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# Global Pandemic Accelerates Digital Transformation According to Latest Study from Dell Technologies

Dell Technologies released results from a global study that shows organizations are shifting their digital transformation programs into high gear and are on the path to accomplish in a few months what would normally have taken them years. The findings, updated biennially in the Dell Technologies' Digital Transformation Index (DT Index), indicate organizations are accelerating transformational technology programs during the global COVID-19 pandemic.

In one of the first global studies to measure business behavior as a result of the pandemic, Dell's 2020 Index found that eight in 10 organizations have fast-tracked some digital transformation programs this year and 79 percent are re-inventing their business model.

The DT Index is a global benchmark indicating organizations' status of digital transformation and their performance across the globe. The survey included 4,300 business leaders (C-suite to Director) from mid-size to enterprise companies across 18 countries.

## A new digital transformation curve

Since the first DT Index in 2016 and the next in 2018, this year's results track the first rise in the number of Digital Leaders (the most digitally mature organization) to six percent. Digital Adopters (the second most digitally mature group) has grown from 23 percent in 2018 to 39 percent in 2020 – a 16-percentage point increase.

The DT Index also records a modest drop since 2018 in the number of Digital Laggards (the least digitally mature group) by 6-percentage points and a steep fall in the second to last group, Digital Followers, by 17-percentage points. These organizations are moving up, into the Digital

Adopter and Digital Evaluator groups, which have expanded in tandem.

"We've been given a glimpse of the future, and



the organizations that are accelerating their digital transformation now will be poised for success in the Data Era that is unfolding before our eyes", says **Michael Dell, Chairman and CEO, Dell Technologies.**

## Barriers to transformation

The pandemic may have catalyzed digital transformation across the globe, but continuous transformation is challenging: 94 percent of are facing entrenched barriers to transformation. According to the 2020 DT Index, the following are the top-3 barriers to digital transformation success"

- 1.) Data privacy and cybersecurity concerns (up from 5th place in 2016)
- 2.) Lack of budget and resources (#1 in 2016, #2 in 2018)
- 3.) Unable to extract insights from data and/or information overload (a jump of eight places since 2016)

## Responding in an uncertain world

Prior to the pandemic, business investments were strongly focused on foundational technologies, rather than emerging technologies. The vast majority, 89 percent recognize that as a result of disruption this year, they need a more agile/scalable IT infrastructure to allow of contingencies.

The DT Index shows the top technology investments for the next one to three years:

- Cybersecurity
- Data management tools
- 5G infrastructure
- Privacy software
- Multi-Cloud environment

And recognizing the importance of emerging technologies, 82 percent of respondents envision increased usage of Augmented Reality to learn how to do or fix things in an instant; 85 percent foresee organizations using Artificial Intelligence and data models to predict potential disruptions, and 78 percent predict distributed ledgers – such as Blockchain – will make the gig economy fairer (by cutting out the intermediary). Despite these findings, only 16 percent are planning to invest in Virtual/Augmented Reality, just 32 percent intend to invest in Artificial Intelligence and a mere 15 percent plan to invest distributed ledgers in the next one to three years.

## Research methodology

During July and August of 2020, Dell Technologies partnered with independent research company Vanson Bourne who surveyed 4,300 business leaders from mid-size to enterprise organizations across 18 countries, create a global benchmark indicating businesses' status of transformation. Vanson Bourne classified businesses' digital business efforts by examining their IT strategy, workforce transformation initiatives and perceived performance against a core set of digital business attributes. This is the third installment of the DT Index (the inaugural study in 2016 was followed by the second DT Index in 2018).

## Global C-Suite Executives are Rapidly Accelerating Digital Transformation due to COVID-19

A new IBM study of global C-Suite executives revealed that nearly six in ten organizations have accelerated their digital transformations due to the COVID-19 pandemic. In fact, 66% of executives



said they have completed initiatives that previously encountered resistance. In India, 55% of Indian executives plan to increase their prioritization of digital transformation efforts over the next two years.

The IBM Institute for Business Value study "COVID-19 and the Future of Business," includes input from more than 3,800 C-Suite executives in 20 countries and 22 industries, including 172 executives from India.

During the pandemic, traditional and perceived barriers to digital transformation like technology immaturity and employee opposition to change have fallen away. Now, executives see organizational complexity, inadequate skills and employee burnout as the biggest hurdles to overcome — both today and in the next two years.

The study shows that over the next two years,

most executives plan to focus on internal and operational capabilities, such as increasing prioritization of workforce skills and flexibility – critical areas to address in order to jumpstart progress.

"In the last few months, we have witnessed year-long digital transformation and adaption compressed into weeks. Companies in every industry have been encouraged to initiate digitisation measures, propelled by the infusion of automation and AI, and look forward to building cognitive enterprises of the future," said Kamal Singhani, Country Managing Partner, Global Business Services, IBM India/South Asia. "Looking ahead, I believe that our focus on Cloud & AI is going to be our competitive advantage as we propel our clients and businesses to achieve this vision while they quickly recover and sustain their path to growth, business continuity and resilience."

The study reveals three proactive steps that emerging leaders are taking to survive and thrive: **1.Improving operational scalability and flexibility**

The report reveals that the majority of organizations are making permanent changes to their organizational strategy. For instance, 94 percent of global executives plan to participate in plat-

form-based business models by 2022, and many will increase participation in ecosystems and partner networks. Executing these new strategies will require a more scalable and flexible IT infrastructure like hybrid cloud in India. Only eleven percent of executives in India are highly prioritizing operational scalability today, but that number will grow to 41% over the next two years.

## 2.Applying AI, automation and other exponential technologies to make workflows more intelligent

Technologies like AI, automation and cybersecurity can make workflows more intelligent, responsive and secure – and they are increasing in priority across the board for global executives. Over the next two years, executives in India report that they have plans to increasingly apply automation across all business functions. Big jumps are expected in procurement (2x), risk (2x), supply chain (2.3x) and R&D (3.1x) in the next two years. As executives increasingly invest in cloud, AI, automation and other exponential technologies, IBM recommends leaders should keep in mind the users of that technology – their people. These digital tools should enable a positive employee experience by design, and support people's innovation and productivity.

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# Traditional PC Market Delivers Another Quarter of Double-Digit Growth

As the global pandemic rages on and many



countries around the world enter the second wave of COVID-19 infections, continuity of business and online schooling remain at the forefront of every economy. This led to double-digit growth in the traditional PC market, comprised of desktops, notebooks, and workstations, as global shipments grew 14.6% year over year to 81.3 million units in the third quarter of 2020 (3Q20), according to preliminary results from the IDC. "Consumer demand and institutional demand approached record levels in some cases," said

Jitesh Ubrani research manager for IDC's Mobile Device Trackers. "Gaming, Chromebooks, and in some cases cellular-enabled notebooks were all bright spots during the quarter. Had the market not been hampered by component shortages, notebook shipments would have soared even higher during the third quarter as market appetite was yet unsatiated."

Unfortunately, shortages of multiple components, such as processors, panels, and other subcomponents, led to missed opportunity for many vendors. "The PC industry rode into the third quarter with a sizeable backlog of unfulfilled orders," said Linn Huang, research vice president, Devices and Displays at IDC. "And it appears the quarter will end under the same auspices. Given that the shortages have been due more to a shortfall of business planning than a technical glitch, we do not anticipate a sudden surge in capacity. Consequently, this backlog will likely carry into 2021."

