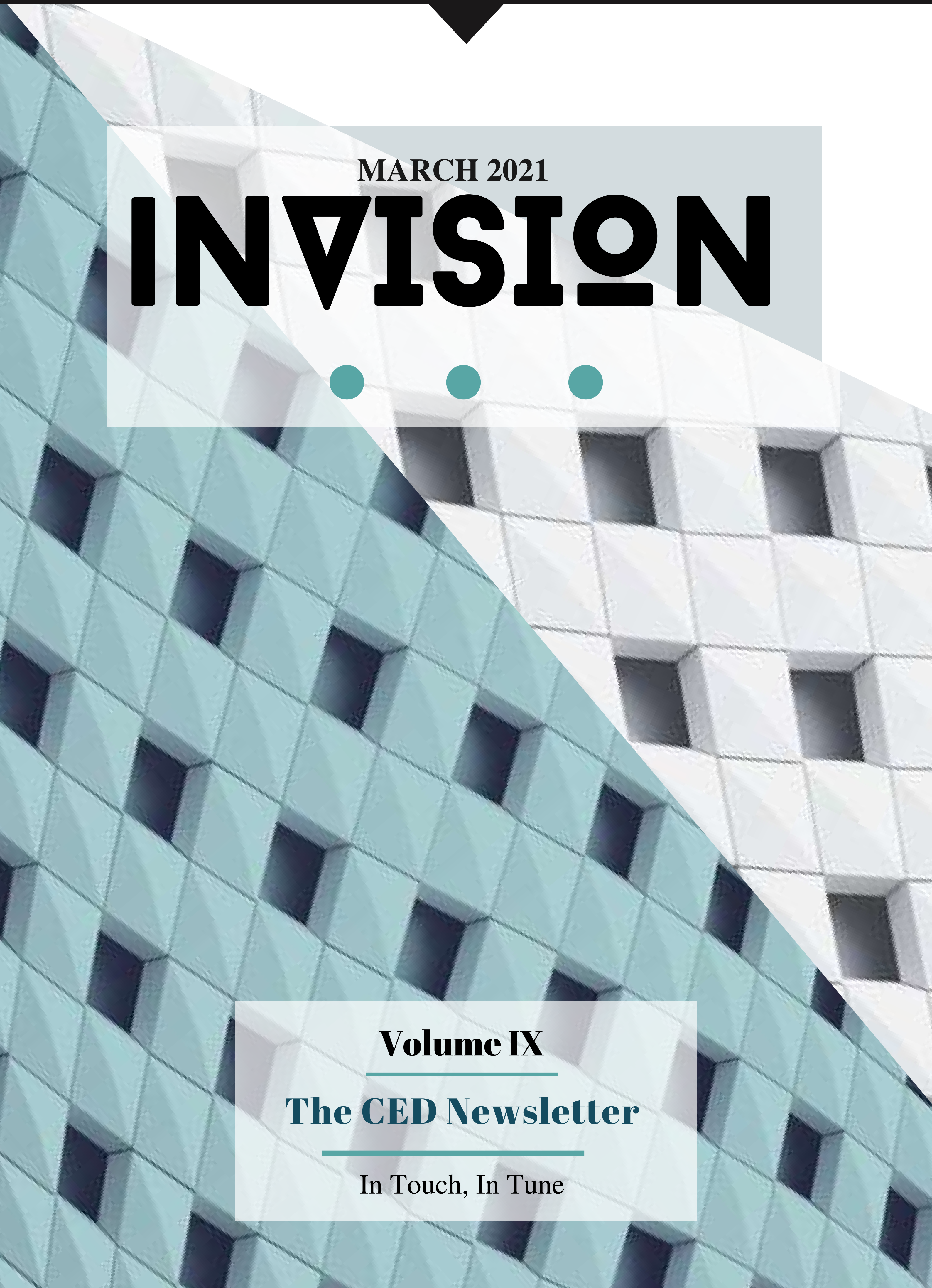

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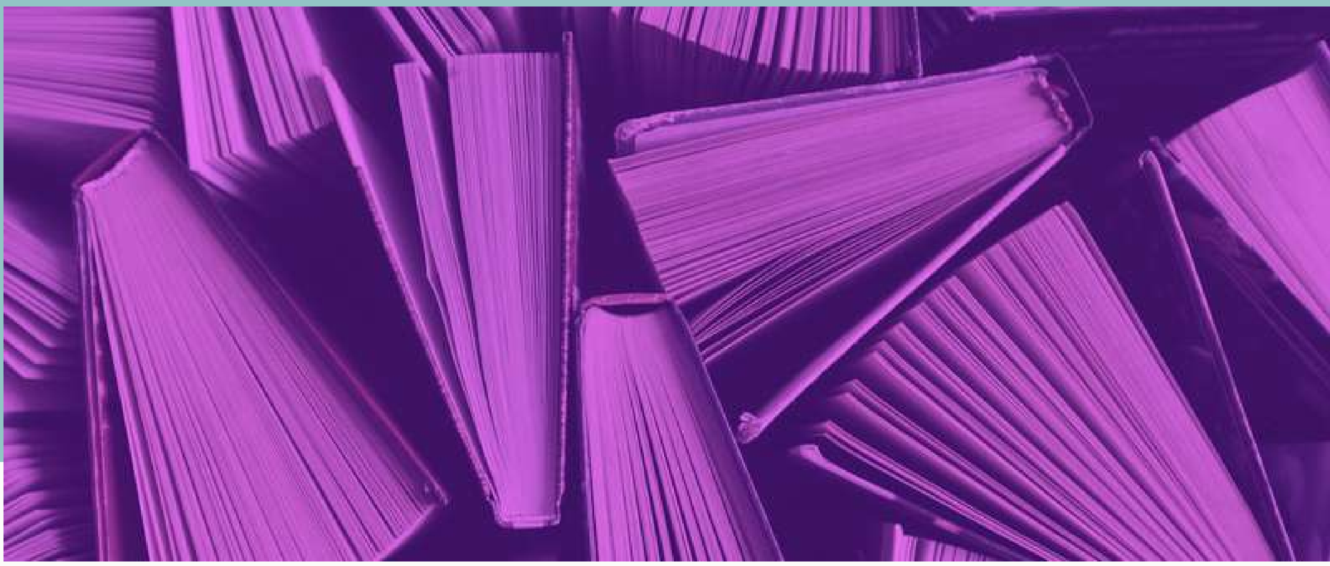
THE BOOK CLUB

