

Registrars–Impact of technology



V.Ganesh
Chief Executive Officer
Karvy Fintech Pvt.Ltd.

Introduction

We live in a technologically advancing age and it is one of the key drivers of long-term economic growth. Corporations are introducing high-end technologies in order to improve efficiency with an aim for higher return on investment. Advancements in information technology, robotics, and other promising

technologies emerging out of the science offer the promise of increased productivity and therefore economic growth in the years to come.

Over a long period of time, technology tends to promote productivity, competitiveness and economic growth, all of which contribute to growth. Introduction of any new technology has diverse consequences. The impacts can be seen in the ecosystem in which the new technology is embedded.

Ultimately, the key to success is to be able to marshal and capitalize on Machine Learning and Artificial Intelligence capabilities to deliver more value and service to customers. Increased digitalization and automation is expected to significantly affect both the quality and quantity of jobs.

Technology and Jobs

New job types are changing the nature and conditions of work by altering skills requirements and replacing traditional patterns of work. At the same time, new technologies are affecting the functioning of labor markets and challenging the effectiveness of existing labor intensive institutions, with far-reaching consequences.

To begin, low skilled, repetitive jobs have experienced decline. Machines developed out of technology do better quality work than people. People tend to make mistakes, machines do not. People get tired, machines do not. People think and act slowly, machines do not. Technology is advancing so fast, people are falling behind because their skills and organizations aren't keeping up with the pace of technology. Hence, they are displaced by these advancements.

However, such assessment tends to overestimate the potential adverse effects of automation by focusing exclusively on the technical substitution of labor. They ignore whether the investment in new technologies is at least as profitable as existing labor-intensive alternatives.

Future automation is unlikely to destroy complete occupations but will rather change the types and number of tasks in most occupations for instance, from over the counter job to a specialist or advisor.

Registrars and Technology

In the early 80's - 90's the job of a registrar for any IPO was completely paper based. From sending out notices to potential investors, collecting the paper forms, updating a physical register with information's received and maintaining the records of sale, purchase and Updation of investor information were all dependent completely on a human being. The competence of the human decided the quality and quantity of work. Many veterans of the industry will tell you stories of burning the midnight oil to meet a 70 day turnaround time for any or all actions.

Enhancements in technology demanded the time to be reduced to 30 days. Come 2019, the industry was working on a 6 days turnaround and by the end of Jun'19 the target is to achieve a 3 days turnaround for all most all or any actions that needs to be addressed. The only reason this was possible is because of the adaption of new technology by the registrars of the world in order to store, manage and analyze data on a real time basis.

The whole ecosystem of customer engagement underwent a drastic change facilitated by Human experience and machines. Customers now have the capability to engage with a Registrar from the comfort of his home or office via the use of mobile applications or websites like KPRISM, NPS, KFINKART etc.. They had all the information that they needed on their palm to make decisions, course correct or interact with experts. They were no longer required to remember important dates, as the applications serves as a personal assistant. Self servicing platforms reduced the turnaround time for any resolution. 90% – 95% of the information is in electronic format which has made the transfer or transmission of data quicker.

The end customer only sensed a change in services being provided while the registrar saw a paradigm shift in the way work was being handled. Technology brought the investor more closer to a RTA. This was unthought-of in mid 90's even though technology was still available then.

So what changed?

Brick and mortar moved to online through ecommerce. An example would be the advent of door step delivery of almost everything that can be transported. Technology bought the market place right into a consumers palm top. It empowered a consumer to change the ecosystem of convenient consumption on the click of a button or a touch on screen.

KARVY as a Registrar created channels through which an investor can view, keep track and interact. Buying,

selling and settlement processes became convenient. Video streaming of large events like AGM, being able to participate through e-Voting and Instapoll, communicate with Board Members, gave the investor a sense of being a part of the action.

Employees servicing the investors also were enabled by technology to provide better, faster and superior services. Creation of a singular CRM tool made it easier for the organizations to keep a check on the footprints of an Investor from all aspect, be it sales, service or any other engagement. The employees felt more empowered with the availability of all information's on their fingertip to be able to assist and serve better.

Big decisions have been taken with respect to investments in technology, investment in people and creation of a harmony where both machine and human existed. Acceptance and adaptability would get questioned with every foot forward. What is in it for me was the question that everyone wanted an answer for.

The future holds great potentials for organizations willing to take the risk. From simple excel based macros to Robots that can sense emotions of a customer are all

available in the market place today. Technology is merely an enabler or a tool with its potential impact in this new era of doing business. Registrars need to align themselves to the market place around them or else there are other big players like Google and Amazon, who will replace them in future.

A road map is created with a defined objective of what aspects of the emerging technology needs to be adopted. How it will be integrated with the existing architecture and implemented. Intangible benefits like reduced turnaround and enhanced CSAT will define the success or failure of all organizations.

Both employees and consumers have to be made future ready. The business model has to be elevated from a service based model to a platform based model. Applications that can sit on the palm of a consumer and allow him to interact with a person who can address the emotional and business aspect will be the norm. A RTA can no longer stay in the shadow of an organization whose shareholders or investors they serve. They have to come out of the cocoon and spread its wings to reach out to the investor.
