cmi

MAGAZINE

The Chennai Mathematical Institute is a small place. In fact, it is so compact (pun intended), that "news", as such, cannot serve much purpose, for any information worth knowing is well-known throughout the student population in the blink of an eye.

Thus, we do not expect that the magazine will ever contain any information that's relevant and simultaneously surprising to the student body. That will not be our main concern, by which we hope to remove the possibility of sensationalism.

Instead, we hope to bring to light the details of various events, students and other people, the history of the institution, elements of the campus etc.

In this endeavour we seek your support, knowledge, and cooperation, but most importantly your readership. We hope to uphold the standards and the spirit of the CMI populace, and therefore require its intermittent input.

You can mail us at <ryan@cmi.ac.in>, <harini@cmi.ac.in>, or <asett@cmi.ac.in>, should you wish to contact us regarding the magazine or submit articles, poems, short stories or other pieces of such a nature. We expect to publish once a month while the semester runs its course.

We repeat our requests and hopes for your interest, and conclude this editorial, hopefully the first of many, with a segue into the meat of this issue, an interview with our beloved Tessellate organizers, Siddhant Shah, Rajdeep Ghosh, and Jessica Vipin.

Warm,
Ryan Hota
Harini Rammohan
Aditya Sett

The 2023 installation of Tessellate was a resounding success, with over 1500 visitors and 480 participants over the three days. Though the excitement during the days of Tessellate was most apparent, there was a flurry of online activity in the months leading up to the event.

From December 1 to February 12, there were 8300 total site sessions, 28,000 page views and 1200 subscriptions to the mailing list on the Tessellate website.

Instagram raked in a total of 485 new followers, reached 3600 pages, reached 2900 accounts and engaged 300 of them, along with a grand total of 21,000 impressions.
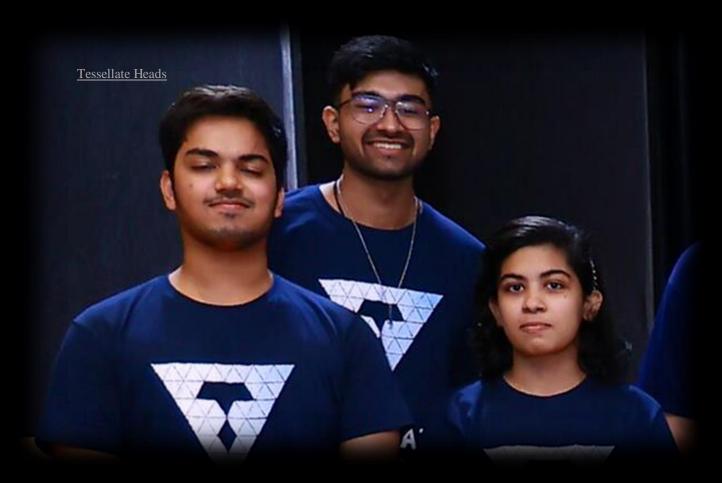
On LinkedIn, there were 68 new visitors, 20 new followers, 1300 total impressions and an average engagement rate of 3.17% over the entire period, peaking at around 20% at the time of fresh posts.

During the same period, there were 2500 views, 55 new subscriptions, 27200 impressions and a total watch time of 100 hours on the Tessellate YouTube channel.

The organizers and students involved spent this period busily spreading the news of Tessellate, ensuring that it proceeded smoothly.

Tessellate crowd

Could you introduce yourselves in the context of Tessellate?

To help you put a face to a name, I'm the guy you saw sprinting around campus during January, like he was crazy or being chased by the Kraken. Fortunately, it was not the latter. I was running around to deal with a Tessellate related calamity, each of which could very easily turn the entire event to a flop show. I, with a lot of help from my co-coordinators Jessica Vipin & Rajdeep Ghosh, and all the volunteers, managed to deal with them and if I say so myself, put up a pretty good issue of Tessellate.

Tessellate Heads

Could you give us an idea to how it all started?

