All glories to Sri Sri Guru and Gauranga

ISKCON
ONLINE

Presented under the inspiration and instructions of
His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada
Founder-Acharya of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness

"So go on with your organization for distribution of my books through press and other modern media and Krishna will certainly be pleased upon you. We can use everything -- television, radio, movies, or whatever there may be -- to tell about Krishna. " – Srila Prabhupada to Bhagavan -- Bombay 24 November, 1970

Introduction

ISKCON Online will significantly expand and enhance the quality, scope and effectiveness of advancing the Krishna consciousness movement using the internet. Based on our core strategy of combining creativity and technology we aim to transform ISKCON's presence and utilization of the Internet into a state-of-the-art tool for serving ISKCON's mission, especially in outreach and systematic spiritual education.

In this document you will read about our overall mission, vision and key elements of our strategy. You will also read about how you can participate. If you are connected to the Internet you have an opportunity to be part of this dynamic expansion of ISKCON's outreach.

We hope you'll be as excited as we are and will join our team. Please read on!

A new universe

With the participation of devotees from all over the world we envision the creation of a "new universe" of service to ISKCON's mission. Similar to ISKCON's strategic planning network, this universe will function a bit differently from ISKCON's "mother" universe.

One thing we've come to understand in working with the GBC Strategic Planning Network is that relevant, relatable, innovative spiritual change can more easily be created in smaller groups of devotees. Once the changes are created, they are exported to the "mother universe." Please note that the ISKCON Online universe is a "subordinate universe" – we are not working outside of ISKCON.

While it's true that the ISKCON Online Universe functions differently from the mother universe, the differences are not in the fundamental principles ISKCON is based on. Rather, they relate to those elements of ISKCON Online's culture that allow for free thinking and creativity in service of the mother universe.

For example, our universe will have little fixed hierarchy, but will be flexible enough to come together into teams according to the task at hand. These teams will be fluid and will likely change often. Also, we will be a lot more experimental than might be healthy in other ISKCON efforts. And we may overlook protocol and procedure in order to take advantage of new opportunities as they emerge. We hope this will allow us to become highly productive.

In this and other ways our universe will serve ISKCON by maintaining a large degree of independence while fully respecting ISKCON's overarching framework and authority.

Our first task has been to create this document. It will enable us to reach out to the devotional community and invite everyone who would like to participate to connect with us and help us build this new universe.

We start by introducing our specific vision and mission statements.

Vision

We envision a global network of creative, enthusiastic and trained devotees, using creativity and technology to create and maintain a rich, diverse and attractive online world of websites, communities, courses and products that are serving the spiritual needs of people throughout the world with relevant and relatable content and nurturing their awareness, interest, and engagement in Krishna consciousness.

We see:

- **Effective and attractive content** - A deep understanding and capacity to create content, design and branding that is both attractive, relevant, and relatable and fully faithful to Srila Prabhupada.
- **A rich online world** - A broad universe of websites, online channels, social media pages, online communities, mobile apps (and whatever new places show up in the future online world) that attract millions of daily visitors, engage their interests and keep them coming back.
- **Dynamic spiritual marketing** - Using the techniques, tools and systems of modern marketing and contact relationship management to reach targeted audiences, nurture their interest, win the ZMOT (Zero Moment of Truth) and bring them forward in the "faith" funnel.
- **Countering negativity -** Expert use of content marketing and SEO (search engine optimization) techniques to overwhelm any negative impressions of Krishna consciousness on the Internet with positive content.
- **Strong analytics** - A craftsman's approach to fine-tuning our efforts through in-depth analytics.
- **Virtual learning environments** - A wide range of systematic, easy to follow, online educational courseware and other products that serve people interested in learning about Krishna consciousness, bhakti-yoga, Vedic culture and anything else of value we have to teach.
- **Physical products** - Complimentary physical products, including books, DVDs, kits, produced and delivered through our own and affiliated organizations
- **Virtual "distributors"** - Making the online streets and markets of the world a prominent venue for ISKCON's outreach, with devotees heading to their computer screens with the same or better level of tools, products, support and enthusiasm as today's book distributors.

- **Online mentoring** - Trained, organized and supported teams of online mentors ready to give personal association and create supportive communities for every person that takes a step forward on the path of Krishna consciousness.
- **Sustaining revenues** - A variety of revenue streams coming from people who find substantial value in what we offer, and are happy to contribute, purchase and subscribe to the extent that our efforts are both sustainable and growing.
- **Progressive culture** - A culture of being a learning organization, agile, adaptive and progressive
- **Collaboration technologies** - Leadership and organization supported by virtual office and workgroup collaboration systems
- **Global volunteer base** - Facilitating and engaging volunteers as much as practical to achieve the best possible results.
- **Regional connectivity** - A distributed approach using regional and language groupings coupled with core central services
- **Personalization** - A dynamic, synergistic relationship between the world of face to face and online outreach interaction.
- **Expert Internet servants** - The capacity and framework to guide and support ISKCON's online presence in every sphere towards more effective outreach and global influence.