-Amulya Sharma

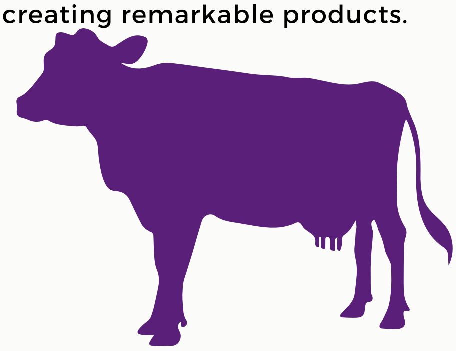


THE CONCEPT OF PURPLE COW

Written by Seth Godin

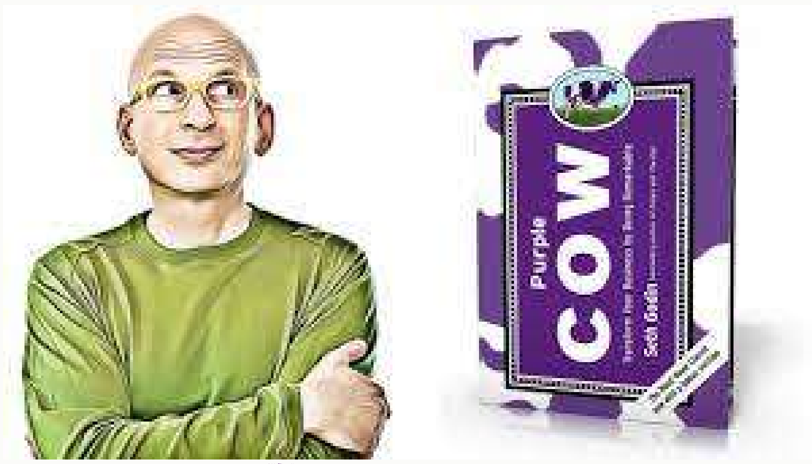
A ‘purple cow’ is a marketing concept developed by marketer and entrepreneur Seth Godin that states that companies must build things worth noticing right into their products or services. Godin claims that a product that isn’t in itself unique and somehow remarkable – like a purple cow – is unlikely to sell, no matter how well crafted its advertising. The purple cow was Godin’s addition to the traditional five P’s of marketing – product, price, place, promotion, and people.

Godin believes that creative advertising is not enough in a media landscape that has people tuning out. With people skipping ads on television and having more control over what they watch and when they watch it, Godin argues that now, more than ever, it is important to remember the importance of creating remarkable products.



For example, by horizontally integrating innovation – getting stakeholder involvement from the board down to lead buyers – you improve the chances of getting a successful Purple Cow to market. Likewise, by making 'being remarkable' a Critical Success Factor for innovation, you get to screen out boring brown cows. Starting up a separate Purple Cow innovation work-stream can free you from the shackles of traditional new product development. And don't forget to live the Be Remarkable mantra yourself, do one thing worth talking about every day.

If Purple Cow has a weakness it is that it underestimates the power of the Dark Side corporate conservatism. Nobody (yet) got fired for sinking money into an advertising sizzle, whether or not there was a (purple) steak worth sizzling in the first place.



Here's a culmination of the Key Ideas of the Purple Cow concept:

Purple Cow Key Idea #1: Advertising is losing its power because it is so abundant.:
This obliviousness stems from the fact that consumers ignore marketing unless it meets their exact needs. After all, you wouldn't really take notice of car ads unless you needed a new car.
This also means that traditional advertising in mass media is becoming less effective.

Purple Cow Key Idea #2: To make your product or service stand out in the modern world, it has to be remarkable.
Before Advertising: This is the oldest form of advertising, where consumers recommended the products and services that solved their problems to each other through word-of-mouth.

For example, people might have talked about the best vegetable seller on the market square, driving more and more customers to her stand.

During Advertising: In this era, advertising worked like magic; the more you advertised, the more your sales would increase. Companies could buy ads to increase sales and profits, which could then be spent on yet more advertising in a virtuous circle.

After Advertisement: This is the era in which we find ourselves today. We have reverted back to word-of-mouth promotion. These days, however, social networks like Twitter and Facebook mean that word of great products and services can spread very quickly.

In this new era, there is so much choice in products out there that it is not enough to satisfy the customer's needs – to truly get attention, you need to be remarkable.

3

Purple Cow Key Idea #3: Today, taking risks is a safer strategy than avoiding risks altogether.

Most companies, though, are reluctant to explore ideas for becoming remarkable, because they are afraid of trying something new.

To succeed, you must overcome this fear, because there is no place for boring products in the modern market. In a crowded marketplace, not standing out is equivalent to being invisible

Purple Cow Key Idea #4: Focus on the customers who are willing to both try something new and spread the word.

4

First, there are the **innovators**: people who are eager to try new things and to be at the cutting edge. Next, there are the early adopters. They are interested in new products because they want whatever advantage they might provide.

Then, there are the **early and late majorities**. These people are the pragmatists who adopt proven products because everyone else is using them too. These groups constitute the majority of the customer base.

Finally, there are the **laggards**, who are reluctant to adopt anything new and will only do so when they absolutely have to.

Traditional marketing wisdom suggests that because they constitute the largest segment, you should target the early and late majorities first. But in fact, this is a mistake, as these people are reluctant to adopt new products before they are widely used.

5

Purple Cow Key Idea #5: Marketing is about inventing the product, not just selling it after it's been made.

Most companies, though, are reluctant to explore ideas for becoming remarkable, because they are afraid of trying something new.

Traditionally it was thought that marketing is about communicating the value of products and services once they've been produced. But in fact, this is just advertising. Marketing comprises much more.

Marketing is actually about inventing the product. Successful products have been built from day one so that every aspect of the product – design, production, pricing, and sales – is influenced by marketing considerations, meaning how to make the product such that people will talk about it.

Purple Cow Key Idea #6: Market to the people who are looking for your solution to their problems, and measure the efficacy of that marketing.

6

Most companies, though, are reluctant to explore ideas for becoming remarkable, because they are afraid of trying something new.

The key is to target your ads effectively. This is because, while earlier marketers could choose whom they wanted to reach, these days the sheer abundance of advertising means it is the customers who have to choose to listen to you. This means your advertisement has to target people looking for a solution – your solution – to their problems, and this is achieved by putting your ad in a place where they are looking for it.

