

'We are harnessing the passion of teachers and students'

—Glynn Willet, founder of tutorswithoutlimits.com (TWL)

Your neighborhood tutor may soon be a thing of the past. Blame it on Glynn Willet, founder of tutorswithoutlimits.com (TWL). TWL, founded by Glynn and his son, Wade Willett, is the pioneer in online tuitions. TWL has managed to enroll over 5,000 tutors from around the world in less than three weeks and has an eBay like environment. It has initially been launched in India, Pakistan and the US. It will soon be launched in Europe, Japan and China. Teachers can now get registered online and offer tuitions to students from across the world. The students too can have their queries answered while doing their homework with only a few clicks. Parents meanwhile can choose tutors at a cost they can afford. With online tuitions, the problem of commuting or arranging schedules is over. The website intends to make tutoring affordable for every student instead of being reserved only for the affluent ones. TWL is a part of 'Learn Without Limits,' which is an expression of Glynn's life-long dream of working with children, combined with Wade's youthful enthusiasm and ideas. Glynn also founded ATX, a professional tax software company, with his brother that was recently sold to CCH. In conversation with [Dataquest](http://Dataquest.com), Glynn talks about his business model and his vision for the online education market.



What is the business model of tutorswithoutlimits.com?

Like eBay, we too provide and create infrastructure for anyone willing to set up a tutoring business; so we act as a platform for the tutors and children. Tutors Without Limits is entirely online as of now, but we cannot disclose our future plans. The potential of the education market is immense since education is the second largest market after military spending and with ESO (Education Services Outsourcing) just starting now, it will be difficult for me to predict how much of the market will turn to ESO in the future.

What technology is used behind online tuitions. How does a teacher contact his students and share documents?

We are, in the new parlance, as a Web 2.0 company. We use AJAX that is the ultimate mash up of chat, voice pull synchronization, wikis, and html editors. The online tutoring session is conducted in the Lesson Board on which we have spent over a million dollars and is a significant and patentable technology (Glynn, however, refused to divulge further details of the technology). The miraculous Lesson Board enables students and tutors to see the same documents, point, mark up and make notations instantly without any installation. Online tuitions can be divided in two parts. First is finding and paying for the tutor based on price, quality and location, which a student is looking for, and once a tutor is located, the student requests a session. The tutor accepts the session and as the student has already prepaid his tuition credit, the tutor

is always assured of being paid. The second step is learning through the online session; wherein, the student and the tutor see the lessons and can point, highlight and note in a synchronized manner. In addition, the student and tutor can use a whiteboard to draw and illustrate questions and answers and create lessons in seconds. For example, a student can go to Wikipedia, copy and paste and create his own lesson in less than three seconds. The Lesson Board works everywhere, every time, because it requires low bandwidth.

How much does TWL charge from the teachers and students?

Registering either as a tutor or student is free. We deduct only 15% of the amount paid to the tutor. In exchange, the tutor receives a classroom (the Lesson Board), a marketing de-



partment, an accounting department, finance department for credit card collections and currency conversions, a Web design department for their personal website, and customer and tech support department. In other words, the tutors receive everything they need to run their tutoring business.

Why did you launch TWL only in three countries? Do you have any tie-ups with any local agencies?

Only three? Can you think of any startup launching in more than one country? On a serious note, the e-commerce spread across borders takes time in establishing the proper banking and credit card gateways. Next in line is a launch in all the English speaking countries in Europe, Japan and China. As far as tie-ups are concerned, we are working with a Pakistan and an Indian company

TWL is the first tutoring service that lets students find tutors based on rankings by other students, and enables tutors to set up their own business

for qualifying and certifying tutors. As these two businesses are starting divisions, we are not yet ready to announce them yet.

What will be your marketing strategy for the future?

In order to attract more students on tutorswithoutlimits.com, we will soon commence multi-media advertising campaigns meant for students, from October 15, 2006.

Do you think online tuitions can replace the traditional methods of tuitions?

Students can look up for tutors for any subject, one can imagine. Eventually, all tutoring will be done online because there is too much inconvenience in getting a student and a tutor together, physically, compared to an online session, where it is easy for teachers to set up their business on TWL once they register. Once the teachers create a profile, they are ready for business and students only have to find them on TWL.

What is the USP of TWL?

TWL is the first tutoring service that lets students find tutors based on rankings by other students and enables tutors to set up their own business and their own fee and schedule. It has created the first synchronized system for teaching from documents online without downloading a component. In short, every student benefits

from one-on-one tutoring.

Your vision for TWL?

We intend to create a world where a young girl in Pakistan can graduate from the sixth grade with a high school education. A teacher in Spain can create a course about a famous local poet or a student in Maine can enjoy that course as part of his Spanish class. A young boy in Lima can receive the same exceptional education that a student in Calgary receives. Our aim is to create a world, which is not only simple to use but also where the best teaching flourishes and is available to all. We are harnessing the passion of teachers, educators, parents, and students from around the globe to unleash innovation and imagination and to provide children, in all countries, the best education the world can offer. 