

*On the lighter side of things, we ask the industry experts what makes them tick. . . .*

## . . . GET TO KNOW . . .

### **Mani Sahota, Chief Information Officer, amana**



#### **Describe your current job role and a summary of the business model of your organisation?**

Mani Sahota is the Chief Information Officer at amana, steering the company's technology teams in bringing new products and features to life. He is the driving force behind amana's cutting-edge mobile trading platform and is currently developing several more platforms and features to cater to amana's growing community of traders and investors.

#### **What are your strengths and abilities that you bring to the above role?**

Although Mani has extensive experience in the financial industry, he values leadership style over experience in his role. He firmly believes that providing people with the freedom to grow is crucial. By allowing individuals to take ownership of their journeys and career paths, he can bring out the best in everyone and create a great team. Mani does not believe in micromanaging, as he thinks it stifles people's creativity and talents. Instead, he prefers to take a more hands-off approach and be available in the background to offer support and assistance when needed.

#### **Please describe the expectations of the end customers that you address. What are their pain points today?**

Whether it's eCommerce, food delivery, hotel bookings or financial services, customers ultimately want an app that is easy to use, fast and carries out the function it was intended for. In amana's world, this means an app that provides access to all markets, not just crypto, or just US stocks, commodities or regional stocks, and not just a few assets in each category. All categories, all markets and thousands of products, all in one app. Apps, like amana's, must be fast, offer unbeatable pricing, with an easy-to-use app experience. Taking a complex product, making it accessible, easy to use, fast and secure is where the tech magic lies.



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### Which technologies and innovations can make a difference to your end customers business?

The rise of Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning will continue to revolutionise the financial industry by automating routine tasks, enabling personalised experiences, improving risk management, and creating new business opportunities to be the future.

Mani acknowledges that the question of how far technology can go is a pressing one, but he is optimistic about the possibilities that the future holds. He believes that with continued innovation and

collaboration between tech experts, we will continue to push the boundaries of what is possible and achieve new heights of technological advancement.

### Which non-competitive business in the region do you admire for innovative usage of technology?

Mani is closely observing the incredible success of Careem's super app and its diverse range of features. He admires their ability to achieve such rapid growth in a relatively short period of time and sees it as an inspiration. He could even envision incorporating some similar features into the amana app, like adding affiliates and expanding into new business lines beyond finance.

He recognises the importance of thinking beyond traditional banking and financial services and keeping up with the evolving needs of consumers in today's rapidly changing landscape. By taking inspiration from successful companies like Careem and leveraging innovative technologies, Mani hopes to drive growth and provide value to amana's customers.

### How do you like to de-stress and re-charge off work?

Mani is a devoted family man and avid cyclist. He's also a Liverpool FC fan – Go, Reds! When it comes to vacations, he enjoys the British countryside and would love to go to a remote island one day, where he could escape from technology and recharge with his loved ones. He believes that a break from technology on a deserted island would provide an unparalleled energy boost.

### How do you think time-off will transform in the metaverse and in the digital world, say in the next 5-10 years?

Mani firmly believes that the future lies in the integration of AI and Virtual Reality. He sees tremendous potential in the recent developments in AI, such as the components being developed by ChatGPT, and considers them to be just the beginning.

However, it is the combination of AI and VR that Mani finds particularly exciting, and he foresees that these two paradigms will become increasingly intertwined as technology advances.

He envisions a future where the use of AI and VR will be commonplace and seamlessly integrated into our daily lives, enabling us to accomplish tasks with superhuman speed and precision. ■

