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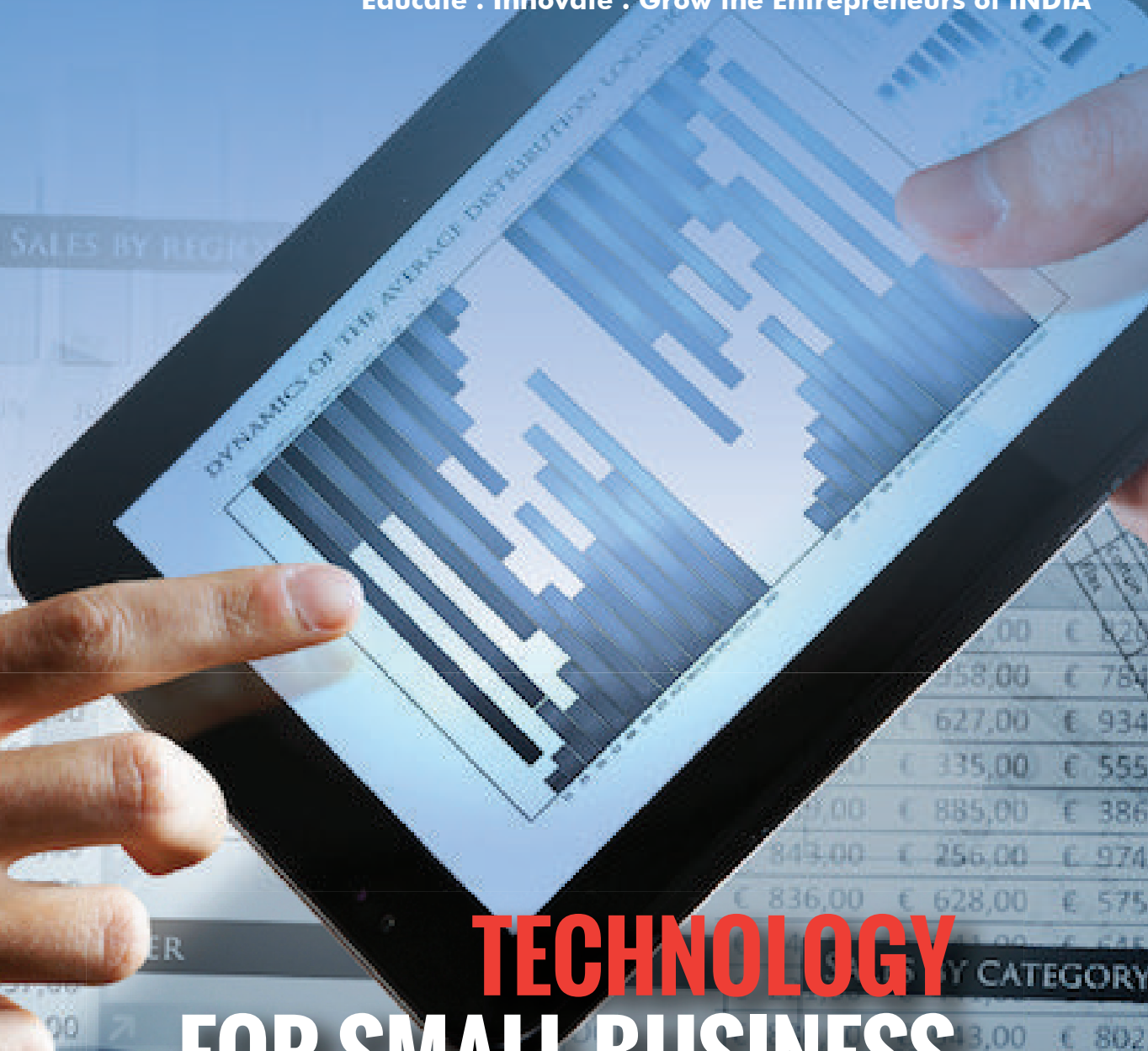
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EDITOR'S NOTE



Dear Readers,

Most updated and appropriate technology is one of the vital aspects when it comes to Small and Medium Businesses. In this edition of September 2017, therefore, we have touched this segment as we believe there will be keen interest among the readers to understand more about the IT solutions for any startup.