## EDITORIAL

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## HPE COVID-19 Test Labs and OPD Centers Facilitate Over 100 Thousand Patient Visits in India

Hewlett Packard Enterprise (HPE) announced that its COVID-19 Test Labs and Out-patient Department (OPD) Centers have collectively facilitated over 100 thousand patient visits across India. These facilities provide additional authorized COVID-19 testing facilities and isolation beds, thereby assisting the Government of India and state governments in their efforts to contain the COVID-19 pandemic.

Launched in May 2020, the initiative now has 31 COVID-19 Test Labs and OPD Centers deployed across Assam, Delhi, Gujarat, Haryana, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Orissa, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Telangana, Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, and West Bengal. Of the total COVID-19 Test Labs and OPD Centers, 16 were built using a combination of 40-foot and 20-foot refurbished negative air pressure containers, while the remaining were existing HPE eHealth Centers (eHCs), which were converted into COVID-19 OPD Centers using the requisite medical equipment and negative air pressure curtains to minimize the spread of infection. "As we continue to work towards containing the COVID-19 pandemic, technology is helping us to better manage this unprecedented situation and navigate through it," said Som Satsangi, MD – India, HPE. "The 100 thousand patient visits at the HPE COVID-19 Test Labs and OPD Centers is a significant milestone. It reaffirms our commitment to be a force for good in this challenging environment."



## Samsung Smartphones Rebound in July-August, Widen Gap With Other Brands: Counterpoint

Samsung took the top spot in the global smartphone market in August, accounting for 22%



of the market share according to Counterpoint's latest Monthly Market Pulse report. In April, Samsung lost the top spot to Huawei due to sharp declines in its major markets of India and Europe. But in July and August, Samsung rebounded as India recovered from a nationwide lockdown. Samsung has now reached its highest market share in India since 2018 by adopting an aggressive online channel strategy to benefit from opportunities arising due to anti-China sentiments in the country.

Samsung is widening the gap with market No. 2 Huawei. After achieving its highest global

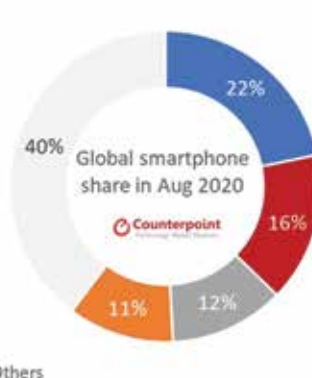
share of 21% in April, Huawei's market share is expected to fall further in the future due to US trade sanctions.

### Global Smartphone Monthly Market Share (Apr 2020 vs Aug 2020)

Apple has managed to maintain its share well in the off-season period. With the October 13 launch of the new iPhone 12 series, we expect sales to rise but only in November as the launch is later than previous years. The long lifecycle of iPhone 11 series and successful new iPhone SE will help Apple bridge the gap till then.

Xiaomi is showing a significant increase in its market share, especially in markets where Huawei used to have strong presence, such as Central Eastern Europe.

Research Analyst Minsoo Kang said, "Geopolitical policies and political affairs among nations are affecting the smartphone market in many ways. There will be heightened marketing activity to seize opportunities in these regions and segments. As a result, the concentration of top players in the smartphone market will be much stronger. We see players like Samsung, Apple, Xiaomi and OPPO benefiting the most."



■ Samsung ■ Huawei ■ Apple ■ Xiaomi ■ Others

## Tally Solutions launches TallyPrime, next gen business management software

Tally Solutions, India's leading business management software provider, is all set to launch TallyPrime- the next generation business management software on November 09, 2020. TallyPrime will equip MSME owners and new-age entrepreneurs with an ultra-simple and powerful software to enhance their business productivity. Focused on making the business owners' lives simple since its inception more than 30 years ago, Tally aims to further simplify business management with TallyPrime, facilitating users to comfortably manage and grow their business without needing to know the finer nuances of accounting or technology. The product meticulously designed keeping the user experience at core, is the first release in a comprehensively planned product roadmap. Tally is also investing heavily in bringing anytime anywhere access solutions for customers that are inherently secure and private. There is also specific focus on newer segments like retail and building a far more integrated product to help businesses take advantage of the power of connectivity. The company is working towards creating a stronger foothold in the global markets it is currently present in and expand to newer geographies.

During the launch Tejas Goenka, Managing Director, Tally Solutions said, "For over 3 decades

we have innovated and created simple and powerful solutions that millions of business owners, professionals, and accountants have used to transform how they run their businesses. With TallyPrime we hope to further simplify business operations for our existing customers and reach out to millions more in the days to come. The pandemic has not been easy to deal with, especially for the MSME sector, but we are seeing many businesses optimistic about the future, and are continuously working to support them with newer generation technologies to help them run their businesses better." TallyPrime Release 1.0 comes with several new features and experiences that will benefit the entrepreneurs along with accountants in their day to day work. The new 'GoTo' capability has taken Tally's famous reporting engine to the next level, the simplified data entry has made it faster to use and more flexible for several business use cases. The ability to multi-task in the product has also been appreciated by many early preview customers. The product has been designed such that it is scalable for future feature rollouts and is supported by this interface without breaking the frame. This will allow customers to easily shift and adopt future releases without any requirement to upskill or learn new techniques.



## Happiest Minds Technologies Limited Reports Q2 FY 21 results post a successful IPO

Happiest Minds Technologies Limited, a 'Born Digital. Born Agile', digital transformation and IT solutions company, announced its consolidated results for the second quarter ended September 30, 2020 as approved by its Board of Directors.

**Ashok Soota, Executive Chairman:**

"We would like to express our gratitude for a very successful IPO and extend a warm welcome to all our new shareholders. We specially want to express gratitude to our customers for their ongoing support and record level of appreciations received during these COVID times. We are happy to report a good all-round performance this quarter and this is a testimony of our digital focus, agility and commitment to all our stakeholders."

**Venkatraman Narayanan, Exec. Director & CFO:**

"We are happy to present our 1st results after going public. In our business we continue to build depth and capabilities in the digital services space results of which are visible. Despite the environment we have shown growth in revenues on a sequential basis and bettered our EBITDA both sequentially and on a year over year basis. On PAT, in the immediately preceding quarter instead of a provision for Income-tax we had a one-time credit for deferred taxes and from the current quarter we have reverted to normal provisions."





