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89% Indians Believe Schools Should Educate Children on Online Safety

The way we learn has changed dramatically over the past year as the pandemic outbreak forced many schools and educational institutions to find alternatives to physical classrooms. This resulted in an uptick in virtual classes as students started spending more time online, thus expos-



ing themselves to higher risks on the web. Online scams succeed because they ride on people's behavioural and emotional vulnerabilities and hence, sensitizing them on basic online safety protocols will contribute significantly to reducing risks and ensuring superior learning outcomes. A new study from McAfee Corp. (Nasdaq: MCFE) shows that 89% Indians believe schools should educate children on online safety. Of these, 62% believe that digital wellness and protection should have its own separate curriculum that is taught throughout grade school while 27% feel it should be integrated into technology subjects like IT.

The report further states that 81% of the people in India said that since last year, at least one member in their household started either full time or part time online learning via virtual platforms. In 34% of households, these learners fall between the age group of 18-24 years, followed by 29% between 13-18 years, 24% between 5-12 years, 21% between 25-35 years, 16% over 35 years, and 9% even under the age of 5. Given that a large young audience has adapted to virtual learning, there's a greater need to ensure their online safety and it's encouraging to know that 36% of the respondents who participate in distant learn-

ing, purchased new security/protection technology in India.

"As they turn to remote and e-learning, students today, are at a heightened risk of online threats as their time spent online increases and they adapt to newer tools. With students as well as teachers now operating from lesser controlled environments, the need to educate them on basics such as phishing, cyberbullying, and inculcating overall cybersecurity hygiene is imperative. Educational institutions must approach cybersecurity holistically, particularly now that technology pervades nearly every facet of a child's life," said Judith Bitterli, senior vice president of Consumer at McAfee. "As technology has transformed the educational sector, cybersecurity too must be part of the school curriculum, and entrenched in the way we teach, and the way we learn."

As per McAfee's Cloud Adoption and Risk Report – Work From Home Edition released in May last year, the education sector saw the second most increase in the amount of threat events in their cloud accounts for both internal and external threats. Dearth of awareness and weak policies governing the space makes the sector alarmingly susceptible to cyberthreats. For parents, some of the areas of concern when it comes to the increased connectedness of their kids are illegal content (55%), sharing personal information (53%), exposure to scams (53%), cyber-bullying (52%) and misinformation (49%). It is therefore important to maintain control over how their sensitive data is managed and shared inside and outside of the virtual classroom.

Here are some tips and to-dos to stay safe:

- **Don't click all that you see** – Despite knowing the sender, never click any kind of unsolicited links included in emails, text messages, or screen pop-ups. Ensure to scrutinize the email/text before you reply.
- **Don't go overboard with sharing** – Maximise privacy settings on all social profiles and engage in safe social networking. Steer clear of giving out too much personal information by deleting any

post that involuntarily divulges personal data. Take into consideration removing the names of family members, school, hometown, and birthdays.

- **Access from home securely** – Use a VPN when children are accessing online learning services from home to protect the privacy of the internet connection with bank-level encryption to stop hackers stealing personal information like passwords or data.
- **Teach personal responsibility** – With misinformation a major concern for many parents, it's important for parents to educate their children about fake news and how to spot it. Ask children to question the content they read or watch online to determine if it is credible before making up their minds.
- **Discuss digital wellness round the dinner table** – While it can sound like a boring topic, it's important for families to regularly discuss online safety at home. Parents should talk to their children about how to spot a phishing scam, what to do if there's been a data breach and how to have good digital wellness.
- **Strong, complex passwords** – Strong passwords are critical, and hence, one must use complex catchphrases and combinations of letters, characters, and numbers. Prefer two-factor authentication to add an additional layer of protection between you and a potential attacker. As members of the family often share devices, it is critical that security software is present on all endpoints, minimising the risk of attack vectors.
- **Cautious information sharing** – While learning online, there could be instances where children are required to exchange information with their peers. Ensure that any information shared online is not sensitive in nature. Using security tools with parental controls like McAfee® Safe Family on all internet-enabled devices helps to monitor children online in addition to having endpoint malware and data protection across all your devices.

Vodafone Idea's financial stress to impact various stakeholders; government support critical: ICRA

The telecom industry had been facing headwinds since the launch of services by Reliance Jio Infocomm Limited (RJIL) which manifested into decline in revenue and profit generation.



Further, the Adjusted Gross Revenue (AGR) penalty added to the woes of the industry and have kept the debt levels elevated. Owing

to the aforementioned reasons, the financial position of Vodafone Idea Limited (VIL) has been deteriorating due to mounting losses and increasing debt levels. As per an ICRA note, this stress on VIL is likely to impact financial as well as other stakeholders and can impact the industry structure.

Explains Sabyasachi Majumdar, Group Head & Senior Vice President, ICRA, "Over the last 12 quarters starting Q2FY2019, VIL has been reporting sizeable losses. Further, with the addition of

AGR liabilities, the debt has burgeoned to more than Rs. 2 lakh crore as on June 30, 2021 (including lease liabilities). This, along with consistent churn in the subscriber base, largely stagnant 4G user base, and pressure on ARPU levels have kept the revenue and profit generation muted. Further, the capex levels have remained low vis-à-vis competition resulting in limited network upgradation and expansion. This coupled with sizeable repayment obligations in the coming quarters is likely to keep its financial position stressed. This pressure is likely to impact its financial stakeholders as VIL owes Rs. 23,400 crores to lenders and Rs. 168,190 crores to GoI towards spectrum and AGR deferred dues as on June 30, 2021. In addition, it will also have a bearing on VIL's 255 million subscribers, large employee base and vendors, especially tower companies. In a scenario of VIL's collapse, tower companies will lose around 180,000 tenancies

that VIL occupies and out of these, ICRA expects only 40-50% of the tenancies to be gradually regained by the tower companies and balance would be lost owing to redundancies and network realignment."

For the ICRA sample of independent tower companies, VIL occupies 35% tenancy share and 36% revenue share. In a situation of VIL shutting down operations, tower companies will have to face a loss of these tenancies, translating into revenue and EBITDA decline for the industry. However, in that scenario, the existing 255 million subscribers of VIL will be taken up by the active telcos, who will have to expand their network presence to cater to a large additional subscriber base. ICRA expects that the existing telcos will gradually take up only 40-50% of VIL's tenancies and the total tenancies for the industry by FY2024 are likely to remain lower than FY2021 levels.

Partners Are Optimistic About FTS Roll Out Post Covid Time

Foreign Trips Schemes popularly known as FTS is the most awaited event among the channel fraternity. FTS is considered as the biggest reward



conferred to partners for their outstanding business performance. Many brands organise FTS for their partners who achieve sales targets to exotic locations. However, since the COVID-19 pandemic has hit the world, the future of FTS seems gloomy. Though many countries are now opening up their economies gradually for tourism, brands seem cautious about FTS. However, partners are optimistic about the scheme and expect brands to explore the possibility of re-launch in 2022.

"FTS is a major reward given to channel partners and partners work very hard to qualify for the same. In the last two years, no brand announced FTS due to the pandemic. However, the situation

is improving, we expect the announcement soon. If any brand announces FTS, I am sure all partners will jump on it", said Aniruddha Menavlikar, Managing Director, Monarch Technologies (Pune) Pvt. Ltd.

