

## Indian IT services companies- The communication drivers

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By Bobby M Varghese, CSS Corp, September 02, 2011

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It has been rightly quoted “The Internet is the most important single development in the history of human communication.” The web indeed has shaped the way we interact, we talk and largely the way we conduct ourselves. With the web becoming an integral part of our communication sphere, the network has become our ecosystem and we consider it to be a part of nature now. And what did we Indians make out of this technology revolution? We became India Calling. India took to the BPO services rapidly and within less than 5 years this became an industry which contributed roughly to about 1 percent of India’s GDP (as recorded in 2008). The development of the web and telecommunications gave us a chance to be a serious player in Customer support Outsourcing. India was considered to be ‘the’ destination for outsourcing, but many a services companies have a different story to narrate.

The anti-outsourcing law, near shoring by European companies and stiff competition from many other countries gave us opportunities to explore and diversify into other services lines. CRM to globalization, Virtualization to Cloud, the IT industry has evolved drastically and is the fastest growing industry in India. The last five years saw a sea of change in the way IT services companies operate and deliver. Companies expanded their services portfolio, extended their services across verticals and mergers & acquisitions took place to bring in creative and smarter solutions. From SaaS, Paas and IaaS, we have arrived at a stage where we are talking about not just collaboration of services but collaboration of platforms itself. The timely adoption and development of newer services has given us an edge over competition and we were inspired to innovate and collaborate. These external factors have forced us to think beyond labour and cost arbitrage, and shift focus to knowledge arbitrage. This we can call the second gen outsourcing.

Nobody had imagined that IT Services Companies will work on developing their own IP in a manner, that today there are dedicated R&D wings in most IT services companies, and a fair percentage of revenue goes into research and development on services. Also one cannot ignore that fact that many developing nations do not have the in-depth knowledge and know-how of applied services. Creating awareness was a mandate, there was a need for vendors and IT companies to guide customers towards the right mix of services depending on their business needs. As we talk about migrating whole working systems on cloud, we also need to play the role of consultants providing cost effective and feasible ideas round the clock.

While we traversed from outsourcing to consulting, from adaption to collaboration we realized that delivery platforms have changed, new engagement models have come into the market. Mobile as a platform is paving the way for many developers to demonstrate their skills and develop technologies that can make communications and business easier for everyone. One-click is now passé, we are experiencing tasks getting by a feather touch. The

world is now in our hands, not on our desktops. Mobile aptly, now is an enterprise gadget and there is a need to constantly develop rich, real time user experience. The platform allows faster business actions, consumer engagement and hence sectors like retail, telecom, manufacturing, banking & financial services, healthcare etc., are working towards integrating the same in their business.

Businesses today are about integration of knowledge and information, along with data which has led to seamless communication across geographies. Space is no more tangible, virtualization is the hour's call and there is continuous collaboration of technology and content to make transactions and interactions real. This has brought in the need of information & communications technology, what we know as ICT Services. From classrooms to boardrooms, IT services companies today are researching and developing platforms which can be used to make communication and business simpler.

IT enables communication and today businesses cannot survive without communication. However, the fact remains that, India is a country with a great amount of digital divide. The disparity between the connected and the disconnected in India is very high. It has been indicated that the government will probably have to spend upto Rs 30,000 crore, in order to provide broadband connectivity to over 2,50,000 villages in India. Given the project costs, this bill is under scrutiny. Additionally, once connected, the community will have to be trained on using the technology and this definitely is time consuming. On the other hand, it is easy to engage users on mobile, since this is one device that is easily accessible, cost effective and user friendly. Gartner has projected that about 220 million handsets are expected to be sold in India in 2011 and the mobile application industry will touch USD 15.1 billion globally. These figures indicate that mobile as a platform could be the next revenue generating factor for IT Services companies.

The vision clearly is to make communication possible for every citizen. To achieve this IT Services companies are working towards developing solutions both user friendly and cost effective to cater to all the segments of the society. We are an integral part of the global village now and with the collaboration and co-creation of content, we are standing at the cliff, ready to take off to newer heights and redefine businesses & communication applying ICT Services.

With the fear of another slowdown and the services industry jolting again, it is a mandate to innovate and co-create. Innovation and market readiness had kept us ahead of severity and we survived. And today, as a nation are the peak of innovation and integration, however there is a lot more work to be done and this in turn requires constant upgradation of knowledge and resources. The application of ICT is the solution to the nation's concern on connectivity. The ICT services industry undisputedly is the next wave of technological advancement in India and the world around, and we are not willing to look back.

Source: [http://bit.ly/InformationWeek\\_CSSCorp](http://bit.ly/InformationWeek_CSSCorp)