



## Anand Chhatpar

Idea Man

### Profile

#### Anand Chhatpar '05

UW Major: Computer Engineering

Career: CEO and Founder, BrainReactions

Anand Chhatpar left India for the University of Wisconsin-Madison in 2001 to pursue his research interests and entrepreneurial spirit. After arriving on campus, Chhatpar was immediately struck by the UW's openness toward international students. He found opportunities beyond his expectations and a new perspective on the world that would help lay the foundation for his company, BrainReactions.

BrainReactions utilizes teams of creative college students to brainstorm innovative ideas for companies. Former clients include Bank of America, Pitney Bowes and Intuit. A typical brainstorm, led by Chhatpar's business partner Darin Eich, generates more than 500 ideas, which he then filters down to the most workable ones for the client. "Students are less cynical and less constrained by what is possible or not possible than somebody who is in the working world," says Chhatpar. "The insight we provide is intentionally external to an organization and its culture, and is precisely the reason it works."

Chhatpar largely credits three UW contests – the Schoof's Prize for Creativity, the Tong Prototype Award, and the Steven G. Burrill business plan contest – and the UW's LeaderShape program for providing him with the intellectual resources and a plan to start his new company. It was the ideas he had in these programs and, more importantly the people he met who provided him the resources to implement his vision.

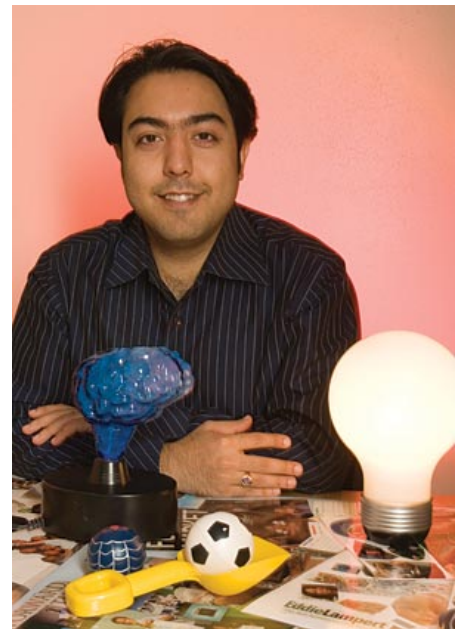
At only 25 years old, Chhatpar's growing list of accolades since starting BrainReactions is nothing short of remarkable, including being chosen as one of *Business Week's* "Top 5 Entrepreneurs Under 25" and featured on CNBC TV's "Young Turks."

Based in Madison, Chhatpar still maintains a strong connection to the UW. After all, students are the idea generators of BrainReactions, and he can't think of a better place to tap in to the best and brightest college minds.

### Video

### Links

- [BrainReactions site](#)
- [Anand's site](#)
- [Anand in Business Week](#)
- [Anand on ITVIDYA.com](#)



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### Our Ten Questions

1. What is your favorite flavor of Babcock ice cream?  
Cookies and Cream.
2. What do you most miss about campus?  
Seeing so many young and active people around me all the time. UW is a very "happening" campus, and once you move away from it, you realize how uneventful life can get.
3. What is your favorite mode of transportation?  
Madison Metro Buses.
4. What items would you take to a desert island?  
Books, drawing paper and crayons, and a laptop and cellphone if possible with solar chargers and a satellite internet connection!
5. What was your first job?

Its hard to remember... I helped my father with his Health Club business starting at a very young age.

- **6. Who is your hero?**  
Richard Branson, owner of the Virgin group of companies.
- **7. What are you reading now?**  
"Four Hour Work Week" by Timothy Ferriss.
- **8. What's the best piece of advice you've ever received?**  
"Make as many friends as you can, as quickly as possible."
- **9. What's on your iPod?**  
Podcasts, mostly interviews of successful entrepreneurs.
- **10. What is your proudest UW achievement?**  
Staying up all night in CAE and Engineering Hall computer labs with my teammates and getting extra credit on my projects while others were still trying to just finish the assignment.

#### Anand's Essay

When I came to study at the University of Wisconsin-Madison in 2001, I was completely taken by surprise by this university's openness towards international students. The community here welcomed me with open arms and I felt truly fortunate to find a deeply nurturing environment here. My experience at the UW has changed my perspective toward the world in a strongly positive way, especially coming from a society in India that is ridden by an undercurrent of differentiation on the basis of religion, caste and class. Now, the world for me is full of bright opportunities.

The three contests I participated in at UW: Schoof's Prize for Creativity, the Tong Prototype Award & the Steven G. Burrill business plan contest provided me a platform to grow into my inventive and entrepreneurial self. The activities and people associated with these contests provided a mentoring base on which I could lay the foundation for my future entrepreneurial superhighway.

My T.A. from Philosophy 211 during my freshman year, Christopher Lang, recognized my curious nature and abilities. Instead of simply fulfilling his duties as a Teaching Assistant, Chris went above and beyond and guided me so that I could reach my full potential. He even provided me and recommended me for an internship position at the Concept Studio in Pitney Bowes that helped me discover a direction for my career, find my passion, and shaped my life and career. Chris was just one monumental contributor to my life that came from UW. Even my mentor at Pitney Bowes, Thomas Foth, was a UW alumnus. There have been too many alumni, faculty, staff and student friends at the UW that impacted my life that I cannot name them all here. Let's talk for an entire day and I can tell you about all of them.

The UW LeaderShape program run by Mark Mastalski at the Student Leadership Center also came as a Godsend during the time I was thinking about my own startup. LeaderShape provided me a plan for acting upon my vision of "accelerating world progress by connecting the idea generators of the world with the implementers of the world". I also found the right people for implementing this vision at LeaderShape, especially Darin Eich, who was a facilitator at LeaderShape and a UW PhD student at that time. Darin has gone ahead to become my full business partner in recent years for my brainstorming business, BrainReactions.

My current business, BrainReactions, constantly depends on the UW for finding the most creative brainstormers that are attracted to this glorious university from all over the world. I, therefore, still maintain a deep connection to the UW and it provides ample green pastures of opportunity for my business and my personal life.