While a majority of partners are optimistic for FTS, a section of the channel voiced safety concerns over overseas travel. Biren Yadav, Managing Director of Mumbai based Bluecom Infotech Pvt Ltd, "FTS has always been significant for the channel community. However, they will have to wait some more time as many countries are still under lockdown like situations and have put stringent restrictions on overseas travellers. I think both brands and partners will also not like to take any risks for at least the next 2-3 years."

Among all the channel incentive schemes, FTS has garnered widespread popularity over the years. It is an excellent motivational tool and can be as rewarding as an advertisement. FTS also promotes healthy competition among the partners and ultimately help brands to sell more and earn more. Hence, brands also make a significant investment in FTS to attract more partners to enrol in it.

"We Indians by nature enjoy exploring new destinations and if it is a sponsored tour then it is like "Sone pe Suhaga. I was part of one of such FTS and it was my best vacation. FTS is not just

focused on a trip but it is also an opportunity to meet your industry peers and brand owners and strengthen your business ties with them. I wish the situation improves soon and we all get back to our normal life", said a partner from Mumbai. RP tech India has organized several grand and successful FTS on behalf of brands for partners in the past in locations such as Singapore, Hong Kong, Malaysia, Bali, Thailand, Mauritius, Australia, Japan, Switzerland, Paris, London, Dubai, Sri Lanka, Tashkand etc. The company says that brands can explore relaunching FTS considering the present COVID-19 guidelines.

"We have managed several memorable FTS in the past, hence, we understand partners' sentiments. It is like one big family going on a vacation, exploring new cultures, exchanging new ideas and having lots of fun. FTS is not just a token of appreciation for their business achievement, it is also a platform for them to meet and network with fellow partners across India. Brands also leverage the platform to build their image among the channel fraternity. So it is a win-win for both. However, the Corona crisis has changed the industry dynamics and hence, we should consider the present pandemic condition worldwide and strictly follow the safety guidelines for everyone's safety", said Rajesh Goenka, Director, Sales and Marketing, RP tech India.

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How technology can enable parents to play a key role in online education

It seems like yesterday when the early mornings of most parents were filled with the bustle of getting their kids ready for school and dropping them off in time at the bus stop or the school gate. A lot has changed in the last one and a half years. Schools have transformed into eLearning institutions. What seemed like a possibility once is now a



reality! Online classes have become the lifeline for students for more than a year.

As children spend considerable time at home, they are constantly under the eyes of their parents. Parents spend more time with their children and can keep a check on the status of their assignments. They want to be informed about their learning so they can witness it and be engaged in the process every day.

For a long time, parents have been the first teachers of children – guiding and raising them, but once formal school starts, the schools take a significant part of this responsibility.

Now with the pandemic, parents are more involved than ever before in the education of their children. It all started with the need for parents to support children during online classes – helping with logging in, using video conferencing apps, submitting assignments, etc. With not much opportunity for peer learning, students are also dependent on parents to complete home assignments and have an exchange of thoughts and ideas with.

However, as things are progressing, shortage of time, difficulty to manage work and a lack of understanding of the material have put a lot of pressure on parents to stay on top of things. While there is a desire from parents to enlist themselves in the learning process, the inability to get a quick understanding of what is going on with children's learning is putting them at a disadvantage.

Learning institutions should consider parents to be stakeholders and capitalize on their commit-

ment to driving better academic outcomes and close-out learning gaps.

Students learning from home have several privileges like access to the internet, apps, games, and websites of their choice within the comfort of their homes. However, this also increases the probability of them getting highly distracted during online classes which leads to the perception that online classes aren't often academically as rigorous as a traditional classroom-based model. Students have a lot more time at their disposal, which in parents' views is wasted. These perceptions create a lot of friction and constant pressure on the students to rise to the expectations of parents.

Technology can ease some of these problems by providing easily digestible information that helps in setting ground expectations while also making parents feel involved in the day-to-day learning process of their children. A few ways in which this can be achieved has been captured below:

1. Consolidated Dashboard for Scheduled Classes: It provides a quick pulse of what is happening every day with the learning schedule in the online class. It can also mention the assignments to be done and check students' extent of participation. It will help parents to engage constructively with their children.

2. Tracking App Manager: Technology can be enabled to track the primary app on the children's screen during online classes. It largely alleviates the anxiety associated with children getting distracted and will help parents to monitor and intervene appropriately.

3. Application for Scanning Documents: In several cases, children need to upload classwork, homework, and assignments at school learning portals. It requires constant juggling of multiple tools. Technology solutions can plugin into synchronous learning platforms for scanning, verifying the quality of the scan, and uploading of the documents at the right place.

4. Using Analytics to share Insights: With learning happening through digital toolsets, there are opportunities to employ technology to track learn-

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ing activity. From the time students log in, one can track various learning events like the accessed content, time spent on a particular content, class participation, etc. This information can be carefully analyzed to find significant insights into the learning behavior of students. For example, the fact that a child learns faster in a simulation-based approach than the lecture-based approach provides parents the ability to engage with students in their most preferred way of learning.

5. Filling the Learning Gaps: The loss of class time has resulted in a few learning gaps. Technology can enable focused reviews to identify areas in which students need additional support and reinforce the same through micro-learning and continuous short assessments. Parents can be self-assured that pandemic-induced learning gaps are taken care of in one way or the other.

While the above are some examples, the key is to enable parents to understand the part they play in their children's education. Technology can provide them with enough information to create an amicable environment for students to cope-up with the online schools. It can play a very important role in this entire process making sure the right information is made available at the right time in the right form that is easily comprehensible and actionable by parents.

Homegrown Brands See Healthy Growth in India's Wearable Market

India's wearables market grew 118.2% year-over-year (YoY) in 2Q21 (April-June), shipping 11.2 million units according to the recent data from the International Data Corporation's (IDC) India Monthly Wearable Device Tracker. Strong shipments from homegrown brands in earwear and watches fueled this growth. Watches continued to be the fastest-growing cat-

egory accounting for 81.2% share in the wristwear category that includes watches and wristbands, up from 35.0% a year ago. The earwear category also maintained its momentum, doubling its shipments in 2Q21 and remains the largest category in wearables.

The second wave of the COVID-19 had a marginal

impact as the overall wearable shipments declined by 1.3% sequentially in 2Q21. Partial lockdowns, weekend curfews, and disrupted supply chains resulted in a skewed slump in the early-quarter shipments. However, unlike last year the market was quick to recover as the vendors stocked the channels to fulfil the pent-up consumer demand in June'21.

India Wearables Market, Product Categories, Market Share, Year-over-Year Growth 2021Q2 (Shipments are in thousands of units)					
Product Category	2Q21 Shipments	2Q21 Market Share	2Q20 Shipments	2Q20 Market Share	Year-over-Year unit change (2Q21 vs 2Q20)
1. Earwear	9,233	82.3%	4,333	84.3%	113.1%
2. Wrist Band	372	3.3%	524	10.2%	-28.9%
3. Watch	1,608	14.3%	282	5.5%	469.1%
Total	11,213	100%	5,139	100%	118.2%

Source: India Monthly Wearable Device Tracker, August 2021 release



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Over the quarters, the watch form factor seems to be appealing to the consumers, and Indian brands have been quicker to leverage this trend and align their device portfolio. Among the top five brands, three spots are captured by Indian brands, while Huami and Realme are at 3rd and 5th positions, respectively. Noise continues to be the leading player in the overall watch category for five straight quarters with a 28.6% share in 2Q21 and closely followed by BoAt with a 26.9% share. Fire-boltt, another homegrown brand, has entered at fourth position in just three quarters of starting its business in this category. However, Xiaomi maintains its formidable lead in the wristband category with 38.9% share, followed by

Oneplus and Titan with 21.7% and 21.3% share, respectively.

