

Centre for Asian Business and Economics

CABE RESEARCH SEMINAR SERIES

PRESENTER Dr Tejpavan Gandhok (Indian School of Business, India)

TOPIC The Chimera of India's Digital Plays Chasing a Billion + Customers

DATE Wednesday 24 October 2018

TIME 10:30am – 12:00pm

VENUE The Spot (198 Berkeley St), Level 10, Room 10.039

ABSTRACT

India with its large billion plus population and 'growing middle-class' is perceived as the next major market where the battle for digital dominance can still be won. Accordingly leading digital players in India (both global and local) are attempting to imitate the US and Chinese tech titan's strategies and outcomes. Nearly US\$25-30 Billion has been invested over the past few years mainly in e-commerce, online taxi hailing and digital payments. Although most of the leading digital players in these three segments by now have users in India in the hundreds of millions, they continue to focus on aggressively trying to acquire hundreds of millions more users, despite significant cash burns and continued competitive intensity. The dominant logic behind these significant cash burning efforts, is that a key driver of the US and Chinese 'winner take all' online platform outcomes is their billion plus user base. In this presentation we will explore an alternative thesis to this dominant logic, and discuss some interesting strategic implications this raises.

BIO

Dr Tejpavan (Pavan) Gandhok is Clinical Strategy & Entrepreneurship faculty member at ISB, a visiting fellow at Anderson School UCLA, and a CABE Fellow at the University of Melbourne. His research interests are in adaptive strategy under high flux and uncertainty e.g. new technology and emerging markets. Pavan is a serial entrepreneur with a strong track-record of investor returns and successful exits including start-ups, high growth and turn-arounds. He also has 15+ years of international Senior Partner level corporate advisory experience in Country and Regional Head roles across Australia, USA, South East Asia and India with strategy consulting and private equity firms such as *Halcyon Partners*, *AT Kearney*, *Stern Stewart & co.* and the *Boston Consulting Group*. In earlier career roles he worked in corporate strategy; technology management and incubation, and as an engineer and research scientist.