

Your **Official Intra College Portal** can give your institute multiple benefits of web based collaboration. It is now a much needed facility in every college!

Introducing [iBranch](#), a web based service using which you can start your **official intra-college portal**, instantly, without buying any hardware or software or hiring 'IT Guys' ... *for as low as **Rs.2490** per month!*

1

Interact Online

2

Share Information

3

Share Knowledge

with state-of-the-art collaborative features...



Announcements



Repository



Discussion Forums



Blogs



Event Calendar

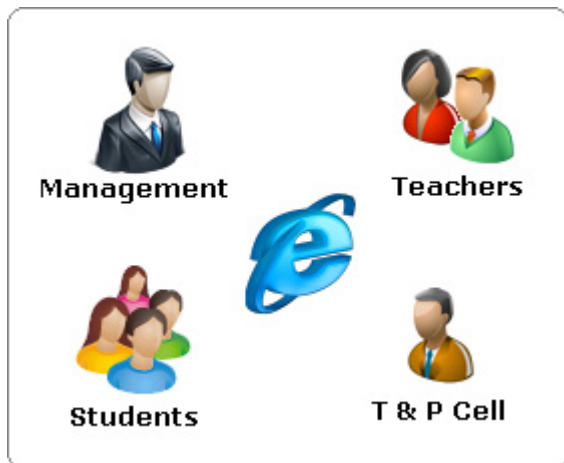
Do you have an iBranch?

With **iBranch.in**

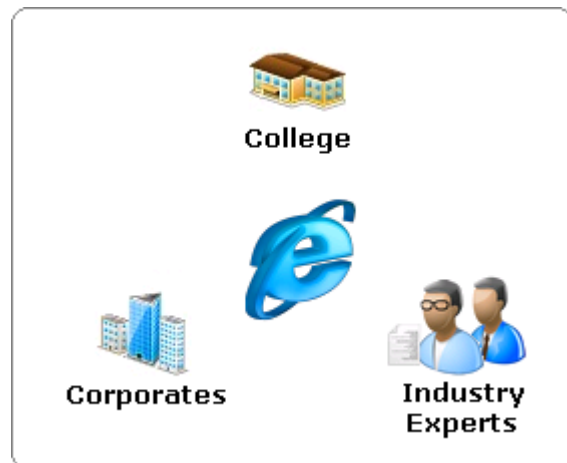
Enhance...

- Quality of your learning environment
- Industry readiness of your students

... and gain a permanent advantage!



Day-to-day
"Internet Advantage"



Long term association of "Subject
Matter Experts & Industry Experts"

Inside...

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What is an iBranch? ...and other FAQs

1. What is an "iBranch"?

"iBranch" stands for INTERNET BRANCH. The iBranch of a college becomes the "Official Intra College Portal" for students, teachers, T&P cell and management to share day-to-day information through Internet.

For example, see our demo iBranch of a college - International Institute of Learning (www.iBranch.in/iil)

2. How is it different from the "Website" of our college?

The purpose of your "Website" is to introduce your college to the outside world. Its like a detailed brochure which contains mostly static information like 'Courses Offered', 'Departments', 'Faculty Members', 'Facilities & Infrastructure', 'Achievements' etc.

Whereas the purpose of iBranch is to share day-to-day information like notices, announcements, classnotes or queries which is highly dynamic in nature (changing every day or hour). Also iBranch is strictly for the members of your organization, not for outsiders.

Technically, both website and iBranch (intra-college portal) need a web server for hosting, but the software for intra college portal is much more complex than that of a website. That's because, an intra-college portal is a collection of many 'web applications' which allow people to collaborate in different ways.

3. Why does my college need an "iBranch"?

If you want to take the advantage of Internet technology in day-to-day functioning your college, you need an iBranch. Since interactivity and knowledge-sharing is the most important day-to-day activity in a college, iBranch (intra-college portal) is equally important as classrooms & black-boards, especially in this Internet age. It also helps the college management to organize the functioning of staff and activities of students more easily.

4. Why use Internet when all our teachers & students have mobile phones?

Sending information over mobile phones through SMS is suitable only for short notices and quick alerts. When compared to online announcement, SMS based notices will be quite expensive because an average notice in a college would require atleast 3-4 SMSes per student to display fully. Hence SMS can only be used as an extension/add-on of online notice board, and not as a substitute.

