



NEWS HIGHLIGHTS

WhatsApp Business App Enters India, Available On Android

PayTM Payments Bank woos corporates with digital incentives

E-comm firms Flipkart, Amazon likely to get 6-month tax breather

Soon, you can request high-rated drivers on Uber

Kirana stores now take to special offers, loyalty point

Today's View

Start Pedaling

A lot has transpired in the Bicycle sharing space in India recently. India's home-grown cab aggregator **Ola** recently launched its "**Ola Pedal**" segment. By their statement, Pedal is India's first-of-its-kind bicycle sharing service meant for short distances within college campuses, tech parks and also for last mile connectivity, targeting to make rides more earth-friendly. The first pilot commenced in November 2017 in the IIT Kanpur Campus, followed by expanding the pilot across the country.

Taking on Ola, Gurgaon-based Green-Tech startup **Mobycy** launched its dockless bicycle sharing mobile application in December. To access these "Smart Bikes", users just have to sign up on the Mobycy app with Aadhaar identification and pay a refundable security deposit.

In the New Year, Alibaba-backed Chinese bicycle sharing unicorn **Ofo** partnered with **Paytm** to offer its services in India. Ofo is currently running pilots across seven cities, including Bengaluru, Indore, Ahmedabad, Delhi, Pune, Coimbatore, and Chennai. As if that wasn't enough, we have heard even self-drive car rental start-up **Zoomcar** is running pilots for its bicycle sharing services.

Generally, users can access dockless sharing bikes by opening an app on their smartphone and selecting a bike off a map, or alternatively by walking up to a bike on the street and scanning a QR code. The app then sends the user a digital code, which is entered into the wheel-lock fitted on the rear of the bike. The user then embarks on her journey.

INTERESTING NEWS

Reliance Jio pips Samsung to top featurephone table

JioPhone has become the No 1 featurephone brand in the quarter to Dec by shipments, overthrowing Samsung.



Change Signals

- JIOPHONE leads featurephone market with 27% market share
- It surpasses Samsung (17% market share) during Oct-Dec: COUNTERPOINT RESEARCH
- OVER 15 MILLION JIOPHONES shipped in Oct-Dec quarter, say industry sources. Of this, over 12 million JioPhones sold to consumers
- HIGH VOLUMES of JioPhone expanded featurephone market size by 43% on-year to 50 million in quarter
- OVERALL featurephone shipments surged 51% on-year
- MICROMAX, ITEL, NOKIA TRAIL TOP 2

JioPhone —first featurephone to support 4G VoLTE tech, is being offered for effectively free with its initial paid amount to be refunded after 3 years — had a 27% share of the segment. Samsung followed with a 17% share, trailed by Micromax.

Source – The Economic Times

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Date – 24th Jan 18

Being dockless, these require no docking stations, giving the user the freedom to start and end their journey at any designated bike parking area near their destination. The user can simply click the lock back into place and park the bike on its side-stand. On ending the journey, the user's online wallet gets charged automatically.

In China, where dockless bike sharing assumed commercial proportions, shared bikes are now the third most significant mode of public transit. The two majors **MoBike** and **Ofo**, each operate over 7 million bikes in more than 170 Chinese cities. This been tried and tested, we must learn from our neighbours. In China, this industry grew too big, too fast, with more than 60 start-ups in the domain up until 18 months back. Now, there remain a handful that survived, but with piles of underused bikes dumped on the city sidewalks.

If dockless Bike sharing was to take off in India, it would not only aid the traffic situation or congestion, but will also accelerate financial savings for individuals while lending health benefits. This could actually be the answer to Delhi's smog instead of the infamous odd-even. As John F. Kennedy said, "Nothing compares to the simple pleasure of riding a bike." We can't agree more.

Today's News

WhatsApp Business App Enters India, Available On Android

WhatsApp has finally rolled out its new WhatsApp Business app in India, currently available for Android platform. Reportedly, the company has been testing the beta version of WhatsApp Business in India with players like BookMyShow, 1mg, and MakeMyTrip amongst others. It had previously announced the app's arrival and begun verifying business accounts as part of its WhatsApp Business pilot program back in September 2017.

The free-to-download Android app for small businesses is available on Google Play. Post installation, the businesses will require a separate number to register on the WhatsApp Business app, from the number used in WhatsApp Messenger.

Source – Inc42

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Paytm Payments Bank woos corporates with digital incentives

Paytm Payments Bank is trying to attract corporate entities with digital offerings such as food and gift wallets for their employees. The bank has set a target of reaching a customer base of 500 million over the next 2-3 years.

