

NEWS HIGHLIGHTS

RBI announces guidelines for Payments Infrastructure Development Fund

How this fintech lending startup used tech to overcome the serious business challenges of COVID-19

INKA Entworks to support Indian data localization for fintech companies

Today's View

Fashion Designing, tech-style!

Every cloud has a silver lining.

The pandemic like elsewhere has also inspired new trends in the fashion industry. The latest trends focus more on luxury at home as there aren't social occasions to dress up for. A "waist-up" focus has been noticed at both Milan and London Fashion Weeks, with detailed necklines and relaxed trousers, clothes that suit video calls and remote working. The designs are said to project contemporary human relationship with technology.

As per a **CB Insights report**, at **\$2.2T**, the fashion sector is also one of the largest industries in the global economy and today, fashion technology is growing at a faster pace than ever. More than ever before, fashion brands of all sizes and specialties are using technology to understand customers and design fashion for catering to their specific needs. There's no doubt that spotting and designing fashion trends are much easier and cost effective with the usage of technology.

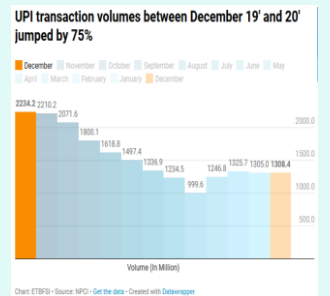
The use of AI alongside ML, Deep Learning, NLP, Visual Recognition and Data Analytics can be used to reduce errors in trend predictions and forecast trends more accurately which would reduce the amount of clothing produced.

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UPI transactions by value jump 105% yearly as COVID-19 surges usage

United Payment Interface (UPI) transactions by value increased by a whopping 105% between December 2019 and 2020, revealed transaction data from the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI).



Source— The Economic Times

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6th January 2021

In 2017, an **Amazon** team in San Francisco created an unnamed AI “fashion designer”. They developed an algorithm that analyses images and duplicates the style, making new items in similar styles. **Google** has already tested the waters of user-driven AI fashion design with **Project Muze**, an experiment it deployed in partnership with Germany-based fashion platform **Zalando**.

The collaborative project of IBM and the Fashion Institute of Technology known as “**Reimagine Retail**” used **IBM AI tools** to indicate real-time fashion industry trends, themes in trending shapes, colors and styles.

The application of technology such as **Microsoft’s Azure programme** and **spatial anchors** in fashion’s design processes is still in its early stages, but the technology is effective in enabling designers to rethink their design process, move past creative constraints and achieve more sustainable workflows and practices.

Historically fashion trend forecasting solely relied on the past dynamics to predict its future. New methodologies like Heuritech predict future trends by applying image recognition technology to social media pictures for accessing shapes, prints, colors and attributes to fabrics.

Similarly, with the help of AI and Computer Vision, **Stylumia** draws information from images, user behavior data, textual descriptions from social media and other data sources to aid fashion professionals around the world in making informed decisions about the direction of their brand.

We believe that more R&D is needed before brands rely on tech-only designers. But emerging technologies are already helping brands create and iterate their designs more efficiently.

Today’s News

RBI announces guidelines for Payments Infrastructure Development Fund

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on Tuesday announced operational guidelines for the Payments Infrastructure Development Fund (PIDF) scheme. The RBI said that it has constituted an advisory council under the chairmanship of B.P. Kanungo, a deputy governor, to manage the fund. The PIDF will be operational for three years from 1 January 2021, and may be extended for two more years based on progress. The primary focus of the fund will be to create payments acceptance infrastructure in tier-3 to tier-6 cities, with a special focus on the northeastern states.

The main target audience of this scheme are the merchants providing essential services, such as transport and hospitality, government payments, fuel pumps, public distribution system (PDS) shops, healthcare facilities, and kiranas, especially those who do not have a payment acceptance device. Central Bank said in a statement, “As the cost structure of acceptance devices vary, subsidy amounts shall accordingly differ by the type of payment acceptance device deployed. A subsidy of 30% to 50% of cost of physical PoS and 50% to 75% subsidy for digital PoS shall be offered”. Multiple payments acceptance devices and infrastructure supporting card payments are covered under this scheme.