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## Unprecedented times and the volatile global business environment have changed the way organizations operate: Shiv Nadar

"These unprecedented times and the volatile global business environment have changed the way organizations operate. Enterprises are accelerating the adoption of technology and sharpening their focus on being resilient and better prepared for unpredictable situations. As businesses rethink, redefine and refine their ways of working, it has become imperative for them to adopt sustainable practices that complement their agile business models. We believe that business has a collective social responsibility to ensure that stakeholders have every advantage to succeed. At HCL, we are committed to



ensuring the socio-economic development of the communities we engage with around the world." said **Shiv Nadar, Chief Strategy Officer, HCL Technologies Ltd.**

"We have delivered a stellar Q2 performance with a sequential revenue growth of 4.5% in constant currency and 21.6% EBIT margin. This growth momentum was driven by our continued leadership in Digital Transformation and Cloud businesses and a strong stability in the Products & Platforms segment, all of which continue to

open diverse growth avenues for us. Our investments over the last few years in next-gen technologies have held us in good stead during these difficult times and position us strongly to leverage the emerging market opportunities." said **C Vijayakumar, President & CEO, HCL Technologies Ltd.**



"We are delighted with the all-round Q2 FY'21 performance. All engines of growth are firing, and our margins have increased significantly with EBITDA at 26.6% and EBIT at 21.6%, expanding by 320 bps and 160 bps respectively on YoY basis. The standout performance for the quarter has been the cash generation and conversion ratios. Our Operating Cash Flow (OCF) & Free Cash Flow (FCF) stand at handsome US\$ 2,692 mn and US\$ 2,444 mn



respectively on Last-Twelve-Month basis, with OCF/NI and FCF/NI conversion at an impressive 161% and 146% respectively." said **Prateek Aggarwal, CFO, HCL Technologies Ltd.**

## Tata Communications Robust Growth In Data Business; revenue grew by +7.2% YoY

Commenting on the results, **A.S Lakshminarayanan, MD and CEO, Tata Communications,** said, "We have had a strong performance in Q2, as we continue to deepen our customer engagements and support enterprises to seamlessly embark and advance on their digital transformation journeys. Leveraging the shift to cloud-first, internet-first strategies, we are innovating across our portfolio to offer solutions that are tailored to this new digital-first world. We see great opportunities ahead, as organisations look to harness the power of technology to transform their business models and drive competitive differentiation and



sustainable development." Commenting on the results, **Pratibha K. Advani, Chief Financial Officer, Tata Communications,** said, "Data business continues to grow at a healthy pace and profitability has improved due to our focus on operational efficiencies. Our margins have expanded, and we have witnessed 3 successive quarters of double-digit EBITDA growth leading to strong PAT. There has been a robust improvement across all financial parameters; our profitability and cash flow generation has improved significantly in the last few quarters leading to a stronger balance sheet for the future."

Commenting on the results, **Pratibha K. Advani, Chief Financial Officer, Tata Communications,** said, "Data business continues to grow at a healthy pace and profitability has improved due to our focus on operational efficiencies. Our margins have expanded, and we have witnessed 3 successive quarters of double-digit EBITDA growth leading to strong PAT. There has been a robust improvement across all financial parameters; our profitability and cash flow generation has improved significantly in the last few quarters leading to a stronger balance sheet for the future."



## STL records strong revenue growth and elevates industry position with global deals

STL, an industry leading integrator of digital networks, today announced financial results for the second quarter ended September 30, 2020. The company recorded good QoQ growth in revenues of Rs. 1,160 crore, EBITDA of Rs. 212 crore, PAT of Rs. 58 crore, and order book of Rs. 10,705 crore. These operating and financial results were backed by diversified global wins and the company's differentiated value proposition in delivering end-to-end digital network solutions across all customer segments.

Networks continue to remain a lifeline for global economies

The current situation has rapidly accelerated the need for digital transformation globally. Digital network creators continue to invest aggressively in high capacity networks that are densely fiberised, scalable, disaggregated, virtualized, and future-ready. Networks for delivering next-

gen services such as FTTH, 5G, IoT, Industry 4.0, and enhanced user experience with ubiquitous connectivity.

STL, with its industry-leading digital network capabilities, is empowering customers to modernise current networks and further build next-gen networks, enabling them to leverage technologies of the future

"Our strong performance is a testament to the value we create for our customers by delivering solutions that enable them to achieve their



current and future network requirements", said **Dr. Anand Agarwal, Group CEO, STL.** He added, "Digital Network creators globally continue to invest aggressively in strengthening their current network, to increase reach and quality of their networks."

## Increase in revenue and margin outlook for FY 21 is due to the continued trust clients: Infosys

"Our second quarter performance is a clear reflection of our ability to help clients on their digital transformation journeys. Our digital and cloud capabilities combined with intense client relevance are helping us achieve differentiated results in the market as is visible in 2.2% year on year overall revenue growth and 25.4% growth from digital offerings, which now are at 47.3% of revenues", said **Salil Parekh, CEO and MD.** "Increase in revenue and margin outlook for FY 21 is due to the continued trust clients have in us. I am extremely proud of our team for achieving these results in challenging business conditions globally."



"The strength and resilience of Infosys was fully visible in Q2 with operating metrics witnessing a healthy increase, broad-based growth, highest ever large deal TCV at \$ 3.15 bn and attrition reducing to single digits", said **Pravin Rao, COO.** "Employees have been critical part of our success. As a recognition of their stellar performance, we are giving 100% variable pay along with a special incentive for Q2. Additionally, we are rolling out salary increases and promotions across all levels effective Jan 1st."



"Our relentless efforts on cost optimization and strengthening operational efficiencies helped by certain cost deferrals led to 270 bps sequential improvement in operating margin to 25.4% and a 300 bps improvement in H1 margins", said **Nilanjan Roy, CFO.** "Free Cash Flows grew significantly in H1 driven by our consistent focus on liquidity and cash management. Consequently, we are increasing our interim dividend per share by 50% to ` 12."

## Wipro's another quarter of strong performance on margins and cash flows

Wipro Limited announced financial results under International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) for the quarter ended September 30, 2020.

**Thierry Delaporte, CEO and Managing Director**



said, "We had an excellent quarter with growth in revenues, expansion of margins and robust cash generation. I am very excited about the opportunities that are ahead of us and encouraged by the acceleration in business momentum we have seen this quarter. Our strategy is to focus on growth in prioritized sectors & markets led by vertical solution offerings."

**Jatin Dalal, Chief Financial Officer** said, "It was another quarter of strong performance on margins and cash flows. We improved on several operating parameters to deliver margin expansion of 0.2% to 19.2% in the IT Services segment. Our Free Cash Flows as a percentage of Net Income for the first half was at 160.7% of Net income. The announcement to buyback equity shares is part of our philosophy to deliver consistent returns to shareholders."





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## Honeywell And Vertiv To Improve Sustainability For Data Center Operations Across The Globe

The partnership builds on Honeywell's industry-leading building management systems (BMS), operational software, and safety and security products along with Vertiv's uninterruptible power supply (UPS), power distribution, thermal management, infrastructure monitoring and modular solutions to enable operators of hyperscale, large enterprise, co-location and edge data centers to integrate multiple domains of data within a data center. The companies will leverage building-operations data to drive optimization of operations, reducing energy use and costs while improving data center performance and sustainability.

"Data centers face similar challenges as other buildings that have disparate systems that were not designed to work together, but they experience these challenges on a greater scale," said **Vimal Kapur, president and CEO, Honeywell Building Technologies**. "We look forward to collaborating with Vertiv to offer integrated solutions that



make it easier for data center operators to distill the mountains of data they pull from their equipment into actions that create more efficient and environmentally friendly operations."

"Business continuity is more critical than ever, with more people working, learning and connecting remotely, driving a simultaneous explosion in data and demand for new data centers. There is need and opportunity for data centers to be more efficient, reliable and sustainable,"

said **Rob Johnson, CEO, Vertiv**.