In the last week of October 2022, Rohan Goyal (STEMS coordinator) talks to Rajdeep (Tessellate Co-coordinator) and tells him that he needs to conduct STEMS and start preparing for it. This leads Rajdeep to start preparing for Tessellate 2023, along with Jessica (as a Co-coordinator) and a few other people, including myself (as the Head of Finances).

At this point, our priority was to get STEMS off the ground by forming teams for each subject and starting registrations, and to reach out to potential sponsors for funding the entire event. Over the course of November, Rohan took the lead in forming teams for STEMS and started preparing the papers. Rajdeep and Jessica, along with help from Professor Priyavrat, started reaching out to potential sponsors. On the flip side, Romit (Head of the Design team) and I started working on the website for Tessellate so that we could start registrations for STEMS.

How much work does such an undertaking require and how did you all cope?

As the amount of work kept increasing, we were overwhelmed, but this is when several people from CMI started volunteering to join the various teams. After months of panic and frenzy, we finally started feeling that this undertaking was attainable.

Over the winter break, we kept working on our own for the most part from home, regularly checking in via Zoom. We launched the website and started registrations for STEMS, getting over 800 registrations by the deadline. It was during this time that the CMI administration reached out to help us, specifically the Director, Prof. Madhavan Mukund, COO, Mr. Venu S. and the CEO, Mr. Ramkumar R. With their help, we were able to increase our outreach to potential sponsors.

What was left to do on campus?

The first weekend of January was incredibly hectic as that's when the first round of the STEMS examination was conducted. The entirety of the STEMS team was in a frenzy of question papers, questions from students and their parents, technical issues and rescheduling papers for students with different exams on the same days. Come the day of reckoning, we managed to pull through, and both sets of the STEMS papers went by without any issues.

With the STEMS papers done, we shifted our focus to the actual on-site preparation for Tessellate. (It was around this time that I got promoted to a co-coordinator :)) Starting off with the banners and decorations, Romit and I, made a list of everything that was needed and had to be made. We delegated these to the respective teams and moved on to the next thing on the agenda, the merch. Next came the internal events, overseen by the Internal Events coordinators, Ishita Pethkar and Aniruddha Bhattacharjee. I don't have much to say about this as most of it was managed, brilliantly if I may say so, by them, needing minimum intervention from our side.

With Tessellate only a couple of days away, we could see everything fall into place. Believe you me, it is a feeling like no other when everything that was in your head starts materialising, connect with people who helped us in various ways and make the overall process a lot smoother.

How were The Three Days?

The three days of Tessellate were a cocktail of missed meals, running around to deal with complications and issues in an adrenaline powered rush, asking every CMI student we saw walking around to go and volunteer at whatever event needed them, greeting dignitaries and so much more.

What was one thing that had to be achieved in order to make it all happen?

A natural question anyone, with a brief idea of the amount of work required to organise such an event, would ask is what we got by accepting such a monumental task. In a word, faith.

I speak for all three of us when I say that by the end of Tessellate, we had newfound faith in two things. The first being the obvious, our capability to deal with problems on the fly. The second being the laws of the universe, specifically Murphy's Law, "Whatever can go wrong, will go wrong."

Would you like to share any feedback you have received?

At the end of the event, a couple of third years, who were here for the past editions of Tessellate, came up to me. I do not remember what they said exactly but it was something along the lines that this was probably the best of all the Tessellates they had attended. What I distinctly remember is the feeling of pride, accomplishment and satisfaction overwhelming me on hearing this.

Any concluding remarks?

After reading this, you have a brief idea of the amount of work that was involved. You would agree that any sane person would refuse to do this again, but where's the fun in that? See you in the next Tessellate.

Before I end, we would like to thank our Assistant Accounts Officer, Ranjini Girish, our Director, Professor Madhavan Mukund, our COO, Mr. Venu Santhakumari, our CEO, Ramkumar Ramamoorthy, the CMI Administration, the Housekeeping staff, the Mess staff and the security personnel.

Furthermore, we would like to sincerely thank the following students who were of great help during Tessellate, along with those who we may have forgotten to mention.

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Volunteers