

Top Networked Society Cities

Ericsson's Networked Society City Index ranks cities and measures their information and communication technology (ICT) maturity in terms of leverage from ICT investments in economic, social and environmental development. Stockholm topped the ranking with Delhi and Mumbai coming at the end of the ranking of 40 cities.

Predictions of the Report

- People power will drive urban development
- GDP will be redefined to capture new scope of growth
- Collaborations will change organisations



Rankings

PHOTO-OP



PAY WITH YOUR PHONE: DMRC MD Mangu Singh at the launch of Top Up (Recharge) facility through SMS for smart card users in New Delhi on Thursday. -PTI

TWEET OF THE DAY

Fastest way to grow tech ecosystems: help investors make smarter decisions at the same rate founders build cos
PAUL SINGH @PAULSINGH

TALKING TECH

Moving Camera Automatically Tracks Suspects

Researchers have developed a new technology that automatically tracks and identifies people across moving and still cameras by giving each person a unique colour and number. Engineers at the University of Washington developed a way to track people by using an algorithm that trains the networked cameras to learn one another's differences. It first identifies a person in a video frame, then follows that same person across multiple camera views. -PTI

For NextGen Startups it Pays to Ride the Brand Wagon

Startups now spend big bucks on creative agencies to improve brand value, expand customer base, attract investor attention and enjoy better recall

Shonali.Advani@timesgroup.com

Bengaluru: In a fast evolving ecosystem where startups battle against odds to grab the attention of all and sundry, branding has become a critical component of the business plan. Startups these days are strategising from the start to create a strong identity for their products or services, to reap long-term business rewards. Creya Learning, Soothe Healthcare, and Giftingnation.com are some examples of companies that have designed a branding exercise since its inception and have not hesitated to spend bucks on creative agencies. The results, entrepreneurs said, are manifold ranging from increasing customer base, attracting investor attention and better recall value in respective fraternities. Education startup Creya brought on board Idiom Design and Consulting as branding partners early into their journey. "All of us three founders had divergent ideas. Idiom helped us crystallise our ideas

and thoughts on what our brand stands for. They gave us alternatives to pick up from," said Datla V Reddy, coach and co-founder of Creya. "We've got a high recall value in the fraternity and we come across as different to others. Opening doors has become that much easier with customers," Reddy added in the context of benefits to branding. Similarly, for Bengaluru-based Giftingnation.com, a discovery portal for gifts, branding was important to break-free from clutter in the sector. "It's crowded with pricing and aggressive marketing strategies," said Srinivas Mothey, managing director, Giftingnation, which started its branding activities six months into launch mid last year. "We wanted to make gifting relevant 365 days of the year and move it from occasion-led to moments," Mothey said, who hired Propaganda India, an advertising agency in the city for the same. The portal now gets 2,000 unique visitors daily, up from 500-600 and has 34,000 Facebook likes. "Our stickiness has increased. Repeat

Image Matters

- Startups are including branding as part of their business plan
- They are strategising from the start with an intention of creating a strong identity

Examples of Startups

- Creya Learning, Soothe Healthcare & Giftingnation.com

Advantages

- Increased customer base
- Attract investor attention
- Increased vendor base
- Better recall values

users have gone up too without mailers. We've also been able to build personalised relationships with customers," Mothey said. More importantly, branding has increased its vendor base and has caught the attention of biggies like Park Avenue, Cadbury's, and Manchester United who have approached them to stock merchandise on the site. About 20 of its 100 vendors are big brands, Mothey said. "The process of branding isn't just about looking good but should mirror the character of a business. The image should depict

where you want to be, or what you've achieved or where you are," said Reshma Thomas, partner, Purplemango, a creative agency in Bengaluru specialising in branding and design and has worked with startups too. The big picture here is perception of a brand in the eyes of investors, as seen in the case of Noida-based Soothe Healthcare, makers of low-cost sanitary napkins Paree, and online youth apparel company CampusSutra.com. Dhiraj Agarwal, founder and CEO of CampusSutra.com that's in

talks with investors to raise \$2 million in funding, said the prototype of a new and improved website has resonated well with investors. The company hired Propaganda India, a five-year-old advertising firm in Bengaluru for branding initiatives that included website revamp. "There's a much better understanding of what our business is now," Agarwal said. For Sahil Dharia, managing director of Soothe, building brand Paree was important to connect to his target audience, which is women aged between 14-30 years in the ₹1.5 to ₹5 lakh household income bracket. "The primary thing is to address a huge market. Branding would be the right way to connect to make Paree a lifestyle choice," Dharia said, whose branding activities were based on TG insights that came out of extensive market research. The efforts paid off well as the company's been approached by strategic investors interested in taking the brand forward and has been commanding valuations 10x of current revenues. Soothe will close FY14-15 at around ₹3.5 crore,

Dharia said. "We have been approached by market players who are telling us to expand Paree into a personal care range," he shared, adding that they will be introducing deodorants to Paree's portfolio. Priya Jayaraman, co-founder and business director of Propaganda, who has worked with a myriad set of startups, including CampusSutra and Giftingnation, said most companies come on board as clients at pre-investment stage or when just funded to ensure that the entrepreneur's vision is depicted correctly. "That's the juncture when the brand can scale up. It takes a while to reach customers, however, having a brand and vision helps everyone in the startup come on the same page, hire, and build philosophies internally that resonate with their vision," she said. Other startup clients include social enterprise Drihti Eye Hospital, and six-month old mobile payments startup, Momoe. "Before you think about branding, you need to make sure your brand is defined. Give time to formalise the entity itself," Thomas advised.