Mission

We deliver the Hare Krishna Movement through Internet and mobile technologies. We use innovation, creativity, systems and technology to deliver engaging and relevant online content, personal services, quality products and fulfilling experiences. We connect, cultivate, nurture, convert and serve people on their path back to Godhead with love and compassion.

Key elements

Key Principles

Our network is guided by two core principles that direct our decision-making:

Core Spiritual Principle – Our constant prayer is to only be an instrument in the hands of Sri Guru and Gauranga. This mood, combined with all the humility at our command, permeates our consciousness.

Core Operational Principle – Utilize creativity and technology in the service of ISKCON's mission.

Other key principles include:

- **A "Learning Universe"** - Network-wide development of state-of-the-art understandings of all disciplines
- **Integrity of messages** – Relevant, relatable AND faithful to Srila Prabhupada
- **Relationship building** – within our network, with ISKCON leaders and preachers, and with ISKCON and the various souls we are connecting to
- **Added Value** - We are "in the business" of providing ISKCON with "added value" – we want to help, we want to serve.
- **Within and without** - As members of ISKCON, we are "within" ISKCON". Yet when we gather in this universe, we view ISKCON and its activities from arms-length, leaving at the door some of the cultural

elements of ISKCON that are not effective in this sphere, while picking up other cultural elements that are required to exist in this universe.

Development of Core Competencies and a Culture of Education

Our network will develop various core competencies and promote a culture of educating ourselves towards personal and group mastery.

Our core competencies include:

- The Faith Funnel - using marketing principles to develop a deep understanding of the stages people go through in their path to Krishna
- Being relevant and relatable for our target audiences
- Understanding the principle of ZMOT (the Zero Moment of Truth) and how to win in the spiritual marketplace
- Overall marketing expertise - performance marketing, content marketing, affiliate marketing and so on
- Willingness and capacity to re-imagine nearly everything
- Comprehensive and meaningful research
- Expert product design
- The Creative Process – Preparation, incubation, intimation, illumination, verification
- Synergy, connectivity
- Change management
- Maintaining energy and focus over inertia
- Discipline

Building our teams

To succeed in this mission we plan to bring together the largest, most talented network of devotees that ISKCON has ever seen. As much as possible and practical we will encourage volunteer efforts, backed up by full-time staff where needed.

We will use virtual office systems to enable team members to work from any part of the world. We will function with flexibility and agility without much dependence on hierarchy. We will have both international and regional teams.

This document is part of a global effort to invite all devotees who want to participate to connect with ISKCON Online. We encourage you to share it with everyone you know.

Teams Populating the Network

Our network will be organized around different teams working collaboratively. These teams are further organized into groups of teams with similar goals. The main groups are:

Executive

The executive group will coordinate the network and support it with administrative functions including legal, finance and accounting.

Research

The research group of teams focuses on market research and competitive research through primary and secondary methods. Our aim is to navigate the Internet universe with as much knowledge and understanding as we can uncover. This research will inform all of our content, product development and marketing efforts.

Content

Content is king in the Internet world and our network seeks to bring together the best talent in and around ISKCON for content development in different mediums. This group has many teams with a lot of crossover and collaboration.

- Branding oriented (logos, styles and key messages)
- Graphic and Other Design
- Website general & site specific written content
- Social Media & Community content – blogs, Facebook and Twitter feeds, etc.
- Video content
- Downloads

Virtual learning environments

We will be expert in "systematic education" online through creating virtual learning environment of integrated web based applications that provide teachers, learners, and others involved in education with information, tools and resources to support and enhance educational delivery and management.

A range of educational experiences will be offered in different online academies tailored to specific markets. Courses will range from free email-based courses to paid certificate courses supported by full-time teachers, live webinars and personal guidance.

This group includes teams for:

- Course creation
- Course delivery
- Learning community development

Mobile Platforms

Mobile platforms (phones, tablets and other devices) are quickly becoming the dominant field for digital content. We will have a team to craft mobile strategies that are fully integrated with other platforms, This team will keep abreast with emerging technologies and ensure that our content and services take advantage of new opportunities.

Other Product Development

Special project teams will work on developing other digital and physical products to serve our markets including

- E –books, "white papers" and magazines
- Premium subscription content
- Mobile apps
- Audio and video downloads
- Printed - Books & brochures
- Bhakti-yoga, kirtan and meditation kits

- DVDs

Services

In addition to content, courseware and other products we will create teams to provide or connect with online and offline services including:

- Access to volunteer mentors
- Online stores for purchasing physical products
- Offline events, seminars, kirtans, retreats and pilgrimage tours

Marketing

With Lord Sri Nityananda Prabhu as our *Mahajan (in* Bengali, the Mahajan is the one who organizes the market, getting goods made by others and then bringing them to sell) , we will create teams to take these products into the global marketplace provided by the Internet and use every appropriate marketing tool to get people connected to Krishna consciousness.

