



NEWS HIGHLIGHTS

Govt. to incentivize online payments to push digital transactions

Flipkart to launch Billion, its own smartphone

Adani Wilmar to enter ecommerce space, onboards Infibeam to develop B2C ecommerce platform

Google, Just Dial in deal talks

Kissht raises \$10 million in funding from Fosun RZ Capital, others

Today's View

Smart Farm

Agriculture, a source of food and related security of the economy, has been the country's backbone for economic growth and sustainability. With the emergence of disruptive technologies in various domains, including farming, agriculture as an industry has not entirely remained outmoded either. Even other sectors or propellers of growth, the likes of the corporate sector, are directly or indirectly are dependent on agriculture. Hence, it is no surprise that farming has embarked on the path of technological transformation in order to fulfill the diverse and evolving needs of a growing population.

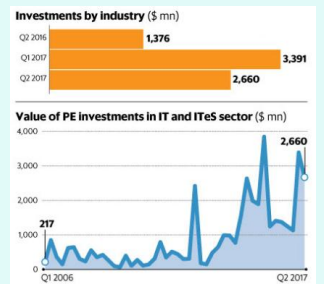
Emerging technologies, such as artificial intelligence, are making their way into various areas of farming. One such prominent area is crop health which directly impacts both, qualitative and quantitative, aspects of farm produce and subsequently the farmers' gain. The **Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)** indicates that pests and diseases are responsible for about 25% of the global crop losses. These diseases typically reduce plant yield by 10% every year even in developed settings, often exceeding 20% in relatively less developed settings.

Therefore, tools and measures monitoring crop health become indispensable. Various start-ups are offering farmers modern diagnostic tools and systems based on sophisticated mechanisms tracking all possible parameters that may influence the final product.

INTERESTING NEWS

Private equity investments in IT and ITeS sector

The IT and ITeS sector saw PE investments of around \$2.7 bn across 78 deals. There was a 93% increase in deal value compared to a year ago.



Among sub-sectors, mobile value-added services led investments, attracting around \$1.5 billion. Business process outsourcing services and online services were next.

Source – Livemint

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Date – 10th Nov 17

As an instance, Switzerland based **Gamaya** developed hyper-spectral imaging (HSI) to enable customers to diagnose crop diseases and determine the required amount of protection chemicals required for their crops. On the other hand, Tel Aviv-based **Prospera** uses computer vision and artificial intelligence to help farmers analyze data gathered from their fields for detecting pests and diseases.

Even nodal agencies are collaborating with agritech as part of their effort to transform outdated farming practices. German-based AgriTech startup **Peat** has developed an app **Plantix** in collaboration with its knowledge and extension partner **ICRISAT** (International Crop Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics). The app allows users to upload photos of sick plants and receive diagnostic results and causes behind the illness. Even financial institutions such as **Bank of Baroda** have collaborated with agritech start-ups like **RML Agtech**. It has developed a mobile app which is used by the farmer to recognize and understand crop diseases. The platform uses proprietary algorithms for determination of nutrition schedules, artificial intelligence for image processing, disease identification, and determining solutions.

With deep penetration of smart devices and internet accessibility even at village level through government initiatives like '**Bharatnet**', the previously far-fetched dream of a smart farm is a possible reality now. While sprawling agri start-ups are disrupting the space at an astonishing pace, now is the time for various agencies to step in, encourage, educate, transform, and get results.

Today's News

Govt. to incentivize online payments to push digital transactions

The government will push digital payments as they appear to have lost momentum after the promotion of cashless transactions during demonetization. The government plans to incentivize apps such as BHIM and the Bharat Bill Payment System and make digital payments easier.

The incentives could include cashbacks and reward points for BHIM users. The government is looking to promote BHIM while ensuring compliance.

Source – *Hindustan Times*

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Adding to the cart: Flipkart to launch Billion, its own smartphone

Flipkart is launching its own smartphone. The company put out a 'teaser' of the device on its website, showing features such as dual cameras, fast charging and unlimited cloud storage.

