



NEWS HIGHLIGHTS

Food delivery firms will fight for a seat at the table

UIDAI's conditional nod to Airtel for telecom eKYC till Jan 10

HDFC to sell HDFC Developers, HDFC Realty to Quikr for Rs 357 cr

Didi gets over \$4b in fresh funding

Mynta hopes to turn EBITDA positive in 3 months

Today's View

Sensory Reality

In our previous write-up ([here](#)), we wrote about how brands are deploying “Sensory Branding” techniques to appeal to customers’ senses. To top it, Brands are now leapfrogging to inspire, engage and impact their customers by leveraging immersive Virtual Reality (VR) experiences.

Virtual Reality, until a couple of years back, looked like a far-fetched dream. But with the emergence of innovative, yet affordable VR platforms available today, Brands are lapping up VR to move to the next level in customer experience.

Take for instance how **Coca Cola**, last Christmas, created a virtual reality sleigh ride experience ([Video here](#)). Using **Oculus Rift**, thousands of people from around Poland were captivated by the virtual world, dreamily becoming Santa Claus for a day! This roller coaster ride made the dreamers, go flying over the country and into different villages, just like Santa, adding that extra element to Christmas festivities and exuberance.

Lowe, a chain of retail home improvement and appliance stores in the United States, recently released the **Holoroom**, a virtual reality Do-It-Yourself workroom for its customers. To give a sneak peek, the Holoroom virtually teaches customers how to complete a common home improvement activity like tiling a bathroom. This not only educates customers, but also lends a sense of comfort while purchasing the tools on display (hopefully from Lowe’s) and ultimately being able to tackle the project on their own.

The virtual reality experience has thriven and advanced much beyond the headset. Sensory Reality, emerging as a sister category to virtual reality and augmented reality,

INTERESTING NEWS

AI Can Add \$957b to Economy

AI can add \$957bn into the Indian economy by changing the nature of work and improving outcomes for Indian businesses and the society in general, Accenture report says.



India is third in the no. of startups active in this space - the number of such entities has grown 86% over the last 5 years. But in terms of funding, India is lagging behind the US and China.

Source – *The Economic Times*

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Date – 22nd Dec 17

is a mixed and much more wholesome experience. Instead of merely being an audio-visual experience, it impacts all your senses at the same time.

Sensiks, a company developing Sensory Reality pods and platforms is redefining the idea of Reality - a whole new dimension. Their 'Sensory Reality Pods' are capable of synchronizing sound, optics, smell, temperature, air flow, taste and vibration to create a fully customizable experience. These are equipped with Biometric sensors that measure Heart Rate Variability (HRV), skin conduction and respiration in the SRP, all feeding into the experience. Through Artificial Intelligence, the pod learns to know its user and can provide relevant content suggestions based on the actual mood of a person with all the collected data. The more intense the interaction, the better are the results!

Geometry, a brand activation agency has become the first in Britain to install the Sensiks Sensory Reality Pod, with the idea of helping brands develop a more meaningful experience and deeper connections with customers. Geometry is latching onto the growing consumer desire for 'experiences' as opposed to products - a trend recently quantified by a report by Harris Group which found that 57% of consumers in the U.K. favour experiences, a figure that swells to 78% among millennials.

We feel that Sensory Reality would serve many additional utilities instead of just providing an immersive brand experience. From networked sensory prosthetics for the physically challenged to eye-tracking for training kids with autism - the extent of real world use cases goes beyond imagination.

Today's News

Food delivery firms will fight for a seat at the table

India's food-tech space is all set to make a comeback next year, drawing the curtains on a year that has seen consolidations, new entrants and a massive clean-up exercise by incumbents as they jostle for the top spot in the delivery market.

With Ola's entry into the high frequency market, the swords are now drawn in what has become a 5-way battle between top guns including Swiggy and Zomato along with Ola-Foodpanda, UberEats and Google Areo, all looking to

claim the top spot. The rivalry between food aggregators has escalated, not just with discounting to woo customers, but also commission cuts.

Source – *The Economic Times*

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This News Letter has been prepared with the assistance of Sadhika Agarwal and Aparna Anand

Start-ups mull filing petition against Angel Tax

The Indian start-up ecosystem, led by Mohandas Pai, is likely to seek the PM's intervention against the I-T Department's way of questioning start-ups on issues relating to fundraising.

