



Mobile Applications Bridging The Digital Divide: ICEA-KPMG Report

- 450 million Citizens immensely benefitted through 300 Plus Government Apps
- A key Pillar to the success of the flagship “Digital India” programme
- Can unlock 80% efficiency gains

New Delhi, 9th July 2020: To celebrate the “**Fifth Anniversary of the Digital India**” program, **India Cellular and Electronics Association (ICEA)** along with **KPMG India** releases today a detailed report on “**Contribution of Smartphones to Digital Governance in India**”, capturing various steps and initiatives taken by the Government to encourage and leverage the rising popularity of smartphones for digital governance. India’s push to digital governance is supported by three pillars: Digital empowerment (digital literacy and participation), Digital infrastructure (access, connectivity, digital identity) and Digital services (integrated services available online).

India is riding the wave of digitisation, with the delivery of services to citizens rapidly shifting to digital platforms. With widespread adoption of smartphones running on open operating systems like Android, there are currently more than 300 government applications, which are facilitating essential citizen services, including information dissemination, direct benefit transfers, education and healthcare.

Some of the key insights from the report include:

- India is the fastest growing app market in the world and #1 in app downloads as of 2019. Key services such as education, healthcare, finance, utilities, justice and transport have become more accessible to the general public through mobile applications. Smartphones and e-services can be leveraged by the government to unlock 80% improvement in efficiency and 8x reduction in processing time
- The growth in internet users in India is expected to be driven by rural users, many of whom will use these devices in local languages
- Essential elements for digital governance apps and portals include local language capabilities, offline functionality, low storage requirements and integrations with other governance platforms. All of these features are enabled by open operating systems like Android, with more than 300 essential government services being made available through mobile applications on the Play Store
- Several state governments are also accelerating digital initiatives through select government apps
- Smartphones have also been vital to the government’s response to the COVID-19 crisis, enabling the government to reach citizens across the country through apps like Aarogya Setu, which has more than 13 crore downloads and is available in 12 Indian languages

Mr. Ajay Sawhney, Secretary, MEITY (Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology) commenting on the report launch, “Smartphones have facilitated access to a rapidly expanding range of digitally delivered services through Apps like Umang, Digilocker and Bhim and also through mobile friendly websites. Smartphones are helping transform the lives of Indian



citizens, both urban and rural, through communication and assimilation of information. They are essential components for delivery and improving the effectiveness of e-governance initiatives.”

Mr. Pankaj Mohindroo, Chairman, ICEA (India Cellular & Electronics Association) said, “This momentum towards Digital Governance has various benefits such as increase in efficiency, reduction in processing time and most importantly access to citizens. The prevalence of Open OS in smartphones has greatly facilitated the inclusion of vernacular languages and reduced the time taken to build supporting mobile applications. With the goal to digitally equip and connect every citizen in the coming years, India is utilizing smartphones and technologies to stride towards a truly digital nation.”

With over 450 million smartphone users in India, mobile devices has played a significant role in India’s socio-economic development. The affordability of mobile devices driven by open operating systems and low mobile data rates have led to widespread adoption and use of digital governance services in India.

Growing penetration of smartphones has made online services more accessible for citizens. It has led to a complementary ecosystem of mobile applications, bridging the digital divide and enabling India to become a digitally advanced nation.

About ICEA: ICEA is the apex industry body for mobile and electronics industry comprising of manufacturers, brand owners, technology providers, VAS application & solution providers, distributors and retail chains of mobile handsets and electronics. ICEA is committed to carrying forward its vision of building Indian manufacturing and design in verticals other than mobile handsets while consolidating the gains made in the mobile handset and components industry. ICEA is fully devoted towards improving the competitiveness and growth of the industry by closely working with the ministries of the Government for creating a robust, legal and ethical electronics industry, thereby creating an innovative market environment in the country.

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