7

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First, they're afraid of criticism – being remarkable means attracting criticism, because you will stand out of the crowd. But criticism doesn't mean failure. In fact, if you don't attract any criticism, you should worry, because it means you're playing it safe, and as mentioned earlier, this is a road to failure.

Second, many companies are also afraid of being inadvertently offensive or looking ridiculous if they are too bold. Indeed, being different can cause people to make fun of you. But even if someone does ridicule your product, their ridicule itself can become famous, thus further spreading the word of your product.

But being offensive or outrageous isn't something you should knowingly strive for, as it only works on occasion. What's worse, it can create a scandal, which will create negative word-of-mouth – not what you want.

Finally, perhaps the biggest fear most big companies have concerning creating Purple Cows is that it would require them to radically transform their existing infrastructure, for example, their factories.

Key Message/Conclusion

In today's crowded marketplace, there's no room for "ordinary" products or services anymore; either you're remarkable or you die. To become remarkable, you need to boldly take risks and not worry about criticism. Then, when you start spreading the word of your remarkable product or service, you need to target the people who are both willing to try new things, and eager to spread the word to others.

THE RISEN SERIES

-Himani Singh

THE CORPORATE BULLYING STORY

Getting groceries is no longer the tedious task that it used to be. This can be credited to major e-commerce grocery platforms of the likes of BigBasket. Digital shopping and delivery of groceries have to lead to a boom in this sector of the e-commerce trade. Where there is success competitors are bound to emerge. So it will be fair to say that BigBasket isn't the only name that comes to mind when one thinks about ordering their groceries online.

That being the case, Many of you would have heard BigBasket's legal 'cease and desist notice to Daily Basket as an example of corporate bullying. But do you know the specifics of this case? Or if you're blissfully unaware of it, here's a brief summary of the 'corporate bullying story of a famous e-commerce chain'

Timeline of BigBasket -

- BigBasket was founded in 2011 by Sudhakar, Hari Menon, Vipul Parekh, Abhinay Choudhari and Ramesh. The online grocery delivery service company has its headquarters in Bangalore, India.
- In March 2019, BigBasket raised $150 million in investment from Mirae, Alibaba Group, and CDC Group.
- In March 2020, they acquired a micro-delivery firm, DailyNinja.
- In October 2020 BigBasket faced a data breach that affected the data of over 2 crore customers which includes email IDs, full names, IP addresses.
- In February 2021, the Tata Group acquired a 68% stake in BigBasket for around ₹9,500 crores (US$1.3 billion).

What are Bigbaskets claim?

- The grocery giant has claimed that the startup's trademark and brand are easily connectable.
- The notice stated, "...the mere mention or reference of a name containing "basket" in word or logo form for any e-commerce business and related products conjure in the minds of the relevant class of consumers and members of the trade as that of being associated with our client."

Timeline of Daily Basket -

- Founded in 2020.
- Daily Basket is currently only operating in Coimbatore.
- The startup plans to set up a chain of mini supermarkets throughout the city and convert them to act as delivery hubs for its online delivery business.

What was Daily Baskets reaction?

- The startup made the legal notice public and published a blog in an effort to counter BigBasket's claims.
- "Except the word 'basket', there are no similarities or trademark violations in the brand logo. Colors are different, the font is different, the graphics are different and the name itself is different. So they want to sue us because we have 'basket' in our name. Last time we checked no one has a monopoly in the word 'basket' or having the word 'basket' and selling groceries online.NaturesBasket.com was actually started in 2005, way before BigBasket," said Daily Basket in its blog.

Is Big Basket's claim logical?

Legal experts feel that BigBasket's case could have an advantage, as an established brand can claim that a new brand with an alike name could lead to customer confusion.

If the case goes to trial, BigBasket would have to prove that by unrestricted use of the word 'basket' for its branding purposes, the word has come to be firmly associated with the company's services.

It is worth considering that in the eCommerce market in India, usage of specific words and phrases such as 'kart' or 'cart', 'dukaan' and 'basket', among others, has become mundane and almost second nature to many startups. These words help customers distinguish the nature of the company's business, and are part of the brand marketing efforts.

Many people have pointed out that going by BigBasket's logic that the use of a single word can amount to trademark violation, the startup — in its 10th year of operations — should itself be held responsible for trademark violation. Reason? The word 'basket' was originally used by Godrej Nature's Basket, a retail venture of the Godrej Group set up in 2005, which deals in the sale of groceries and various other food items as well as kitchen accessories.

However, BigBasket's assertion seems to be relying on the assumption that by leveraging 'basket' in its brand name, Daily Basket, which only started grocery delivery services in August last year, is trying to draw on the goodwill of a current well-established player in the same space.

What are your views on the same? Share your thoughts with us at niftemced@gmail.com or write to us on our Instagram handle.

FOODPRENEURSHIP

-Nistha Nagpal

ROBOTICS AND FOOD INDUSTRY

What do you think of robotic pizza delivery?
Or a pizza prepared by a robotic chef?
Would you buy a robotic chef?

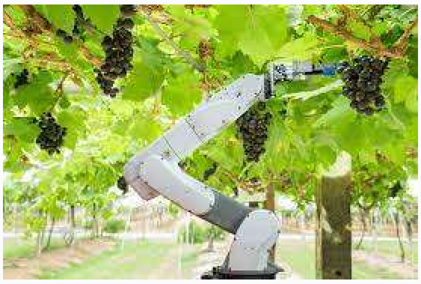
The COVID pandemic has placed a lot of stress on food producers across the supply chain. From growers to manufacturers and caterers, companies have been confronted with the need to implement social distancing measures and have faced workforce shortages as employees fall sick or self-isolate. In some sectors, mainly meatpacking and sections of the agricultural sector, outbreaks linked to production facilities have forced shutdowns.

In an industry, such as the Food and Beverage industry, that has long been wedded to manual, labor-intensive processes the challenges posed by COVID-19 have forced the industry leaders to consider the integration of automation and advanced Robotics in the sector.

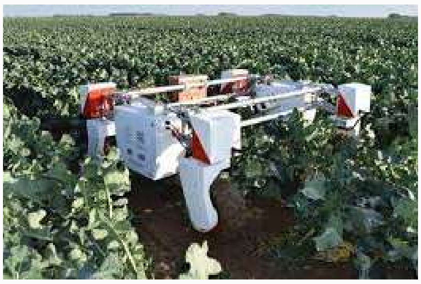
Whether the workers are out sick or the plant needs some help with social distancing, robots will help pick up the slack. Adding to this is the fact that consumers today want better quality and sustainable food available at their convenience.
Robotics can play a very crucial role in almost every link in the food supply chain, from field to kitchen. Here are some examples of how robotics is already making its mark in the sector.