"Our collaboration with Honeywell will help us to collectively better serve our data center customers. Our offerings complement each other to provide greater value to data center operators."



## Quick Heal Technologies appoints global experts to accelerate innovation in Cybersecurity

Quick Heal Technologies Limited, one of the leading providers of IT Security and Data Protection solutions for consumers, businesses, and government, has further strengthened its



R&D leadership team with the appointment of global experts, **Sanjay Agrawal and Bibhuti Kar as Chief Product Officer and Head of Research and Development** respectively.

The expansion of the leadership team reinforces Quick Heal's commitment to accelerate product innovation and drive expansion of next-generation enterprise security solutions under the "Seqrite®" brand.

**Dr. Kailash Katkar, Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer, Quick Heal Technologies**, said, "We are pleased to welcome two strong and successful leaders who have proven track record of

developing next-generation cybersecurity products and solutions globally. The addition of Sanjay and Bibhuti will further accelerate our efforts to strengthen our enterprise security business. We are certain that they will add significant value to Quick Heal Technologies as we continue to innovate and deliver world-class security products and solutions in sync with the ever-evolving and dynamic market expectations."



**Sanjay Agrawal, Chief Product Officer, Quick Heal Technologies**, said, "I am excited to join Quick Heal Technologies, a company that has

crafted its legacy and earned the reputation as the cybersecurity leader in India. I am excited with the opportunity to innovate and build world-class products to deliver the best in class protection against complex security threats."

## Rosenberger Unveils Supertron VAD As Their National Distributor

Rosenberger Electronic Co. (India) Pvt. Ltd., a fully owned subsidiary of Rosenberger Hochfrequenztechnik GmbH & Co. KG, a global leading manufacturer of connectivity solutions



is proud to announce that it has appointed Supertron as the strategic business partner and distributor (India and SAARC) for their Enterprise and Data Center business vertical.

**Jaideep Redkar, President of Rosenberger Electronic Co. (India) Pvt. Ltd.** opined, "We are pleased to be associated with Supertron, a market leader in the field of distribution of premium IT products and solutions. The new arrangement will enable us to serve our customers and the Indian market more effectively providing the benefits of Rosen-

berger's best in class products with impeccable quality standards at a competitive price".

Speaking on this partnership **Debraj Dam, Chief of Supertron VAD** Comments "We are extremely



excited to be able to make Rosenberger Data center and structured cabling solutions available to Indian solution partner's community and its consultant and customers to complement the solution offering and domain we focus on."

"This association with Rosenberger will enhance the value in terms of growth as well as profitability, making our partnership prodigious. With Rosenberger's local manufacturing capabilities, we will enhance Atmanirbhar initiative of the Govt."

## SK hynix to Acquire Intel NAND Memory Business

SK hynix and Intel announced that they have signed an agreement on Oct. 20, Korea Standard Time, under which SK hynix would acquire Intel's NAND memory and storage business for US \$9 billion.



The transaction includes the NAND SSD business, the NAND component and wafer business, and the Dalian NAND memory manufacturing facility in China. Intel will retain its distinct Intel® Optane™ business.



SK hynix and Intel will endeavor to obtain required governmental approvals, expected in late 2021. Following receipt of these approvals, SK hynix will acquire from Intel the NAND SSD business (including NAND SSD-associated IP and employees), as well as the Dalian facility, with the first payment of US \$7 billion. SK hynix will acquire from Intel the remaining assets, including IP related to the manufacture and design of NAND flash wafers, R&D employees and the Dalian fab workforce, upon a final closing expected to occur in March 2025 with the remaining payment of US \$2 billion. Per the agreement, Intel will continue to manufacture NAND wafers at the Dalian Memory Manufacturing Facility and retain all IP related to the manufacture and design of NAND flash wafers until the final closing.

## OutSystems appoints Subrato Bandhu as Regional Vice President in India

OutSystems, the global leader in AI-powered application development, announced the appointment of **Subrato Bandhu as Regional Vice President for India**.



With India emerging as a significant app development market, and companies rapidly ramping up their digital transformation efforts, Subrato will be responsible for

increasing the footprint of OutSystems in India by providing strategic business direction, growing the team and clientele base.

With over 20 years of experience in B2B enterprise software, together with his deep relationships with Indian corporates, Global Service Providers (GSP) and Global Captive Centers (GCC), Subrato's leadership experience includes bringing innovative strategies into execution, driving managerial decisions, and leading organizational development. Prior to his role at OutSystems, he was instrumental in setting up business for B2B software companies Sprinklr, AppDynamics and BMC Software as part of his past engagements. Subrato and his team were responsible for the overall India business strategy, customer success, partner network development, operations, and sales execution for all three GTM's.



## ASUS Announces ROG Strix and TUF Gaming AMD Radeon RX 6800 Series Graphics Cards

ASUS announced a new lineup of ROG Strix and TUF Gaming AMD® Radeon™ 6000 Series graphics cards. The new AMD Radeon RX 6000 Series and the underlying RDNA™ 2 GPU gaming architecture herald a new era of Radeon graphics power. To get the most out of these exciting new GPUs, ASUS engineers have been hard at work developing ROG Strix and TUF Gaming graphics cards that deliver the high performance, low temperatures and quiet operation that enthusiasts expect.



The ROG Strix LC Radeon RX 6800 XT puts a big chill on Big Navi. The Radeon RX 6800 XT is one of the most powerful GPUs that AMD has ever built. As ASUS engineers began to sketch out the ROG Strix card, the raw power of the Radeon RX 6800 XT spurred design of a cooling system that could unleash its full potential. During this process, the ASUS team naturally turned to liquid cooling. PC enthusiasts the world over are already familiar with the benefits of all-in-one liquid cooling systems for their CPUs, and many of them have even added similar systems to their graphics cards using aftermarket kits to pursue the outer limits of GPU performance.

## Seagate Announces Next-Gen Gaming Solutions In India

Seagate Technology plc, a world leader in data storage and management solutions, announced in India, its new line of revolutionary internal and external storage solutions for gamers. The solutions announced include – Seagate® FireCuda® 520, Seagate® FireCuda® 120, Seagate® FireCuda® Gaming SSD, and Seagate® BarraCuda® Fast SSD. The Seagate FireCuda 520, a PCIe Gen4 x4 SSD and the Seagate FireCuda 120 SATA SSD are the



new internal gaming SSDs announced. Seagate FireCuda 520 provides up to 45% more speed than PCIe Gen3 M.2 NVMe, while Seagate FireCuda 120 is perfect for optimising performance, capacity, and speed for gamers. The external solutions – in form of Seagate FireCuda Gaming SSD and Seagate BarraCuda Fast SSD – deliver elite performance and convenience for gamers and power users on the go. Seagate FireCuda Gaming SSD is best suited for NVMe SSD performance while Seagate BarraCuda Fast SSD is a portable drive designed to provide speed & space and optimal SATA performance to the users.

## Active Noise Cancellation To LG Tone Free Lineup With UVNANO Case

LG Electronics (LG) is expanding its LG TONE Free lineup with the introduction of its most advanced true wireless earbuds yet. LG HBS-FN7 offers all the benefits of its LG HBS-FN6 sibling – intuitive user experience, incredibly comfortable in-ear fit and noise isolation performance, Meridian-tuned premium sound, hygienic UVnano charging case – and adds Active Noise Cancellation (ANC) to provide even greater listening pleasure and enhanced personal audio experience.