And apart from announcements, there are many other ways in which you share information within your college. For example, in a department, HoD will need to share a common calendar so that every faculty-member is aware about the schedule and responsibilities of other faculty-members (*hence you need an online calendar*). HoD, teachers and students will need to hold group-discussions which should be available for reference in future (*hence you need forums*). They would also need to share a lot of documents among them (*hence you need online document repositories*).

5. Why do we need more ways of collaborating when we use e-mail?

E-mail is most suitable for personal communication. Although you can send detailed messages with attached documents to a number of recipients at once, it is still unorganized. E-mailing a message to a group of people is like distributing photocopies of that message instead of putting it on a notice board (What if the message needs a small correction after it has been distributed??). iBranch provides you with a sophisticated notice board on the Internet (along with lots of other features of course).

Wikipedia states "loss of context" and "inconsistency" as drawbacks of e-mail, it says "Email can duplicate information. This may be a problem, when a team is collaboratively working on documents". For the recipients too, it is difficult to categorize the mails because everything is at one place.

E-mail was one of the first applications over Internet (more than 2 decades old!). Lately we have seen many new collaborative applications emerge, like instant messaging, discussion forums, blogs and others using which users share information and content over Internet. Emergence and popularity of these applications prove that people need to collaborate in more than one ways.

6. What direct benefits does college management get by using iBranch service?

iBranch enables the management of a college to easily monitor the quality of the learning environment in the institute, and get direct feedback from students & teachers. It helps in cutting down your printing & photocopying costs and reducing your telephone bills, by centralizing the info-sharing.

It also helps to retain and develop the knowledge base of your college, which means even if a teacher leaves the organization, the knowledge shared by him/her over your iBranch shall remain for future reference.

7. If we keep our internal or private information on a web portal, then anybody can see it...

Your iBranch is accessible ONLY to members you authorize. Unauthorized visitors only see a login screen when they visit your iBranch.

8. Can you provide multiple levels of security? For example the information shared between management & staff should not be visible to students.

Yes, we provide 'role based security' for your portal.

10. Why use iBranch service when we can develop and host a collaborative portal on our own?

We mainly offer you 3 advantages – cost, continuity of service and latest technology. Please see the ["Advantage iBranch" on page-3 for details.](#)

11. What kind of supporting hardware or software do we need to buy to use iBranch service?

None, you only need a PC with Internet access.

Advantage iBranch

Opening an iBranch on www.ibranch.in has three major advantages over developing and/or hosting your own portal solution:

1. Cost Advantage – *Great benefits in setup & running costs*
2. Training Advantage – *Ensuring proper utilization of service*
3. iBranch Network Advantage – *Exposure to industry*

1. Cost advantage - *Great benefits in setup & running costs*

(Please see the box "Behind the curtain" to understand the infrastructure and manpower resources needed for running an intra-college portal).








Where are the costs?			
5% – 20% Initial Infrastructure	5% – 15% Deployment personnel	5% – 15% Ongoing Infrastructure	50% – 85% Ongoing Personnel
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hardware - Software - Security - Monitoring / Management Tools - Ancillary Upgrades - Facilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Design - Configure & Integrate - Test & Tune - Ancillary Upgrades - Launch - IT staff Training - End User Training & Awareness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hardware Repair / Replace - Network - Security - Bandwidth - Software Maintenance & Upgrades - Redundant Systems - Capacity Adds - Add on Feature Sets - Monitoring/ Management Tools - Facilities - Other (help desk etc.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Scheduled Maintenance - Unscheduled Maintenance - Outage Response - System Monitoring - End User Service & Support - End User Training Staff Training - Planning, Engineering, Testing - Deployment of Upgrades and Add-ons - Security Monitoring - Marketing Awareness & Adoption

Original source: IDC. (Direct source: White paper from WebEx™ – [pdf] "On-demand Vs. On-premise collaboration".)




Behind the Curtain

What an intra-college portal requires at the back-end?




Infrastructure:

-  Server class computer
-  Server operating system with web server software
-  Portal software or a content management system
-  Database server software.
-  Supporting software like anti-virus etc.
-  Internet leased line with at least 2Mbps bandwidth.
-  Firewall (hardware or software)

Deployment Personnel:

-  System design and Information architecture.
-  Portal software or content management system development (or customization).
-  Infrastructure deployment.

