

How YourNest's latent partners are helping hatchlings take flight

It's common knowledge now that VCs don the hat of an enabler by going beyond funding businesses. They may provide timely advice and help with market connections, they may keep a tab on operations from a distance or engage deeper by conducting regular reviews. YourNest Angel Fund, though, is getting its latent partners (mostly HNIs) involved with its investee companies.

Facilitator role

Sunil Goyal, Co-founder and CEO, YourNest Angel Fund, says, "Most of our investors are first-time angel investors. We felt it was high time they shared insights with the start-ups we're invested in."



With an initial fund size of Rs.18 crore, YourNest has invested in 16 B2B start-ups. Goyal and his fellow fund managers aim to invest Rs.20 crore in a follow-on round. Around 140 individual investors have contributed to YourNest's first fund. "For our individual investors, it's like being associated with the future leaders of this country. They've helped us shortlist ventures to invest in. Our latent partners also open up their own client and customer networks when it's relevant for our start-ups," says Goyal.

Ramesh Awtaney, Chairman and Founder, ISON Group, which has a strong presence in Africa, is an investor in YourNest Angel Fund. "I consider my role as a facilitator or sounding board. While many of YourNest's start-ups will focus on India as a market first, and not everyone needs to be in Africa, if a start-up has a

winning idea, I may help with customer references. I may even facilitate its business in African markets without their having an office presence here," says Awtaney, on the range of his involvement.

Adding strength

GolfLAN, a global golf marketplace platform provides real time golf tee slots in over 1,000 courses in 30 countries, received funding from YourNest in March 2015. Samir Gupta, COO, GolfLAN, says, "Getting YourNest on board was a defining moment for us. We found they had a desire to help out meaningfully. We've had tactical and strategic guidance on our platform and on scaling with a focus on customer satisfaction from its team of investors."

aahaa stores, touted as "India's first managed corporate marketplace" for indirect purchases, serves large companies. Its product categories range from stationery to IT & AV products, and facility management products to brand promotion products. aahaa received funding from YourNest earlier this year.

Asokan Sattanattan, Founder and Chairman, aahaa stores, says, "We're now the single largest supplier in our space. We've scaled up with the guidance of private investors like Ramesh Awtaney. YourNest's team of investors has also introduced us to clients."

YourNest has launched a second fund to focus on pre-Series A investments – a corpus of Rs.300 crore for a new set of 25-30 start-ups that "taps Indian HNIs with a growing appetite for Alternate Investment Funds, Global & Indian Institutions and Fund-of-Funds."