



Rajeev Madhavan—CEO, Magma Design Automation

Magma Design Automation generated \$160 million in revenue in 2006. Like all start-ups, the journey started with some hard work and pitfalls; nevertheless the founder Rajeev Madhavan persevered relentlessly against all odds. This Chilli Talk is an in depth interview covering those early years.

Rajeev Madhavan's background

After receiving his bachelor's degree in electronics and communication from KREC (Karnataka Regional Engineering College), Surathkal, India, Rajeev Madhavan went on to study for a master's degree in electrical engineering at Queen's University, Ontario, Canada.

His first job after graduation was at BNR (Bell North Research) in Ottawa, Canada, where he got an opportunity to write his own synthesis tool to complete a chip design he was working on. He joined Cadence as a full-time employee in 1991, and worked for just over 12 months on Cadence's Spectre HDL tool.

Troubled by the politics of getting new tools into customers' hands, he left in 1992 to set up LogicVision along with Vinod Agarwal and Michael Howells. Here he felt he could do better than the synthesis tools he was using so in 1994 decided to set up on his own and founded Ambit Design Systems. Having achieved some significant benchmark performance against prevailing Synopsys tools, Ambit was eventually sold to Cadence.

Rajeev Madhavan continued to be driven by the need to deliver what the customer wants, so founded Magma Design Automation in 1997. Magma successfully raised several rounds of VC funding (over \$100m), and went on to become a public company in November 2001.

The full interview with Rajeev Madhavan is available in The Chilli RED. It covers the following questions:

- The start-up vision: what drove you to do a start-up, some of the issues leading up to it, including raising money and who influenced you?
- How did you get your first deal? How did you respond?
- How did you build your team, how did this evolve, and how would this compare to the industry today?
- What drove the team and what would be your advice to other start-up management teams?
- What's your advice on dealing with VCs and raising money?

- What are the main industry challenges today from your viewpoint, and what are the opportunities?
- How do you stay on top of tracking developments and the company?
- What are the company challenges you face now and could you put this in the perspective of the industry challenges?
- Can you highlight some of the sacrifices that you made in starting up and growing successful businesses?
- What have been your toughest and proudest business moments?
- What do you enjoy and what do you hate?
- What would you do differently?
- Did you ever feel like giving up?

Read the full interview with Rajeev Madhavan [here](#).

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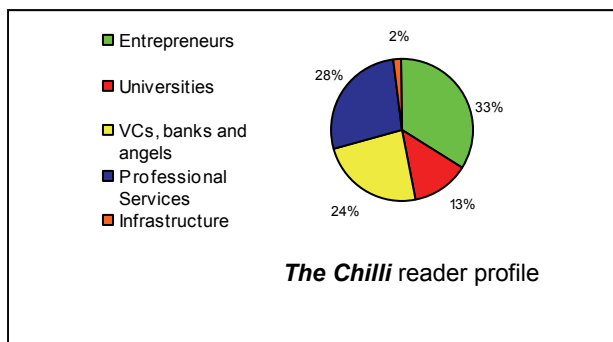


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