

Similarly, Apple has built a fleet of roughly 70 self-driving test vehicles in California, and partnered with Volkswagen to turn some VW vans into self-driving shuttles for Apple employees. Apple has also developed in-vehicle integration technology CarPlay, which is similar to Google's Android Auto, enabling drivers and passengers to access messages, maps and music, in addition to third-party apps such as Spotify.

Amazon is also venturing into this space considering the fact that self-driving vehicles can reduce the company's long-haul shipping expenses by as much as 50%, according to recent estimates. The company has also partnered with automakers such as **Audi, BMW, Ford** and **Toyota** to enable Alexa in the vehicle.

Facebook, though relatively inactive in this space, has started integrating vehicle sales into Facebook Marketplace. A number of automakers are planning to use Microsoft's VR offering Oculus at the dealership to allow buyers to test and customize different car features at the lot.

On the other hand, **Microsoft** has been capitalizing on the auto industry's lack of expertise in frontier technology such as cloud computing and AR. It has launched its Azure-based Connected Vehicle Platform to enable predictive maintenance, in-car productivity, advanced navigation, customer data collection and driver assistance capabilities.

The era of autonomous logistics has potential to disrupt major industries: not only auto, but also many other elements of mobility services including transportation, insurance, urban planning, smart cities, etc. With the entry of Bigtechs, the transition has become accelerated. It's time for traditional players to step-up and get Auto-nomous.

Today's News

Bank of Baroda completes integration of 3898 branches of erstwhile Dena Bank & Vijaya Bank

Public lender, Bank of Baroda has completed its integration of 3898 branches of Dena Bank and Vijaya Bank with itself. The bank said that the bank has completed the integration of 1770 erstwhile Dena Bank branches in December 2020 and had previously completed the integration of 2128 branches of Vijaya Bank in September 2020. The bank said, "With this, the integration of erstwhile banks with Bank of Baroda stands completed much before committed timeline."

Over more than 5 crore customers were migrated, all ATMs, POS machines and credit cards have been migrated successfully. After the successful integration, Bank of Baroda has a total 8248 domestic branches, 10318 ATMs across India. All customers can access Bank of Baroda digital channels like Baroda Connect, M-connect Plus.

Source – *The Economic Times*

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Amazon India adds 1.5 lakh sellers in 2020

Ecommerce major Amazon India on Sunday said 1.5 lakh new sellers joined its platform this year, and over 70,000 Indian exporters in its global selling programme have crossed \$2 billion in cumulative exports.

Amazon India, in its SMB Impact Report 2020, noted that it works with more than 10 lakh small and mid-size business (SMBs) including sellers, delivery and logistics partners, neighbourhood stores, enterprises, developers, content creators, and authors in the country.

Source – *Your Story*

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Nucleus Software launches new offering to help lenders capitalize on the 'Buy Now, Pay Later' opportunity

Nucleus Software, the leading provider of lending and transaction banking solutions to the global financial services industry, today announced the launch of FinnOne Neo 5.5, the latest version of its award winning digital lending platform.

The new version has been designed specifically to help lenders rapidly expand business operations and generate new digital revenue streams by targeting new customer segments. It will also enhance their digital portfolio rapidly and deliver end-to-end contactless banking.

Source – *India Infoline*

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Pine Labs raises almost \$100 mn from Lone Pine Capital; valuation jumps to \$2 bn

Home-grown payments solution provider Pine Labs, on Monday, announced that it has raised close to \$100 million from Lone Pine Capital as part of secondary and primary share sale. This investment round has taken the company's valuation from \$1.6 billion to \$2 billion within a year.

The Noida-based startup was the first to reach a \$1 billion in valuation in 2020, marking its entry into India's unicorn club in January when it raised strategic investment from card network behemoth Mastercard.

Source – Live Mint

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Central bankers comb for crypto clues as Bahamas launches 'Sand Dollar'

It didn't seem like a revolution. A botanical green smoothie and a snapper fish burger, it was. In a Bahamas health-food cafe. But future generations might look back at this as a pivotal moment - the first national launch of a technology that could upend commercial banking and even shake the U.S. dollar's status as the world's de facto currency.

The refreshments were among the first items bought using the Sand Dollar, a digital currency issued by the Bahamian central bank for use across the country via an app. "It's instant - I get a message, and it's received," said Dawn Sands, owner of NRG, the cafe in the capital Nassau, showing Reuters via video how sales work. "Once people get comfortable and educated, I think it's going to be big."

Source – The Economic Times

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PayU launches tokenized payments in collaboration with Google Pay

Online payments provider PayU has in collaboration with Google Pay introduced tokenized payments for merchants. PayU said the feature would allow the payment providers' 4.5 lakh merchants to use debit cards, credit cards or Google Pay UPI to make recurring payments without sharing card details.

PayU said the feature would allow merchants "to offer greater convenience, speed and payment mobility to their consumers," whilst adding "Card information is tokenised, and the digital token is linked to the phone, allowing Google Pay users to make repeat payments seamlessly and securely."

Source – The Economic Times

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With 32 deals in its maiden year, 9Unicorns is now India's top accelerator fund

Even as Airbnb and DoorDash went for massive IPOs last week, their earliest investor YCombinator (YC), came out as a big winner. On IPO, the valuations for Airbnb and DoorDash soared to \$100 billion and \$71 billion, respectively, indicating stellar returns to YCombinator from these early investments.

The startup investment revolution started by YC in 2005 has spread to other major economies, including India, which has also seen the birth of many accelerators and incubators over the last few years.

Source – Your Story

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PayNearby: Taking commerce hyperlocal

Mumbai-based PayNearby, co-founded by Anand Kumar Bajaj, Subhash Kumar, Yashwant Lodha and Rajesh Jha, aims to take integrated commerce hyperlocal, via kirana stores, given that these are the closest point of commerce in any given Indian locality, especially in rural India.

At the moment, the PayNearby app has 22 services listed on the app. During the lockdown, the usage of the platform went up, says Anand Kumar Bajaj.

Source – Financial Express

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A year of Made in India apps, and a promising future for Indian startups

The year 2020 was the year of Made in India apps. Following the ban of hundreds of Chinese mobile apps by the Indian government, many local app developers joined the 'Aatmanirbhar Bharat' bandwagon to create the Indian alternatives of these banned apps. From online learning and casual gaming to podcasting and stock trading to mental health assistants and job search — YourStory's weekly App Friday column held a mirror to all the key trends of 2020.

According to Pankaj Makkar, Managing Director of Bertelsmann India Investments, as the curtains are drawn over the year, one can predict a more stable future for the Indian startup ecosystem.

Source – Your Story

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