

Radhika Aggarwal: From E-commerce Pioneer to India's First Woman Unicorn Founder

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Radhika Ghai Aggarwal's entrepreneurial journey began long before she made headlines with a unicorn-valued startup. Growing up in an Army family, she learned *adaptability, resilience and discipline* while moving across different cities in India — traits that would later support her in business. Armed with an **MBA from Washington University in St. Louis** and additional executive training at **Stanford University**, she also gained corporate experience with global companies such as **Goldman Sachs and Nordstrom** in the United States. This diverse professional background in **e-commerce, fashion, retail and marketing** provided the foundation for her entrepreneurial ambitions.

Before entering the marketplace arena, Radhika launched her first venture — *FashionClues* — a fashion and lifestyle content platform aimed at non-resident Indian women, reflecting her interest in **fashion, storytelling and digital engagement**.

Building ShopClues: The Unicorn Marketplace

In **2011**, Radhika co-founded **ShopClues** alongside **Sandeep Aggarwal** and **Sanjay Sethi** with the vision of bringing India's bustling **local bazaars and small businesses online**. Unlike many early Indian e-commerce players that focused on branded products, ShopClues targeted *value-driven consumers and price-sensitive markets* — especially in **Tier-II and Tier-III cities**. The platform offered a wide range of categories, including fashion, lifestyle and everyday essentials, with a strong emphasis on *unstructured and regional inventory*.

Under Radhika's leadership as **Chief Business Officer**, ShopClues grew rapidly, empowering **hundreds of thousands of small and medium-sized sellers** by giving them access to India's online consumer base. The company scaled swiftly, with **millions of registered buyers and millions of monthly product orders**, reflecting its resonance with underserved markets.

In **early 2016**, ShopClues achieved a historic milestone by entering the **unicorn club** — becoming *one of India's earliest billion-dollar startups and making Radhika the first Indian woman co-founder of a unicorn company*. This achievement spotlighted her as a trailblazer in the male-dominated world of entrepreneurship and e-commerce.

Navigating Challenges

Despite its early success, ShopClues faced intense competition from larger players such as Flipkart and Amazon, and internal challenges eventually led to shifts in leadership and strategy. By the late 2010s, as market dynamics changed, ShopClues underwent transitions that included acquisition by a Singapore-based firm in an all-stock deal — a major moment in the company's lifecycle

Through these shifts, Radhika remained focused on *building resilient teams*, prioritising **capital efficiency and a differentiated value proposition** by focusing on mass-market affordability rather than purely high-growth metrics.

Kindlife: A New Chapter in Well-Being and Community

Ever the innovator, Radhika entered a new entrepreneurial phase with **Kindlife**, launched in **December 2021**. Conceived as more than just an e-commerce platform, Kindlife is an integrated **well-being ecosystem** that blends online marketplace features with community engagement and brand collaboration. The venture focuses on empowering *Gen Z and conscious consumers* with curated products and resources that promote health, wellness and ethical living, reflecting Radhika's evolving vision beyond traditional retail.

Recognition and Legacy

Radhika Aggarwal's contributions to business have earned her numerous accolades, including *Outlook Business Woman of Worth* and *CEO of the Year* awards, among others — recognizing both her strategic leadership and impact on India's digital economy.

Today, Radhika is widely celebrated as *a pioneer who helped democratise online selling for millions of small merchants and reshaped India's e-commerce landscape*. Her story continues to inspire aspiring entrepreneurs, especially women, by demonstrating how *vision, strategic focus and commitment to underserved markets* can create lasting impact in even the most competitive industries.

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