Today every technology vendor considers SMEs as an important market segment for them. Still, there is a huge gap in the technology adoption of SMEs as many businesses are not very keen on adopting the right technology. Many SMEs are slow in adopting technology that can increase their efficiency.

In addition, there are multiple misconceptions and myths also as well as mis-selling happening to many SMEs in connection with technology adoption. Many SMEs feel they have no one to look at for tech guidance. The majority of them do not have any dedicated IT support. In fact, there are insufficient resources available in small business communities to help them.

The Sept'17 issue of Small Enterprise Magazine is a Technology Special issue, where we have an insight into various tools, services, and solutions to help SMEs to reach the next level. You can also have an overview of how to get the best IT solution at a reasonable price and avoid miss-selling on top technology brands showcasing their updated SME specific product lines.

This issue will have a complete suite of top technology trends, best gadgets, and equipment for SME offices, best solutions to stay efficient, connected and safe in this competitive ecosystem.

Apart from the cover story, you can have all your regular articles on Success Stories, Women Entrepreneur, Finance, Tax, HR, Marketing, Mentoring, Innovation etc. as well to read.

Happy reading!

Dojo Jose

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Contents

VOLUME-V, ISSUE-VIII, SEPTEMBER 2017, PRICE Rs.100/-



08

MENTORING



08 Searching a mentor for your business

58

MANAGEMENT



58 How to work effectively with remote workers

60

GST



60 Increasing job opportunities with GST launch

COVER STORY



- 10 Technology for SMEs Franchise Agreements
- 12 Big Data for SMEs
- 14 Top 12 Affordable Technologies for Small Businesses
- 18 Latest Technological Trends for SMEs
- 20 How can Virtualization Help SMEs
- 22 Understand Why Increasing Adoption of Cloud Services By SME's Makes Perfect Sense
- 26 8 Critical CRM Trends to Look Out for In 2017
- 28 4 Must have Technologies for E-commerce Ecosystem
- 30 Understand the Need for Web Hosting and its Advantages
- 34 Apps rules the World
- 36 Robust Security Systems -The Reasons SME's Need It Today
- 38 Have you tried 21st Century Communication tools yet!
- 40 Are emails driving you crazy Then this one is for you
- 42 Jugnoo On-demand App
- 44 OfBusiness – Building efficiencies and spurring growth of Small and Medium Enterprises

46 WOMEN ENTREPRENEUR



46 Michelle Carvalho

48 The Benefits of a Traditional and Indigenous Marketplace

50 MARKETING



50 The Shinning Stars of Digital World Programmatic Buying & Native Advertising

54 HR



54 Creating a Monday Morning High – Friday Evening Blues Workplace

56 Bots to the Rescue Advancing HR management systems in SMEs

BOTS TO THE RESCUE

ADVANCING HR MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS IN SMEs



- Godwin Pinto, Business Head at CMSS, Creators of H#, an HR management suite.

Cyper Managers Software Services (CMSS) is the provider of "totally integrated solutions" in the areas of Software Products, Application Engineering and Professional Service. CMSS works on an Ancient Indian work-ethic of "Manasa>Vacha>Karmana", meaning "we commit only to those tasks, which we think we can accomplish and deliver upon our commitment.

The revolution in the human resource management is about to begin, as the HR Bots take over the many simple as well as complex functions of people

management at an organization. The tasks range from a humble reminder of introducing a new recruit to a difficult one like issuing a termination letter, from managing leave calendars to encouraging team culture within workmates on a particular project. As the new technology swiftly replaces actual HR human force, the question remains are they as simple as it seems?

Let's evaluate some real instances that usually takes place in the life of an employee at a typical SME.

Suresh is a mid-level employee working in Vam Energetics, a

medium sized Indian company exporting health essentials globally. His boss treats him like family and his salary is higher than industry average. Now take this some Q and A to evaluate if Suresh is Happy or will he quit the company in the next 6 months.

