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Internet of Things

“You Can SIMPLIFY THE IoT For The INDUSTRY To SAVE And MAKE MONEY”

Unlimit is an independent unit of Reliance Group providing Internet of Things (IoT) solutions for the Indian market. Launched in 2016, it has grown from a single employee to an organisation that promises a complete stack of IoT solutions thanks to a 500-plus partner network. Their chief executive officer, Juergen Hase, who was the first employee of Unlimit and coined the name of the firm, shares his thoughts on India's IoT industry and its prospects, in a conversation with Rahul Chopra

Q. How do you see the Indian IoT ecosystem evolving?

A. It is growing fast, very, very fast. There is a lot of work happening around the digital world, in universities, startups and the government sector. Most of the solutions that startups are coming up with are connected to the IoT in one way or the other.

Q. In terms of business, are you seeing growth?

A. For IoT-related businesses to achieve full potential, it will take time. Many believe that the IoT is a low-hanging fruit, which is not the reality. You have to work hard and go step-by-step to make it happen. There are a lot of innovations coming in from young organisations, but the challenge is how to go to market with these solutions. How to make the products suitable for customers, which can include prototypes or field tests. And, this is where you need the combination of these young organisations and deep-pocketed experienced players like Unlimit, Tatas and so on. Only then there will be an opportunity for startups to ramp up and survive.

Q. We often get the feedback that the frequency of proofs of concepts (POCs) is much higher in India as compared to final orders?

A. People want to have a touch-and-feel experience for implementation of the IoT, and this is why we are doing POCs. POCs typically help customers realise the different stages of digitisation, investments and benefits expected on the bottom line. The good thing is these are not prototypes; these are POCs. My impression is that 95 per cent of our POCs will be going ahead to the next stage.

Q. How can your partners create revenue?

A. Most of our partners are part of the value chain of the IoT. Let us take the example of a firm that provides vending machines, but it may not have the scale to do a big project—it will need end-to-end support for deploying the full stack for a large customer.

This is where Unlimit comes in. We work with such firms to fill in the gaps to deploy a complete solution. They know the customer and its pain points, and we become their partner in enabling them to solve the complete problem, than just the one they have expertise in.

It is a win-win situation for all. The customer does not need to knock on multiple doors. The partner gets to expand the scope of the project and Unlimit gets one more project.

Q. Out of the various verticals where the IoT is being deployed, where are you seeing the highest growth?

A. High volume is coming from the automotive sector, especially connected cars. The second area is Industry 4.0. Many smaller projects are coming from transport and logistics as well, such as management or asset management.

Q. In the manufacturing sector, who is the main person to talk to? And, how does the discussion go?

A. That is the reason we start with consulting—to present the business model. You can simplify the IoT for the industry to save and make money. Save money through efficiency and workflow. But if you want to implement the IoT as a full stack into a factory, then you have to do it in the form of PPT (people, process, technology). Technology comes last.

To begin the IoT journey with customers, we have to listen to what they are really doing, what their pain points are, and then make suggestions like from where they can start and where they can go in the future. The trigger happens from both sides—it is a pull-and-push process. We explain to people what is possible and what the opportunities are in the market. At the same time, a lot of customers reach out to us. **EFY**