\$6million

The amount raised by energy-saving chip maker Indice Semiconductor in a Series A round.

TechBUZZ

Flipkart Teases Nexus 6 Launch



Google's latest flagship devices, Nexus 6, is one of the most awaited phones of this year. Google chose to see the Nexus 5 only on the Play Store initially before a wider roll out. But with the Nexus 6 being built by Motorola it looks like the phone will be sold on both Flipkart and the Play Store. Flipkart teased the phone launch on its social media channels on Thursday, so it looks like the launch is not far away.

Facebook Launches Video Tool

To push more users to share videos, Facebook has launched a personalised video creation tool. The 'Say Thanks' tool lets users put together personalised video cards combining preset themes and their own posts and photos. This allows users to make shareable, customised videos to post on theirs and their friends' timelines. Visit facebook.com/thanks, to select a friend to generate preview of a video. - IANS

'iPad Pro' Has Been Delayed, says Report

It looks like Apple's 12.9-inch iPad has been delayed. The heavily-rumoured large-screen iPad, sometimes referred to as an "iPad Pro," was initially reported to be launching in the first quarter of 2015. A new report from KGI Securities analyst Ming-Chi Kuo says that Apple has faced delays on its 12.9-inch iPad, which will push the launch into the second quarter of next year. - Business Insider

FLYING HIGH Increasing demand for drones in everyday life and the nascent stage of technology help bring industry and academia together

Drone-making Scales Heights on Campuses



Krithika Krishnamurthy & Malavika Murali

Bengaluru: Rohan Verma was still a student when he bagged his first customer, while showcasing at a fest at Goa's BITS Pilani, the unmanned aerial vehicle or drone that he had built on campus. Verma founded the startup Blackprop Tree in Gurgaon soon thereafter and three years on, the 22-year-old is among the prime examples of how university-industry interaction can spur entrepreneurship. "Developing drones was just pure passion. Entrepreneurship was an accident," said Verma, whose company has recorded sales of ₹3 lakh and is looking to tap large companies such as Indian Oil Corporation and GAIL.

Although college projects in India have not traditionally been designed to solve real-world problems, industry and academia are now getting together owing to the necessity of drones in everyday life and the nascency of the technology. Anna University, SRM University and Delhi Technological University are some of the institutions providing the requisite resources to students to equip them to be on top of the game, leading to synergies with industry. "It's a technology that touches both the military and civilian life at the same time. That's why we see industries actively seeking out institutions like ours

ON DRONE USE

It's a technology that touches both the military and civilian life at the same time. That's why we see industries actively seeking out institutions like ours

PROFESSOR SN OMKAR
Chief research scientist, Department of Aerospace Engineering

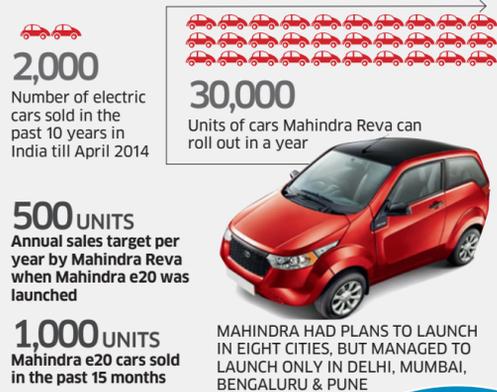
ny Lockheed Martin, which works on sophisticated drones way past its regular hours. In addition to industry expertise, Lockheed Martin has also invested \$450,000 (about ₹2.7 crore) in its UAV research, making it one of the largest-funded projects at an undergraduate level in India. "We have no aerospace department. We continuously sift through tenders and look at what the industry needs," said Divya Tejnani, a 21-year-old mechanical engineer of the university, who spends her extra hours at the lab and submits this project for course credits. What started as a college project in 2009 to participate in an overseas competition is now a continuing passion for Delhi Technological University, which has developed about six UAV models through the years. Tejnani's team develops tactical

UAVs that weigh 37 kg and are capable of flying for six hours - tailor-made for surveillance in urban jungles like Delhi and Mumbai. The team won the third place this year at the global competition in Maryland in the United States, conducted by the Association for Unmanned Vehicle Systems International (AUVSI), where it has participated for the past six years. AUVSI is an industry lobby that promotes civilian use of drones. Chennai's Anna University has been operating three UAVs for the Tamil Nadu Police for the past two and a half years. A team of 12 PhD and graduate students work on core research while post-graduates operate them for the police. Besides, the university is conducting trials with the Gujarat government to aerially survey agricultural fields and has plans to design a course to train the armed forces to operate drones. Professor Senthilkumar of Anna University said that universities have an edge over other companies in the same space, as the latter are always short of cash and talent. By the time, a company bids for a tender and develops the UAV, technology would have advanced to the next level, he said. "But here, at universities, we can continuously redraw plans and work on the latest project since there are always students to work on projects," said Senthilkumar. It is a win-win situation for both companies and the universities. The universities do not incur the manpower costs that plague smaller companies and the students not only get valuable experience but also are grabbed by big companies such as Honeywell and Rockwell Collins.