LG TONE Free FN7 builds on the already great

passive noise isolation of LG TONE Free FN6 by neutralizing external sounds using three microphones in each earbud that monitor soundwaves coming from all directions. Adjustable ear gels with patented twist-fit Vortex Ribs design deliver a tighter in-ear seal to minimize outside noise seepage. With ANC activated, environmental noises are now almost completely neutralized, making every note and voice sound clearer, more natural, without losing the details from turning up the volume to maximum. Whether you're in an airplane, at an outdoor café or on a noisy street, everything sounds as though you're in the quiet comfort of your personal space.

## Apple introduces HomePod mini: A powerful smart speaker with amazing sound

“HomePod mini has everything customers want in a smart speaker — amazing sound for listening to music, a world-class intelligent assistant that delivers a personal experience to each member of the household, and like every Apple product, it's designed with privacy and security in mind,” said Bob Borchers, Apple's vice president of Worldwide Product Marketing. “HomePod mini is the ultimate smart speaker for anyone with an Apple device. It works effortlessly with iPhone to hand off music, answer calls, or deliver personalised



listening suggestions, elevates the sound from Apple TV, plays music from a Mac, and so much more. There's a lot of Apple innovation packed into such a small speaker, all at an affordable price.” HomePod mini is designed to work with Apple Music, podcasts, radio stations from iHeartRadio, radio.com, and TuneIn, and in the coming months, popular music services including Pandora and Amazon Music. Multiple HomePod mini speakers work together to stream music or podcasts to multiple rooms, all in perfect sync. By placing two HomePod mini speakers in a single room, a stereo pair can be created for a wide soundstage, filling the space with rich, enveloping sound.

## Now Enjoy Easy-Access and Quick Transfers On-the-Go with Kingston's new DataTraveler Exodia

Taking ahead its endeavor of bringing unmatched storage experience on-the-move, Kingston Technology, a world leader of memory products and technology solutions, announced the launch of a Type-A USB drive: the value-driven DataTraveler Exodia. The new USB drive features fashionable new looks and practical functionalities to fulfill the on-the-go storage needs of the discerning new age consumers.



DataTraveler Exodia is a value-driven Type-A USB flash drive for light users, featuring USB 3.2 Gen 1 performance (up to 10x faster than USB 2.0) and up to 256GB2 capacity. With lightweight design and colorful key ring loop by capacity, it is ideal for everyday use at work, home, school and wherever you need to take your data. The new USB flash drive comes with cap protection which protects the USB plug and the data. The cap also fits onto the back loop, so the users won't miss it at all. Priced affordably at INR 550/- for 32 GB, INR 900/- for 64 GB, INR 1,700/- for 128 GB and INR 4,900/- for 256 GB, the new DataTraveler Exodia will be available across all the retail stores pan India from October 29, 2020 onwards.

## ECS Launches Ultra Slim Mini PC with Solid Power – LIVA One H410

Elitegroup Computer Systems (ECS), the global leading motherboard, Mini-PC, Notebooks, mobile device and smart city solutions provider, is pleased to announce desktop performance mini PC – LIVA One H410. LIVA One H410 is designed perfectly for business applications, again its small size and excellent power efficiency benefit edge AI computing, smart signage, retail intelligence, healthcare, terminals, and gateways. Users can outfit LIVA One H410 with anything from the latest Intel® Gen 10th Core™ i9 ten-core CPUs processor with M.2 SSD interface up to 64GB memory and 7 USB ports for all your needs to transform data. It supports dual displays through HDMI and DisplayPort to experience the stunning 4K visions.



## AMD Launches AMD Ryzen 5000 Series Desktop Processors: The Fastest Gaming CPUs in the World

AMD) introduced the highly anticipated AMD Ryzen 5000 Series desktop processor lineup powered by the new “Zen 3” architecture. Offering up to 16 cores, 32 threads and 72 MB of cache in the top-of-the-line AMD Ryzen 9 5950X, AMD Ryzen 5000 series processors dominate in heavily threaded workloads and power efficiency, while the AMD Ryzen 9 5900X processor offers up to a 26% generational uplift in gaming performance. With extensive improvements throughout the core including a unified 8-core complex with direct access to 32MB L3 cache, the new AMD “Zen 3” core architecture delivers a 19% generational increase in instructions per cycle (IPC).



# Need for the better regulator to control market monopoly: MakeMy Trip CEO

India is doing a great job in coming out of the slowdown, but the need for better regulator remains. We must not let monopolistic powers establish a controlled environment in the market and exercise their powers for dominance, said **Deep Kalra, CEO, MakeMy Trip**, in a recent webinar series Talk with the Legends. The webinar interaction was hosted by Dr. Ajay Data, founder of Made in India app VideoMeet. Deep further added, "The days of pandemic reminded us of existential crisis and bootstrapping in its full form. Europe has done a great job in not giving an unfair advantage to giant-sized companies, and thereby the consumer interest has not been comprised."



Being an industry leader in giving people international & domestic travel-stay experiences, **Deep Kalra, CEO, MakeMy Trip**, highlighted the adverse situations his company was subjected to during the lockdown. While the executives at MakeMy Trip board-level took 100% pay cut, 50% cut was subjected to other senior mem-

bers and 10% to other positions. The hardest thing for the MakeMy Trip remained to retrench 10% of their workforce, which was a great lesson to learn. However, following the mantra of 'Never waste a crisis', the team worked on strengthening their relationships with the hotel industry, travel agents, bus operators etc. This alternative work done around this time has helped them to bounce back as domestic travel is back to 50% of their pre-COVID levels, and luxury hotels are providing them business opportunities more than what they were ready to in Pre-Covid times. He also added, "MICE will be the slowest recovering segment in events and corporate travel due to the acceptance of remote working and virtual meetings. Solo individual trips and weekend getaways are currently bringing recovery to the industry." The talk enlightened the audience about changing nature of businesses, digital transformation among sectors and the survival strategies adopted by leaders to combat the slowdown. According to Kalra, India will see the emergence of around 2 million user base, who will be com-

fortably doing digital transactions post-Covid, this number stood at just 1 million before the pandemic; this reflects the gamut of opportunities fintech, healthtech, edtech will present in the coming times. Thousands of users attended the session via Laptop, Smartphones and Tablets



on VideoMeet application. **Dr. Ajay Data, Founder of the VideoMeet App**, host of the interaction in conclusion said, "Lockdown has taught us all to constantly look for alternatives and be prepared with our contingency plans. This has made the Indian businessmen and young entrepreneurs adopt digital tools more than before due to their accessibility and wide reach. As, it is only via Internet and the virtual meetings that seamless communication could prevail. Talk with Legends is our effort to bring business leaders to the forefront and discuss directly with the viewers their experiences and learnings during the difficult phase of lockdown."

