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Today's View

Stadium-Tech

In recent years, stadium-going experience is being transformed due to introduction of innovative technology tools, right from drone delivery and real-time crowd sentiment analysis to live event holograms.

New-age start-ups are developing novel stadium-tech solutions ranging from blockchain and computer vision for ticketing and security, payments using biometric identifiers to AI for analysing crowd emotions. Global smart stadium market size was around US$ 5 Billion in 2018 and is expected to reach US$ 13 Billion by 2023, as per **MarketsAndMarkets**.

For instance, few start-ups have developed behaviour analytics solutions to track and analyse stadium attendee behaviour. In this reference, **PlaceIQ** offers a location-based audience platform which provides consumer analytics and media targeting.
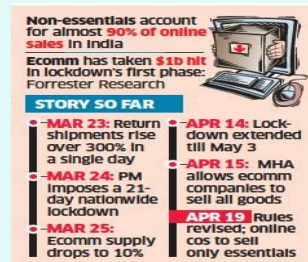
It has also developed a foot traffic measurement technology, which provides access to granular data about the fans' entire stadium experience. Similarly, Virginia-based **Gravy Analytics** has been working on advancing consumer behaviour analytics for large audiences. Its AdmitOne location data processing platform uses proprietary algorithms and machine learning to filter and categorize location signals, verify place and event attendances and determine consumer intent.

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Non-essentials removed from e-commerce cart

The Centre on Sunday reversed an earlier order that allowed sale of non-essential goods on online marketplaces in a move seen as a major blow to the Indian ecommerce industry, which had begun preparing to dispatch orders following the new rules amid the nationwide lockdown.

Non-essentials account for almost 90% of online sales in India
Ecomm has taken $1b hit in lockdown's first phase: Forrester Research

STORY SO FAR

- **MAR 23:** Return shipments rise over 300% in a single day
- **APR 14:** Lock-down extended till May 3
- **MAR 24:** PM imposes a 21-day nationwide lockdown
- **APR 15:** MHA allows ecomm companies to sell all goods
- **MAR 25:** Ecomm supply drops to 10%
- **APR 19:** Rules revised; online cos to sell only essentials

Source–The Economic Times

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On the other hand, some organisations track attendees' emotions in real time to understand how much they enjoyed an event. **SightCorp** has developed face analysis, mood measurement and audience analytics for stadiums. Another startup **CrowdOptic** monitors and tracks what crowds look at, capture the images and share the same during live events.

Some other firms are leveraging live event holograms to be digitally rendered in stadiums as holographic projections. One such start-up **8i**, uses HD video from multiple cameras to create human holograms for augmented, mixed and virtual reality.

Similarly, **Veo** offers automatic recording technology so that any soccer club, regardless of its size, can record, edit and live stream its matches. Its AI-powered detectors independently track the ball and the players.

Apart from these innovations, stadium-tech is being further improved via real-time player insights, seamless payments, blockchain-based ticketing etc. More on this in our next article!

Today's News

ICICI launches voice banking on Amazon Alexa and Google Assistant

ICICI Bank today announced that it has integrated its AI-powered multi-channel chatbot iPal, with voice assistant apps – Amazon Alexa and Google Assistant. The integration will enable the bank's retail customers to undertake an array of banking services with a voice command. The facility offers customers an alternative way to connect with the bank from home, at a time when they are advised to stay indoors in the wake of the nationwide lockdown in India due to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

The launch of the voice banking facility comes close on the heels of new digital initiatives undertaken by the bank such as the chat based banking services on WhatsApp and 'ICICIStack', a set of digital banking and APIs (Application Programme Interface), to ensure uninterrupted banking experience to retail and business customers.

Source – IBS Intelligence   READ MORE

After RentPay, Cred announces launch of instant credit line Cred Stash

Kunal Shah's fintech startup Cred on Monday announced the launch of Stash, a product that provides an instant credit line to the platform's consumers. This follows the launch of RentPay, which allows members to pay monthly rent payments on credit.

Stash is being piloted with IDFC First Bank and is designed to be a completely digital way to get credit in India. According to a press note, Cred aims to provide a seamless way of credit to the consumer without the tedious application and verification processes typically associated with loans and at an interest rate at one-third of typical credit card interest charges. The team adds that CRED's member base have credit scores over 750.