"I am getting a lot of phone calls from various start-ups as well as investors, and we might file a formal petition. I think social media is the best way to reach out to the government for now" he said.

Source – *BusinessLine*

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Ola launches 'Lite' version to serve tier II, III markets

Ola launched a 'Lite' version of its app that works on lowest Internet connectivity and will target consumers in tier II and III cities. It consumes less than 1 MB and loads within 3 seconds without compromising on the booking experience. Other Internet companies offering similar apps include Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn.

Source – *Moneycontrol*

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Toyota to set up mobility service company

Toyota Motor Corp. announced its intent to merge its subsidiary, Toyota Fleet Leasing Co. and Toyota Tokyo Rental & Leasing Co. to strengthen the existing corporate automobile leasing and rental car businesses and intends to plan and provide new mobility services.

Source – *BusinessLine*

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UIDAI's conditional nod to Airtel for telecom eKYC till Jan 10

The government has temporarily allowed Airtel to use the eKYC feature of Aadhaar after the telecom service provider has repaid Rs. 138 cr of subsidy payments back in the original bank accounts of 55.6 lakh customers. The UIDAI has conditionally allowed Airtel to conduct eKYC upto Jan 10, 2018 and is awaiting the audit reports from the RBI and the department of telecom which are expected by January 10, 2018. Airtel Payment Bank however has not been allowed to use eKYC license key until further notice.

Source – *The Economic Times*

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HDFC to sell HDFC Developers, HDFC Realty to Quikr for Rs.357 cr

Quikr has acquired HDFC Developers Ltd. and HDFC Realty Ltd. in a deal valued at Rs 357 crore, looking to earn higher margins by accessing premium realty buyers and also expanding offline. In a filing with the BSE, HDFC said that it had approved the 100% sale of HDFC Developers and HDFC Realty to Quikr for Rs 102cr and Rs 255cr respectively. It added that the sale of the two units would be completed prior to the close of the current financial year.

For Quikr, the deal marks its fifth acquisition in the real estate space, with Realtycompass, Indian Realty Exchange, Commonfloor and Grabhouse being the previous buys. The company will also gain access to the offline brokerage market with HDFC Realty, which it says has a network of 7,000 brokers and a 300 member in-house team.

Source – *Business Standard*

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Didi gets over \$4b in fresh funding

Didi Chuxing announced it has raised more than \$4 billion in fresh funding, boosting its ammunition to expand overseas and dealing a blow to its biggest rival, Uber. The total funding of Didi, including its last round of funding in April with more than \$5.5 billion, will exceed \$9.5 billion this year alone, and around \$20 billion in total.

The company will also surpass its original value of more than \$50 billion, strengthening its position as one of world's most valuable startups. Didi said the latest fundraising will be used to support artificial intelligence capacity-building, international expansion and new business initiatives, including the development of new energy vehicle service networks. Investors in the new funding include Japanese tech giant SoftBank Corp and Mubadala Capital, an Abu Dhabi state fund.

Source – *China Daily*

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Bengaluru's Sling Media to play important role in DISH Network's 5G tech rollout in the US

Sling Media's Bengaluru development centre will play an important role in parent company DISH Network's 5G product rollout strategy in the U.S. "Bengaluru has been a core development centre for us in terms of products. As we are starting to invest in our future in terms of IoT communication, we think Bengaluru will play a big role in how we bring the products together," said Vivek Khemka, CTO, DISH Network.

DISH Network has spent over \$20 bn in acquiring wireless spectrum assets in the U.S. in the past few years and plans to build a 5G-capable narrowband IoT network to connect various types of sensors like agricultural sensors, and sensors present in smart cars and smart cities among others.

Source – *The Economic Times*

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Mahindra Group invests in Finland startup Medixine

The Mahindra Group announced an investment of EUR 200k in a Finnish start-up which won a competition run by the Indian conglomerate in search for the next big idea.

Medixine, which has a suite of cloud software programs that provide e-services to patients and help them become active players in their own care instead of being passive targets, won the Mahindra Group's 'Avatar Hunt'.

Source – *The Economic Times*

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