## Indian Companies Are Thinking Ahead Of The World's Digital Transformation Curve

ServiceNow, the leading digital workflow company, released a local study, comparing India's success, realities, anxieties and attitudes to working in the COVID-19 era to global peers, fielded by Wakefield Research. "The Work Survey" features perspectives of 100 Indian C-suite executives and 1,000 local employees, from a total 9,000 global respondents. The survey reveals that India holds the number one global standing when it comes to utilisation of digital workflows. While the trend at first seems encouraging, there is still a long road ahead. "74% of India's executives said that their business continues to use offline workflows, lowest among all other countries surveyed (US 89%, UK 98%, Australia 98%)," said **ServiceNow Managing Director – India & SAARC Arun Balasubramanian**. "While the figure indicates greater adoption of digital workflows in India there is clearly plenty of scope for greater utilization of digital work processes."



The pandemic has helped companies forge new and better ways of working, something India's executives (97%) and employees (93%) firmly agree on. However, one of the biggest challenges for India to overcome is transforming the many old processes that remain disconnected across systems and departments. Less than half of Indian employees (49%) and executives (42%) believe they have a fully integrated system for workflow management across business functions. "The appreciation for digital workflows in India are among the highest in the world," said Arun, "but there is still a long road ahead for the sub-continent. We are on the cusp of

an unprecedented wave of workflow and workplace innovation and there's no going back." **Opportunities for India to ride the digital transformation wave:**

While the survey indicates strong appreciation of digital transformation in India, it also identified appetite for more. Both executives (69%) and employees (55%) acknowledge the need for further investment as the top priority for organizations seeking to leverage any pandemic-induced cost savings. And it appears there will be funds for this purpose, with 91% of India's executives agreeing that cost savings will be derived by changes to company operations, brought on by COVID-19. Demand for upgraded digital workflows has been the most highly touted benefit of new post-COVID work processes globally among India's employees with 54% of them stating that better use of technology to improve work efficiency was a key benefit they experienced from working remotely. "In order to succeed in the new normal, every company must underpin their business with digital workflows," said Arun. "You're only as good as your people and winning today means delivering new digital business models, faster than the competition, to make it easy for employees to do their best work, anywhere." With India preparing to take charge of its digital future, it is safe to say that new systems put in place because of COVID-19 were developed on the fly and are vulnerable to the next major disruption. Less than half of India's executives and employees felt departments such as customer service, sales and marketing and finance could adapt and implement

new workflows within 30 days of another major business disruption. IT fared best, executives (74%) and employees (75%) giving the department the best chance of adapting. While the benefits of remote work are universally touted, months into working from home, the challenges have become more apparent and there is scope for further growth and innovation. Both executives (95%) and employees (93%) expressed concerns about how remote work will impact the business moving forward with extended timelines for new releases or innovations topping the list for employees, while delays in product or service delivery of most concern for executives. **ServiceNow CEO Bill McDermott** said, "Digital workflows are the way business gets done in the 21st century. There's no going back. Digital transformation will accelerate. New ways of working will become the norm. We are on the cusp of an unprecedented wave of workflow and workplace innovation."

### Survey Methodology

Wakefield Research fielded an online quantitative survey between September 1st and September 10th, 2020 to 900 C-level executives and 8,100 office professionals (employees) from companies of 500 or more employees in the following countries: United States, United Kingdom, France, Germany, Ireland, Netherlands, India, Japan, Singapore, Australia and New Zealand. While Wakefield surveyed across industries the findings highlight meaningful differences from employees from the following five key industries: financial services, healthcare, manufacturing, telecommunications and public sector.





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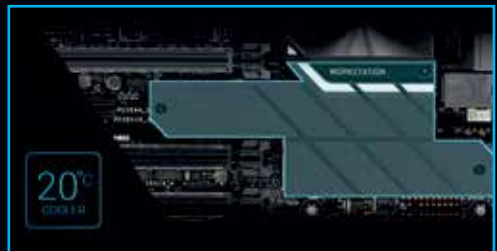
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# ASIRT Announces New Governing Board



ASIRT (Association of System Integrators & Retailers in Technology) a dynamic and focused IT Association committed towards the growth and progress of System Integrators (SIs) and IT Retailers in India. The Association promotes collaboration amongst Members to expand on business segments and to cover larger areas of operations. Adopting transparency in operations and relations ASIRT nurtures Member talent and creation of values. Formed in 2012 ASIRT has been instrumental in bringing this value-chain to the relationships with Vendors, Principals Techday the flagship event conducted every month till date has the active support of Principal Companies and Vendors as Sponsors with active participation by its Members.

A Governing Board of up to 14+ Members, with

edge and technology updates for the benefit of its Members and their employees. ASIRT also arranges Picnics, Online Live Music shows, and the Annual cricketing event – ACPL, which helps in increased bonding and trust amongst its Members and gain traction for introducing different IT solutions to their clientele.”

oldest one third elected Board Members retiring every year while continuing for maximum two Terms of three years each, manages ASIRT. The Board's agenda is to ensure that ASIRT is aligned with the business needs of all partners large or small, act as their enablers, help them with business growth whilst lending an ear to their grievances.



Speaking on this occasion, **Tushar Parekh, Chairman, ASIRT,** commented, “ASIRT today is Mumbai's largest aggregation of Indian ISVs, SIs, Resellers and Cloud Platform providers. Currently, we have about 200+ Members in ASIRT from the MMR region. Our

immediate objective is to help partners revive their businesses from the downturn caused due to lockdown. We are helping the partners to coordinate, link up and help each other to improve their businesses in mutually beneficial ways. In the long-term perspective, we want to improve the reach of ASIRT so that the Members can get the maximum benefit of their services and solutions and work more efficiently. We are using both digital and traditional methods to achieve this purpose.

Creating Consortium Teams of 30 to 35 members each has helped enhance collaboration amongst members thus improving the businesses and extending business reach.

We are also aligned with other IT Associations and join hands to provide the SI communities a level playing business environment and trade practices.

**Tushar Shah, President, ASIRT** added, “ASIRT works to create a unified SI & Retail ecosystem and acts as a strong voice working as a bridge



between Vendors & the SI community for mutual benefits. It also organizes training sessions “TechEdge” which help in garnering more knowledge and technology updates for the benefit of its Members and their employees. ASIRT also arranges Picnics, Online Live Music shows, and the Annual cricketing event – ACPL, which helps in increased bonding and trust amongst its Members and gain traction for introducing different IT solutions to their clientele.”

## Dnyanesh Kamlakar To Lead ISODA; New Team Aims Doubling Membership, Expansion

**Dnyanesh Kamlakar Kulkarni, Founder, and Owner of Deltakraft Solutions,** who was the Vice President in the last term, got promoted as President of ISODA.



The Infotech Software Dealers Association recently concluded their 11th AGM. This was a first for the association as they organized their First Virtual AGM recently. After the financials and the last years' minutes were passed, the new Management Committee was elected. Rajeev Mamidanna, Co-founder of Technosprout Systems, who was the Vice-Chairman in the last term, got promoted as Chairman of ISODA. Elections took place for the following positions:

1. Vice Chairman
2. Vice President
3. Secretary
4. Treasurer

Pradeep Daga, Founder, and Owner of Suntronix, erstwhile Regional Secretary (South) was elected as the General Secretary. Alok Gupta, Founder, and Owner of Softmart Solutions and erstwhile President of ISODA were elected to the Vice Chairman's position. Jitesh Chauhan, Founder, and Owner of Rubik Infotech, erstwhile Regional Secretary (Gujarat) was elected to the Vice President's position. The position of Treasurer was retained by Ravi Jalan of Shakti Enterprises.

