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One-stop cyber shop for creativity

Anand Parthasarathy

Draw, paint, edit, search, manage and publish work — all without special software

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- ZCubes shifts PC-based tools to the Internet
 - It has been attracting a lot of attention in U.S.
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KOCHI: Imagine being able to create your own drawing with a few mouse clicks — then colouring it, adding animation and graphics; searching the Internet for some additional 'eye candy', adding it to your own work — then editing it into a professional-looking document and publishing it on your own web page?

An online resource created by an Indian inventor based in the U.S. allows you to do all this — without having to deploy any special software on your personal computer.

Large package of tools

"ZCubes" is the brainchild of Kerala-born Joseph Pally, an IIT-Madras graduate who went on to do his engineering Masters at Texas A&M University in the U.S. and stayed back to launch two companies.

The ZCubes resource (www.zcubes.com) went online a few weeks ago and since then has been attracting a lot of attention in the U.S. for its large package of tools tailored to enabling lay users to handle text, pictures, videos, music.... and spin them together to create a unique user experience.

More important — all the software to do this is available on the site and it helps one to handle over 30 standard formats, making it easy to mix-n-match media from many sources.

Mr. Pally, who started an IT services company, BitsOfCode, a few years ago, has founded a separate entity to promote ZCubes in view of the wide interest in the U.S. to leverage his invention, for which he and his team have obtained multiple patents.

Free resource

"We are able to handle all these different elements and save them in a single document or view — because we work in the basic language of the Web: HTML (Hypertext markup language)," says Mr. Pally.

"We would like to leave the resource free for all users... we will make our money in other ways, from advertisers or partners who might bundle ZCubes with their own offerings."

He is in India on a short visit and spoke to *The Hindu* on the sidelines of the Digital Futuristics Cable TV expo, which ended in Kochi on Saturday.

His achievement was greeted with standing applause during a technical seminar on Digital TV that was held as part of the event.

'Disruptive technology'

Enthusiastic blog postings on the Web speak of the browser-based ZCubes achievement as 'disruptive technology' that all too rarely shakes up the Internet by unveiling an inspired tool or resource which leaves users saying: "Why didn't any one think of doing this before? It's what we always wanted!"

Mr. Pally is scouting for talent to fuel two India-based development groups he is setting up in Thiruvananthapuram and Jaipur.

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