“Affordability has been the key for Indian brands, and these brands have been immensely successful in gaining a significant portion of the watch market with competitive pricing, aggressive marketing, and faster adoption of new features,” says Anisha Dumbre, Market Analyst, Client Devices, IDC India. “This new generation of homegrown brands are digitally native, aware of their limitations and selectively targeting the gaps. However, they need to be watchful of the China-based brands, who going forward will be aggressive by introducing more sub-brands and leveraging the ecosystem play,” adds Dumbre.

The earwear category grew by 113.1% YoY in 2Q21, shipping 9.2-million-units. BoAt’s aggressive shipments and diverse portfolio helped it gain a dominant 45.5% share in 2Q21. It also led the TWS category with a 39.6% share in the quarter. OnePlus finished second with an 8.5% category share in the second quarter of this year. Even in the earwear category, the homegrown brands have a strong dominance as their share has reached 71.5% in 2Q21 from just 31.2% in 2Q20. Ptron, Zebronics, Noise, Portronics, Bolt Audio, and Truke were among the key prominent brands that supported the dominance of homegrown brands in this category.

Top 5 Watch Companies, Market Share, Year-over-Year Growth 2021Q2 (Shipments are in thousands of units)

Company	2Q21 Market Share	2Q20 Market Share	Year-over-Year unit change (2Q21 vs 2Q20)
1. Nexxbase (Noise)	28.6%	25.5%	538.4%
2. Imagine Marketing (BoAt)	26.9%	–	–
3. Huami (Amazfit)	9.3%	25.1%	110.9%
4. Fire-Boltt	5.5%	–	–
5. Realme	4.7%	21.3%	24.7%
Others	25.0%	28.1%	405.9%
Total	100%	100%	469.1%

Source: India Monthly Wearable Device Tracker, August 2021 release

Top 3 Wrist Band Companies, Market Share, Year-over-Year Growth 2021Q2 (Shipments are in thousands of units)

Company	2Q21 Market Share	2Q20 Market Share	Year-over-Year unit change (2Q21 vs 2Q20)
1. Xiaomi	38.9%	23.0%	20.3%
2. OnePlus	21.7%	–	–
3. Titan	21.3%	2.6%	471.6%
Others	18.1%	74.4%	-82.8%
Total	100%	100%	-28.9%

Source: India Monthly Wearable Device Tracker, August 2021 release

Top 5 Earwear Companies, Market Share, Year-over-Year Growth 2021Q2 (Shipments are in thousands of units)

Company	2Q21 Market Share	2Q20 Market Share	Year-over-Year unit change (2Q21 vs 2Q20)
1. Imagine Marketing (BoAt)	45.5%	18.5%	424.0%
2. OnePlus	8.5%	5.0	264.2%
3. Samsung	7.9%	30.4%	-44.6%
4. Realme	5.5%	14.3%	-17.9%
5. Palred (Ptron)	5.1%	3.4%	219.7%
Others	27.5%	28.4%	106.0%
Total	100%	100%	113.1%

Source: India Monthly Wearable Device Tracker, August 2021 release

Commenting on the outlook for the Indian wearables market, Jaipal Singh, Research Manager, Client Devices, IDC India, said, “The robust growth in wearable is attracting brands who have businesses around devices and accessories to expand their presence across all

wearable categories. Thus, the influx of new entrants remains a key driver of growth,” He further added, “As we approach the festive season, vendors and channel partners are gearing up for record level of demand with the intention of further corrections in the prices. An

upside of over 35% seems an easily achievable feat in 2H21 when compared to 2H20. However, vendors will be selective in their channel inventory with focus remains on e-tailers as concerns around COVID-19 third wave still prevails in the country.”



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Hewlett Packard Enterprise completes acquisition of Zerto

Hewlett Packard Enterprise announced that it has completed the acquisition of Zerto, an industry leader in cloud data management and protection with a net cash purchase price at closing of \$374 million. This acquisition immediately positions the HPE GreenLake edge-to-cloud platform in the high-growth data protection market with a proven solution and further propels HPE's storage business into a cloud-native, software-defined data services business.

"Data is the most critical asset and is essential to operate in this new digital economy," said **Tom Black, Senior Vice President and General**



Manager of HPE Storage. "Our customers continue to face complexity in managing and protecting their data. Zerto's best-in-class talent and technology expands HPE's data management and disaster recovery capabilities, giving customers the ability to protect their data and recover in minutes from ransomware attacks. We are thrilled to welcome Zerto to the HPE family. Together, we will accelerate innovation and scale these offer-

ings to help our customers manage and protect their data from edge to cloud."

Zerto's cloud data management and protection software will remain available as a standalone service and will be available as a service through the HPE GreenLake platform and the Data Services Cloud Console. Its journal-based continuous data protection technology includes disaster recovery, backup, and data mobility in a single, simple cloud data management and protection software solution that spans on-premises, hybrid, and multi-cloud environments.

Apollo Funds Complete Acquisition of Yahoo

Apollo Global Management, Inc. (together with its consolidated subsidiaries, "Apollo") announced that funds managed by its affiliates (the "Apollo Funds") have completed the acquisition of Yahoo – formerly Verizon Media – one of the world's premier global technology and media companies. With the close of the transaction, Yahoo will now operate as a standalone company under Apollo Funds. Verizon has retained a 10% stake in Yahoo. "We look forward to partnering with Yahoo's talented

employee base to build on the company's strong momentum and position the new Yahoo for long-term success as a standalone consumer internet and digital media leader," said **Reed Ray-**



man, Partner at Apollo. "We couldn't be more excited about this next chapter for Yahoo as we look to invest in growth across the business, including accelerating its customer-first offerings and commerce capabilities, expanding its reach and enhancing the daily user experience."



"This is a new era for Yahoo," said **Guru Gowrappan, CEO, Yahoo.** "The close of the deal heralds an exciting time of renewed opportunity for us as a standalone entity. We anticipate that the coming months and years will bring fresh growth and innovation for Yahoo as a business and a brand, and we look forward to creating that future with our new partners."

Partners Group to acquire leading Indian wired broadband service provider ACT

Partners Group, a leading global private markets firm, has agreed, on behalf of its clients, to acquire Atria Convergence Technologies ("ACT" or "the Company"), one of India's largest providers of high-speed fiber-optic broadband, from Argan (Mauritius) Limited and TA Associates. Partners Group, which has been a joint investor in ACT since 2016, will acquire a controlling stake in a transaction that values the Company at an enterprise value of nearly USD 1.2 billion.

Headquartered in Bangalore with over 7,000 employees, ACT is a leading multi-service operator offering a package of internet, TV, data, and other broadband services. The Company serves around 2 million wired broadband subscribers across 19 cities in India and has one of the largest fiber networks in the country, capable of delivering connection speed of up to 1 Gbps. ACT has high customer retention rates and delivers reliable broadband, strong uptime, and quality customer service. The Company is well-positioned to benefit from rapidly rising data consumption in India, which has been accelerated by new working and learning from home trends since COVID-19. Partners Group will work closely with ACT management and TA Associates, which will continue to hold a minority stake, on a value creation plan to support the Company's ongoing growth and contribution to the Digital India mission.



