

IIMC CASE RESEARCH CENTER (IIMCCRC)

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FARMIZEN: ARCHITECTING A REAL WORLD

FARMVILLE

(PART A)

MAY 2018, BENGALURU, FARMIZEN FARM

"The ultimate goal of farming is not the growing of crops, but the cultivation and perfection of human beings."

– Masanobu Fukuoka

In May 2018, Shameek Chakravarty, the co-founder and CEO of Farmizen, took a stroll amidst the gentle breeze through one of his partnering farms, reminiscing about his journey thus far. As he noticed two kids working playfully on their farm under the careful watch of their parents and farmers, he realized that his dream of enabling an experiential consumption for his customers had come true in its entirety. However, Chakravarty was fully aware that Farmizen had to constantly reinvent itself, if it were to continuously motivate its customers to immerse themselves in the (vicarious) farming process. Chakravarty was lost in his thoughts; should he add ratings and other gamification elements in his app, that would certainly help keep his customers constantly engaged going forward, but, would it affect the harmony that exists in the system right now or affect his farmers adversely?

Farmizen, a company that deployed app-based services to enable its customers to manage a piece of land in the real world, just like how Farmville, an online game, allowed its users to manage their farm in the virtual world, began its operations in January 2017 in Bangalore, India.

This case was written by Bhupesh Manoharan, Rishikesan Parthiban, Shalini and Prof. Krishanu Rakshit of the Indian Institute of Management Calcutta. The case was prepared solely to provide material for class discussion. The authors do not intend to illustrate either effective or ineffective handling of a managerial situation.

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The firm enacted a model in which a customer could rent a 600 square feet plot for 2,500/month (36.40\$) and vicariously farm crops of their choice via the app with the help of farmers who owned that land and performed the actual production of crops. In essence, Farmizen's focal objective was to disrupt the horticulture consumption practices of the city dwellers by transforming the usual commodity purchase into an experiential purchase.