Source – *The Economic Times*

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RBI rolls out stricter norms for high-value transactions

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has decided to roll out the Legal Entity Identifier (LEI) system from April 1 for transactions of Rs 50 crore and above undertaken by entities (non-individuals) through the central bank-run Centralised Payment Systems.

LEI is a 20-digit number used to uniquely identify parties to financial transactions across the world. It was conceived as a way of improving the quality and accuracy of financial data systems for better risk management post the 2008 financial crisis.

Source – *New Indian Express*

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Made in India brand boAt raises \$100M from Warburg Pincus, plans to expand its product line

boAt, founded in 2016 by Aman Gupta and Sameer Mehta, has secured \$100 million in PE funding from Warburg Pincus. Speaking to YourStory, the founders said that this deal is significant in the D2C industry as it is one of the largest fundraises, which is testimony to the growth of the industry in India.

"This raise will allow the company to focus on R&D, make in India, and create an ecosystem by working with local manufacturers. We will also ramp up our global supply chain by working with global manufacturers in the South East Asian region," said Aman.

Source – *Your Story*

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Sources of funds for loan apps under the regulatory lens

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has begun looking into the sources of funds for app-based instant loan companies accused of harassing vulnerable borrowers, said a person aware of the matter. Strong arm tactics to recover dues, including naming borrowers, have led to at least two suicides, according to media reports.

According to this person, RBI is likely to launch an investigation into whether some banks allowed funds to flow into these apps without conducting mandatory due diligence. The RBI scrutiny follows a probe by the Enforcement Directorate, which has filed a money laundering case on the basis of first information reports registered by police against instant loan apps connected to overseas jurisdictions.

Source – Hindustan Times

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INKA Entworks to support Indian data localization for fintech companies

INKA Entworks will support Indian data localization compliance requirements for fintech companies by hosting its mobile app security solution AppSealing in Amazon Web Services (AWS) Asia Pacific (Mumbai) Region. Following the European Union's General Data Protection Regulation, governments across the world have mandated, or are evaluating regulation to exercise control over how data is stored within countries and mirrored across regions.

By hosting AppSealing in AWS's Mumbai infrastructure region, INKA Entworks now offers its global customers, operating in India, a layer of additional risk compliance and high security protection for its application.

Source – APN News

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Digital Transactions Soar Over the Holidays as MoneyGram Reports Record Online Growth

MoneyGram International, a global leader in cross-border P2P payments and money transfers, today announced record online transactions during the holiday season. For December, MoneyGram Online (MGO) delivered 142% year-over-year cross-border transaction growth and reported the largest number of transactions ever in a given month.

Driven by strong demand for the app and its real-time capabilities to send directly to bank accounts and mobile wallets, every country with MGO capabilities delivered a record number of transactions in the month.

Source – P R Newswire

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How this fintech lending startup used tech to overcome the serious business challenges of COVID-19

The COVID-19 pandemic and the resultant lockdown has had a deep impact on vulnerable sections of society like self-employed businesspersons and lower-wage employees due to the unavailability of financial credit to tide over the crisis.

This was also a very crucial time for SmartCoin – the Bengaluru-headquartered fintech startup that provides micro-loans through its app for sums as low as Rs 1,000, going up to Rs 50,000. Its business came to standstill when the lockdown was announced in the month of March 2020.

Source – Your Story

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Government launches Toycathon to make India global toy manufacturing hub

The government on Tuesday launched 'Toycathon', a hackathon for students, teachers, experts, and startups to crowdsource ideas for developing innovative toys and games based on Indian culture and ethos.

India imports most of its toys and the government is working towards promoting the indigenous toy industry for making the country self-reliant in the sector, Minister for Women and Child Development and Textiles Smriti Irani said at a press conference.

Source – Your Story

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VrLocal emerging as one of the fastest growing startups in India

The Covid-19 pandemic has made it very important for people to keep their homes and offices clean and sanitized. Disinfection, sanitation, and cleaning have entered our daily lexicon. The current focus being hygiene, corporates and business organizations are in need of services like cleaning and maintenance.

The demand for these services has increased in the past few months. With the beginning of the work-from-office pattern, organizations have to maintain hygiene and cleanliness for the safety of their employees.

Source – Live Mint

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