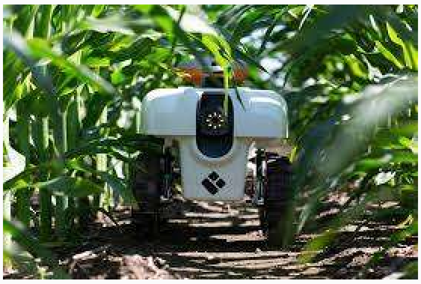
ROBOTICS IN AGRICULTURE

Imagine you are a farmer and there is a technology that allows you to know the ideal time to plant, water, nurture, and harvest your crop, isn't it something you would want to invest in?



An agricultural robot is a robot that is specifically used for specialized agricultural purposes. The main application with the agricultural industry would be regarded within the harvesting stage, monitoring the environment, and soil analysis. Robotic systems can take care of harvest plants as well as carry out on-farm data collection. This will help in increasing crop yields. Agricultural robots, also termed "Agribots" will deeply influence Agriculture. Agribots will help in increasing the crop yield by automatically analyzing the crops, using a detailed sensor to gather data on the status of the crop within the external conditions to evaluate the best type of condition for crop cultivation. Robotic applications also include seedlings seedling, identification, and sorting. Autonomous tractors, weeding robots, and harvesting robots are also available.





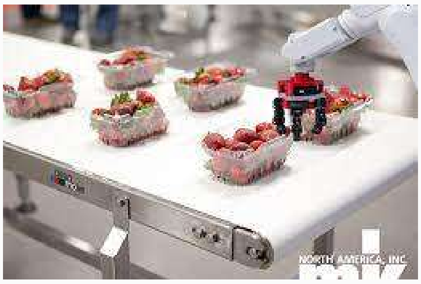
For non-plant agriculture, robotics is also being introduced to dairy and poultry for non-plant agriculture. Autonomous feeding and milking, egg collection and sorting, and autonomous cleaning are the applications.

FOOD MANUFACTURE

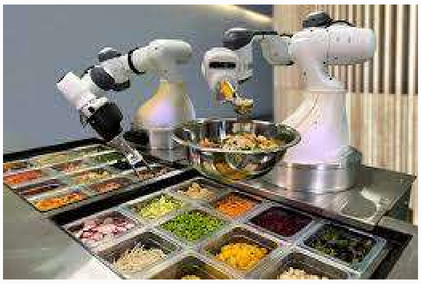
The ever increasing demand for food can be addressed by Autonomous food production practices. Food production/Manufacture can be divided into 2 stages:

- Primary processing- primary processing stage includes cleaning, sorting, transporting, and blending. Examples of robotic applications in primary processing include butchery and fruit-vegetable sorting.
- Secondary processing- In secondary processing ingredients are combined to form new food products by cooking, baking, chilling, and so on. Robotic applications include product sorting, defect removal, and mixing.

The processing of food at high volumes has posed many problems for robots. This is mainly because of the fact that the shape and size of the food items are often highly variable, posing a challenge when a robot tries to grasp an item. However, due to technological advancements, robotic automation can be effectively deployed in many different ways. These include:

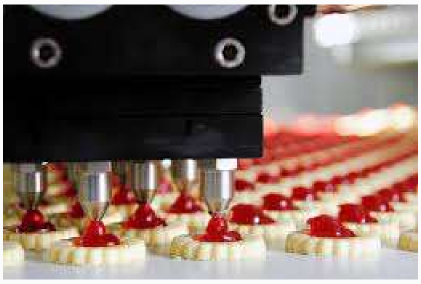


- Robotic cutting and slicing for seafood or beef
- Robotic dispensing for cake decoration
- Vision guided sorting robots for produce

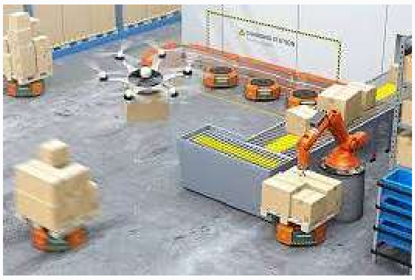


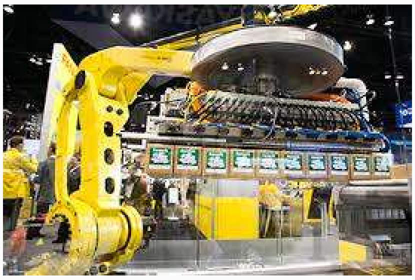
There are many other ways in which robots for food processing are being used nowadays. Some robots, for example, can now even be used to make pizzas without any human intervention.

Food processing has long been an elusive industry for robotic technology. The challenges inherent in food products had prevented widespread adoption of robotic technology. Today, however, the most recent technological advances have led to the rising use of robotics in food processing. This is likely to ramp up in the future.



FOOD PACKAGING





According to the surveys conducted, 94% of food packaging operators are using robotics already in the food packaging processes. The machines being brought in to do the monotonous jobs with the added advantage of minimal human error and no chance of fatigue. Contemporary robotics allows for order picking and packaging to be much more efficient. For example, once an order has been placed online, the robot will be able to detect the location of the specific product, package aptly and provide the customer with real-time information and the status of the product being delivered.

For some time now, robots for food packaging have been incorporated into the food supply chain. However, the latest development is that it is possible to automate the entire packaging process.

Food packaging can be divided into 3 phases:

- Primary packaging- Individual food products are packaged. For example- pick and place robots put sweets into plastic tubs
- Secondary packaging- Individual packages are grouped together. For example- another pick and place robot stacks those plastic tubs into a larger box.
- Tertiary packaging- Secondary packages are grouped together for shipping. For example- a palletizing robot puts many boxes onto a pallet.

Packaging robots are able, but not limited to carry out the following tasks- open, fill, pack, seal and correctly label the package to be sent out to the end-user.