Rare Enterprises to invest in Syska LED Lights Private Limited

Rare Enterprises and its Partners have signed a term sheet to invest in Syska LED Lights Private Limited, promoted by the Uttamchandani family. In accordance with the terms of the signed term sheet, about 15% of the funds have been deployed already. It is expected that the transaction should conclude in the next 60 days.



Rakesh Jhunjhunwala, Partner – Rare Enterprises, said "We are encouraged with the business and the brand that Syska has built so far – we view this as

a long term partnership with the Promoter family to take Syska into its next phase of growth and leadership."

Commenting on this partnership, Govind Uttamchandani, Director, Syska Group said, "Syska Group has been on a consistent growth trajectory and we are poised to achieve new business milestones in the coming years. With the blessings of our Guru, we believe this collaboration with Rare Enterprises will support our organization in its next phase of growth, and enable us to secure a leadership position in India's fast moving electrical goods (FMEG) industry. We are confident that this will be a long and fruitful association."

Equinix Completes Acquisition of Two Data Centers in India

Equinix, Inc., the world's digital infrastructure company™, announced that it has extended Platform Equinix into the strategic Indian market, following the completion of the acquisition of the INDIA operations of GPX Global Systems, Inc. ("GPX India"). The US\$161 million all-cash transaction includes a fiber-connected campus in MUMBAI with two data centers.

Equinix's expansion into India will unlock opportunities for Indian businesses expanding

internationally and for multinational corporations pursuing growth and innovation in the Indian market. With the upcoming 5G rollout in the country, companies can get ahead in the digital era with Equinix and benefit from the ability to accelerate their evolution from traditional to digital businesses by rapidly digitizing and scaling their infrastructure, easily adopting hybrid multicloud architectures and interconnecting with more than 350 international brands and local companies in India.



Equinix India will be led by Managing Director Manoj Paul, a veteran with more than two decades of experience who will leverage his deep insights into the local data center industry to support the digital transformation

journeys of businesses in India.

Google ramps up its India commitment for a safer internet for everyone



Underlining the wider impact of the post COVID-19 acceleration in digital adoption in the country, Google announced that it has stepped up its commitment to online safety in India with a slew of new programs and initiatives. Announced at the virtual Google for India event today, these investments include expanding resources in its Trust & Safety teams in India, the launch of a newly enhanced Google Safety Centre in 8 Indic

languages, and user education programs focused on online safety for kids and families. In addition to launching the global 'Be Internet Awesome' program for kids in India, Google will also partner with Indian comic book publisher Amar Chitra Katha to interweave critical internet safety lessons through popular comic book characters across eight Indian languages.

Google has significantly increased its resources dedicated to India's Trust & Safety teams, including product policy analysts, security specialists, and user trust experts that support more than 10 vernacular Indian languages, enabling our central teams to benefit from the local nuance and inputs. This will help Google India continue its campaign against existing and emerging abuse areas, such as misinformation, fraud, threats to child safety, violent extremism, phishing attacks, and malware. This will also further strengthen Google's global Trust & Safety operations of over

20,000 people spread across the world who are dedicated to identifying, fighting, and preventing online harms.

The launch of the newly expanded Safety Centre in Hindi, Marathi, Malayalam, Kannada and Telugu, and in Bengali, Tamil, and Gujarati by year-end, will serve as a single destination dedicated to educating and empowering Google's users on the importance of digital safety covering important topics like data security, privacy controls, and online protections.

Designed and crafted by digital safety experts to help children, families, and educators learn about staying safe online, the Be Internet Awesome toolkit includes a highly visual, interactive experience called 'Interland', where children can learn the fundamentals of online safety and participate in a series of fun, challenging games. Through its interactivity, children will learn how to safeguard valuable information, one-up cyber bullies, and spot what's real and what's fake. This gamified curriculum will also find place in popular Indian comic book publisher Amar Chitra Katha's popular series across eight Indian languages.

Microsoft collaborates with Invest India to empower tech startups

Microsoft India announced its collaboration with Invest India, Government of India's national investment promotion and facilitation agency, to support tech startups in the country. As part of this collaboration, the Microsoft for Startups program will work closely with Accelerating Growth of New India's Innovations (AGNI Mission), a program of the Office of the Principal Scientific Adviser to the Government of India and a Mission under the Prime Minister's Science, Technology, and Innovation Advisory Council (PM-STIAC) that convenes India's finest technologies with their potential adopters. Housed and executed by Invest India, AGNI Mission helps startups become enterprise ready. With support from AGNI Mission, Microsoft has onboarded 11 startups into the Microsoft for Startups program. These startups span various industries such as agriculture, defense & security, IT/ITeS, e-mobility, waste

management and financial services.

Emily Rich, Director of Startups – APAC, Microsoft, said, "The collaboration between Microsoft and Invest India affirms our commitment to the startup ecosystem in the country. Combining the reach of Invest India's AGNI Mission with the tech and business resources of Microsoft for Startups, this is an exciting opportunity for startups to accelerate their aspirations for enterprise readiness."

The startups shortlisted by Microsoft for Startups for the current cohort include:

1. Amplearth Packaging & Systems: Enables latest innovations to help manufacture and manage large-scale sustainable and reusable FMCG packaging.

2. Arishti CyberTech: Enables security and flexi-

bility within enterprise communications, enabling businesses to share sensitive data smoothly.

3. Daybest Research: Provides smart agricultural intelligence and technology to farmers in India and government institutions.

4. Go Buzzr (Dev BeeTech): An agritech startup offering an IOT-based smart beehive monitoring system that studies the condition of beehives and communicates through a mobile application.

5. Prkruti (Jal Technologies): Specializing in embedded systems, their device tracks, monitors and measures pollution and climatic levels at various locations.

6. Sandbird Research & Development: Provider of a smart electric tiller with which farmers can sit remotely and operate vehicles with driver-less remote control technologies.

7. Vasudhaika Software (Kalgudi Digital): Provider of a convergence platform for businesses across agriculture & rural livelihoods with a holistic approach that benefits organizations.

8. Vecmocon Technologies: Contributes to sustainable requirements of society through technology solutions such as smart battery pack, EV cluster, fleet management, operations motor and motor control.

9. Whrrl Fintech Solutions: Empowers farmers, traders and producer companies on blockchain platform in raising working capital to tide over lengthy crop cycles.

10. YCLEPT 4E Labs: Provides clean energy, connectivity & local information on the go using eco-friendly smart solutions. It runs on clean energy and can be operated through cloud technology.

11. Yuktix Gidabits: Provides clean energy, connectivity and local information on the go using eco-friendly smart solutions. It runs on clean energy and can be operated through cloud technology.

Samsung Introduces 'Samsung DOST', India's Biggest Electronics Sector Skilling Program



Samsung India announced the launch of 'Samsung DOST' (Digital & Offline Skills Training), a CSR initiative that aims to make 50,000 youth job-ready for the electronics retail sector over the next few years. Samsung, India's largest smartphone and consumer electronics brand, has partnered with India's premier skill development organization, National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC), to execute the program through its nationwide skills training centres. Samsung DOST will be the biggest skills training program in the electronics sector.

Samsung has been India's committed partner for the last 25 years, leading the consumer electronics and smartphones space with strategic investments in manufacturing, R&D, retail and community development. Samsung has set up the world's largest mobile factory in Noida and is a key player in the government's large-scale electronics manufacturing push, which is expected to create significant number of job opportunities for youth in manufacturing as well as the retail sector.

