

keep on track'em in the free world

JUSTIN GREY CHATS TO 2014 MY BUSINESS AWARD WINNER
KASHIF SALEEM ABOUT HOW HIS TECH SOLUTION
IS SAVING COMPANIES IN MINING, CONSTRUCTION
AND NATURAL RESOURCES MILLIONS.

The excitement in Pakistani expat Kashif Saleem's voice is palpable as we broach the topic of the ICC Cricket World Cup that's currently in full swing. With the start of the one-day limited overs tournament only a few days away, Kashif isn't holding his breath on Pakistani dominance.

"The Pakistan team is very unpredictable...it's like Perth's weather," Kashif laments down the line from his adopted home city in Western Australia. "They can be the best team and they can be the worst team. My Dad is from India and my Mum is from Pakistan, so when India and Pakistan are playing, you don't want to be in my house! But I always play it safe and support the Australian team!"

With a shared national past time of cricket, Australia was an obvious choice for relocation in the late 1990s when Kashif sought to broaden his horizons beyond Pakistan's borders. Leaving a stable job, Kashif moved to

Perth and enrolled in a Bachelor of Business Information Systems at Edith Cowan University.

Graduating in 2001, he kicked around in a number of IT positions in the field with large construction and mining companies before starting his own business, Saleem Technologies. The move from employee to business owner was straightforward for Kashif.

"I finished my studies and did some work here and there to get some experience," he explains. "I thought about working in another business, but I soon moved into my own business because business gives me the freedom to build things.

"I like helping people and basically [business ownership] just helps me to help other people and do my own thing. And fulfill my passion, which is helping others with technology."



KASHIF

Track'em

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2014 MY BUSINESS AWARD WINNER: TRACK'EM

At the 14th annual My Business Awards, held in Sydney last November, Track'em took out the Best Use of Technology category in recognition of their innovative GPS materials tracking solution. Commenting on the win, Kashif said winning the Best Use of Technology category was further testimony to the effectiveness of the Track'em product.

"Our system sets us apart from our competition and its proven use in small to medium enterprises to multi-million dollar projects is reinforced with this win. The recognition that we are having an impact in making our client's lives easier goes a long way in fueling our enthusiasm and determination even more."

Kashif was unable to make it to Sydney for the Awards gala ceremony, and Track'em's Operations Manager Hiren Patel (pictured, right) accepted the Award on his behalf. And this was more than apt – it was actually a Track'em employee who entered the company into the 2014 My Business Awards

"My Office Manager, who is also my right-hand woman, she's the one who [entered] me," he chuckles. "It's really exciting because it's not just something personal – it's for the whole team. It's good recognition, it's good for promotion, and it's a good team-building exercise because it really motivates and excites the team. So it's not just

something that I've won; it's something the whole team has won."

Details regarding the 2015 My Business Awards, including how to enter, will be announced in the coming months, so watch this space.



INNOVATION & INVENTION

Under the Saleem Technologies name, Kashif tinkered with a handful of IT solutions aimed at helping businesses in the mining, construction, and natural resources sectors. The solution that gained the most traction in the market was called Track'em, which provides a systematic, efficient and cost-effective approach to on site materials tracking.

Using an innovative GPS tracking system, Track'em provides 24/7 monitoring for each piece of equipment that leaves the manufacturer, is in the delivery process and is stored on site. By enabling the quick, exact location of a scanned item, including where it was scanned and who scanned it, Track'em saves business owners money by reducing wastage and material losses. It also eliminates

wasted time spent searching for materials on large worksites. Finding answers to problems using innovation and invention has always been a passion of Kashif's, so, naturally, Track'em was almost something he was born to create.

"I really, really love innovation and inventing things," Kashif explains. "But I also believe that innovation has to be done for the benefit of others. There's no point in innovating things just for the sake of innovating things. So with Track'em, the idea came from a discussion I had with one of the project managers on site. They kept losing materials – they looked for a [tracking] system, but couldn't find exactly what they wanted. So I built the system.

"We had a look around and there were some systems

which could do some of what we wanted to do, but not exactly what we wanted. An idea is a very, very important thing, but the key is how do you execute that idea. And I think we did that really well. When I speak to people about Track'em they say, 'Oh, I had this idea' or 'I had that idea'. But what you actually do with that idea is the most important thing."

Kashif says that much of the motivation for creating Track'em was his desire to use his knowledge of Information Systems to help business owners increase their productivity and profitability by better managing their time and reducing costs.

"That is what I'm really, really passionate about," he enthuses. "It really frustrates me to see wastage, in companies and big organisations especially. That's why I wanted to build a solution which would give them control and visibility of their resources and their assets. It all just comes down to people. For me it's not just about making money; it's about how we can help people to be more efficient, so that everyone wins."

SUCH A WASTE

While outsiders may not appreciate just how much of a drain losing materials, locating materials and wastage are on large businesses in mining and construction, Kashif has seen such burdens first hand. Kashif says that a \$20 item can end up costing as much as \$920 once you factor in the cost in lost time and reordering and penalties if you can't find the item. He has even presented on this subject at industry events.

"According to my research and analysis, 73 per cent of projects are delayed, 64 per cent of projects have costs over-run, and the cost in Australia to build or to construct a project is 80 per cent higher than other places," he explains. "So it affects everyone, from the taxi driver who's picking up Fly In, Fly Out guys to blue collar people working on site, to the Project Manager to the Daily Operator...everyone.

"In Australia, mining and oil, gas and resource businesses are really big. And what happens in the end is the economy suffers. Last year, about \$150 billion worth of projects were shelved, and materials and efficiency are part of the problem."

GETTING IN THE FRONT DOOR

Despite the inherent virtues of his product, Kashif had some initial difficulties establishing Track'em in the market. One of the biggest challenges he faced was getting into the market and securing his first client.

"I was someone who was not known in that space, I was nobody," he remembers. "But the best thing I like



about people in Australia is that everyone gets the same go. So when people saw that I'm passionate about it and that I'm hard working, they would rally behind my company and my idea.

"It's one of those things, everyone needs to know where their assets are. In your house or in your business, you know how important it is to know where your assets are and what you have. [Track'em] is like being able to find your TV remote, but on a billion dollar scale!"

TRACK'EM GLOBAL

Kashif and his team are on the fast track to global dominance with the Track'em product. As well as the obvious requirements for Track'em in resource rich Western Australia, there is already some serious demand for Track'em in the Middle East, South Africa and the US.

"We are looking to go to the next level – we want to be the number one asset tracking system in 2016 in Australia, and we want to be the number one in the US and the Middle East by 2020," the ambitious Kashif forecasts. "We're looking at what we can do to increase our market penetration and capture new markets. We've got huge interest from the Middle East and the US."

That enviable potential notwithstanding, like any product that introduces new technology and a different way of doing things, Track'em's future growth will require educating potential users about its virtues.

"There is a demand for this type of solution, but the problem is people don't like change," Kashif admits. "We still have to educate our prospects and clients about the return on investment they can get and things like that. It has its own challenges, but it has its own benefits because it's something that they need if they want to survive, especially in this economy."