

# 'Arista's IPO created millionaires in India'

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**Bengaluru:** Jayshree Ullal led Arista Networks to a spectacular IPO on the New York Stock Exchange last year, and today the company's market cap stands at \$4.8 billion, one of the most valuable networking companies in Silicon Valley. Ullal, who grew up in Delhi, has been CEO of Arista — a company co-founded by Andy Bechtolsheim, who previously co-founded Sun Microsystems — since 2008. Prior to that, she was in Cisco for 15 years. On a visit to Bengaluru on Tuesday, Ullal spoke exclusively with TOI. Excerpts:

**You had a very successful IPO in the US last year. Did that create some millionaires among your Indian employees?**

Yes, it did. Every one of our staff is also a shareholder. And we have some top class talent in our India centre.

**You started hiring for your India engineering centre in 2011. How do you see its progress?**

The centre is the biggest outside the US now. We have over a 100 people, and that will double in the next one year. We are making multi-million dollar investments. The technical talent pool here is equal to that in our US centre. And the engineers here do absolutely cutting edge work, writing automation scripts, new protocols.

**How has the Indian market been for you? Can you name some of your customers?**

We have many customers, but we haven't obtained permissions from all to name them. Among those we can, there's



Nandan Nilekani inaugurating Arista Networks' new innovation centre in Bengaluru. To the left is Ashok Soota, founder of Happiest Minds, and to the right is Naresh Wadhwa, president (Apac) in Arista, and Jayshree Ullal, CEO of Arista

Flipkart, Netmagic, the Bombay Stock Exchange. We have done some major implementation with Flipkart over the past few months. Netmagic is using us in their newest data centre that they launched in October. We wrote our software initially for public cloud scale. But in those early years (2008), public cloud was still nascent. But we found great traction in financial services, thanks to our low-latency technology which assisted in high-frequency trading. From 2010, public cloud has become important. Six of the seven cloud titans — Apple, Google, Microsoft, eBay, Amazon, Yahoo and Facebook — are our customers (Ullal said she couldn't specify which six). Microsoft is now a big customer for us for its Azure platform, including in their data centres in India. On Monday, we concluded an agreement with Pi Datacenters that is setting up a massive data centre near Vijayawada.

**Your revenue grew by 62% last year to \$584 million. How does this year and the future look?**

We are likely to end this year

at \$800 million and touch a billion dollars next year. Following our success with financial services and public clouds, we are now beginning to focus on the service provider market and the high-tech enterprise market.

**What accounts for such growth?**

One is, like I said before, unlike the legacy players, we started out by writing our code for public clouds. Others are trying to adapt their legacy software to the new requirements. The public cloud uses a lot of automation, and we are very good at that. And when you bring in so much automation, you have to pay very little to maintain your infrastructure. A storage cloud has some 10,000 elements and you need just one engineer to maintain that. Enterprises currently use lots more engineers, but they too now want to move to the newer kind of infrastructure.

Also, technology is moving so fast, you have to replace your older products very quickly. I launched 20 products this year, and some of them replaced my products of just three years ago.