FOOD SAFETY

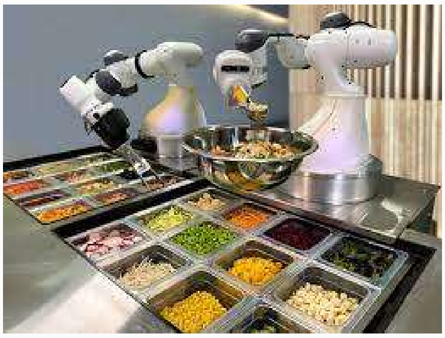
Food safety has always been a top priority for food producers. Food contaminating substances may easily be transferred to food from workers, even those following hygiene methods at food plants. In other words, food workers can easily spread pathogens with their hands, despite wearing gloves.

Robots reduce the risk of contamination leading to foodborne diseases by limiting human contact with foodstuffs.

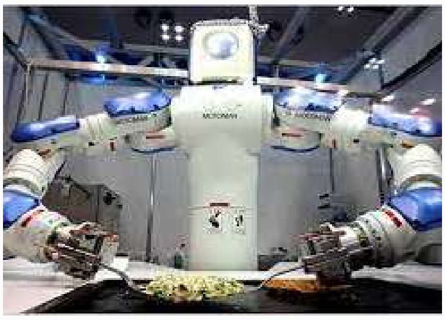
As the conventional robots are too strong to handle the most delicate items, which is why the manufacturers still rely on human workers. However, enter soft robotics, soft robots are built from materials like silicone, a polymer known for viscosity and elasticity. Soft robots have proved useful in accomplishing tasks that require increased flexibility and adaptability to help improve safety.

Robots can play a vital role in ensuring that the quality and safety of food production remain a top priority for manufacturers. Not only can robots augment the jobs of human workers, but they could also greatly support efforts to manage cross-contamination on the production line.

COOKERY



Traditionally, the intricate nature of cooking has required a human to carry out the task. However, automated robots have been designed and created to cook different types of food all by an application, which even cleans up afterward.



Robots and automation in the food industry are growing with more and more applications and robots being used than ever before.

Robots provide additional advantages in food production, such as-

- Improving food quality
- Improving product consistency
- Adding functionality
- Improving worker safety
- Improving productivity
- Enhances convenience

Compared to other stages of the food supply chain, cookery robots are still in their infancy. However, it is undeniable that robotics is changing the food industry.

ENTREPRENEURSHIP TIPS

-Neha Kundu

FEASIBILITY ANALYSIS: IS YOUR BUSINESS IDEA ACTUALLY FEASIBLE?

Sometimes, people might come up with a solid business idea. Let's be honest, at some point, we all think of some big or small business ideas. But are all business ideas feasible? Is it possible to convert each wild idea into a sustainable and profitable business? This is the feasibility analysis of a business idea all about!

WHAT IS FEASIBILITY ANALYSIS?

Feasibility analysis is the study of determining whether or not a business idea is viable as per the scenario. It is the preliminary evaluation of if or not, the idea is worth pursuing.

This step while building a business can be very helpful in saving a lot of money, time, and other resources. Imagine that after spending loads of money on your wild business idea, you find out that the idea is not feasible in the real world. This can be a major setback in various aspects beyond money. So, conducting a feasibility analysis is an integral part of the process of establishing a business or a startup.

WHEN IS FEASIBILITY ANALYSIS CONDUCTED?

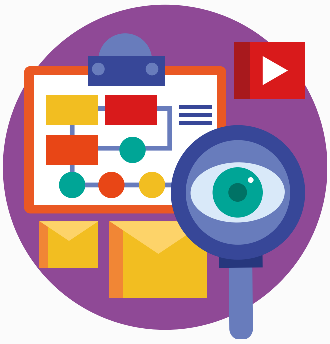
The best time to conduct a feasibility analysis is early during the thinking process. If an idea popped up in your head, think deeply and systematically about it. Think of how you will be proceeding with the same. This way, you can screen out the non-viable ideas in the early stages before you spend any of your valuable resources.

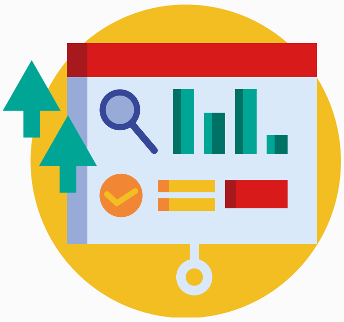
HOW TO CONDUCT FEASIBILITY ANALYSIS?

To conduct a feasibility analysis for your business idea, there are four major components that need to be taken care of. These are like the four main pillars on which any business stands. So, to conduct a feasibility analysis, you just need to identify these pillars for your business idea.

1] Product/ Service Feasibility

The purpose of this component is to assess or establish the overall appeal of the product or service that you are proposing. Before you rush your product/ service into the production stage, understanding this is very important. You should really understand that your product is something that the customers need.





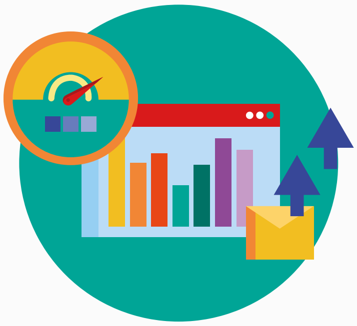
2] Industry/ Target Market Feasibility

This involves the assessment of the attractiveness of the industry or the target market of your product or service. An industry is nothing but a group of firms, both big and small, that offer the same product and services. Your market will be a part of the industry, a specific group of customers.

So before moving ahead with your idea, think this through.

3] Organizational Feasibility

This determines whether or not your organization will have access to management expertise and essential resources. The resources mentioned here are the non-financial resources like office space/ factory land, testing labs, human resources, manufacturers, raw materials, etc. All these resources are crucial for launching a successful business.



4] Financial Feasibility

Financial feasibility basically involves the following three analyses. These include:

- Total startup cash needed which is the total cash required to make the first sales.
- The overall financial attractiveness of the business includes a number of factors like projected sales for 5 years, retaining customers, generating internal funds, etc.
- Apart from these two, you also need to study the financial statements of other similar businesses. This will give you a fair idea of what the financial statements of your business will look like. This is a great help for planning out and assessing the financial feasibility of your business.

These statements are available on the internet in various research generals. You can also buy in-depth case studies for the same which provides a lot of insights.

The Bottom Line

Whenever you come up with an incredible business idea, it is important to check the feasibility of the same. This was, you can save a lot of time and money. The ideas that seem top-notch in the head might not be very feasible in practicality. So, a feasibility analysis is a must before going ahead.