Is Suresh Happy?

1. Suresh wants to apply for a home loan, but this requires a lot of to and fro with the HR department right from simple documents like salary breakup to queries on how will his HRA get affected once he gets one. Although, HR promptly responds to every query or document request within 24 hours, but the total procedure takes around a couple of weeks. Hence, by this time, the house which Suresh had liked; has been sold. Is Suresh Happy? Yes/No

2. Suresh sees an extra deduction in his salary slip and calls up HR for clarification. This being a year-end, HR is busy with Statutory Tax Documentation of all employees and hence takes time to respond to individual queries. Is Suresh Happy? Yes/No

3. Suresh wants to apply for a leave, but before that he wants to know his pending casual leaves. He has to apply to HR either on email or through a software interface. HR responds to him in a stipulated time. Would Suresh be happier if he got the response instantly? Yes/No

4. Suresh wants to seek clarification if HRA is still applicable if he pays rent to his parents? In response to his query, HR sends him the policy document, which is an exhaustive document of numerous pages, covering each and every aspect of HR Policy from entry to exit. Suresh has to wade through the pool of information before he finds HRA Policy applicable to his level. Is Suresh happy spending his working hours, hunting for policy information?
Yes/No

5. Suresh's friend Tina is being harassed by her Boss and she wants to know what action she should take, but is afraid to confide in someone because anonymity might get compromised. Would it make Suresh happy, if he could point her to a place where she can find out a course of action without having to confide in someone?
Yes/No

6. Suresh wants to refer a friend for a job in his company but with current scenario, he has to refer the friend to HR and then the friend has to follow-up with HR for criteria, available positions, formalities, etc. Would it make Suresh happier if he could tell his friend to chat with his HR on Facebook or Web Chat?
Yes/No

The reality is that, as HR, do not know many employees who are in the same position and more importantly the same frame of mind as Suresh.

Fortunately, these gaps can be bridged by using bot and app plugins, which wrap around existing HCMs making them

more friendly and engaging. The introduction of HR bots, basically interfaces which can allow employees to transact (apply leave, expense, muster, etc) and seek profiled based information from policy documents.

Here is what chatbots such as H# can do;

- 1). Aids Transaction: Apply leave, muster, expenses and approvals
- 2). Profiled based information: Allow information to be shown from policy documents which is pertaining to the logged in user's profile
- 3). Engagement activities: Automate or send manually notifications for employee engagement activities
- 4). Event notifications: Send events like training invites, birthdays and much more
- 5). Snap Surveys: Launch quick surveys for selected employees in department

Few advantages that chatbots provide;

- 1). 24/7 Helpdesk
Having HR helpdesk round the clock for handling HR queries may not be cost effective for SME's. Chatbots can automate responses of common queries that Helpdesk face. In the simplest of form could be resetting the password for a particular application. If at all there is out of the box question, this can surely be passed onto a live helpdesk agent / emailed to HR desk. Further, the Bot can be trained for such cases to be handled in an automated way.

2). Single point for all self-service transactions
The same interface could be used to conduct various HR related transaction, irrespective of the backend workflows each are internally involved in.

3). Transaction to Engagement
Let bot invoke notifications for actions / reminder so that users can act.

4). Simplification of Information
Policy documents, in an effort to maintain clarity may involve lot of content to cover employee's grade / band wise information. Bots can simplify this information by showing / answering contents specific to user's profile. It can be further configured to answer specific questions like "how many maximum PL am I eligible for in a year?"

5). Understanding employee expectations
Due to its open ended conversation format, employees bound to seek information which bot might not be trained for. This helps HR team to identify what processes could be bot enabled
Since User Interfaces (UI) and User Experience (UX) have undergone a sea-change in the last 5 years, especially after social networks have put the spotlight firmly on engaging with the "Human" component, it is expected that HCM should not be left far behind. The possibilities of how a chatbot can ease HR processes are endless and to sweeten the deal, chatbot are now available on Cloud.