The phone will be launched under the Billion brand and is named Capture+. Flipkart also boasted a service network that spans 130 cities. Flipkart is largely targeting the mid-range smartphone market.

Source – *Business Standard*

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How Axis Bank is shaping its digital journey

Axis Bank is now implementing a series of measures that include self-service kiosks, Aadhaar-based customer services, and automation—all aimed at increasing the momentum of its digital transformation journey.

Source – *Livemint*

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Amazon revs up its innovation quotient

Amazon.in is investing heavily in tech-led solutions that address India-specific issues in the area of payments, mobile, delivery and discovery.

The e-tailer's local product team, tech team and others identify the opportunities to innovate and start the process of defining the innovative idea.

Source – *BusinessLine*

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Alibaba's retail experiment this Singles' Day

Alibaba is prepping for Singles' Day — an annual online shopping fiesta dwarfing Black Friday and Cyber Monday that could generate a record \$24 billion in sales. This year comes with a twist: The e-commerce titan has enlisted 10% of China's convenience stores, about 600,000 outlets, to hawk goods and get billions of parcels shipped to customers nationwide.

Source – *Business Standard*

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This News Letter has been prepared with the assistance of Sadhika Agarwal and Pankaj Tadas

Adani Wilmar To Enter Ecommerce Space, Onboards Infibeam To Develop B2C Ecommerce Platform

Infibeam Incorporation has announced that it will be developing 'Fortune Online', an exclusive B2C ecommerce platform for Adani Wilmar. The initiative will enable the customers to select and purchase Fortune brand products online, by using the home delivery application.

Both the firms, "will develop, integrate, implement and maintain an online ecommerce and mobile platform with integrated logistics framework for on-demand customer purchase of Adani Wilmar products."

Source – Inc42

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Give doorstep banking to seniors: RBI

The RBI has told banks to provide specialized service to senior citizens and differently abled persons through dedicated counters and doorstep banking. These instructions have to be implemented by December 31, 2017.

RBI said that it has received complaints from this group of persons about being discouraged from availing banking facilities in branches. Setting up dedicated counters or preferential counters has been advised.

Source – Times of India

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Google, Just Dial in deal talks

Internet giant Google is in talks with service engine Just Dial to acquire its business. "Google has been talking to Just Dial for an acquisition for some time. Both the companies entered into exclusive talks about two months ago," said an investment banker familiar with the discussions.

"It may take some more time before the discussions are finalized," he added. Google has expanded its offers in India to include business listings with Google Maps, too.

Source – Business Standard

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Kisht raises \$10 million in funding from Fosun RZ Capital, others

Digital lending platform Kisht has raised \$10 million in a funding round led by Fosun RZ Capital, with participation from Prophet Capital, Beijing and existing investors Ventureast and Endiya Partners.

Kisht is a consumer credit start-up that allows consumers to pay for their online orders in monthly instalments, without the need for a credit card. The company will use the funding to expand its reach among more offline and online merchants, enhance its data science capabilities and venture into additional product categories.

Source – Livemint

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Times Internet ties up with Truecaller

Times Internet has partnered with Truecaller to make sign-ups and phone number verifications easy for users. The objective is to increase user convenience by providing a homogeneous sign-up and login interface across all TIL web and mobile properties.

Times Internet, with its 37+ digital properties, already offers unified logins (SSO) and loyalty. This new tie-up will further smoothen the sign-up and authentication processes for TIL's customers.

Source – Times of India

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Wipro Consumer Care to make investment in HUMPL

The consumer products division of Wipro has agreed to buy 20% stake in online consumer products firm Happily Unmarried Marketing for Rs 50 crore. Wipro confirmed the transaction. "...this investment is in keeping with the company's strategy of leveraging emerging online opportunities brought about by rapid digitalization," the firm said.

The development is in line with a global trend of large consumer companies buying into niche product startups and online distribution platforms at a time when new-age customers increasingly shop on online platforms, including social networks.

Source – The Economic Times

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