The New Management Committee is as follows:

1. Chairman – **Rajeev Mamidanna**, Technosprout systems, Mumbai
2. Vice Chairman – **Alok Gupta**, Softmart Solutions, New Delhi
3. President – **Dnyanesh Kamlakar Kulkarni**, Deltakraft Solutions, Mumbai
4. Vice President – **Jitesh Chauhan**, Rubik Infotech, Ahmedabad
5. Secretary – **Pradeep Daga**, Suntronix, Chennai
6. Treasurer – **Ravi Jalan**, Shakti Enterprises, Mumbai

The Regional Secretaries for all the designated regions of ISODA will soon be announced after their elections are done over the next 1 month. ISODA says it had crossed more than 200 members and the number is growing day by day. We are actively looking at adding new chapters and getting more members on board. With the uncertainty of the current times and businesses struggling to grow, ISODA Management Committee intends to create a platform of growth for all its members by pushing a few initiatives for all. **The top priorities for ISODA Management Committee this year will be:**

1. Enable realistic collaboration within members to upsell, cross-sell and grow together in these uncertain times

2. Work as a professional organization and bring more maturity to our internal communication and interactions with members
3. Improve communication with OEMs and Distributors
4. Focus on doubling the Member count and ensuring the identification of new regions
5. Skills development initiatives for employees of ISODA members to enhance knowledge of relevant solutions
6. Digital Marketing to be taken to next level by Increasing visibility of ISODA socially
7. Ensure maximum touch with the OEM community by planning creative means of interactions online

**Manasi Saha, the immediate past-president of the association,** sharing her memories on the presidency calls it a wonderful experience. “It was good learning, from some great achievements and through great friends. I am leaving my post on a good note and with great memories. As a person, I had achieved



1. Patience 2. Good listening 3. Team playing skills”. Wishing the new management-committee, she thanked the other members Jiten Mehta, Vipul Dutta, L Ashok, Guna, Amarnath, and Rajiv.



# India's leading IT Association TAIT celebrating Silver Jubilee this year

It is a matter of Pride for India's leading IT Association, TAIT (Trade association of Information Technology) which is celebrating their Silver Jubilee year this year. TAIT Board also Unveiled their 25 Years Silver Jubilee LOGO during one of their Event.



Trade Association of Information Technology (TAIT) was formed in March 1996 to represent the interest of IT community in the ecosystem of Manufacturers, Distributors/ Sub-distributors / Resellers, System Integrators & Service Providers. TAIT has over 300+ members representing the complete spectrum of IT organizations. The association was formed to uphold the larger interest of the IT trade, which represents Major business of Mumbai's IT industry. It's a forum where the challenges of Mumbai's domestic IT Industry business is heard and understood. TAIT is the most proactive, leading IT association of India. On the Occasion of their Silver Jubilee year, TAIT provided Unique E-Identity by way of E-Business Card to all their members, which is one of its kind. This E-Business Card contains their members' entire Profile, Location map, All Contact Details, Product Line and much more. The same can be transferred

to your contact with the click of a button.

As a part of TAIT's tradition of continuous efforts to Upskill their Members on various aspects of Business, TAIT organized a very informative Session on New Taxation provisions of TCS and Faceless Assessment scheme of 2020, by a Young and dynamic Practicing Chartered Accountant, CA Hansal Bavishi who is also a contributing writer in the Institute of Chartered Accountants of India (ICAI) Journal, among various other professional columns and journals.

**Excerpts of the session, which may come handy to all the Tax Payers.**

1) **Faceless Assessment Scheme, 2020** – It was introduced on 13 August 2020 by Hon'ble PM Shri Narendra Modi which is set to completely change the way income tax assessments are carried out in India. It is slated to entirely eliminate human interface between the taxpayers and income tax officials.

2) **TCS on sale of Goods** – With effect from 1 October 2020, tax shall be collected at source by a seller of goods from the buyer of goods subject to certain conditions.

The speaker, **CA Hansal** thoroughly enlightened the members of TAIT on both the topics, sharing practical experience, knowledge and insights on

how to deal with the impact it will have on compliances, day to day operations and business in general. This was followed by questions, where the speaker took up various questions the attendees had on the topics.



All in all, it was an immensely helpful sessions for all the attendees because it would be absolutely imperative to comply with and look out for the rapid changes introduced. As a result, what was supposed to be a session for an hour, got extended to over 90 minutes.

**Praveen Khandelwal, National Secretary General of Confederation of All India Traders (CAIT)**, one



of the most respected Business Leader in India, on Special Invitation from TAIT, addressed TAIT Members during this event.

Praveen Khadelwal congratulated TAIT and all its members on their Silver Jubilee year, and assured to work and resolve challenges that the IT Trade is facing. The session was concluded by Vote of thanks from TAIT President Samir Parekh.

## Indiatchannels Launches B2B Catalogue Creation for Distributors/ Sub distributors

Indiatchannels.com, a 360 degree business portal to digitally connect OEM, Distributors/ Sub distributors, Retailers, Consumers and Corporate/SMB for all their IT, Mobile or Surveillance requirements. Since its launch it has marked a strong footprint in the industry. Indiatchannels has achieved the set milestones with more than 5000 registrations of all India partners within three months only.

Earlier, portal had announced the B2C catalogue creation for partners followed by OEM platform to showcase their offerings. Our latest offering is the launch of B2B catalogue creation for distributors/ sub distributors. With this launch distributors can showcase their offerings to 5000+ registered partners and extend their network.

Registered partners under Distributor/ Sub distributor category have received their login-id and passwords at the email id submitted during registration to begin catalogue creation process. Partners already registered as B2C can shift similar offerings to B2B catalogue quickly to save time. The web link is generated automatically upon catalogue creation that can be shared with other partners.

Inventory management tool is offered on the portal without any cost. It is visible to all other registered partners to assist them in planning their order quantities to distributor.

B2B catalogue page creation is simple but for the suitability of partners, a help document has been provided on the portal. The document will help the partners to comprehend the process of catalogue creation.

B2B page will allow the partners to deal with transaction of products, services and resources

between businesses digitally. There is a business search option given so that dealing with other partner is easier. It will also assist the partners to enhance their business efficiency and revenues.

It is expected that this model will be helpful for the distributors in every possible way for their business expansion. It is equipped with the scalable architecture and a strong user-friendly interface. Flexibility is one of the primary components of this model.

Distributors can design, customize and get creative while configuring their page on the portal. They can also optimize their latest offers for the Product and services with powerful and easy-to-use tools.

Earlier, it was complex for the IT community to reach out to the businesses and their customers due to unavailability of means of interaction through a portal like Indiatchannels. The portal has overcome this restriction and not only opened the ways for B2C business growth but also for B2B business growth. Now, partners can achieve their desired goals of enhanced growth and success through Indiatchannels.com

### Benefits of Registering

Creating B2B page on the portal offers numerous benefits to the registered partners as mentioned below:

- Distributors can register as B2B partner completely free of cost.
- Distributors get access and opportunity to associate with 5000+ pre-registered partners.
- Distributors can strengthen their online presence and enhance their business prospects with the B2B business model.

