



# The upside of online

For the last seven years Muki Regunathan, founder of a leading Bangalore-based, full-services interactive company, has been working with global, high profile clients in the IT, mobile, education and health care space. Here, Muki, who is exposed to an online life on a daily basis, gives us his expert view on why it works for him – and how it can for you.

I stopped standing in a boring teller line at my bank long ago. It gave me more time to spend over a leisurely lunch with friends. When I travel to new cities, I use Google maps and weather alerts to prepare myself and get around quickly. It has given me more time to be at art museums and enjoy rides at amusement parks with my wife and kids. I interact with all my clients online, ensuring that I have more time to spend with the interesting ones in face-to-face meetings over a good cup of coffee. By doing certain things online, I am actually trading time. It's a good way to look at what you should do online and why.

Ironically, my focus is on creating time to enrich my offline life. I've grown a little sick of being poked on facebook, reading about what people are doing on their virtual farms and making supposedly interesting connections on LinkedIn. Social networking tools are, doubtless, powerful. And they are the flavour of the century (so far).

And it is great to know what my friends are listening to, shopping for and the places they have been. But it has still to influence me enough to make a buy decision on anything. When I wanted to buy a new car, I went to the showrooms and took them out for a test drive. Can you see what is happening here? I am consciously separating knowledge and information from experience.

So my advice: seek information and do the mundane on the net. Use this intelligently to make time for deeper experiences in real life.

Because experience is proprietary.