Source – YourStory   READ MORE

Fintech firms eye new strategies

As the extended lockdown continues to impact commerce, payments firms are looking at different strategies to make up for the decline in volumes. For instance, PhonePe and Paytm have started changing the user interface for their mobile apps, to help assist in payments and delivery of essential services and items.

"We have a unique product called "Stores" on our app, where we show all merchants in the vicinity of the customer as per their current location.

Source – LiveMint

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Paytm, Zomato, BigBasket, others could run into India's great FDI wall

India's top startup unicorns — including Paytm, Zomato, BigBasket and Dream11— that count Chinese investors among their largest backers are likely to face delays in raising capital after the government said all foreign direct investments from the world's second-largest economy would be subject to its approval first.

A slew of growth and early-stage companies, too, which were in talks with Chinese investors for new investment rounds, will likely face difficulties, while follow-on rounds from existing backers may become increasingly complex to execute, according to investors, lawyers and startup founders.

Source – The Economic Times

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Itilite Technologies raises $13 million led by Greenoaks Capital, Vy Capital

Itilite Technologies, which offers SaaS-based integrated travel desk solution for corporates, said it has raised $13 million in its Series B round led by Greenoaks Capital and Vy Capital. Matrix Partners India along with other existing investors also participated in the funding round.

Founded in 2017 by IIT-Delhi and IIM-Ahmedabad alumnus Mayank Kukreja, and IIT-Kharagpur and IIM-Lucknow graduate Anish Khadiya, the business travel startup said it will utilize the funds for international expansion and product innovation. "Around the world, digital transformation of business travel is well underway, and we are well positioned to help them to modernize their processes using technology," said Mayank Kukreja, Chief Executive Officer at Itilite Technologies. Alibaba Cloud Intelligence president Jeff Zhang said in the statement that the COVID-19 pandemic "has posed additional stress on the overall economy across sectors" and the company hoped the investment would help businesses "speed up the recovery process".

Source – The Economic Times　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　READ MORE

Alibaba to invest $28 billion in cloud services after coronavirus boosted demand

Alibaba Group said it will invest 200 billion yuan ($28 billion) in its cloud infrastructure over three years - a plan that follows a boom in demand for business software as the coronavirus outbreak peaked in China. The company said in a statement it will spend the funds on semiconductor and operating system development as well as building out its data centre infrastructure.

While most of China's white collar employees were working from home throughout February, the country's dominant cloud player saw usage surge for its software, most notably DingTalk, a workplace chat app used by both businesses and schools. At one point, users complained of lags on the app due to the high volume of activity. The company acknowledged the issues on Weibo, the Chinese social networking site.

Source – The Economic Times　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　READ MORE

This startup by CERN scientist and his brother is building affordable supercomputers

Close to 50 years ago, we landed on the moon with a computing power much lower than what today's average smartphone can do. This very fact got Saurabh Vij and his brother Gaurav Vij to think that as we move into the future, smart devices will become more powerful, and can help solve complex computational problems.

Saurabh recalls thinking: "What if your smartphone could make money for you by solving complex computational tasks for scientists, engineers, designers, and organisations like NASA." This led them to start Q Blocks, a computing company that builds affordable supercomputers, in 2019. The startup is registered out of Ontario, Canada. Currently, supercomputers are only available to scientists, governments, and a few big corporations. "At Q Blocks, our vision is to connect and cluster together billions of smart devices like smartphones, X boxes, and gaming stations to provide affordable distributed supercomputers to those who can't access them right now," says Saurabh.

Source – YourStory　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　READ MORE

How taxi rental platform Instacar is navigating the coronavirus roadblock

Ishan Vyas, Anurag Gupta, and Priyanshi Choubey in 2016 started Instacar, a marketplace for outstation taxi rentals, in Indore. The idea was simple: solving the problem of renting cars for outstation trips.

The pre-booked chauffeur-driven taxi service aims to do away with a persistent problem – India's unprofessional, unorganised, and unsafe cab services. The co-founders were keen to offer highly professional chauffeurs with experience and etiquette, and premium cars.

Source – YourStory

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PoS startups face slow demand due to supply chain disruptions

Digital payment startups in the point-of-sales (PoS) space, such as Ezetap, Mswipe Technologies, Innoviti Payments and Mosambee, have seen demand slow sharply as supply chain disruptions during the ongoing lockdown make delivery of existing orders and fresh sales difficult.

Most customers are either closed for business, operate with a limited workforce or have put orders on hold. Some are experiencing disruptions in procuring devices from China and other countries.

Source – The Economic Times

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