

IS IOT THE NEXT BIG THING AND ARE WE READY FOR IT?

Relevant for: Science & Technology | Topic: Robotics & Artificial Intelligence

We have become accustomed to digital technology, which has made our lives easier, more convenient and comfortable. Our smartphones, coffee machines, headphones, wearable devices, bluetooth trackers and smart door locks are already impacting and reshaping our daily lives, and we need to be prepared for various such innovations.

Consider, for instance, what connected devices can do. Our alarm clock that rings at 5am will alert our coffee machine to start brewing coffee. Or our office vending machine will know when it was running low and automatically restock itself. On a broader note, the Internet of Things (IoT) can help improve the efficiency of things, thus refining the way we work and live.

The emergence of IoT, [artificial intelligence](#) (AI) and machine learning (ML) has started to impact our lives and businesses across industries. Indian farming has gone through a technological evolution in the past decade, becoming more industrialized and technology-driven.

With smart agriculture gadgets and AI sensors, farmers have gained better control over crop and soil management, monitoring climate conditions, predictive agricultural analytics and supply chain efficacies, making it more predictable and efficient.

[AI and IoT](#) not only help in medication adherence, patient monitoring, quality control and biometric security, but also play an important part in making the city efficient.

There are connected vehicles and smart roadways providing real-time updates on traffic, transit and parking data to improve efficacy and reduce congestion. They also help implement waste management solutions.

IoT, AI and ML are ideas that are proving to be the pivot of a digital revolution. Even today, we still find the internet largely being a person-to-person connection and electronic devices merely playing the role of passive facilitators. A recent Gartner Inc. survey said by 2020 the relationship will be multi-directional and multi-dimensional—from people to people, people to devices, and devices to devices.

It is clear “The Next Big Thing” is IoT. Unfortunately, not all consumers can imagine its impact except those who are keen observers or technology experts. India’s supplier ecosystem is evolving at a rapid pace with original equipment manufacturers and service providers developing end-to-end solutions, including usage-based insurance, cold chain and those for infotainment.

Besides touching every aspect of life, IoT also brings people, processes and devices closer to each other. At the American Enterprise Institute, Bill Gates insisted that the mindset of the government and people has not adjusted to view the future so far, even though technology is exploding in this decade.

IoT has become a critical part of an enterprise’s digital strategy and every business is keen on leveraging it. The IoT universe churns data and numbers to provide optimal service and value. Security plays a key role not only to protect physical assets, but also to protect vital information. Security weaknesses are raising concerns as interconnection of physical assets with critical data on the internet raises risks of theft and frauds.

In India, the “Connect India” strategy aims to create a robust digital communication infrastructure to connect the entire nation. The government believes it will not be enough to just provide a robust communications network. The country should make greater strides to nurture technologies such as IoT, AI, ML, and also other new technologies. The National Digital Communications Policy 2018 is a good move to build the country’s information and communication infrastructure.

While India adapts to this evolving world, even in its current state, IoT can confer key benefits and provide an invaluable head start to organizations adopting this technology optimistically.

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