Considering the potential of employment generation post skill training, Samsung has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with NSDC for the 'Samsung DOST' program under which youth will receive 200 hours of blended classroom and online training, followed by five months of on-the-job training (OJT) at Samsung retail stores, along with a monthly stipend at par with industry standards. This will help the youth acquire new competencies and skills needed for jobs in India's fast growing electronics retail environment.

Khatabook raised 100Mn USD in Series C funding round

I am excited to announce we've closed a Series C funding round of \$100 million with a valuation now close to \$600 million. The round was led by



Ravish Naresh,
CEO, and Co-founder,
Khatabook

US-based VC firms Tribe Capital and Moore Strategic Ventures (MSV). Other investors in this oversubscribed series C round were Alkeon Capital, with continued investment participation from internal investors B Capital Group, Sequoia Capital, Tencent, RTP Global, Unilever Ventures, and Better Capital. In addition, Balaji Srinivasan, Sriram Krishnan participated as independent investors among others in Khatabook's series C funding round.

In the words of Arjun Sethi, Co-Founder and Partner at our lead investment firm Tribe Capital, "Khatabook has successfully built such a network by empowering this seismic shift among MSME businesses to move from paper to digital, literally."

The Journey So Far:

In two and a half years, Khatabook has become an integral part of the MSME community in almost every district in India. For that, we are thankful to our merchant users on the Khatabook platform

for changing their offline business practices to digital; Our users inspire us.

Currently, We have a monthly active user base of 10 Mn and growing. Other than our Flagship Khatabook, we have introduced 3 other solutions for MSMEs.

- Biz Analyst by Khatabook is a leading SaaS business management solution integrated with the Tally ERP9 to offer premium value-added on-demand services like sales and purchase reports, livestock updates, and other MIS reports, thus allowing a bird's-eye view of the business operations.
- Pagarkhata by Khatabook is a staff management platform for businesses to help merchants digitize staff attendance, payroll/wages, attendance updates, leaves, payments, etc. We have also partnered with Workindia to help MSMEs with efficient hiring through the Pagarkhata platform.
- Cashbook is for those who want a digital solution for only cash handling and tracking. Cashbook helps with cash sales and expense management. While it is available as a feature within the Khatabook app, we have a full functionality exclusive Cashbook android app for those only looking for cash and expense management solutions.

NITI Aayog ties with Cisco to foster women entrepreneurship in India

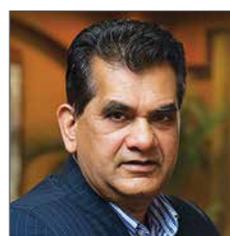
NITI Aayog's Women Entrepreneurship Platform (WEP) will leverage Cisco's technology and experience working with India's startup ecosystem to enable more women-owned businesses across the country

WEP, initially launched by NITI Aayog in 2017, is a first-of-its-kind, unified portal that brings together women from diverse backgrounds and offers them access to a multitude of resources, support, and learning. WEP Nxt is a significant step to augment these efforts. Based on a focused study of Indian women entrepreneurs and their most urgent needs across six key verticals – community and networking, skilling and mentorship, incubation and acceleration programs, and financial, compliance, and marketing assistance – WEP Nxt will be driven by evidence-based decision-making. The focused study, fuelling this transition, is also being made available for the benefit of the ecosystem.

Additionally, as a part of this initiative, Cisco, in collaboration with the Nasscom Foundation, Satva Consulting, and the DeAsra Foundation, will

enable technology-led experiences and engagements to address the challenges faced by women entrepreneurs at individual and enterprise levels and create new opportunities for growth.

"As per the Sixth Economic Census, women only constitute 13.76% of the total entrepreneurs, i.e., 8.05 million out of the 58.5 million entrepreneurs in the country. This may have been a missed opportunity in the past, but I am confident as the Government of India and Private sector hold hands through initiatives such as the WEP, we will realise



this vision of a new India – where men and women have the equal opportunity to build and to share in the glory of achievement," said **Amitabh Kant, CEO, NITI Aayog**. "WEP Nxt will further catalyse this movement and I am confident with Cisco as our partner, this technology platform will soon be the personalized guide for every woman entrepreneur in the country to realize her dreams "

Zoom Selects Seagate's Lyve Cloud

Seagate Technology Holdings plc (NASDAQ: STX), a world leader in mass-data storage infrastructure solutions, reached an agreement with Zoom that will soon enable the video conferencing company's customers to use Seagate Lyve™ Cloud to store meeting recordings.

When Zoom's customers record their meetings, they will have the option to save these media files on Seagate's S3 storage-as-a-service (STaaS) platform.

Seagate's always-on edge-to-cloud mass-storage Lyve Cloud is designed to overcome common storage chal-

lenges—unpredictable costs and complexity of storing, moving, and activating data at scale.

"Our customers expect secure storage and frictionless sharing of their meeting recordings," said **Velchamy Sankarlingham, President of Product and Engineering for Zoom**. "Given the scale of meetings we enable and the variety of customer needs, we need cloud storage that delivers best-in-class TCO. We are adding Lyve Cloud support because it delivers those benefits."



Over 11,000 offline retailers and neighbourhood stores from Maharashtra are now part of 'Local Shops on Amazon'

Parvin Shaikh, owner of Gorgeous Princess Beauty Centre started selling cosmetic products from a small shop in Chinchwad, Pune in 2016. Amidst the challenging times last year, she brought her business online with Local Shops on Amazon to reach a wider customer base and an opportunity to boost sales. Since then, she has witnessed a three times increase in sales and today, and she is able to cater to a much wider customer base, beyond her local neighbourhood, including localities like Kothrud, Baner Gaon and even areas in the outskirts of Pune like Manjri and Undri. On her experience with Amazon, Parvin says, "The consistent growth we witnessed through the program helped us expand our customer base and product offerings, foraying into new categories including Healthcare, and Apparel. We have now registered our brand 'PinkMee' with Amazon.in for selling Mother and Baby Care products."

Today, Parvin is one of more than 11,000 offline retailers and neighbourhood stores from Maharashtra registered as sellers on the 'Local Shops on Amazon' program. The program brings the benefits of ecommerce to offline retailers and neighbourhood stores. It helps supplement the existing footfalls at their offline stores with a digital presence on Amazon.in and expands their reach. The program helps customers discover products from neighbourhood stores in their city (many they already trust and love!) from the convenience of their homes while helping local shops transform into digital stores. With this program, sellers can sell to customers beyond their immediate vicinity, using their existing delivery mechanisms or engaging with identified courier partners. They can also leverage other fulfilment programs from Amazon like Easy Ship and Seller Flex to further expand their business within their cities and other locations across India. The program has played a key role in helping local offline retailers and neighbourhood stores across India sustain their livelihoods and jumpstart their business amidst the unprecedented pandemic.

"We made cloud economics simple and predictable regardless of the high volume of meetings recorded



or the number of times viewed," said **Seagate's Ravi Naik, executive vice president of storage services and chief information officer**. "Lyve Cloud charges no API fees and egress fees, and our always-on storage means Zoom users can view their recordings when they need to."

The multiyear deal between Seagate and Zoom is for a Silicon Valley cloud location, with other options on the horizon.

NetApp India welcomes industry stalwart Vasanthi Ramesh to its engineering leadership team

NetApp, a global cloud-led, data-centric software company, announced the appointment of **Vasanthi Ramesh** as vice president of Engineering for Manageability and Data Protection and member of the NetApp® India engineering leadership team.



Data manageability and protection are increasingly important as more companies adopt cloud IT infrastructure. NetApp, with its 30 years of data leadership, is bullish

about innovation and talent growth in India. Vasanthi Ramesh's appointment aligns with NetApp's commitment to provide industry-leading solutions to its customers.