Ongoing personnel:

-  Infrastructure maintenance
-  Portal administration (user memberships and roles management)
-  End user training and support

The initial infrastructure with an entry-level server and free open source software would cost more than Rs.100,000 and it would incur a recurring cost of more than Rs. 25,000 per year for power and internet connectivity (excluding maintenance costs). This assumes that your IT department has reserve manpower to do things mentioned in the second and fourth column of the above table, which is often difficult. Even if a single technical person is deployed to administer the portal setup, the effective recurring costs shoot beyond Rs.100,000 per year!

On iBranch.in, subscription prices for an intra-college portal start at *Rs.2490 per month!* So how do we provide this service at such low prices? The infrastructure costs get shared among various clients. Operational costs per portal, which are the highest among all costs, are recovered through sponsorships and ads (limited and strictly relevant advertizing).

2. Training Advantage - *Ensuring proper utilization of service*

'Evangelizing' is one of the most important activities among our client colleges, and the sole purpose of evangelizing is to help the client college to adopt the culture of web-based collaboration. It involves specially designed modules for students, teachers and management. Just as we specialize in the technology of intra-college portals, we also specialize in implementing it within a college. Apart from free & continuous online training, we offer following two evangelizing programs for colleges:

- JumpStart Program
- Collaboration Maturity Program

JumpStart Program is a *fast-track module* to quickly train the students and teachers for web based collaboration. Its like a crash course for giving them tips & motivation on 'why & when to use iBranch' and 'how to make the best use of their intra college portal'.

Collaboration Maturity Program is an *advanced in-depth module* to make an organization 'collaboratively mature'. A college which has attained collaboration maturity can get lot of preference and appreciation from the industry.

3. iBranch Network Advantage - *Exposure to industry*

We are continuously working towards expanding our Corporate & Industry network, and we allow them to get directly connected on a long-term basis with our client colleges for Knowledge Sharing, Projects and Placements. This ensures that the students of our client colleges get quality & long-term exposure to the corporate domain, making them industry ready.

Collaborative Features



Announcements

A simple and secure way to broadcast notices & announcements, and publish news. It comes with 'display-in-future' and 'expiry date' facility. Useful when you want to create a "virtual notice board".



Event Calendar

Important events can be displayed (with details-on-click) under specific dates on a calendar. E-mail reminders can also be sent optionally. Useful for exam schedules, meetings & conferences, deadlines etc.



Discussion Forums

An online platform for members to discuss topics asynchronously (unlike chatting). Saves & displays discussions topic-wise. Useful when you want a group discussion on a topic. Also when you expect a reply for a query from anybody within your organization.



Blogs

Blogging, the latest trend in the Internet world, allows members to write articles, essays, comments etc. and share them publicly. Useful when you want to just write about something and express yourself subjectively.



Repository

Upload documents (like text files, spreadsheets, presentation slides, pdf etc.) from your computer. It can then be downloaded by authorized users from anywhere. Useful when a document/file needs to be distributed among a group or made available for reference anytime in future.



Custom tabular data

A custom defined table which can be used to build online lightweight databases. For example time-table, task allocation table, member records etc. Useful when multiple users need to view or edit tabular data which traditionally requires group-sharing of excel files through e-mail.



White Board

Its a plain and simple white board! You can write any text on it or even create advanced displays using HTML.



Wiki

It's the newest way of co-authoring documents. It maintains a single active copy of the document online and also tracks the changes made to it. Useful when more than one persons work on a single document. For example a team working on a client-proposal.

Our Clients and Testimonials

Testimonials...

"It is a matter of sheer delight for the RGTU to be on iBranch. We firmly believe that in the Age of Knowledge it is absolutely essential to create Knowledge Power by effective utilization of the power of connectivity and power of networking..."

- **Prof. P.B. Sharma**, Ex VC, RGTU. (from his blog on UITRGTU iBranch)

Client Organizations...



University Institute of Technology - RGTU, Bhopal.



Sarojini Naidu Govt. Girls P.G. College, Bhopal



National Law Institute University, Bhopal.



Institute of Professional Education & Research, Bhopal.



Radharaman Group of Institutes, Bhopal.



SAM College of Engg & Technology, Bhopal.



Sardar Vallabh Bhai Polytechnic, Bhopal



Gyan Ganga Institute of Technology & Management



Truba Institute Of Engg. & Information Technology, Bhopal



Neo Momentum Classes, Bhopal.



VNS Group of Institutes Bhopal



IES Group of Institutes, Bhopal.

...and more!

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