• Adapting to several complex market situations will be easier for them considering the current scenario.

• Distributors can handle and manage their own page without any interventions.

• Showcasing the latest services, products and resources offerings will be effortless.

• Distributors can manage their inventories easily through inventory management tool available on portal.

• The platform not just assists in increasing business reach but also helps Distributors with enhanced sales.

• Distributors can also associate with OEMs effortlessly through the portal.

• Complete analytics/ Reports regarding catalogue page visits can be monitored, helping converting potential leads to business.

• Detailed report on prospects/ sales is available on portal.

Through the launch of B2B catalogue creation facility the distributors now have the opportunity to boost their business by extending their network and enrolling prospective partners to work with across the country.

**What Unistal Systems MD, Alok Gupta has to say?**

Alok Gupta said "We want to share our heartfelt appreciation towards the partners. We are so humbled and grateful for all their support, without which we wouldn't be where we are today. Our endeavour is to come up with more such launches for continuous growth & development of our channel fraternity."



# Putting People at the Center of AI Development: Samsung



The Samsung AI Forum is an annual event that brings together globally renowned experts in the industry as well as across academia to serve as a platform with which to disseminate the very latest in AI trends, technologies, and research.

This year's AI Forum, the fourth of its kind, is being held over two days this November 2 and 3. The second day of the event, hosted by Samsung Research, the advanced R&D hub of the company that leads the development of future technologies for Samsung Electronics' SET (end-products) business, facilitated discussion around how industry experts and academics alike can further research into AI technologies, products, and services that directly impact and enhance the lives of all people.

## AI Forum Day 2: Human-Centered AI

To open up the second day of the AI Forum 2020 on November 3, Dr. Sebastian Seung, President and Head of Samsung Research, gave a welcome speech that highlighted how the theme of the Forum's second day, "Human-Centered AI," is very much in line with Samsung's vision of creating products and services that make all our lives richer and more convenient.

Dr. Seung outlined the importance of collaboration between corporate and academic AI researchers. "Unlike academic researchers, who have greater freedom to explore their profes-

sional interests, corporate researchers dealing with real-world issues often encounter constraints in their research," explained Dr. Seung. "To overcome such restraints, companies are driven to find creative ways to problem-solve and to conduct truly innovative research."

Dr. Seung went on to outline the areas in which Samsung has been progressing its AI research, highlighting how the company has been expanding its research into traditional AI fields such as vision and graphics, speech and language and robotics. He noted that the company has also been making great efforts with their on-device AI, with work being done to develop how AI functions on devices with limited computational power, limited electrical power consumption and other such constraints. He also highlighted the company's focus on the field of health and wellness, stressing it as a very fascinating area wherein AI, data and devices can come together to benefit people in their health and wellness journeys.

In order to showcase the big picture within which AI research exists, Dr. Seung then presented a range of Samsung products that are infused with AI technologies, noting the existing technical challenges that Samsung and other AI researchers around the world should be looking to surmount in order to extend the capability of AI as much as possible to help people. "AI research for a better world only begins when we think deeply about how AI is capable of improving our lives and changing human behavior for the better," concluded Dr. Seung.

## Expert Highlights: Keynote Speeches

For the second day of the Samsung AI Forum 2020, some of the most prolific experts in AI worldwide were invited to participate in the

Forum's lectures and discussions. Professor Christopher Manning of Stanford University, a world-renowned scholar in the field of natural language processing (NLP), gave a presentation titled Natural Language Understanding and Conversational AI. Professor Manning shared the current status and latest trends in NLP technologies, highlighting the recent rapid development of such technologies, and introduced more accurate conversational agents and more effective open domain social robots based on them. Professor Devi Parikh of the Georgia Institute of Technology gave a lecture titled Multimodal and Creative AI Systems, in which she described her work into computer vision systems that humans can interact with via language and AI systems that can assist humans with their creative and artistic endeavors.

Professor Subbarao Kambhampati of Arizona State University, a founding board member of the nonprofit The Partnership on AI, gave a lecture titled Synthesizing Interpretable Behavior for Human-Aware AI Systems. Using several case studies from his research, Professor Kambhampati highlighted the growing need for AI systems to work synergistically with humans in everyday life and asserted that, for this to happen, the systems need to exhibit behavior interpretable by humans.

Lastly, Daniel D. Lee, Executive Vice President of Samsung Research, Head of Samsung's AI Center in New York and Professor at Cornell Tech, delivered a lecture under the theme AI for Robots and People. He examined the technologies being used in the latest machine learning algorithms and explained how they can be used both to develop more advanced robotics systems and to improve people's everyday lives.

## Organizations are Never the Same After Being Hit by Ransomware

Sophos, a global leader in next-generation cybersecurity, announced the findings of its global survey, "Cybersecurity: The Human Challenge", which reveals that organizations are never the same after being hit by ransomware. In particular, the confidence of IT managers and their approach to battling cyberattacks differ significantly depending on whether or not their organization has been attacked by ransomware.

For instance, IT managers at organizations hit by ransomware are nearly three times as likely to feel "significantly behind" when it comes to understanding cyberthreats, compared to their peers in organizations that were unaffected (17% versus 6%).

More than one third (35%) of ransomware victims said that recruiting and retaining skilled IT security professionals was their single biggest challenge when it comes to cybersecurity, compared with just 19% of those who hadn't been hit.

When it comes to security focus, the survey found that ransomware victims spend proportionally less time on threat prevention (42.6%) and more time on response (27%) compared to those who haven't been hit (49% and 22% respectively), diverting resources towards dealing with

incidents rather than stopping them in the first place.

"The difference in resource priorities could indicate that ransomware victims have more incidents to deal with overall. However, it could equally indicate that they are more alert to the complex, multi-stage nature of advanced attacks and therefore put greater resource into detecting and responding to the tell-tale signs that



**Chester Wisniewski, principal research scientist at Sophos.**

The fact that ransomware attackers continue to evolve their tactics, techniques and procedures (TTPs) contributes to pressure on IT security teams, as evidenced by Sophos Labs Uncut's article, "Inside a New Ryuk Ransomware Attack". The article deconstructs a recent attack involving Ryuk ransomware. Sophos incident responders found that the Ryuk attackers used updated versions of widely available and legitimate tools to compromise a targeted network and deploy ransomware. Unusually, the attack progressed at great speed – within three and a half hours of an employee opening a malicious

phishing email attachment, the attackers were already actively conducting network reconnaissance. Within 24 hours, the attackers had access to a domain controller and were preparing to launch Ryuk.

"Our investigation of the recent Ryuk ransomware attack highlights what defenders are up against. IT security teams need to be on full alert 24 hours a day, seven days a week and have a full grasp of the latest threat intelligence on attacker tools and behaviors. The survey findings illustrate clearly the impact of these near-impossible demands. Among other things, those hit by ransomware were found to have severely undermined confidence in their own cyberthreat awareness. However, their ransomware experiences also appear to have given them a greater appreciation of the importance of skilled cybersecurity professionals, as well as a sense of urgency about introducing human-led threat hunting to better understand and identify the latest attacker behavior," said Wisniewski. "Whatever the reasons, it is clear that when it comes to security, an organization is never the same again after being hit by ransomware."





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