"I am delighted to be working with a technology leader like NetApp. I see this as a great opportunity to work on futuristic technologies that help unlock the best of cloud for customers around the world. It has been my personal goal to work in an organization that has a culture of inclusivity, strong people-centric values, and lays emphasis on employee well-being. NetApp checks all of these boxes," said Vasanthi Ramesh.

Nirmata appoints Nataraj Narayan as Managing Director

Nirmata, the software solutions provider for governance, compliance, security, and automation of production Kubernetes workloads and clusters, and creators of Kyverno, the leading policy engine designed for Kubernetes, announced the appointment of **Nataraj Narayan** as the Managing Director for Nirmata in India.



With a stellar career as a senior executive at multiple companies such as Hexaware, Mindtree, Wipro, KPIT, and most recently at Sauce Labs

(AIQ), Nataraj brings three decades of industry experience, having successfully launched and scaled technology businesses. He has been SVP and Head of Global Cloud Infrastructure, Application Support & Security at KPIT, SVP and CIO and Head of Cloud Infrastructure at Hexaware, CIO and Global IMS Head at Mindtree, Head of R&D Infrastructure and Test Center at Ericsson India, and early in his career led and managed the Microsoft and Cisco relationships and launched the infrastructure support business at Wipro. Most recently, Nataraj led Global Strategic Sales, GSI Partnerships & India Operations for Sauce Labs (AIQ).

Adobe Appoints Prativa Mohapatra as Vice President & Managing Director of India Business

Adobe announced the appointment of **Prativa Mohapatra** as Vice President and Managing Director for Adobe India. In this role, Prativa will lead Adobe's India business across Adobe Experience Cloud, Adobe Creative Cloud and Adobe Document Cloud, reporting to Simon Tate, Adobe's President for Asia Pacific (APAC).

Adobe's strategy for unleashing creativity, accelerating document productivity, and powering digital businesses gives brands a competitive advantage, enabling them to engage customers across every digital touch point. With a track record built on innovation, category leadership, and rapidly expanding market opportunity,

Adobe India is poised for continued growth.

"Adobe is uniquely positioned as an enabler for everyone — students, creative artists, small businesses, government agencies and the largest brands — to design and deliver exceptional digital experiences. I am



thrilled to join the world class team at Adobe India and propel our business vision in the country," said **Prativa Mohapatra, Vice President & Managing Director, Adobe India.**

VMware Appoints Kit Colbert as Chief Technology Officer

VMware, Inc., a leading innovator in enterprise software, announced that **Kit Colbert** has been named VMware's next Chief Technology Officer.



Colbert joined VMware in 2003 as the technical lead behind the creation, development and delivery of the vMotion and Storage vMotion features in VMware vSphere. Throughout his tenure at VMware, he served in multiple roles, including VMware's Cloud CTO, General Manager of VMware's Cloud-Native Apps business, CTO for VMware's End-User Computing Business, and as the lead architect for the VMware vRealize Operations Suite.

As part of his new role, Colbert will shape the technical vision for the company, and the transformation to a cloud and subscription-centric R&D organization. His oversight includes advancing research and development efforts, overseeing the VMware Engineering Services team, the Design/UX team and the company's ESG commitments.

Vineet Singh Joins BYJU'S As Vice President, Brand & Creative Strategy

BYJU'S, the world's leading edtech company and the creator of India's most loved school learning app, announced the appointment of **Vineet Singh** as Vice President, Brand & Creative Strategy.



In his role, Vineet will be responsible to build and enhance the brand's value proposition across offline and online mediums to

cater to a diverse array of audiences across the country. From market research and insight analysis to defining the brand elements and tone, Vineet will be in charge of creatively increasing brand awareness and strengthening the company's positioning for market growth. He will oversee the brand's creative philosophy, conceptualise and execute powerful narratives for BYJU'S. "Vineet is a proven and a brilliant creative strategist and we are delighted to have him on board. We are looking forward to his creative and integrated campaigns that will help us establish a deeper connection with our consumers", said Pravin Prakash, Chief People Officer, BYJU'S.

STL appoints Paul Atkinson as CEO for its Optical Networking business

STL, an industry-leading integrator of digital networks, announces the appointment of **Paul Atkinson** as the Chief Executive Officer for its Optical Networking Business. Paul's appointment is in line with the widened portfolio and the increased global reach of STL's Optical business.

With its core focus of Enabling Digital Transformation at the Edge, STL has been delivering industry-leading optical solutions for telcos, cloud companies, governments and enterprises globally. The world is witnessing concurrent network build cycles of 5G, FTTx and Rural Broadband and optical solu-

tions will be at the heart of these. To cater to these mega-trends, STL has been widening its portfolio and scale as well as globalising its optical business at a rapid pace.

Before STL, **Paul Atkinson** was the Managing Director and Group CEO



at IXOM, Australia. Prior to IXOM, Paul was associated with the Prysmian for over 20 years as the CEO of affiliates and regions across the world. During this stint,

he led multiple successful business integra-

tions and was pivotal in delivering non-linear growth across geographies and business lines. Before Prysmian Group, he held senior roles in commercial, finance and operations in the consumer goods and healthcare sectors. Paul takes over this responsibility from Ankit Agarwal, who has played a crucial role in STL's global expansion in the Optical business. Ankit widened the portfolio with the acquisition of Optotec & Metallurgica Bresciana and increased STL's scale and presence in Italy, UK, US, Brazil and China. As a Whole-Time Director on the board, Ankit will now focus on driving the strategy and growth across STL.

Wipro appoints Mohammed Areff as Country Head & Managing Director, Middle East

Wipro Limited, a leading global information technology, consulting and business process services company, announced the appointment of



Mohammed Areff as the Country Head & Managing Director for the Middle East.

Areff will focus on Wipro's vision for business growth, localization, brand building and significant transformational and modernization engagements with clients in key sectors across the region.

Areff is a veteran bringing in over two decades of experience with various multinationals in the Middle East and has held lead roles in spearhead-

ing client transformations across various industries.

In his most recent role, Areff was the Regional Director of Microsoft Gulf where he was responsible for driving successful customer outcomes by leveraging technology deployments and implementations across multi-cloud environments, leveraging Data and AI, CRM, ERP, Enterprise Security, and incorporating the use of Microsoft's Productivity and Collaboration tools. He also led teams across various industry verticals providing the sales and technical specialization on new business and premium cloud solutions. Prior to that, Areff developed extensive expertise in the Middle East Managed Services space through leadership roles at NCR Corporation and Avaya.

Samiran Chatterjee joins JK Tech as Vice President-Operations

Former Global Head of Recruitment and Resource Management at TEOCO, **Samiran Chatterjee**



joins the JK Tech team to head their Operations.

In his role as Vice President- Operations, he will be responsible for Sales Operations, Revenue and Resource Management. Samiran brings with him

33+ years of experience across industries, of which 20+ years are in the IT industry.

In a statement from Alope Paskar – President and CEO, JK Tech, he says "Samiran comes with

vast industry knowledge and will definitely be an addition to the strong foundation that will accelerate the growth of JK Tech. With more than 3 decades of experience, he will be able to guide JK Tech along with the rest of the leaders, through this crucial transformational phase."

Samiran was also associated with Microland, Capgemini, Mphasis, iGate among others in his earlier professional assignments. He headed diverse functions, like, Learning & Development, Business Operations & Recruitment and Capacity Planning & Management. Samiran is an alumnus of I.I.T., Kharagpur.