MD and CEO Renu Satti said the offerings will be an incentive to companies already using Paytm e-wallet services to shift employees' salary accounts to the bank. Around 500 corporate entities are using e-wallet services.

Source – Livemint

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

Facebook launches accelerator for AR, VR

Facebook launched its drive to tap start-ups and groom them. It is focusing on AR and VR. With T-Hub, Facebook has announced Indian Innovation Hub Accelerator. The 12-week cohort, starting in April, will handhold start-ups in a variety of AR/VR products and solutions.

Source – BusinessLine

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Apple may discontinue iPhone X around July-August

Apple could discontinue the first-generation iPhone X around mid-2018 as the second-generation model is set for launch later this year.

It is not expected to sell iPhone X at lower price as it will hurt its other products in the lower-priced premium segment. It is estimated that Apple would ship about 18 million iPhone X units in the January-March quarter in 2018.

Source – The Economic Times

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Netflix valuation breaks \$100bn for first time

New subscribers drawn in by shows including Stranger Things, Bright and The Crown helped push the valuation of Netflix past \$100bn for the first time. It has added 8.33 million subscribers in the 3 months to the end of Dec. The company signed up 6.36 million subscribers internationally.

Source – The Guardian

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E-comm firms Flipkart, Amazon likely to get 6-month tax breather

The provision of tax collected at source (TCS) imposed on suppliers selling products on e-commerce websites in the GST regime is likely to be deferred by 6 months.

The TCS of 1% to be charged collectively by the Centre and states was kept in abeyance till April 1, 2018, by the GST Council in October along with the reverse charge mechanism and the e-way bill. However, in light of revenue leakage concerns, the e-way bill to track the movement of inter-state supply of goods will be implemented from February 1, while reverse charge mechanism on composition dealers may be implemented any time.

Source – Business Standard

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Soon, you can request high-rated drivers on Uber

Uber said the company may allow people to request drivers with higher ratings. The company will “do more with driver ratings... and have users be able to opt in to a higher level of service” Uber CEO Dara Khosrowshahi said.

Uber is currently providing 4 bn rides a year globally. Khosrowshahi, however, did not elaborate further on whether users would have to pay a premium.

Source – Financial Express

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Kirana stores now take to special offers, loyalty point

Special discounts on festivals, loyalty point alerts and weekly offers are no longer restricted to modern trade and ecommerce players; mid-sized convenience stores and even neighborhood kiranas are increasingly adopting modern technology and business strategies to keep up with bigger rivals.

And they have the backing of top consumer product makers and a new breed of technology service providers. Neighborhood retail stores are fast evolving with the adoption of technology to serve the changing shopper aspirations and needs. The country's largest FMCG Hindustan Unilever is experimenting with different business models in collaboration with different retail partners to help them serve shoppers and consumers better.

Source – The Economic Times

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Sequoia plans largest India fund at \$1 billion

Sequoia Capital is preparing to raise up to \$1bn for its 6th India-focused fund, making it the largest corpus raised for the domestic market. The Silicon Valley-headquartered firm's plans for a new fund comes 2 years after it raised \$930 million for its previous India-focused fund. Sequoia Capital's local team also leads investments in Southeast Asia and has set up an office in Singapore. This region will be a significant part of the strategy in the upcoming fund for Sequoia Capital India, which manages about \$3.2 bn of investments.

Source – The Economic Times

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Bitcoin may split 50 times in 2018 as forking craze mounts

Forking may soon sideline the popular alternative of ICOs, in which startups raise money by selling entirely new tokens. That market has gotten crowded after raising about \$3.7 billion last year, and smaller offerings have struggled.

A fork's main advantage lies in sprouting from Bitcoin, the world's most famous cryptocurrency. In a typical fork, all existing Bitcoin owners are eligible for the forked-off coin -- giving the new asset a potentially huge number of users. Most coins arrive with at least some name recognition, because they have originated from the famous Bitcoin.

Source – Bloomberg

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The rising risk from fraud and cyber attacks

Indian companies reported all-time high levels of fraud, cyber-attacks and security incidents during 2017, according to Kroll, a corporate investigation and risk consulting firm.

The report is based on a survey of 540 company executives around the world. About 89% of respondents in Indian firms said they had experienced an incident of fraud in 2017, compared with 68% in 2016. The global average for 2017 was 84%.

Source – Livemint

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