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# MITHUN DIVAKARAN

Date of Birth: 8 January, 1982

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## Experience

**Perssist**, a New York-based startup connecting clients with virtual assistants (VAs) to handle various tasks  
*August 2014 to present*

### Operations Manager

- Since late 2015, tasked by the CEO to handle day-to-day operations and managing VAs based in Philippines, Russia, India, Pakistan and Canada.
- Since taking over operations, helped sustain the business by maintaining client satisfaction and signing up new client subscriptions.
- Co-ordinate work schedules, help VAs, and tend to concerns Perssist clients may have.
- Also tasked with obtaining new customers, lead generation, hiring and training new VAs. In between all this, I work on client requests as well.

Personally worked on over 8,000 requests since joining Perssist. For a more detailed look at the sheer variety of client tasks handled and excelled at, please refer to [this Google document](#).

**Halo Incubator**, a New York-based startup incubator that provided early stage female founders with the essentials required to fast-track ideas into high-potential start-ups and successful businesses.

*August 2019 to January 2022*

- Building the website (Squarespace)
- Social media management (Hootsuite)
- Reviewing applicants for each cohort
- Event management and planning for Demo Days
- Creating periodical newsletters (using Mailchimp)
- Create presentations (Google Slides), graphics (Photoshop, Canva)
- Research about startup ecosystems, fundraising, competitors, finding emails, etc.

## Other freelance work

*2013 to 2015*

Touchstone Healthcare Solutions, a Florida-based technology & editorial solutions provider for the healthcare industry. Responsibilities included handling editorial work largely consisting of:

- Populating Wordpress websites with relevant content & images for individual clients
- Setting up & updating social media accounts (Facebook, Twitter, Google Plus, LinkedIn, etc.) for Touchstone's clients
- ... or any other specific requests clients had.

Independent projects I worked on:

**Scoutmore.com** – Scoutmore allows users to create travel summaries that help others plan better trips with logical journey routes. Created over 30 such trip summaries based on my own travel experiences, and after thorough research of feasible tours, of destinations I hadn't visited.

**Mixx22.com** – A short-lived website that tried to be like ViralNova.com. Contributed over a 100 articles, many of which I pitched to the editors in the US.

Other freelance work during this period consisted of contributing travel articles for Madrid-based *lookiwasthere.com*, creating travel itineraries, helping set up podcasts, writing descriptions for hotel companies, reports on video gaming, and various independent writing projects.

## Townsquare Media, Freelance writer

*February 2012 to August 2012*

Freelance writer for Connecticut-based online media group.

- Worked on TheFW.com (focused on viral content) and Guyspeed.com (targeted at men).
- Pitched stories, wrote 321 articles, sourced & edited photos (mostly from Getty Images), managed a shift for handling Facebook pages, and helped generate web traffic using social media and Reddit.

February 2011 – May 2011: Assisted AOL Television in incorporating Hulu video content in 'AOL TV' articles.

- Hulu videos I selected received over 1.5 million streams per month in the 3 months I worked on the project. The video streams helped contribute significantly to AOL TV's incremental ad revenue.
- Was complimented for figuring out which stories would get popular and choosing appropriate videos to capitalize on the surge in user interest and search traffic.

May 2010 – January 2011: Patch.com is a local news and information platform catering to communities and suburbs across America.

- Managed a team of 14 editors (from 60-odd candidates I personally interviewed) to clean up data, verify and organize listings for the growing Patch.com network of hyper-local websites.
- Gave me an understanding of how to better target local audiences with relevant content and ads.
- Professionally, I had the great opportunity to manage a fairly large team.

October 2007 – April 2010: Managed the Celebrity, Movies, and Games channels for AOL's ANZ portals (www.aol.com.au and www.aol.com.nz - now defunct).

- Managed interns, created original features, edited photos from various press agencies (Getty, Wireimage, AP, etc.) and actively promoted content using social media (detailed below under Achievements).
- Also took on the managing editor's role for the Australian & Indian editions of men's blog, Asylum.com.

2006 – September 2007: Editor for AOL Yellowpages' database of American retail outlets and small businesses. Much of the work was data verification. The project also taught me about how mapping websites function, as the data worked on was also used in AOL's Mapquest.com.

June 2003 – early 2006: As an Editor at AOL Search, I was part of a team that analyzed search engine queries and performed categorization of keywords. Working on this project helped me understand search engine technologies and the different ways people look for information online. The classification and categorization of search keywords were all part of a process to serve related ads for matching search queries.

Early 2003: Began my career at AOL (back then predominantly an internet service provider) with the Bangalore call center's billing process. Dealt with customer billing issues and customer retention of their largely American user base. I learnt how to deal with errant customers and understood the inner workings of a "customer care" BPO operation.

### **Achievements**

- Using my presence on social news sites such as Digg & Reddit, I generated web traffic in excess of 36 million page views (PVs) to aol.com.au in our very first year of operations (2008).
- Traffic from referral websites thereby helped increase awareness about AOL Australia, boosted its page rank among search engines and the portal gained readership at no additional cost to the company.
- My efforts helped the team far exceed 10 million PVs annual target given at launch.
- As Facebook and Twitter grew into viable platforms for content distribution, I was quick to join the bandwagon and eventually became the "social media guy" everyone at office came to understand how to best use the medium.

I was recognized several times by company senior management for my innovative ideas and stupendous results achieved. My achievements were even lauded during a special luncheon with AOL CEO Tim Armstrong, during his first visit to India in 2009.

Some of the **awards won** during my time at AOL were the '**Star of AOL**' Award in 2007, **Part of the Star Performing Team** in 2008, '**Thinking out of the Box**' Award in 2008 and **Star Performer** in 2010.

**Education**

Bachelors of Business Management, from Dr. G.R.Damodaran College, Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu (1999 - 2002)

Schooling: Indian School, Bahrain (graduated 1999)

**Softwares Known**

Adobe Photoshop, MS Word, Excel, PowerPoint, basic video editing software such as iMovie.

Web analytics: Trained in Omniture tools (now Adobe Analytics) and Google Analytics

Social media: Hootsuite, Buffer

**Languages Known**

- English (extremely proficient; I speak with a neutral accent)
- Malayalam, Hindi (basic) -- they are Indian regional languages
- Studied the first level of German; studied two levels of Japanese

**My website**

Launched in late 2009, my personal website <http://mithunonthe.net> has received over 2 million page views with minimal promotion and most of the traffic coming from organic search engine referrals. Something I attribute to my knowledge and good implementation of SEO, and various social media and link referral tactics. My website showcases my travels across India and Asia (Thailand, Philippines, Singapore, Malaysia, Hong Kong, Macau, Japan, UAE, Vietnam, and Oman), using words the way I like to voice them and photography which tries best to re-live my experiences.

Some of my articles have been tweeted by famous personalities in Philippines in the past and some of my posts have been quoted on Wikipedia pages too (I didn't add them, I swear). I used to also write about Korean pop (2nd generation mostly), other music I love, and general topics of my interest.

**References**

Evan Britten-Bozzzone, Co-Founder - Perssist

Email: (available on request)

Albert Wang, Co-Founder - Perssist

Email: (available on request)

Nora Peterson, Founder - Halo Incubator

Email: (available on request)

Anand Sukumaran, Former Manager - AOL, Yahoo!

Email: (available on request)