E-BITS

-Vishaal

Contec Global inks $200 million deal with Maithri Aquatech for sustainable water solutions

Maithri Aquatech Pvt. Ltd. and Contec Global have entered into a strategic alliance, combining Maithri Aquatech's Air-to-Water sustainable solutions with Contec Global's footprint in Africa and the Middle East, to meet the ever-growing requirements of clean, potable, and safe water in these regions on a sustainable basis. The MoU signed between both the companies is for over $200 million, spread over the next few years. The first project to stem from this partnership will be implemented in select Middle East countries.

This partnership will bring together valuable skills in sustainable water solution development, deployment, and social impact strategy to help various countries take a step towards the water and food security, through innovative solutions. This deal will undertake capacity building using Indian technology and expertise to deliver turn-key AWG solutions for drinking and micro-irrigation in acutely water-stressed areas, according to Ramkrishna Mukkavilli, Founder and Managing Director of Maithri Aquatech.

CONTEC GLOBAL

Aim to onboard 5 million SMBs, invest heavily in strengthening security infrastructure: Razorpay

Razorpay said there has been strong growth in the number of small and medium businesses adopting digital payments during the pandemic, and it expects to onboard 5 million SMBs on its platform over the next year. The payments solutions provider -- which has onboarded 7 lakh SMBs, startups, and freelancers in the past 12 months -- also plans to invest in strengthening security and fraud analytics infrastructure and building hyperlocal solutions. The company aims to further accelerate this digital revolution by enabling 5 million new Indian SMBs to adopt digital payments in the next 12 months.

Moglix launches supply chain finance platform Credlix

B2B commerce company Moglix has announced its foray into the supply chain financing space launching its digital platform Credlix. The platform provides quick collateral-free working capital solutions, exclusively to its suppliers, pan-India through its collaboration with banks. Currently, the service is available to its 15,000+ suppliers, most of whom are MSMEs. Credlix helps in access to collateral-free credit from enterprise buyers and banks/NBFCs through invoice discounting. Suppliers will be able to request early payments from enterprise buyers at affordable discount rates to keep their supply chain up and running. It allows suppliers to monitor all stages of invoice discounting and stays in control of their cash conversion cycle. From credit application and credit risk assessment to payment approval and final disbursement, suppliers will get a single platform to manage their early payment requests.

U GRO Capital crosses Rs 2,000 crore milestone on loan disbursals

U GRO Capital has announced its Q3 FY21 financial results and posted a PAT of Rs 6.3 crore. This has been achieved while maintaining a conservative approach to provisioning, with Rs 5.9 crores of provisioning expenses in Q3. Despite the adverse economic and business conditions brought about by COVID-19, U GRO Capital has declared profits in each quarter of FY21. Commenting on the results, Shachindra Nath, Executive Chairman and Managing Director of U GRO Capital stated, “We have been making steady progress towards achieving our goal of solving India’s $300 billion MSME credit gap. We have also made an operational and strategic pivot by introducing our direct distribution product line to serve micro-enterprises.

Only small, micro-level eco-friendly industries permitted in TTZ: NGT

Only small, micro, and macro-level industries which are eco-friendly, non-polluting, or necessary to secure essential amenities can be allowed in Taj Trapezium Zone (TTZ), the National Green Tribunal has said. A bench headed by NGT Chairperson Justice Adarsh Kumar Goel made the observation while setting aside the environmental clearance granted to a mining company for extraction of minor minerals. TTZ is an area of about 10,400 sq km spread over the districts of Agra, Firozabad, Mathura, Hathras and Etah in Uttar Pradesh and the Bharatpur district of Rajasthan.

Mastercard, Razorpay join hands to make digital payments more accessible for MSMEs

To drive digital payments acceptance by small businesses in India, Mastercard and Razorpay have launched a strategic partnership that combines Razorpay's payment processing capabilities with Mastercard's digital banking solutions and card services.

The partnership will empower the micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) in digitizing their operations, maintaining business continuity in the challenging environment, and preparing for the future beyond cash. Before the outbreak of COVID-19, around 90 percent of India's retail payments were conducted in cash. The pandemic has accelerated the adoption of digital technologies and rapidly shifted how consumers prefer to shop and pay. This presents a great opportunity to unite merchants, consumers, acquirers, and fintech companies in expanding the adoption of digital payments in India. SMEs would require establishing a digital footprint to build their customer base and meet the demand for secure, convenient, and touch-free transactions. With their partnership, Mastercard and Razorpay will work together to cater to the needs of MSMEs.

Stride Ventures leads Rs 10 crore debt round in Sequoia-backed Progcap

Stride Ventures has led a debt round of Rs 10 crore in Progcap – a fintech player providing access to collateral-free working capital to retailers. The fund is committed to being a strategic partner in Progcap's growth journey. This is Stride Ventures' fourteenth investment from its maiden fund and second investment in the fintech space. Progcap has over two lakh retailers on its platform. These funds will be deployed to increase their AUM and penetration amongst retailers across the country. Progcap will look to strengthen its ties with banks and corporates by leveraging Stride's network.

Google to give Rs 109 crore to support SMBs in India

Google said it would give $15 million (nearly Rs 109 crore) to support small and micro enterprises in India in the face of the Covid-19 pandemic. The investment is part of the $75 million commitment from Google to help small businesses outside of the US. "In India, we will invest $15 million to support small and micro enterprises across the country and are in discussions with local partners," the company said in a statement. The company is working with non-government partners who have a long track record of providing resources to businesses that are generally overlooked by traditional lenders. When the pandemic hit last year, Google announced a $200 million investment fund as part of its more than $800 million commitment to support small businesses.

Shopify slips after warning revenue growth will slow in 2021

Canadian e-commerce firm Shopify Inc. says it will take advantage of “unprecedented opportunities” in 2021 to speed up innovation and expand into new markets but warned that its growth rate will slow. Revenue will grow “rapidly” this year but not as quickly as in 2020 when it increased to 86% to $2.93 billion, the company said. It didn’t give specific guidance on earnings for the current year. The arrival of vaccines could see some consumer spending rotate back to bricks-and-mortar retailers, Ottawa-based Shopify said. Shopify is investing in product marketing and in-country sales teams in countries where it already has a good foothold, President Harley Finkelstein said on a conference call but intends to take a “meticulous and very strategic approach” to international expansion.

