

# Indiana Business



## IU'S ENTREPRENEURIAL AWARDS

Nallesh Rathod is CEO of Imaginestics LLC in West Lafayette, a company whose visual search engine for manufacturers works even with a doodle.



# Innovation, Growth & Spirit

Winners of IU's Indiana Entrepreneurial Awards of Distinction represent the state's pioneers, risk-takers and visionaries.

by Erik Hromadka

THE THIRD ANNUAL Indiana Entrepreneurial Awards of Distinction recognize companies that demonstrate excellence in the areas of growth, innovation, spirit and social enterprise. The 2007 awards, presented by Indiana University's Kelley School of Business and its Johnson Center for Entrepreneurship and Innovation, select winners from the state's public and private companies that are at least three years old and have revenues of more than \$1 million.

"These companies are vital to the state's effort of developing an entrepreneurial culture," explains Donald F. Kuratko, executive director of the Johnson Center. "They work hard to make a success of their businesses and have a real impact on the state's economy. They certainly deserve the special recognition that this program gives them. They are the future for the state of Indiana."

Partners for the 2007 Indiana Entrepreneurial Awards of Distinction include Katz Sapper & Miller, IU Research & Technology Corp., Indiana



**INDIANA UNIVERSITY**  
ENTREPRENEURIAL  
AWARDS OF DISTINCTION

Venture Center, Monument Advisors, Premier Capital and NASDAQ.

## INNOVATION AWARDS

The Innovation Awards recognize companies that are pioneering new systems, bringing new products to the market and developing "best practices" for their industries. The 2007 winners include:

### Imaginestics

#### Visual search engine for manufacturers

Another example of innovation is taking place at Imaginestics, a software company at Purdue Research Park in West Lafayette that is developing software to allow customized ordering through

### Third annual awards

Presented by the Johnson Center for Entrepreneurship and Innovation at Indiana University's Kelley School of Business, companies were selected for growth, innovation, spirit and social enterprise.

the use of a search engine with three-dimensional modeling.

The idea is to allow customers to participate in the engineering of manufactured products by placing orders that are compiled from a list of searchable parts and shown as 3D images, explains president and CEO Nainesh Rathod.

Rathod and co-founder Jamie Tan had originally worked together in a startup company using two-dimensional shaping matching and intranets. They decided to pursue even greater innovation by licensing a

3D algorithm from Purdue University and used it to create an Internet tool available to manufacturing companies worldwide.

"Our whole goal is to take the back room engineering and move that forward," Rathod explains. "We're really transforming the whole sales and marketing process."

The company's VizSeek line of software allows users to search for three-dimensional parts and then compare and configure them according to their specific needs. For example, modular office furniture can be ordered to exact dimensions by searching a database of available parts and "building" the order on-line.

Rathod says the approach to is a novel way to innovate the sales process and begins by creating a searchable database of parts and procedures so that customers can have a simple process to order creative, customized products.

"We had a customer with 20,000 parts and we indexed that in literally just a couple days," he notes. "This hasn't been tried by anybody."