We will use passive methods like advertising, content marketing and email based drip marketing using state of the art automation and tracking systems.

And we will mobilize global networks of volunteer "Distributors" and "sales teams" to venture into the online world offering the treasures of the *Nama Hatta*.

Performance

Our network will sharpen and develop our efforts by using performance analytic tools and strategies. We will have expert teams dealing with SEO (search engine optimization) strategies, audience analytics, site metrics, and overall performance measurements.

Technical

Behind the scenes will be highly competent teams of professionals handling all the back end systems to support the content, courseware and marketing efforts as well as keeping the network running at optimum efficiency. This includes:

- Web hosting and email and SMS systems
- Workgroup collaboration and project management
- CMS (content management systems)
- CRM (contact relationship management)
- MAS (marketing automation software)
- LMS (learning management systems)
- Social media integration and management
- Specialized programming

Human resources

The people forming the network will come from all over the world, tied together by a dedicated HR team and robust communications. By reaching out through expanding circles of our existing networks we will reach every person in around ISKCON who may want to participate.

Fundraising

A dedicated fund-raising team effort will complement revenues from marketing our products and enable our network to provide extensive free or low cost services.

Localized and Affiliate Teams

Our global efforts will link with a range of localized regional groups that we will help setup in collaboration with different regions. These include

- US/Canada
- India
- UK
- Russian
- Spanish
- Brazil
- Chinese
- Africa

We will also create affiliate relationships with SKCON centers, groups and events, and BBT books, BTG and other publications.

Internet Network Projects

Our planned projects include:

Spiritual marketing web sites

Our initial focus is to develop several important new general content oriented websites, namely

- Bhakti.com – A portal to bhakti-yoga targeting the yoga community
- KCbasics.com [working title for url] – A general purpose introduction to the basics of Krishna consciousness
- Kirtanworld.com - A portal targeting the growing interest in kirtan and linking to a global network of location specific kirtan sites (like Kirtanlondon.com)
- Darshan.com – The go to place for Deity darsan
- Gitamadeeasy.com [working title for url] - For first-time readers of the Gita

Virtual learning environments

We will create virtual learning environments to host courses and provide the framework for developing learning communities.

Some will be like online academies hosting a variety of courses:

- Bhaktilife.org – connected to Bhakti.com
- ISKCONAcademy.org – connected to various ISKCON sites
- Krishnacourses.com – Connected to Krishna.com and similar sites

Others will be a single topic – specialized course used to give introductory courses and lead students to the academies.

- Japacourse.com – Introduction to mantra meditation
- Gitacourse.com – Intro to the Gita
- Bhakticourse.com – general intro to Bhakti-yoga
- Krishnacourse.com – General intro to Krishna consciousness
- Bhaktiroots.com – For new congregational members

Spiritual lead capture pages

To market courses and other products we will have specialized lead capturing landing sites with the main objective of getting people to sign up and receive some free download or course that we will then follow-up to market other products.

Some ideas are:

- Bhakticonnection.com
- Bhaktiexperience.com
- Pathforhappiness.com
- Krishnameditation.com

Social Media and online communities

Along with websites we will build our social media presence through Facebook pages, Twitter feeds, Youtube channels, Google+ pages and other outlets.

We will also identify existing online communities where we can participate with our content and build specialized content for these communities.

Supporting other outreach efforts

Many devotees involved in outreach are unable to do any substantial follow-up as they lack the resources. We will offer such devotees the opportunity to channel their leads into our marketing systems with the option of staying in the loop with these individuals where practical and appropriate.

This will be especially important to traveling book distributors and speakers as well as many ISKCON events.

ISKCON websites

According to their needs and requests, our network will offer its expertise in Internet outreach to help revamp and improve ISKCON's existing websites including:

- Krishna.com
- HareKrishna.com
- ISKCON.com and .org

We will also offer templates and consultation for ISKCON center sites seeking to establish best practices and standards for effective outreach.

Connecting with us

To join the ISKCON Online network just visit ISKCONOnline.com and submit your information. You'll be asked to give a few personal contact details and describe yourself, your interests, skills and talents.

We will then begin working with you to see how you can best serve in this mission. And, of course, if you have any questions, comments or suggestions you can use the Contact Us form on the site or write to info@ISKCONOnline.com.

Summary

In 1970, Srila Prabhupada wrote to Bhagavan dasa:

"So go on with your organization for distribution of my books through press and other modern media and Krishna will certainly be pleased upon you. We can use everything -- television, radio, movies, or whatever there may be -- to tell about Krishna. "

ISKCON Online will systematically package Krishna consciousness in all the new media popular today: web sites, apps, online e-learning, social networks and more.

It is a logical next step to "systematically propagate spiritual knowledge" as desired by Srila Prabhupada, coming closer to the fulfillment of the mission of Sri Gauranga.

We look forward to your participation.