Commvault APJ Appoints Kelly Chan as AVP Metallic Sales

Commvault, a global enterprise software enabler in the management of data across cloud and on-premises environments, has appointed **Kelly Chan**



as Area Vice President for Metallic Sales for Asia Pacific and Japan (APJ).

Metallic, a Commvault venture, delivers industry-leading SaaS portfolio of proven enterprise-grade data protection solutions to better help companies protect their data with the simplicity and flexibility that SaaS enables.

Growth Opportunity Leadership Kelly will be responsible for leading the growth trajectory of our Metallic business with dedicated focus to expand our Metallic footprint across APJ as customer requirements region wide shift to SaaS based priorities. She will also be integral to the overall success of Metallic's new partnership with SoftwareONE, the #1 global Azure partner, which significantly expanded the opportunity for Commvault and Microsoft to reach more customers in APJ. Prior to joining Commvault, Kelly held senior regional sales leadership roles with leading IT and SaaS organizations.

Truecaller appoints Jijendran Ravindran as Vice President of Global Business Development

Truecaller is pleased to announce the appointment of **Jijendran Ravindran**



as Vice President of Global Business Development. Jijendran joins Truecaller from Xiaomi, where he was the Associate Director and Lead for MIUI India. He was

responsible for managing and driving the overall business strategy for the brand. His work involved customisation of apps for India, app promotion, portfolio growth, managing partnerships & revenue across the MIUI properties and handling a large team of talents.

Jijendran has extensive experience of working across varied sectors spanning telecom operators, smartphone brands & Start-ups. His rich experience of over 16 years includes new partnerships, strategy, business development, operations, marketing, advertising & customer insights.

Jijendran will lead the business development function and will report to Kari Krishnamurthy, Chief Commercial Officer. Jijendran will be working towards expanding business and growth across markets. He brings to the table an innate knack for understanding consumers, a bias for action and people development experience. Prior to Xiaomi, Jijendran was heading app partnership for Micromax in India, Sri Lanka, Russia & Bangladesh. He has also been associated with Airtel and Vodafone in the past.

ServiceNow Appoints Uber CTO Sukumar Rathnam to its Board of Directors

ServiceNow, the leading workflow company that makes work, work better for people, announced the appointment of **Uber CTO Sukumar Rathnam**



to its board of directors, bringing the total number of directors on ServiceNow's board to 12.

"Sukumar has been at the forefront of digital innovation for some of the biggest brands in the world.

He is widely regarded as a dynamic technologist and purpose-driven leader," said ServiceNow CEO Bill McDermott. "With Sukumar joining ServiceNow's Board of Directors, we feel even more confi-

dent on our journey to be the defining enterprise software company of the 21st century."

As Chief Technology Officer at Uber, Sukumar is responsible for the company's global engineering organization. Prior to joining Uber, Sukumar spent nine years at Amazon, where he oversaw product management, software engineering, machine learning, and business operations for the selection and catalog systems. These systems manage the world's largest e-commerce catalog of products and offers, serving up information on billions of products at more than 10 million requests per second. Before Amazon, Sukumar held software engineering and architecture leadership roles at Microsoft, PeopleSoft, and Oracle.

Schneider Electric elevates Sachin Bhalla to lead its Secure Power division in India

Schneider Electric, the leader in the digital transformation of energy management and automation announced the appointment of **Sachin Bhalla as the Vice President and Country General Manager for India and SAARC**



in the Secure Power division of Schneider Electric's Energy Management Business. Sachin comes with over 19 years of experience in handling various leadership roles in Business Management and was earlier with Luminous Power Technologies,

as the Senior Vice President – Marketing. He will be taking over Venkatraman Swaminathan's role, as the former will move on to head operations in East Asia and Japan in his new role as the BVP, Secure Power in Schneider Electric Singapore.

In his new role, Sachin will helm business operations for the Greater India Zone of the Secure Power Division which provides complete physical infrastructure solutions for data centers, distributed IT environments, and industrial applications through its industry leading brands APC, Uniflair Cooling, President Racks, and Luminous UPS.

D-Link introduces new feature-rich Routers based on 11AC Wireless technology

D-Link (India) Limited one of the leading networking brands in the country announced the availability of three new variants of High performance Gigabit router, namely DIR-2150 (AC2100 Wi-Fi Gigabit Router), DIR-1950 (AC1900 Wi-Fi certified EasyMesh Gigabit Router), and DIR-1260 (AC1200 Gigabit Router). These new routers are based on Lightning-fast 11AC Wireless technology and packs in enough processing power to handle every high-bandwidth intensive networking task you throw at it.

The new 11AC routers by D-Link are feature-rich like the- D-LINK WI-FI App with intuitive inter-



face and step-by-step instructions for easy setup. Profile-based Parental controls is another noteworthy feature that make it easier to control kids' online activities. In addition to the lightning speed users can also experience advanced features such as an automatically optimizing QoS with a built-in speed test (powered by Ookla® to check your connection uplink and downlink speeds), an automatic firmware update system that ensures the best protection, and compatibility with voice assistants (Amazon Alexa and Google Assistant). D-Link's new 11AC Gigabit routers efficiently send high-speed Wi-Fi signals to multiple devices placed in the same network. So, our users can now simultaneously stream HD media, transfer large files quickly, and experience fast gaming without lag or buffer.

face and step-by-step instructions for easy setup. Profile-based Parental controls is another noteworthy feature that make it easier to control kids' online activities. In addition to the lightning speed users can also experience advanced features such as an automatically optimizing QoS with a built-in speed test (powered by Ookla® to check your connection uplink and downlink speeds), an automatic firmware update system that ensures the best protection, and compatibility with voice assistants (Amazon Alexa and Google Assistant). D-Link's new 11AC Gigabit routers efficiently send high-speed Wi-Fi signals to multiple devices placed in the same network. So, our users can now simultaneously stream HD media, transfer large files quickly, and experience fast gaming without lag or buffer.

The Logitech G PRO Wireless Gaming Mouse, a Proven Winner, now available in India

Logitech announced that the Logitech® G PRO Wireless Gaming Mouse is now available in India. This product will extend the G Pro lineup for the Indian gaming community, who already has access to the Logitech G Pro Wireless gaming headsets that were previously launched in India.



The PRO Wireless mouse was designed to be ultra-lightweight at 80g and yet incredibly strong. A feat of engi-

neering, this strong lightweight build is thanks to an advanced 1mm thin wall construction and unique endoskeleton design. The PRO Wireless is also compatible with the Logitech G POWERPLAY Wireless Charging System, for infinite charging and play. The mouse represents more than 2 years of development in collaboration with more than 50 professional esports players globally and blends extreme performance with the most advanced technologies into a gaming mouse design intended to do one thing: help you win.

Intel Introduces New High-Performance Graphics Brand: Intel Arc

Intel revealed the brand for its upcoming consumer high-performance graphics products: Intel® Arc™. The Arc brand will cover hardware, software and services, and will span multiple hardware generations, with the first generation, based on the Xe HPG microarchitecture, code-named Alchemist (formerly known as DG2). Intel also revealed the code names of future generations under the Arc brand: Battlemage, Celestial and Druid.

