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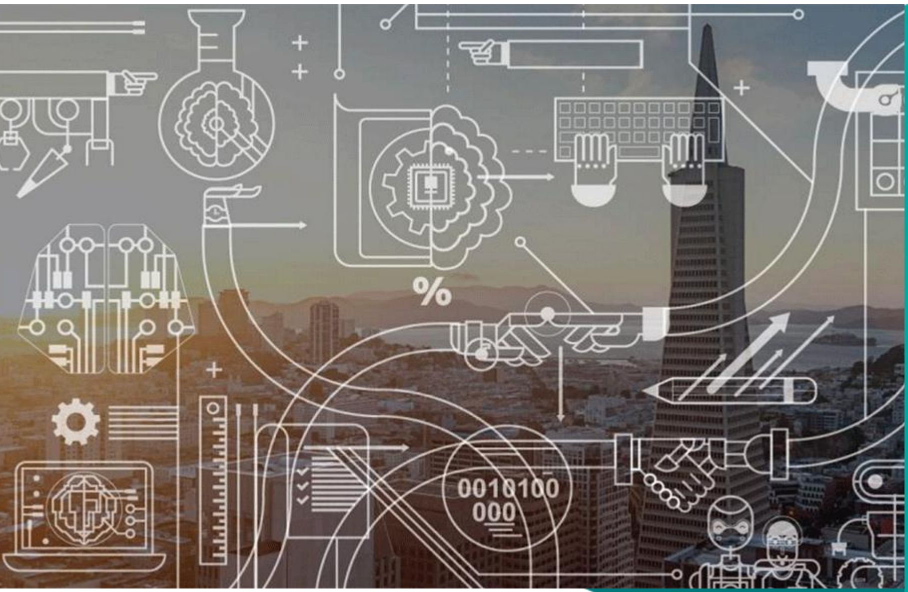

NEWS HIGHLIGHTS

From payments to lending: Fintech firms eye the next big game

Facebook plans its own Cryptocurrency, integrate with WhatsApp & Instagram

SEBI mulls 'regulatory sandbox' for AI, Blockchain

PolicyBazaar-owned DocPrime touches 1 million unique visitor milestone

Today's View

Cognitive Supply Chain

Imagine a scenario where a manufacturing company cannot commit to an incremental business opportunity due to inflexible production lines or a promotion that results in a significantly lower uplift than estimated, leading to supply chain losses from excess inventory. Traditional supply chain-operations are generally observed to be too slow to respond to such changes in demand.

Hence, various enterprises are in process of developing a next-gen supply chain called 'cognitive supply chain' that anticipates rather than reacts to changes in demand and it collaborates with suppliers across the supply chain, supported by an agile workforce.

Unlike transactional supply chains, cognitive supply chains are digitally led, yet process-centric, as opposed to being merely digitally enabled. As per **Genpact**, the benefits of moving from a transactional supply chain to cognitive supply chain include faster time-to-market, improved market share, and increased growth and profitability. This transition is expected to provide 8% year-on-year reduction in logistics costs and 50% improvement in productivity.

As per **IBM**, more than half of outperforming supply chain executives surveyed said their top investments in the next three years will be around

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Rs 5,000 crore to put software products companies on fast lane

The government approved the creation of an Rs 5,000-crore fund to back software products startups in the country as part of its broader National Policy on Software Products. Union Minister of Electronics and IT Ravi Shankar Prasad, in a late-evening press conference, announced the new policy, which has been in the making for over three-and-a-half years.

Source – The Economic Times

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Date – 1st Mar 19

cognitive technologies. Looking at potential benefits, multiple organisations are developing such solutions.

For instance, **TCS** has recently partnered with **JDA Software** to build next-generation cognitive solutions to optimise supply chains for customers worldwide. The partnership is aimed at developing joint, interoperable technology solutions for supply chains of the future. Such solutions are expected to fulfil product demands intelligently as well as explore new business models, capabilities, and value propositions.

On the other hand, Israel-based firm **Ewave Mobile** helps leading companies around the globe transform their traditional supply chains into cognitive supply chains by skilfully integrating people, processes and technologies. It delivers innovative software services based on cognitive supply chains to enable its clients to penetrate new markets, optimize their supply chain KPIs and effectively manage their risks and opportunities.

Similarly, US-based next-gen planning and optimization platform **Solvoyo** applies descriptive, diagnostic, predictive, and prescriptive analytics to deliver cognitive supply chain solutions for its e-commerce clients. Such platforms have helped the e-commerce firms to reduce its inventory by 57% per SKU, resulting in 94% increase in revenues.

With its ability to foresee issues associated with supply and demand, cognitive supply chain enables employees to deal with demand-supply concerns in a much more strategic manner. We believe that, through the management of a connected ecosystem and nurturing of an agile workforce, the cognitive supply chain has an ability not only to support business growth but also to encourage improved ways for technology and insights to work together.

