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Top Skills

Mergers & Acquisitions (M&A)
Operational Excellence
Engineering, Procurement, and
Construction (EPC)

Languages

Sinhalese (Professional Working)
English (Native or Bilingual)
Tamil (Native or Bilingual)

Praveen Paul

Operations & Sales Strategist | Team Builder | Global Exposure |
Sales Director | Chief Operating Officer
Dubai, United Arab Emirates

Summary

With 25 years of experience scaling businesses across MENA and APAC, I've driven growth through strategic leadership and innovation.

As COO of a hospitality proptech business, I led its transition from legacy to a SaaS platform, achieving 80%+ of new sales from SaaS solutions with a quantitative and analytical sales strategy. I tripled installations, quadrupled revenue, streamlined operations and improved cash flow with healthy reserves. I also built and enhanced team capabilities, expanding to 30+ countries. A successful exit for the founders resulted in an acquisition in early 2025.

In Blockchain/Web3, I Co-founded a startup that raised \$3M to deploy data monetization technology empowering creators in research, art, and music and established a service entity in the UAE to support its global workforce.

In Australia, I founded an engineering automation company, delivering multimillion-dollar projects in industries like mining, oil & gas, and recycling. I built and managed cross-functional teams, optimized operations, and spearheaded projects exceeding \$1M in engineering hours, establishing a strong industry presence.

My expertise lies in scaling businesses, optimizing operations, curating global sales strategies, building teams, leveraging technology for global expansion, consistently delivering measurable impact and unlocking growth opportunities.

Experience

Winsar Group
Chief Operating Officer
August 2016 - Present (8 years 9 months)

India

The Winsar Group has been synonymous with hospitality technology for over two decades, offering deep product expertise through its comprehensive end-to-end Property Management System (PMS).

- Spearheaded the transition from on-premise to SaaS, including the initial setup of AWS infrastructure (SaaS now accounts for 80% of new sales)
- Built, recruited, and trained a three-tier global sales team of 30+ members, driven by data science-based targets, daily performance tracking, and weekly closure metrics
- Revived cash flow through strategic initiatives promoting on-time payments and set clear targets for both operations and accounts receivable teams
- Scaled onboarding and customer success teams, rolling out comprehensive ticketing, cloud telephony, project management, and performance tracking systems to handle over 60 new installations per month
- Quadrupled revenue
- Tripled the installation base (now 2,200+)
- Tripled country presence (now in 30+ countries)
- Tripled team size (now 150+)
- Established offices in the UAE and Indonesia
- Actively contributed to acquisition due diligence

Itheum

Chief Operating Officer

July 2021 - April 2024 (2 years 10 months)

Itheum is on a mission to unlock data silos and create new value for personal data through the power of decentralized technologies like Web3 and blockchain.

As COO, I was deeply involved in Itheum's early growth and strategic foundation — helping shape both its technical and operational roadmap. Key contributions included:

- Took a deep dive into Web3 and blockchain, rapidly building hands-on knowledge in a domain where I had no prior experience.
- Led tokenomics strategy, fundraising initiatives, and successfully launched the utility token via an IDO.
- Built and scaled a global non-technical operations team, overseeing marketing, community, and partnership functions.
- Developed and executed end-to-end marketing operations, including tooling, methodology, and growing engaged online communities.

- Established a compliant operating entity in Dubai to support global operations, ensuring ongoing alignment with evolving regulatory requirements.

This role expanded my leadership experience into the frontier of Web3 innovation, blending strategic execution with fast-paced startup agility.

Singapore Tourism Board

Cohort 2 Member - Singapore Tourism Accelerator

March 2020 - October 2020 (8 months)

Singapore

The Singapore Tourism Accelerator (STA) is a highly-selective, 6-month program for the world's most promising technology startups or pre-scaleups that can power the travel and tourism industry. The STA is organised by the Singapore Tourism Board (STB) and its appointed corporate innovation partner, Found8. Winsar is a chosen company out of a small selection of 10 companies picked from hundreds of applicants worldwide.

KAPP Engineering

Co-Founder, Director of Business Development & Special Projects

August 2005 - August 2016 (11 years 1 month)

Perth, Western Australia, Australia

KAPP Engineering is a vendor-neutral provider of industrial automation and process control solutions, specializing in PLC, SCADA, DCS, and MES systems across industries like mining, manufacturing, water treatment, and recycling.

As a founding member, I played a key role in establishing and scaling the business from the ground up, overseeing commercial and technical execution of major projects.

Key contributions:

- Built KAPP's reputation from scratch, securing large clients despite initial challenges with market recognition and a young workforce.
- Delivered complex projects valued at over \$1M, including:
 - Underground mining systems
 - Advanced manufacturing lines
 - Interstate ore loading and transfer systems
 - Large-scale recycling plant automation
- Led full project lifecycle execution — from scoping, design, and risk analysis to contract negotiation and delivery.

- Drove technical innovation by introducing:
 - Virtual Machine environments (VMware)
 - Advanced VSD configurations
 - MES-based business intelligence dashboards
 - Radio and cellular network surveys and deployments
- Bridged technical and commercial roles — combining strong engineering fundamentals with business development, pre-sales, and project delivery leadership.

This role cemented my foundation in engineering leadership, client trust-building, and technology-driven business growth across mission-critical environments.

Industrial Automation Group Pty Ltd

Control Systems Engineer

March 2002 - August 2005 (3 years 6 months)

Perth, Western Australia, Australia

Contributed to the design, development, and deployment of cutting-edge control systems and automation platforms across agriculture and irrigation technologies.

Key contributions:

- Played a key role in the R&D and commercialization of CSIRO's Grain Aeration Algorithm, developed to improve on-farm grain storage through precise aeration control (drying, cooling, maintaining).
- Integrated the algorithm into a custom PLC-Linux hybrid platform, combining standard automation logic with advanced scientific models.
- Led field testing and implementation in collaboration with CBH Esperance, ensuring real-world validation and optimization.
- Spearheaded the design and early-stage development of a "Generic" Irrigation Controller, built on the company's 15+ years of industry experience.
- System architecture included Linux-based PLCs, Java-based handheld/central controls, and GPRS-based communication.
- Focused on scalable, remote field deployment across diverse irrigation environments.
- Delivered multiple control systems projects, working across a wide range of PLC and SCADA brands, developing a strong foundation in multi-vendor integration and systems engineering.

This role sharpened my skills in automation R&D, field testing, and custom system architecture, laying the groundwork for my future in complex engineering environments.

Channel Group

Field Application / Marketing Engineer

December 2000 - November 2001 (1 year)

Singapore

Managed a portfolio of electronics and software products tailored for the manufacturing sector across Singapore and Malaysia, providing both technical and commercial support throughout the sales cycle.

Key contributions:

- Led product management for a diverse line of industrial electronics and software solutions, serving large-scale manufacturers in Southeast Asia.
- Delivered technical presentations and demos to R&D teams and design engineers, translating product capabilities into real-world applications.
- Conducted competitor benchmarking and market analysis for assigned suppliers, shaping go-to-market strategies and enhancing sales positioning.
- Provided end-to-end client support — from pre-sales through to deal closure — including:
 - Custom reference designs
 - Detailed connection schematics
 - Hands-on troubleshooting and resolution of project-specific challenges

This role honed my skills in technical sales, product positioning, and customer engagement — building confidence in navigating complex B2B environments early in my career.

Education

Curtin University

M.Eng/Sc, Telecommunications & Networking · (2002 - 2003)

University of Northumbria at Newcastle

B.Eng (Hons), Electrical & Electronic Engineering · (1996 - 2000)