdex with a \$2,500 personal investment in 2001. He contacted the Georgia State University SBDC for assistance in 2006, and started working with consultant Peter Rassel. He credits that contact – and what he has learned from the SBDC – for the company's forward momentum. There has been no stopping him since.

Commdex has been ranked among the nation's "50 Fastest-Growing" engineering firms (2008) and telecom firms (2009) by Inc. magazine. Niyyar was recognized by Lt. Gov. Casey Cagle as the Greater North Fulton Chamber of Commerce's "2009 Small Business Person of the Year." After opening a Baltimore office last year, Niyyar and his Norcross-based company are moving to a larger headquarters office and expanding into the international market.

Commdex is a leading systems integrator of secure wireless communications systems (land mobile radio, broadband wireless, etc.) in public safety for local, state and federal agencies. It designs and builds networks of wireless voice, video and/or data to help first responders (police, fire, EMS, etc.) save lives by improving responses to emergencies. The company has helped deploy these systems for hundreds of jurisdictions in more than 40 states.

Niyyar believes that building a knowledge infrastructure within a company is as important as building a communications infrastructure for other companies, so he attended the SBDC's FastTrac® program.

"We looked at his company's financial indicators," says Rassel, "and were able to help Prince pinpoint issues that will come up in his business by using his financial statements." Rassel also helped Niyyar apply for 8A certification, a designation that allows minority businesses to compete for government contracts. "It's an exhaustive process getting



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all the information together. He did the work, and I did the coaching and review." Commdex was certified an 8A.

They focused on marketing, with SBDC's Erica Bracey helping to update the company's collateral materials. "We were able to put together a very professional brochure as a result of this help," says Niyyar. "Working with Peter and Erica is like hiring a top-notch consulting team to be by your side, and you never have to watch your checkbook. They are truly a great source of help, guidance and support. In any business area, we knew we could count on them," he says.

Rassel says that Prince has assembled a good team. "He learned this in FastTrac®: realize your limitations, bring on qualified people and listen to good advice. Now he shares his experience with fellow business owners."

"Make sure that you understand the business you are in and never be afraid to ask for help," says Niyyar. "You won't ever know everything you need to run your business, so surround yourself with people who do. We were very fortunate to have the SBDC and other folks by our side through all this furious growth."