

## Turn of fate makes an athlete setup IT firm

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What is badminton's loss is IT industry's gain. Sriram Manoharan, aged 35 wanted to follow the footsteps of his illustrious father R. Manoharan, who was the captain of Indian Volleyball team by making badminton his career, had to change tracks to business thanks to a knee injury.

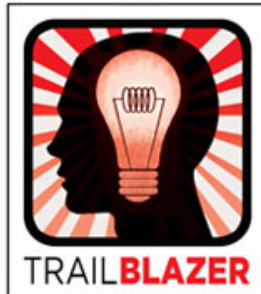
Today, the Chennaiite is founder and chief business development officer of Contus, an IT company that provides creative and innovative applications and software solutions to its clients.

Sriram after graduating in commerce from Loyola College in Chennai, worked in several companies including TCS and IBM before venturing out on his own with support from his close friends.

"At the age of 29, I was well-settled with a house, car and family. But I decided to take personal loan of ₹5 lakh and start a business because I knew if I had waited for some more time, I wouldn't have been able to give up on my comfort," the entrepreneur said.

For someone, who joined the IT bandwagon during the Y2K issue period via NIIT, it was natural to enter into programming sphere.

But within six months into a job, where his company was developing ERP solutions to a factory in Maharashtra, Sriram found out



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that it was not his cup of tea.

He quickly took a job as system admin at Wipro and later moved to Slash Support, where he was given a leadership role that turned out to be a crucial phase of his career.

"My manager Srinivasa Kannan at Slash Support identified me as a leader and it boosted my confidence. After marriage and a daughter, I decided that it was time I started a company. With support from four friends who contributed a similar ₹5 lakh each, we floated Contus. Within a year, we spent all the money and

were left with only ₹3 lakh. But, we did not lose hope. We went ahead and collaborated with a software development company and it worked," Sriram said, narrating his journey.

Contus achieved a turnover of ₹7 crore in 2013-14. "We have done close to ₹2.8 crore in the last three months and we hope to touch ₹12-15 crore in 2013-14," Sriram said.

With wings spread as far as the US, the company today has about 160 people on its roll.

"We have in recent times developed an e-commerce platform for a jewellery company and are in the process of developing mobile App for M&M vehicles like XUV 500," Sriram added.

**FOUNDERS BLISS:**  
Contus founder Sriram with his team

