

IBM Cloud Helps Pace Automation Ltd. transform local 'Kirana' stores into e-tailers

RetailSmart™ powered by IBM Cloud to deliver convenient online shopping experience to 'Kirana' store customers across India

Bengaluru, India - 23 Mar 2017: IBM (NYSE: IBM) and Pace Automation Ltd., a leading 'Solution as a Service Company' announced a strategic partnership to offer '*RetailSmart*', an end-to-end fully integrated solution that will enable local 'Kirana' (unorganized) stores to become ecommerce ready. Powered by IBM Cloud, the solution allows Kirana stores to deliver a convenient online shopping experience to consumers and pay safely using a convenient payment mode (irrespective of the size of the purchase).

According to industry reports, the current number of Kirana stores in India is pegged to be at 15 million*. These stores have been facing tremendous headwinds from the organized retail and ecommerce companies. Attractive product presentations, discounts and cash back offers have led consumers to shop online while saving both time and money through these ecommerce portals. In addition, with the government's demonetization campaign, it is imperative for Kirana stores to go digital.

To bridge the gap, Pace Automation Ltd. has developed a unique solution, 'RetailSmart' on IBM cloud to digitally enable Kirana stores across the country. By implementing the solution, a Kirana store automatically becomes a part of the SmartKirana Network, hosted on IBM Cloud from Chennai datacenter. The network digitally interconnects all Kirana stores in the country. Customers can easily access the network of Kirana stores in the neighborhood via smartphone app on Android available on Google Play Store or a web portal www.smartkirana.in. Initially, the service will be available in Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Kerala and National Capital Region and will be gradually expanded to other states and rural areas via network of distributors.

The solution will also give these stores an immediate access to ecosystem partners in banking, communication, insurance, payment processing and National product data repository. It enables the Kirana stores to:

- Automate business processes like billing, stock management and accounting with increased efficiency and profitability
- Receive online orders from customers through a web portal or smartphone app
- Accept all credit / debit cards, mobile wallets, Aadhar enabled payments or UPI, irrespective of the value of the transaction thus making the transactions Cashless.
- Put all transactions through the system creating transaction transparency, an integral aspect of GST compliance
- Provide micro banking and value added services to customers generating additional revenue streams

"The objective of this project is to digitally empower Kirana stores and help them scale business by adding new revenue streams. For this we have tied up with series of partners to create a successful business ecosystem

for Kirana merchants. Our target is to bring 1,50,000 local grocery stores to the network in the next three years and allow customers to order their groceries online from the nearest Kirana shop. IBM is our technology partner that enabled us to develop and seamlessly deploy the solution on the Cloud. RetailSmart connects all the Kirana Stores across the country in its network digitally through the communication Ecosystem partner. This project is a win-win for all the stakeholders involved - Kirana stores, Manufacturers and Suppliers of goods and the end use customers” said **SG Chandru, Chairman & Mentor, Pace Automation Ltd.**

Mukul Mathur, VP, Global Business partners and CSI, IBM India/South Asia said, "We are excited about partnering with PACE in their efforts to digitize the unorganized Kirana stores and transform them into organized retail, leveraging the IBM Cloud and Cognitive solutions. IBM cloud is open by design, offering a set of tools, flexibility and agility that helps organizations of all size and developers to easily translate their innovative ideas into technical solutions and business models. This tie-up is an extension of IBM’s commitment to the ecosystem and a great example of how our joint solutions reach deep into the SME segment making the vision of Digital India real.”

Powered by IBM Cloud, the solution is fully integrated end-to-end consisting of a custom -built hardware, an intuitive application software, backend / payment processing engines. A physically separated disaster recovery system ensures business continuity.

PACE has also developed and implemented several solutions on IBM cloud across verticals for retail sector. ServeSmart is the flagship solution of PACE to automate the operations of restaurant retail business and has automated Café Coffee Day (CCD) operations in 2004 when they had just 90 outlets which has grown to 1800 plus outlets today. PACE now provides 'ServeSmart' services to more than thirty five hundred restaurant outlets of various leading restaurants in India. PACE hosts all its solutions on an IBM – IaaS Facility at Chennai and at Singapore to provide disaster recovery and business process continuation.

About IBM India: For more information on IBM India, please visit <http://www.ibm.com/in/en/>
