

## Prerana Shishu Vidyalaya - Site Visit (April 2007)

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Last year the 'Big Thing' for PSV was moving from an open park setting to a large rented building. The "Next Big Thing" for the year ahead has a much greater potential.

In April 2007, I accompanied [Randy Wang](#) and [Urvashi Sahni](#) of the [Digital StudyHall](#) (DSH) project on their visit to the Prerana Shishu Vidyalaya. They were very pleased with the school, its teachers and its future potential – and have selected PSV as one of the hand-picked schools around the world participating in the DSH.

Here is a photo of Randy and Urvashi at the old location of PSV – this is where the school ran for nearly 20 years. On their left is Nanhi Dhar, the Principal of the school.



The venue continues to be used for the smallest children (KG-3) as the location is close to their homes

### Digital StudyHall Alliance

DSH is a global project, centered in India, that records and distributes DVDs of classes led by the best grassroots teachers.

Here is an excerpt from their [web-site](#)

Digital StudyHall (DSH) is a research project that seeks to improve education for the poor children in [slum and rural schools](#) in India. In a nutshell, think of its technical approach as the educational equivalent of [Netflix](#) + [YouTube](#) + [Kazaa](#).

We digitally record live classes by the best grassroots teachers, transmit them on the "Postmanet" (effected by DVDs sent in the postal system), collect them in a large distributed database, and distribute them on DVDs to poor rural and slum schools. Education experts and teachers use the system to explore pedagogical approaches involving local teachers actively "mediating" the video lessons. By harvesting a "viral phenomenon" of community participation, DSH aims to help train teachers and deliver quality instruction to underprivileged children. The project is a collaboration between computer scientists and education experts.

The main aspects of DSH are:

- [A "people's database of everything"](#)
- [A network of hubs and spokes](#)
- [Mediation-based pedagogy](#)
- [Technology for sharing community-generated video](#)

In May 2007, the principal, a couple of teachers, and the local school sponsors (Mrs. Budhwar and Mr. Daniel Sarkar) attended a workshop of 'spoke-schools' organized by DSH in Lucknow.



## The Year Ahead – Planning for 2007-08

The plan is to roll out the DSH content in the coming year starting with Math and English. One set of equipment will be procured – a TV, a DVD player, and an inverter (Kanpur, like most places in UP, suffers from chronic power outages). The approximate cost will be \$600 and the funds have been sent by ASHA-for-Education, Dallas chapter. Having one set will limit DSH-enabled teaching to only one class at a time. Depending on the needs and experience, we will increase the number of sets.

The successful roll out of DSH will hinge on the teachers – their ability to incorporate DVD content into their teaching as well as their motivation to put in the time and energy to prepare ahead. Members of the school management (Mrs. Budhwar, Mr. Bajaj and Mr. Daniel Sarkar) are planning to provide them the support and incentives to ensure this.

## Looking Beyond 2008

Once the DSH methodology has been institutionalized in PSV, there is great potential in spreading it to other schools in the region – both in the city and in the villages in Kanpur district. This scale-up will, of course, require working closely with other NGOs and initiatives in the area. Here are some of them –

1. Shramik Bharti
2. ASHA for Education (IIT Kanpur)
3. Manaviya Shiksha Sanskar Sansthan (MS<sub>3</sub>)