Information and communication technology (ICT) has assumed greater significance in the IT-enabled service (ITeS)/business process management (BPM) industry as organisations increasingly adopt new technology solutions to deliver better customer experience and improve business efficiency. The digitalisation of businesses has emerged as one of the key trends. Every organisation has created a digital roadmap for the roll-out of next-generation technologies such as artificial intelligence (AI), blockchain, internet of things (IoT) and big data analytics. However, the adoption of these technologies also increases the risk of cyberthreats for enterprises. Jagdish Mitra, Chief Strategy Officer and Head of Growth, Tech Mahindra, talks about the emerging ICT trends...

What role is ICT playing in the ITeS/BPM industry? What are some of the ICT initiatives taken by your organisation?

The increasing internet penetration, right skilling and the launch of initiatives such as Digital India, Make in India and Startup India have together established India as a leading digital economy. While technologies such as AI, IoT, AR, virtual reality (VR), ML, big data analytics, robotic process automation, and 3D printing are becoming mainstream, they are also presenting a formidable challenge to the strong Indian IT industry.

As a leading global digital transformation company, being future-ready is our prime responsibility. As part of our TechMNxt charter, we at Tech Mahindra are leveraging the start-up ecosystem and new-age technology partners to foster a culture of innovation and collaborative disruption by exploring newer technologies and business models.

The digitalisation of businesses has emerged as one of the key trends in the ITeS/BPM industry. What is your digital roadmap?

We have introduced digital in six blocks. These include designing the right digital strategy (business model, process, technology) and implementating a roadmap for the client’s business based on market trends; digitally transforming customer-facing functions of client organisations

across the customer life cycle (sales, service, engagement and marketing, etc.) as well as their internal business and technology operations (finance and accounting, supply chain, manufacturing, etc.) to deliver outcomes such as improved efficiency, better customer experience, lower risk and cost, and higher scale; leveraging emerging technologies to exploit opportunities, incubate disruptive business models and deliver experiences to “tomorrow’s enterprise”; fostering data-driven decision-making by harnessing the power of data, analytics and cognitive technologies to derive actionable and impactful insights; and laying a robust, secure and future-proof foundation for a digital enterprise.

How is your organisation leveraging technologies like IoT, AI and blockchain?

In the digital era, transformation cannot happen with one technology or service line in isolation. It has to be a melting pot of all technologies. Tech Mahindra’s TechMNxt program focuses on the application of trending technologies to solve real business problems. We believe that the application of technology across sectors such as banking, finance, communications and media, healthcare, retail and manufacturing will open up great opportunities in the future. For instance, we are running a program, aLiVe, to ensure 100 per cent AI skilling for the company.

We are constantly collaborating with the industry and academia to encourage innovation and research. We have tie-ups with various universities across the globe such as the University of Nebraska, University of Berkeley, University of Suffolk, University of Sydney and a newly established Centre of Excellence in Canada to usher in the next wave of digital disruptions by promoting collaborative innovation and research programs, and providing experiential learning opportunities to students. We have also set up the Makers Lab in various locations around the globe, where we expose our employees to technologies of the future and allow them to learn, explore and experiment on our premises.

What are the cybersecurity risks faced by the industry? How can these be mitigated?

With increased focus on digitalisation, cybersecurity breaches, such as data and identity thefts and banking and telecom sector frauds, are set to become a big menace for Indian enterprises and government sectors. Many industry reports suggest that India faces the highest number of

cybersecurity threats in the Asia-Pacific region. Organisations understand the need for a robust security infrastructure and are investing in new-age technologies to fight cyberthreats.

In addition to developing cybersecurity solutions, there is a need to train employees in basic security practices such as recognising potential threats and taking precautions. Robust access control mechanisms and IT policies, and regular software checks can further help in mitigating the cybersecurity challenges.

What are the key technology trends that will shape the ITeS/BPM industry over the next few years?

The IT industry is witnessing exponential growth in the use of cutting-edge digital technologies such as blockchain, 5G, AI, automation (chatbots), robotics (cognitive), and IoT. These new-age technologies will make deeper inroads in the Indian and global markets in the years ahead. As the demand for cutting-edge solutions that offer a superior connected experience to end users continues to rise, we will see the emergence of new business models such as platform-as-a-service aimed at better serving customers. Most importantly, there will be a demand for new jobs in design thinking and analytics to name a few. This will require reskilling of the workforce to derive maximum benefits.

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