

Managing director of Sanjay Automobile Engineers **Sunil Christian** speaks about his family business and his passion for cars

**Omkar Rege**

A 56-year-old legacy in the automobile industry for someone who comes from a family predominantly of doctors is a commendable feat. Sunil Christian, managing director of Sanjay Automobile Engineers Pvt Ltd, recalls the roots of his family's advent into the world of automobiles says, "My father established the Standard Garage, which is the stepping stone for us in this business. He built a reputation from modest beginnings with quality service in Aurangabad, before shifting to Pune in 1968."

After years of quality service, Sanjay Automobile Engineers finally entered the business of automobile dealership in 1998 becoming one of the first Hyundai dealers in the city. The dealership, named after Sunil's brother Sanjay, who is a doctor, saw some tough days initially like all other Hyundai centers. "People just didn't connect with the brand initially. They did not like the designs and also misconstrued the name as someone saying Honda differently," says Sunil.

## SERVING QUALITY

Snahil Sakhare DINA



Sunil Christian at his showroom in Wadwadadi

But as Hyundai grew as a brand in the country, the dealerships also felt the growth in terms of sales as well as brand equity. "Making Shah Rukh Khan the brand ambassador was the catalyst. He made the brand public and made Hyundai a household name. The credibility was always there, but the recognition came slowly," adds Sunil. He sees the manufacturers as a proactive company that is always looking at improving themselves. "Santro lacked public appeal initially. They didn't like its design. But the manufacturers have worked hard on all

the models that followed. At present, following the trend of fluidic design which is a common ground for all the recent models," he says. With three sales outlets and four workshops, Sanjay Hyundai is a well established dealer in the city. "We are a customer-centric business and customer satisfaction and loyalty is our only reward," Sunil says. He adds, "We may not be the highest sellers in the market but we get our points from service."

The trophies from manufacturers that are behind Sunil's desk at

## **Making actor Shah Rukh Khan the brand ambassador was the catalyst. He made the brand public and made Hyundai a household name**

— Sunil Christian, managing director,  
Sanjay Automobile Engineers

his office tell the same tale. Almost all of them are service related laurels and Sunil is proud to have won

them. Being an engineer, the economic side never really attracted Sunil. He claims that given a chance he'd spend all his time at the workshops but his responsibility calls for him to be at the showroom. Another aspect of being an engineer is the keen interest in the machines which leads to a keen desire to provide quality service to customers.

Sunil also gives that as a reason for not having ventured into multi-brand dealership. "We, have always tried to maintain our customer base with our service. If we increase our

span, there might be dilution of focus which would hinder quality and we don't want that," says Sunil. "If in the future we ever indulge in another brand, it will be a quality brand that believes in the same things that we do." His passion for cars runs in his blood and the years of service have only made that passion stronger. With a clear mission to provide customers with quality service, Sunil will only make that passion a stronger legacy in the years to come.

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