Indian Bank signs MOU with SID of IISc, for funding Start-ups and MSMEs

State-owned Indian Bank said it has entered into an MOU with the Society for Innovation and Development (SID), an initiative of the Indian Institute of Science, for extending exclusive credit facilities to startups and MSMEs. This initiative is a part of the Banks scheme Ind SpringBoard for financing Startups and will empower Startups and MSMEs to realize their research efforts powered by financial support from the Bank and backed by incubation facilities offered by SID, it said in a release. The Bank will extend loans of up to Rs 50 crore to these start-ups for their working capital requirements or for purchase of machinery, equipment, etc, it added.

YourPhysio raises $350K funding from Better Capital & Titan Capital

Online physiotherapy & pain relief company YourPhysio has raised a $350K pre-seed round of funding led by Better Capital. The round also saw participation from Snapdeal founders Kunal Bahl & Rohit Bansal's Titan Capital and BITS Pilani angel investors Sarath Sura, Venu Palaparthi & VP Rajesh. With the vision to bring pain relief to millions of people, digital physiotherapy was started in March 2020 by BITS Pilani alum Ashutosh Mundhada and Dr. Sheetal Mundhada who brings over 30years of experience in physiotherapy. The company saw instant uptake of its online physiotherapy service as it spread to over 100 cities in a matter of months. In India alone, over 220 million people suffer from musculoskeletal conditions that affect joints, bones, muscles, and ligaments - conditions that can be treated successfully via online physiotherapy sessions. The India opportunity is pegged at $5B and growing. There is also a global opportunity as YourPhysio has already delivered online physiotherapy for users in multiple countries

Why India needs a Bharat Fund beyond the existing VC ecosystem

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a devastating effect on India's economy, especially the Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprise (MSME) sector. Employing over 100 million people, the sector's revenue was severely impacted owing to working capital issues, disruption in their supply chain, delay in payments, and shortage of labor.

The ensuing liquidity challenges continue to put the sector at risk of operating at a subdued scale but innovative policy interventions like the introduction of "Funds of Funds" with the right implementation plan, will go a long way in bolstering & growing the sector. When it comes to funding, traditionally the sector has depended on debt financing and despite several directives, the banks and financial institutions and the non-banking finance companies have remained very cautious and selective in providing the sector with funds. Taking this into account, the Government of India, as part of its fiscal relief measures, had announced a "Fund of Funds" scheme that aimed to infuse Rs 10,000 crore and support the 2.5 million MSMEs across the country. With this financial year's union budget, the allocation to this initiative was also hiked for the year. The objective of the scheme is to provide MSMEs access to funds that will help them tide over the crisis. Available to all Triple-A rated MSMEs, the "Fund of Funds" will focus on MSMEs who do not have or are not eligible to procure funds from any other sources.

Small business lender Kinara Capital secures $10 million from IndusInd Bank

Bengaluru-based small business lender Kinara Capital announced securing $10 million (Rs 74 crore) from IndusInd Bank with a 100 percent guaranty from the U.S. International Development Finance Corporation (DFC). This is part of a debt and equity round of Rs 100 crore, with equity contributions coming from Kinara's existing investors Gaja Capital, GAWA Capital, Michael & Susan Dell Foundation, and Patamar Capital, the fintech non-banking financial company said in a statement. "This investment will be utilized by Kinara Capital towards the expansion of MSME financial inclusion across manufacturing, trading, and services sectors in India," it said. Kinara Capital has disbursed Rs 2,000 crore across 56,000-plus collateral-free small business loans, the statement added.

Zingbus secures funding from Titan Capital, Ritesh Agarwal, others

Zingbus has secured an undisclosed pre-Series A investment led by Venture Catalysts, Titan Capital, Better Capital, Ritesh Agarwal, Founder, Oyo, and Anupam Mittal, Founder, People Group. The funding round also saw participation from 9Unicorns accelerator fund, AdvantEdge Founders, Smile Internet, MG Group, and several other marquee angel investors. Zingbus currently enables more than 2,000 daily journeys across Delhi/NCR, Himachal Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Rajasthan, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Jammu, Haryana, and Punjab. The platform will utilize the funds to increase its operational footprint across the country and expand the scale of its fleet operations to 500 buses in the next 12 months. It was co-founded in 2019 by IIT Kharagpur graduates Prashant Kumar, Mratunjay, and Ravi Kumar Verma. In a statement, Prashant Kumar, Co-Founder & CEO, Zingbus said, "With almost 10 million daily intercity bus rides in India, the overall market is worth $15 billion at present and is growing at a CAGR of 18%. About 25% of this market is semi-deluxe, air-conditioned buses, which will be zingbus' focus area for the next few years.”

Dip in gold jewellery exports hits small-scale units

Dwindling gold jewellery exports have dented the business of several small-scale jewellery manufacturing units in Gujarat, as their order volumes declined. According to the gems and jewellery export promotion council (GJEPC), gold jewellery export stood at $3,552 million for the period between April 2020 and January 2021, 64% down against the same period in the previous financial year. "Majority of jewellery exports take place from Mumbai, Chennai, and Kolkata. However, several exporters outsource manufacturing to units in Gujarat.

With declining export orders, the business of small manufacturing units will be impacted," said Ashish Pete, GJEPC president. Estimates suggest that Gujarat also accounts for up to 10% of jewellery exports in India. Ahmedabad is home to at least 30-40 wholesale jewelry manufacturing units, the majority of which are dependent on both domestic as well as export orders, according to Manek Chowk Choksi Mahajan (MCCM).

Covid-19 vaccine distribution to give cold chain logistics sector a boost

The largest vaccination drive is underway in India. Covid-19 vaccine distribution will require a robust logistics chain and a temperature-controlled environment that supports the life of the vaccine effectively to reach the remotest corners of the country. The government has budgeted over Rs 35,000 crore towards the Covid-19 vaccine and its distribution. Cold chain logistics players say this will give a significant impetus to their sector. However, there is a growing need for precise cold chain solutions for several critical medical applications that stretch beyond the Covid-19 vaccination.

As per a report by Research and Markets, the Indian cold chain market was worth Rs 1,121 billion in 2018 and is further projected to reach Rs 2,618 billion by 2024, growing at a CAGR of 14.8% during 2019-2024."The increased focus on a cold chain in healthcare will probably double the growth metrics for the next two to three years we have seen a tremendous increase in demand for our healthcare logistics services in the past year. In 2021 we expect high growth in volumes of healthcare cargo which the company will handle. We are confident to beat market growth pegged at 14% CAGR," says Shagun Kapur Gogia, Founder and Director of Mumbai - based ColdStar Logistics.