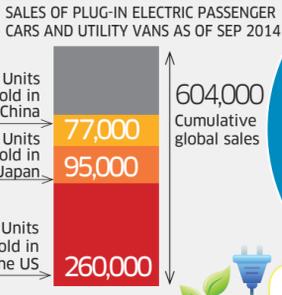
End of the Road?

Whatever happened to e-vehicles? The once ubiquitous 'cute-looking' electric cars are becoming a rarity these days. What happened? While lack of charging points and limited speed options are cited as reasons for the lack of popularity of such vehicles, govt's lethargy in implementing National Electric Mobility Mission Plan will also have to share the blame. **Megha Reddy** looks at the trend in India and abroad

Local sales on a downhill...



But Global Sales are Decent



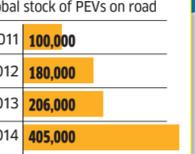
E-Norway

Norway is the country with the highest electric car market penetration per capita in the world. It is also the largest plug-in electric segment market share of new car sales and in March 2014 Norway became the first country where over 1 in every 100 passenger cars on the roads is a plug-in electric vehicle.

Types of E-Cars

- Plug-in electric Vehicle (PEV):** Can be recharged from any external source like wall sockets
- Battery Electric Vehicles (BEV):** They are fully-electric vehicles with rechargeable batteries and no gasoline engine
- Plug-in Hybrid Electric Vehicle (PHEV):** They can recharge the battery through regenerative braking and 'plugging in' to an external power source

PEV Growth in 4 years



Why the Bumpy Ride?

- Inadequate charging support and limited speed options
- Govt's inability to implement the National Electric Mobility Mission Plan, which was to offer subsidies and create infrastructure for e-vehicles
- Cost of electric vehicle ownership is roughly 45% higher than a conventional car

ELECTRIC CARMAKERS IN INDIA

- Ajanta Group
- Hero Electric
- Mahindra
- Tata Motors
- Tara International
- Mahindra Reva Electric Vehicles

B'luru will Develop Ericsson's Telecom Cloud Offerings

Trusting the Cloud

Ericsson says telco applications are unique. The cloud will help telcos have faster rollouts of networks, with lower cost and more flexibility in terms of the hardware they want to use. Ericsson's R&D centre in Bengaluru is carrying out most of the development work.

Varun.Aggarwal@timesgroup.com

Bengaluru: Swedish telecom equipment maker Ericsson is working on creating its own cloud-based solutions for the telecom industry and expects to start running proof-of-concept models in India as early as next year. A bulk of the research and development work on the project is happening at the company's Bengaluru facility. Telecom companies have very different applications and requirements compared with other enterprises, said Nishant Batra,

vice-president and head of engagement practices at Ericsson India. "Teleco applications are unique. We are starting by virtualising their legacy applications, similar to what was done by IT companies. And then we would control those virtualised applications using software-defined network controller," he said. "With the cloud, telcos can have faster rollouts of networks, with lower cost and more flexibility in terms of the hardware they want to use." The flexibility and cost effectiveness of renting storage and software over the internet are driving companies to adopt cloud solu-

tions. And, this increasing demand for cloud computing among enterprises has led Ericsson to look more closely at its applications in the telecom space. Ericsson has been increasing its focus on cloud in the past one year and has a separate division for cloud and IP networks. Fibre cuts, which cause network disruption, are commonplace in cities these days. Ericsson's cloud-based software will be able to detect fibre cuts automatically and divert network traffic through other routes, Batra said. "With this, telcos will not have to invest in too much on the ground to detect net-

work issues," he said. "We want to replicate the success of Amazon and Microsoft in the telecom space. But we still need to learn a lot from them," Batra said. Ericsson's research and development centre in Bengaluru, which houses more than 1,700 people, is carrying out most of the development work, Batra told ET. The company also outsources R&D work to Wipro, Tata Consultancy Services and HCL Technologies, which, put together, employ another 1,800 people on Ericsson's projects. "We are currently building this cloud platform at our R&D facility in India, which is primarily

focused on telecom companies but will also be able to cater to other industry verticals," said Batra. The company is looking at both organic and inorganic growth in the cloud space. It has acquired video cloud storage company Fabrix Systems, cloud billing company MetraTech and picked a majority stakes in enterprise cloud company Apcera in the past one year. It is open to acquiring an Indian company doing innovative work in the space, Batra said. "We are sitting at the hub of innovation. If we find some innovative companies here, then we can look at investing in them."