



Innovation > Work & Lifestyle >

Online platform enables outsourcing of digital work and creates jobs in developing countries

## ONLINE PLATFORM ENABLES OUTSOURCING OF DIGITAL WORK AND CREATES JOBS IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

 WORK & LIFESTYLE

**CloudFactory aims to provide an assembly line of digital workers in developing countries that can help get jobs completed more quickly while boosting employment and providing training opportunities.**

We've seen a platform designed to outsource tasks specifically to students before and now we've come across something similar, but targeting a very different social group. CloudFactory aims to create an assembly line of digital workers in developing countries that can help get jobs completed more quickly while boosting employment and providing training opportunities. Founded by Mark Sears, who worked with tech startups in the US and Canada before moving to Nepal, CloudFactory has access to a team of one million workers from around the world, currently sourced from Amazon Mechanical Turk. Companies with digital jobs requiring human input — such as audio transcribing, content editing, handwriting digitization and photo tagging — can upload their data as a .CSV file onto the site and break the work down into its essential components, called 'stations', much like a factory assembly line. Companies can choose the skill level required of each worker, have multiple laborers compete for future task or set up stations so that each worker reviews and improves the work done by the preceding station. As the site's cloudworkers are located at different points around the world, the work can be completed 24 hours a day, seven days a week, meaning that businesses can get jobs started instantly and wrap them up more quickly than they would using in-house staff. CloudFactory also provides the option of uploading a one-time project or ongoing work, offers analytics and feedback on the work being done and allows companies to tweak their task forms and remuneration levels. With a focus on "unlocking the human potential" in areas struck by poverty, the company is also hoping to invest its funds back into its contractors, providing training through a non-profit arm as well as offering 'Cloud Worker Kits' — a netbook or tablet, headphone with microphone and a wireless internet dongle — to help workers to do their job. The kits will be

funded partly by donations and partly by microloans allowing workers to pay a portion of the costs back over time, although this aspect of CloudFactory is yet to be set up. On top of this, CloudFactory give ten percent of their gross income to Nepalese charities. The startup has lofty social ambitions, looking to create work for those who have skills to offer and train those in developing countries. It is also looking to avoid the potential for exploitation that can come with outsourcing projects. Businesses around the world – one to get involved in? Spotted by: Hermanth Chandrasekar

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