

CHENNAI'S BRAND GURU

BY WORKING ON WINNING STRATEGIES IN THE CORPORATE AND POLITICAL SPACE, **SAMUEL MATHEW** HAS ESTABLISHED A BRAND FOR HIMSELF IN THIS CITY



SAMUEL MATHEW has always been very pious. In the second year of his undergrad degree at Loyola College, Chennai, Samuel refused to go on a trip with his friends because he would have to miss Sunday mass at Church. In 1999, during his final year, after much persuasion, he agreed to go to Goa, but only on the condition that all his friends accompany him for the Sunday service there.

His association with the *New Life Church* in Avadi spans over 25 years where he has unfailingly translated the sermon from English to Tamil every Sunday. The ability to do this has sharpened his skills beyond the house of prayer — he's quick with his words and his wit, and this has greatly shaped his professional life as well. You see, Samuel is a marketing man with the gift of the gab.

Beyond the Church, he's known to be mischievous, bold, warm and personable. He has teased his teachers in college, won the hearts of his friends and made friends with many people he's crossed paths with in life, including most of Kollywood. A public speaker, he has not only addressed branding conferences and marketing workshops, but also inspired youngsters in over 50 colleges in the State of Tamil Nadu. His ability to gel so well with people and the drive to get the most out of life has traced his path thus far.

Street smart more than studious, Samuel juggled a job at *Integrated Finance* as a marketing executive even while he was in college. After college, he built his marketing skills in companies like *Kotak Mahindra Bank*, *HDFC Bank* and *Mahatria's Infinitheism*, and climbed the corporate ranks much quicker than most of his batch mates. Yet, this wasn't enough to keep him professionally satiated. The

entrepreneurial bug bit him early in life. In 2002, while still at his first job, he started his own venture called *Vivid Media Marketing*, to cash in on in-film advertising, at a time when the concept was not very popular. In 2013, he started *Tomories*, a wedding photography venture to break into a new market. In 2014, after shrugging off offers from giants like *Reliance*, he decided to launch his current venture, *7 Miles Per Second*, a branding agency, which was named by web design company *Spidergems* as one of the top ten branding companies in Chennai.

As someone who started his career as an employee, he developed the discipline to start his day early and put in 8 hours of work a day — he still does this, even though he is now the boss, and can set his own rules. He works six days a week, and takes off on Sunday, to go to Church, visit his parents and spend time with his wife Monika Sam and 7-year-old son Jaden.

In 2016, he exercised his skills in a new arena by employing his strategising skills for political campaigning — that year, he worked on the election strategy for the winning AIADMK party, which is still in power. In 2018, he was invited to lend his expertise to analyse the general elections in Malaysia. Now, he has no option but to skip Sunday masses because of his professional pursuits which require him to travel beyond the subcontinent.

Always ready to shine in the spotlight, Samuel is known for making even strangers feel like age old friends. But, he works his magic behind the scenes with the brands he builds and the strategies he executes. This quality has been his winning stroke in taking him to new heights in his personal and professional life. **P**

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