Nepali Times

Nepali software companies write algorithms for self-driving cars and analysed data for French President Macron's elections campaign, but they could do much more

A factory in the clouds

In 2008, Canadian technologist Mark Sears and his wife came to Nepal for a two-week vacation. They met talented people who had basic software skills but lacked work opportunities. Sears stayed on, training youngsters in high-demand skills like Ruby on Rails (a programming language) and matching international technology needs with Nepal's capable workforce.

One project led to another and CloudFactory was born. Its vision: to help change the lives of millions of people by linking them to work. The idea was that if an individual has a computer, an internet connection and basic skills, then CloudFactory could connect them to the kind of work that was previously limited to people with programming degrees. Today, CloudFactory employs 2,044 people, 1,280 in Nepal.

The company uses a cloud-based platform to distribute simple tasks from tech companies globally to 'cloud workers' in Nepal and Kenya. The tasks can include inputting data, transcribing receipts and annotating images for companies developing artificial intelligence (AI) algorithms for self-driving cars. Recently, CloudFactory worked with a company in France that applied data to help French President Macron win the recent election.

Engineers at the CloudFactory office in Bhaisepati. CloudFactory is one of the leading IT companies, employing over 1,000 people.

"What we are doing is not just providing data services for our clients but people who care," says John Snowden, general manager of CloudFactory in Nepal. "We are doing meaningful work using brilliant technology to get there, and that results in people who care," he adds.

What sets CloudFactory apart from its competitors is exactly that: it provides clients a relationship with workers for whom the work is meaningful and who care about doing a good job. Those working here get an opportunity to grow and make a difference.

Monica Ghimire, 25, joined CloudFactory as a part-time worker. Fast forward five years and she is now a project lead in the company. "The working culture and environment here is great. There is something new to learn every day and new ideas are welcomed. There is constant interaction and mentorship," she says.