

E-Commerce

India is at the cusp of a digital revolution. Internet has become an integral part of the growing urban Indian population. Various factors have been driving this trend, such as declining broadband subscription prices, the launch of 3G services leading to an ever-increasing number of “netizens”, urban India’s changing lifestyle, convenience of online shopping, and changes in the supporting ecosystem.

Although the trend of e-Commerce has been making rounds in India for 15 years, the appropriate ecosystem has now started to fall in place. The e-Commerce market in India has enjoyed phenomenal growth of almost 50% in the last five years.

This is mostly due to such factors as a considerable rise in the number of internet users, growing acceptability of online payments, proliferation of internet-enabled devices, and favourable demographics.

The number of users making online transactions in India is expected to grow from 11 million in 2011 to 38 million in 2015. Venture capitalists (VC) and private equity players have demonstrated their faith in the growth of e-Commerce in the country. This is amply substantiated by the significant increase in the total investments (US\$305 million in 2011 against US\$55 million in 2010).

There are three main modes of online transactions. Consumer-to-consumer (C2C), used chiefly for online classifieds and online travel, business-to-consumer (B2C), mostly in the area of online retail, online classifieds, digital downloads, financial services, online travel, and finally business-to-business (B2B).

There are advantages and disadvantages of e-Commerce. The former include:

- Annual disposable income per household to grow by two-and-a-half times by 2015
- Discretionary spending expected to form a major portion of expenditure in India
- Proliferation expected in the sales of PCs, tablets and smartphones
- More Indians’ increasing time spent online
- Probability of growth in internet user base, mirroring that of the voice user base
- Volume and average value of transactions higher for credit cards than debit cards
- Increase in the number of payment options

while the latter are as follows:

- Low average broadband speed and flat average internet speed cause for concern
- Online payment landscape marred by low penetration of credit and debit cards
- High failure rate of online payment transactions

Ex. 1 Find the words or expressions in the text which mean the following:

- 1) a turning point that marks a new trend: _____
- 2) to introduce a product to the market: _____
- 3) an increase / a spread: _____
- 4) job and other advertisements: _____
- 5) the group of permanent users: _____
- 6) the amount of financial operations: _____
- 7) a reason to be worried: _____
- 8) a large percentage of unsuccessful events: _____
- 9) troubled by: _____
- 10) insufficient presence on the market: _____
- 11) sufficiently evidenced: _____
- 12) people who are comfortable using the Internet: _____

Ex. 2 Match the expressions from the two columns into logical collocations:

- | | |
|------------------|--------------|
| 1) a digital | a trend |
| 2) to drive | a growth |
| 3) declining | demographics |
| 4) to fall in | revolution |
| 5) to enjoy | equity |
| 6) favourable | place |
| 7) venture | income |
| 8) private | capitalists |
| 9) disposable | spending |
| 10)discretionary | prices |

Ex. 3 Provide English equivalents of these expressions:

1) uznaniowy	7) wprowadzić usługę
2) kapitał prywatny	8) odzwierciedlać
3) przedsięwzięcie	9) płatności elektroniczne
4) korzystna sytuacja	10)średnia
demograficzna	11)inwestor dostarczający
5) dochód rozporządzalny	kapitału wysokiego ryzyka
6) być siłą napędową jakiegoś	12)niewystarczająca obecność na
zjawiska	rynku

Grammar corner...

In one of the bullet points relating to the disadvantages of e-Commerce in India, you have seen this sentence: Low average broadband speed and flat average internet speed cause for concern. Since you know the rules of English grammar, you have probably noticed that there is something missing here. We should either say ... cause concern OR are a cause for concern. However, this was not a mistake, but rather a stylistic measure. Sometimes, in order to sound more concise (i.e. short and sweet) or to increase formality, we drop some parts of sentences. This stylistic trick is also used by journalists in catchy headlines. What we usually drop is function and grammatical words like articles (e.g. a, an, the), prepositions (e.g. at, in, on), and auxiliaries (e.g. do, did, have, had). It takes a bit of practice to recognize what can be dropped, which you will have a chance to do in the exercise below.

Ex. 4 Develop the following into FULL sentences:

- 1) Murder investigation team baffled. =>
- 2) Man held over London burglary. =>
- 3) Tax cut vowed by government. =>
- 4) Protest rally organizers apprehended. =>
- 5) Protesters to meet President Tuesday. =>
- 6) Advertising agency in million-dollar merger negotiations. =>
- 7) Prime Minister announces resignation. =>
- 8) Laid off bankers lining up at soup kitchens. =>
- 9) Young employees to be affected if minimum wage voted. =>
- 10) President to resign following scandal. =>

GLOSSARY	
at the cusp of	u progu
to launch a product	wprowadzić produkt na rynek
a proliferation of	rozprzestrzenianie się
classifieds	ogłoszenia (np. o pracę)
user base	grupa stałych klientów
the volume of transactions	ilość przeprowadzonych transakcji
a cause for concern	podód do niepokoju (np. inwestorów)
failure rate	odsetek niepowodzeń
a market marred by something	rynek borykający się z problemem
penetration of the market	obecność produktu na rynku
amply	należycie / obficie
netizens	osoby sprawnie posługujące się internetem
to drive a trend	być siłą napędową pewnego zjawiska
favourable demographics	korzystna sytuacja demograficzna
venture capitalists	inwestorzy dostarczający kapitału wysokiego ryzyka
private equity	kapitał prywatny
disposable income	dochód rozporządzalny
discretionary	uznaniowy / według uznania
to vow	przysiąc / przysiąc
a protest rally	manifestacja / protest
to apprehend a person	ująć / aresztować osobę
to substantiate something	udowodnić coś
to be baffled	być skonfundowanym

ANSWER KEY:

Ex. 1

- 1) a cusp
- 2) to launch a product
- 3) proliferation
- 4) classifieds
- 5) a user base
- 6) the volume of transactions
- 7) a cause for concern
- 8) a high failure rate of
- 9) marred by
- 10) low market penetration
- 11) amply substantiated
- 12) netizens

Ex. 2

- 1) a digital revolution
- 2) to drive a trend
- 3) declining prices
- 4) to fall in place
- 5) to enjoy a growth
- 6) favourable demographics
- 7) venture capitalists
- 8) private equity
- 9) disposable income
- 10) discretionary spending

Ex. 3

- 1) discretionary
- 2) private equity
- 3) a venture
- 4) favourable demographics
- 5) disposable income
- 6) to drive a trend
- 7) to launch a service
- 8) to mirror
- 9) online payments
- 10) an average
- 11) a venture capitalist
- 12) low market penetration

Ex. 4

- 1) The team which is conducting the murder investigation is baffled.
- 2) A man was held over a burglary in London.
- 3) A tax cut was / has been vowed by the government.
- 4) The organizers of a protest rally were / have been apprehended.
- 5) The protesters are scheduled to meet with the President on Tuesday.
- 6) An advertising agency is participating in the million-dollar merger negotiations.
- 7) The Prime Minister announces his resignation.
- 8) The laid-off bankers are lining up at the soup kitchens.
- 9) Young employees are supposed to be affected in the minimum wage is voted.
- 10) The President is expected to resign following the scandal.