Today's News

From payments to lending: Fintech firms eye the next big game

Deep Singh's chocolate cakes were becoming more and more popular, with considerable help from Facebook videos which made it possible for the Delhi-based entrepreneur to advertise the product and from the online gateway which allowed him to cater to online orders and accept payments as well. But to scale up and convert his passion into business he needed capital to buy bigger ovens and hire staff. Banks and non-banking finance companies (NBFCs) shied away from lending to a small-scale baker.

However, his payment service provider thought otherwise. Calculating his daily transactions, cash flows and consistent business metrics, the payment gateway sanctioned a loan to him. After solving basic problems like accepting payments for micro merchants, companies such as Razorpay, Instamojo and PayU India are eyeing the next big game: lending. With rapid digitisation of payments, companies which process these transactions have caught the pulse of the business.

Source – The Economic Times

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SEBI mulls 'regulatory sandbox' for AI, Blockchain

To make best use of latest technologies, the Securities and Exchange Board of India is considering a 'regulatory sandbox' approach to allow greater but well-regulated use of new innovations such as blockchain and AI in the securities markets.

Officials said SEBI is of the view that innovation in financial technologies like blockchain for settlement, AI including robo-advisory, e-wallets, security systems for intermediaries and market infrastructure institutions, resolution of complaints, outsourcing and development of new technology can be better done through a 'sandbox' mechanism.

Source – The Economic Times

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Uber is said to hold advanced talks to buy Mideast's Careem

Uber Technologies Inc. is in advanced discussions to buy its Dubai-based rival Careem Networks FZ a deal that would expand the ride-hailing giant's operations in the Middle East, according to people familiar with the matter. The companies may announce a cash-and-shares transaction that values Careem at about $3 billion in the coming weeks, the people said, asking not to be identified because the talks are private.

Negotiations are ongoing and no final agreements have been reached, the people said. Representatives for the companies declined to comment.

Source – The Economic Times

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This News Letter has been prepared with the assistance of G Balakrishna and Manish Kulkarni

Facebook plans its own Cryptocurrency, integrate with WhatsApp & Instagram

Some of the world's biggest internet messaging companies are hoping to succeed where cryptocurrency start-ups have failed by introducing mainstream consumers to the alternative world of digital coins. The internet outfits, including Facebook, Telegram and Signal, are planning to roll out new cryptocurrencies over the next year that are meant to allow users to send money to contacts on their messaging systems, like a Venmo or PayPal that can move across international borders.

The most anticipated but secretive project is underway at Facebook. The company is working on a coin that users of WhatsApp, which Facebook owns, could send to friends and family instantly, said five people briefed on the effort who spoke on the condition of anonymity because of confidentiality agreements.

Source – The Economic Times

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Grab is expanding India engineering team in its search for a super app

Southeast Asia's largest ride-hailing app Grab is expanding the scope of its India engineering team to include geomapping and data science as the Singapore-based tech firm looks to offer a super app to its customers in the region, officials said. Grab's Bengaluru unit, one out its seven engineering and research & development centres, has so far been primarily focused on building payment systems for the platform.

The team of engineers and data scientists have now started working on a lending platform for Grab and would soon begin work on insurance offerings, Vikas Agrawal, chief technology officer, Grab Financial, said in an interview. Grab offers its partners, who normally are shunned by traditional banking system, access to credit based on their transaction history on the platform.

Source – The Economic Times

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PolicyBazaar-owned DocPrime touches 1 million unique visitor milestone

DocPrime, the healthcare business launched by EtechAces Marketing and Consulting, the parent of online insurance aggregator PolicyBazaar, has seen one million unique visitors on its platform, the six-month-old venture announced on Wednesday. According to a statement by the venture, millennials and digital natives between the age group of 18-25 and 25-30 form the highest segment of unique visitors at 52%, while a further 17% of the users were split between the 30-40 age group.

Additionally, the company, in its official statement, also said that 40% of the visitor traffic came from tier-1 cities, such as, New Delhi, Bengaluru, Hyderabad and Mumbai, while tier 2 cities of Pune, Lucknow, Patna and Jaipur contributed a further 15% of the traffic.

Source – The Economic Times

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97,000 analytics, data science jobs vacant in India: Study

With more and more companies adopting analytics and data-based decision making has given rise to 45 per cent increase in jobs over last year, a study has revealed. Close to 97,000 positions related to analytics and data science are currently vacant due to a dearth of qualified talent, which is 45 per cent over last year, a study done by online Edu-tech Company Great Learning said here.

"In the last few years, many large players have been forced to acqui-hire talent to keep the wind in their sails," Hari Krishnan Nair, Great Learning's co-founder, said.

Source – BusinessLine

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SoftBank Vision delivers $60 million to Grofers

Grocery delivery startup Grofers has raised around $60 million in fresh capital from SoftBank Vision Fund (SVF), the first tranche of a larger $120-140 million funding round that the company is stitching together.

The investment comes at a time when competition in the online grocery delivery space is heating up, with well capitalized firms such as Swiggy making a beeline for a piece of the action. Grofers' bigger rival BigBasket is also in discussions to close a new $150-million round as on February 8, which may value the company at $1 billion.

Source – The Economic Times

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