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He came to Singapore's NUS as a computer science undergraduate. By the time he was 21, Rachit Dayal was running his own profit-generating company. LAVANYA MACHIRAJU meets the bright-eyed, bushy-tailed 'website guy'.

Is it easier to increase traffic to your website or to bend spoons? For Rachit Dayal, both are possible - and equally fun. A quick skim through his site, RachitDayal.com, reveals a hard-working yet easygoing entrepreneur who promises to turn your website around. It's not surprising to hear something like this from seasoned marketing gurus, but coming from someone who is just 24, it warrants a second look.

India Se: It all started when you came to the National University of Singapore for your undergraduate degree in computer science, didn't it?

Rachit Dayal: Yes, after a year in NUS I was selected for the Overseas Scholars'

programme and went to the University of Pennsylvania for a year. While I was at UPenn, I joined a start-up company where I appointed myself as the chief marketing officer since I realised that they had nobody to do the marketing. I figured then, that I had a knack for this. When the year was up I had the choice of either staying with the company or coming back and completing my degree. I chose to come back and finish my education - but in addition to my degree in computer science I decided to pursue a minor in entrepreneurship as well, so that I could start my own company right after I graduated.

IS: You are often cited as a role model for teenagers and younger children to

follow. What is your take on this?

RD: I think that no matter where you are, there is always someone better, more recognised and more successful than you and someone to emulate. I am nowhere near where I want to be; but that said, if I am one of the pit stops on their way to greatness, that's great.

IS: What is, in your opinion, your greatest achievement to date?

RD: I think I am more of a process-oriented person, meaning that I give the process as much importance as the goals that I set, and meet. But my greatest achievements... well, obviously my first paycheque was a great achievement. I am also very proud of the fact that I started a self-funded and immediately profit-generating business when I was 21, and have been supporting myself since then.

IS: It can't be easy, following this path that so few your age have taken. What is your driving force? What motivates you to go on?

RD: My motivation is to be different. I think that the most important things in life are having fun, giving back and creating value - and I also think that the most successful people are a little different from everyone else. Take Steve Jobs for example - being a design student he brought in not only a great system but also something which looks good. I think the more you aspire to be different and think out of the box, the more you grow as a person. Do what you love and love what you do! **is**