Why It Matters: Intel Xe is a scalable graphics and compute architecture designed to deliver exceptional performance and functionality span-



ning integrated to discrete and data centers to supercomputers. Upcoming Intel Arc graphics products are based on the Xe HPG microarchitecture, a convergence of Intel's Xe LP, HP and HPC microarchitectures, that will deliver scalability and compute efficiency with advanced graphics features. Alchemist, the first generation of Intel Arc products, will feature hardware-based ray tracing and artificial intelligence-driven super sampling, and offer full support for DirectX 12 Ultimate.

Who It Helps: Intel's long-term vision is to bring frictionless gaming and content creation experiences to gamers and creators worldwide, giving them innovation and choice in hardware coupled with open and accessible software tools.

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Qualcomm adds Bluetooth Lossless Audio Technology to Snapdragon Sound

Qualcomm Technologies International, Ltd. continued to demonstrate its vision and leadership in the wireless audio space with the introduction of Qualcomm® aptX™ Lossless audio technology to its already extensive audio portfolio. aptX Lossless is a new capability of the proven aptX Adaptive technology and a new feature of Snapdragon Sound™ Technology that is designed to deliver CD quality 16-bit 44.1kHz lossless audio quality over



Bluetooth® wireless technology. Qualcomm Technologies has taken a systems level approach and optimized a number of core wireless connectivity and audio technologies, including aptX Adaptive, which work together to auto detect and scale-up and are designed to deliver CD lossless audio when a user is listening to a lossless music file and the RF conditions are suitable.

"At Qualcomm Technologies we're excited about the future of sound, and we're continually looking for ways to help our customers deliver new and exciting listening experiences. Lossless audio

IBM Unveils On-Chip Accelerated Artificial Intelligence Processor

At the annual Hot Chips conference, IBM unveiled details of the upcoming new IBM Telum Processor, designed to bring deep learning inference to enterprise workloads to help address fraud



in real-time. Telum is IBM's first processor that contains on-chip acceleration for AI infer-

encing while a transaction is taking place. Three years in development, the breakthrough of this new on-chip hardware acceleration is designed to help customers achieve business insights at scale across banking, finance, trading, insurance applications and customer interactions. A Telum-based system is planned for the first half of 2022.

Today, businesses typically apply detection techniques to catch fraud after it occurs, a process that can be time consuming and compute-intensive due to the limitations of today's technology, particularly when fraud analysis and detection is conducted far away from mission critical transactions and data. Due to latency requirements, complex fraud detection often cannot be completed in real-time – meaning a bad actor could have already successfully purchased goods with a stolen credit card before the retailer is aware fraud has taken place.

The new chip features an innovative centralized design, which allows clients to leverage the full power of the AI processor for AI-specific workloads, making it ideal for financial services workloads like fraud detection, loan processing, clearing and settlement of trades, anti-money laundering and risk analysis. With these new innovations, clients will be positioned to enhance existing rules-based fraud detection or use machine learning, accelerate credit approval processes, improve customer service and profitability, identify which trades or transactions may fail, and propose solutions to create a more efficient settlement process.

0 to 300 Million in 5 Years - Rahul Chari: CTO and Co-Founder, PhonePe



They say a picture is worth a thousand words. This one captures a single moment — the moment we hit the launch button on the rocket ship we call PhonePe.

We launched the PhonePe app on 28th August 2016 — exactly 5 years ago. The expressions on our faces capture the variety of emotions we were all feeling on that day — a combination of nervous excitement on the kind of reception the product would receive, along with a sense of pride given that we had put in 8 months of immense hard work to get to that point. What is extremely heartening is that a lot of individuals in this picture are still a part of the PhonePe mission. They along with the larger team continue to enjoy every new launch in the same way as if it is still Day 0. And that continues to be one of the big reasons for the kind of success we have achieved and the love we have received from our users.

Right from Day 0, we made it a point to keep the user and the merchant at the center of all our product adventures, with a maniacal focus on the Payments Success Rate. Every percentage point increase in the success rate still gets a hurrah and every drop in the success rate is still a cause for concern jointly between the technology, product and payment operations team. That group decided very early on to create a joint weekly-payments review looking into every aspect of the payments flow, not just the payment transaction — errors when fetching a bank account, setting or changing the UPI PIN, checking the bank balance etc. I still remember an email from one of our architects to everyone in the company with a single word — “Memorize” — the attachment in the email being the document covering UPI Error codes. We sliced and diced the error codes by operation type, by banks, by time of the

day and every other possible way to provide as much information as possible so that we could jointly (NPCI and Banks) address the problem of low success rates quickly to ensure that UPI trials converted to frequent usage as early as possible. While the all-hands-on-deck approach to shore up payment success rates in the early days of UPI was expected, the practice of joint weekly-deep-reviews on payments continues to this day with the same approach of taking every percentage point change very seriously. Speed and Reliability of payments, continues to be the mainstay of the PhonePe app.

Talking about product adventures, while every visible feature that we launch garners the lion's share of attention, it is the invisible efforts that continue to deepen the trust with our users and engagement with the larger payments ecosystem. Our inline fraud detection platform that intercepts every transaction on the app, the accounting systems that ensure timely payouts to lakhs of merchants on a daily basis, and the customer support systems that continue to push the boundaries of automated resolutions, are all examples of the immense behind-the-scenes technology-driven orchestration that is needed to ensure consistency, reliability and security at scale. Complementing this powerful platform is a set of missionaries across the business development teams, sales team, the customer support team and the operations team who bring the human touch to building the relationship with our users, merchants and partners.

The question that is most frequently asked of us is what helped us cover so much ground in terms of products, services and consumer-merchant use cases in a short period of time. While external factors such as the environment from a policy perspective along with catalytic events

such as demonetization were definitely favorable for the expansion of digital payments, the core reason for our success, I believe, is our philosophy of building open, interoperable and neutral platforms with a strong focus on partnerships. One of our values is ‘Positive Disruption’ which reads as “Our business solutions are designed to be inclusive and empowering for all ecosystem players. We don’t negatively disrupt our business partners’ profit pools just because we can”. Staying true to the spirit of this value, we have always sought to follow a path where we are complementary as opposed to being competitive to merchants, partners and the BFSI industry. The Switch platform is a great example of this. And while we had our share of ups and downs in this journey, the support from not just our banking and merchant partners but also some of our competitors in times of crisis has been gratifying. We are extremely grateful and will continue to work in the same spirit in the years to come.

Over the last 5 years, the sense of pride in our rapid growth has been overtaken by a strong sense of social responsibility. Very early on in our journey we received a testimonial from a customer about how the easy money transfer meant that her house help was able to safely transfer money to her children back home in her native place without the use of any agents. This inspired our first TV Ad campaign. But over the years, many similar examples made us realize the importance of the freedom to use one’s own money easily and safely. The pandemic has only cemented this further, given the sheer dependence of a large part of the population on digital payments for day to day operations. The growth in our user base is driven strongly by semi-urban and rural parts of the country, and for many of them we are the first foray into the world of digital payments and transactions. This has only meant that we have deepened our investments in automated support with self-healing where possible, proactive prevention of transaction failures and better detection of social engineering frauds. All these investments are paying rich dividends as we see more and more of Tier3 India not only doing money transfers, but also purchasing insurance and trying out investments. The reach we have built and the trust we have earned only implies that we now have a greater responsibility towards taking the right products in the financial services sector to these users. All of these add up to the efforts of the ecosystem towards financial inclusion at scale beyond just digital payments.

So a Big Thank You to each and every one of you for helping us accelerate from 0 to 300 Million users in 5 years. It has been an exciting journey. And we need all the support we can get to reach a billion users even faster.

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