RISE AND FALL

-Vinayak Gupta

CAN INDIA MAKE 2020-2030 A GOLDEN DECADE FOR THE ECONOMY?

As we are entering this new decade, let's take a moment to hark back to those 'India a Superpower by 2020' predictions in 2010. While we should have barged in this decade as a global superpower, all we have is an 'India Superpower by 2030' prediction. But this time it seems rather close to the disquisitions of indigenization, industrialization, and globalization. But is it really accomplishable? Let's break down the elements of economic development and do a reality check of our status quo.

In terms of population, India, China, and West (hypothetically including North America, Europe, Japan, Australia, South Korea) are almost at the same level with:

India: 1.3 Billion

China: 1.4 Billion

West: 1.1 Billion

So, you would think that the same population would mean the same market size and demand, entailing the same economic progress but surprisingly it does not because of the massive gap between the per-capita income.

India: 2000 USD

China: 11000 USD

West: 43000 USD

Hence in terms of market size, this is the gap you are looking at:

India: $2.6 Trillion

China: $12.2 Trillion

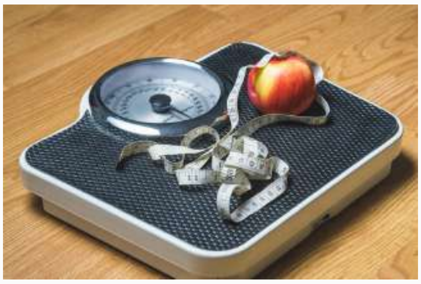
West: $ 47.3 Trillion

This is the fundamental problem that is ignored. India can not have the same indigenization and industrial sophistication as the West with such a small market size.

Per capita GDP, one of the most important indicators of standard of living. This is real wealth in the hands of Indians, and we are all consuming more than we did a decade ago. There is still a long way to go before we reach developed country levels but we can now at least aspire to reach $5,000 per person by 2030, a respectable level, which will mean we are no longer a poor country. Rather than 'superpower' hyperbole, this can be our aspiration for India for the next two decades: $5,000 per capita GDP by 2030, $12,000 per capita GDP by 2040.

As we are rapidly moving towards the Information Age, we need the knowledge to feed our industrial ecosystem. The synergy of innovation and productivity is what drives growth in the Information Age. The government faces a burden of education of approximately 200 million people every year. Many studies say that you need to spend at least 1,000 USD per person during primary education and 10,000 USD per person during secondary education to create a basic skilled worker. Calculating the entire cost of educating the country and creating a workforce with a basic skill set is approximately 550 Billion USD. Comparing that to the Indian expenditure of around 20 Billion USD on education, the gap is quite horrifying.

Adding to it, India has 44% of its population which is malnourished, which creates this huge dilemma of spending money on feeding people rather than industrializing. Furthermore, malnourishment hinders the cognitive abilities of people and even if you start feeding them, it takes almost three generations for the same mental faculties to resurge. So they need supplementary care apart from the 1000 USD on their primary education.



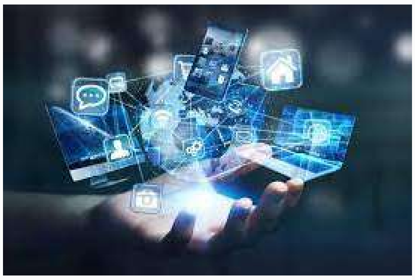
If this was not enough, India is facing a constantly increasing brain drain problem. Hundreds of thousands of Indian professionals leave the country after taking subsidized education here.

This is the second big fundamental problem. Can India really capitalize on its youth with such scant human investment?

Apart from all these issues, India is still the fifth largest economy with a massive annual budget which if utilized well can bring enormous prosperity but the question arises; does India utilize its money and resources well? The answer simply is, it doesn't!

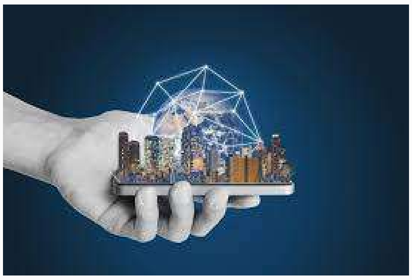
30% of the energy produced in India is lost which translates to 16.8 Billion USD that the government spends which never see the light of the day. 60% of water and 40% of the food produced is lost. Let alone the money spent on subsidies, loan waivers, electricity bill waivers, MSP to produce that food, that too in such an unproductive manner while ruining the environment which further increases the healthcare and climate-related expenditures and affects the life of the more productive population. This is a tremendous policy problem that cannot be solved. Why you may ask. As the 35% rural population controls about ⅔ seats in the Lok Sabha while the 65% urban population controls only about ⅓ seats. The driving factor of all the policies will always be electoral politics which can be very detrimental to the economy.

India also has extremely high crime rates. With millions of pending cases and a meager number of policemen and judges per capita, India really lacks behind in the implementation of rule of law.



All these are real hard limits towards India's industrializing. These are real issues in the face of India but it simply chooses to ignore them. It's not that India lacks the will or capability to solve these problems, it's just the sheer ignorance towards the fundamental problems and overconfidence about the international praise due to which I don't see India tackling these problems anytime soon and where will that take us in the years to come, we just have to wait and watch.

But there is definitely a silver lining that always works for India and that is the massive population and potential. The major goal in the coming decade should be to increase the per capita GDP to increase the market size. India needs to foster the business ecosystem, undergo major reforms, have strong and centralized governance in order to industrialize completely and probe well into the information age.



The beginning of this decade has shown an impressive amount of FDI in India. Investor confidence; simple, business-friendly policies; end of bullying by regulators/bureaucrats, stable rates/taxes can further stimulate these investments which India desperately needs.

Infrastructure is the key to all economic developments. Airports that don't need runway repairs every three months, internet connections that are stable and are not shut down on a regular basis, electricity, and water are absolute basics for any business-friendly environment in the country.

The most critical factor is still the will and expertise to face the fundamental problems. We need to shift the focus to the economy rather than petty politics.

Let us resolve that in the next decade, we will keep reminding ourselves and the government, to make the economy a top priority. Let's be humble and shun superpower rhetoric. Let's have a better, achievable, and worthwhile goal. To give the average Indian a dignified life, or a per capita income of $5,000 by 2030.

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THANK YOU FOR READING THROUGH TILL THE END.