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Huge Expectation
After the Tumultuous
Year 2020



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Home Audio Segment

**Growing at
Rapid Pace**



Manvendra K Chandola
CEO, Riversong India

Mani B
Product Manager, Audio
Business, Sony India

Pawan Kumar
CEO of Elista

Mukesh Taneja
General Manager (Sales),
Intex Technologies



Sanjay Kalirona
CEO at Gizmore

Achin Gupta
Country Head-India, ZOOOK

Shailesh Prabhu
Country Head, TPV
Technology India Pvt. Ltd.

Ajay Arora
CEO, Matata



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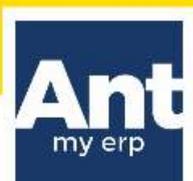
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Editor's Note

Dear Readers,

According to Market Research, Global Home Audio System Market is growing at a faster pace with substantial growth rates over the last few years and is estimated that the market will grow significantly in the forecasted period i.e. 2019 to 2026.

We at DeviceNext started our 1st Edition of 2021 with Home Audio Market which is showing huge opportunity in Indian market.

One major reason is the Pandemic, which gives the home entertainment segment a huge boost as consumers now a day enjoying movies, games and sports indoors.

According to Market Research, Global Home Audio System Market is growing at a faster pace with substantial growth rates over the last few years and is estimated that the market will grow significantly in the forecasted period i.e. 2019 to 2026.

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One major reason is the Pandemic, which gives the home entertainment segment a huge boost as consumers now a day enjoying movies, games and sports indoors.

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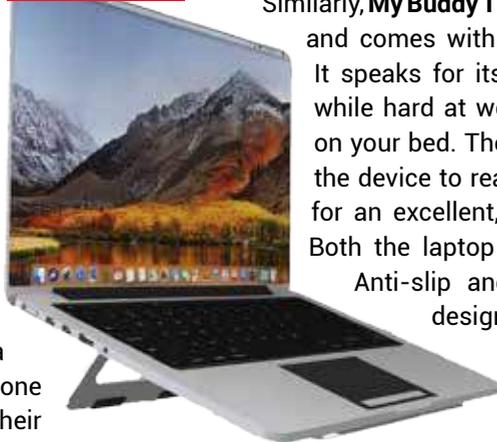
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Portronics My Buddy K2 and My Buddy T Laptop Stands are super lightweight, foldable, & portable, and can easily fit into almost all bags. Hence, people can set-up their workstation anytime, anywhere they go.

The **My Buddy K2** is crafted with **Aluminum alloy and Silicone** material, with 7-level adjustments that allows you to choose the correct angle for yourself. Be it a casual binge-watching spree, deep-focused work, a conference call, or even a cup of tea, one can choose from 7 height levels as per their

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convenience, minimizing the risk of injuries and fatigue.

Similarly, **My Buddy T** is built with **Aluminum alloy**, and comes with a **single-level adjustment**. It speaks for itself- improve body posture while hard at work, or even when bingeing on your bed. The ergonomic stand elevates the device to reach your eye-level, allowing for an excellent, customized viewing level. Both the laptop stands are equipped with **Anti-slip and Anti-skid silicone pads**, designed to hold the laptop firmly in place, and **scratch-resistant surfaces** for extra longevity.

Bluei launches compact 10,000mAh ‘THUNDER’

Bluei Thunder power bank with 10000 mAh capacity offers an impressive conversion rate of upto 90%, which makes it a great power source for your gadgets. A 5000 mAh phone can be charged around 2-3 times in a single row on its full capacity. This power bank automatically adjusts its output according to the connected devices. It has more than 300 charges/discharge cycles so that you effortlessly stay connected to your contacts and the world of entertainment for a longer period of time.

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Inbase launches “Boom Plus”

The newly launched speaker boasts of delivering a blasting sound with astounding voice clarity while promising long-lasting battery life. The latest **Bluetooth 5.0** ensures uninterrupted connectivity with any phone. **Boom Plus** is amazingly slim and compact, with **IPX6** ratings, making it water-resistant that allows one to enjoy their favourite music in the rains and even besides the pool.

With a staggering battery capacity of **500 mAh (in-built capacity)**, one can enjoy **4 hours** of play-time. Available in **Splashy Red, Metallic Grey, Olive Green** and **Pacific Blue** colours, **Boom Plus** certainly promises to deliver the punch while jazz up the style quotient with its elegant looks. The speaker is also equipped with an in-built microphone that comes in handy for calling and also houses a **TF Card Slot** and **USB Charging Port**.

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Anker announces Qi-certified 10W Fast Wireless Charging Stand

Powering over 30 million satisfied customers globally, technology leader Anker recently announced the launch of its 10W PowerWave charging stand in India. Designed simple yet sturdy, PowerWave charges most Qi – based phones and focuses on speedy charging for Samsung handsets. Priced at Rs. 1999/- the product is available Online with Amazon along with leading retail stores in India.

Making the work from Home set up a little better, the Wireless Charging stand supports Versatile viewing when at use. Place horizontally to enjoy videos while charging, or go vertical for video conferencing or to use facial recognition technology – all while keeping the power flowing. PowerWave delivers charging power through cases up to 5mm thick – including Otterboxes.



U&i launches New Wireless Neckband “Killer”

With its advanced **Bluetooth Version 5.0**, it can be paired easily with any Smartphone and other devices; an uninterrupted Bluetooth connectivity with a working distance of **32 feet (10 meters)** ensures a smooth music experience without any hindrance. **U&i Killer** comes with **500 mAh** battery ensuring a playtime of 50 hours and has a charging time of 2 hours.

Equipped with Multi-Functional and Volume/Track Control Buttons, Killer neckband offers rich bass HD stereo sound. With passive noise cancellation, it ensures an enriching music experience.

It also boasts of an in-built microphone along with **Google** and **Siri Assistant** features.



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Flix ‘S1 Smartwatch’

Designed with the minimal yet classy approach, Flix S1 features a 1.4 inches QVGA high-resolution display and comes with IP68 water resistance safeguarding the user from splashes or rain. It has a long battery life, that can last up to 7-10 days on a single charge.

The wearable device can be connected to a smartphone using Bluetooth version 5.0. One of the noteworthy feature includes - Find your phone, which helps in tracking the phone right from the watch through the HitFit Pro app. The Hitfit Pro mobile app is available on both on iOS and Android, helping user real time feedback and insightful result analysis.

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MediaTek Selected for Wi-Fi Alliance's Wi-Fi 6E Certification Program

MediaTek announced it has been selected to be on the test bed for Wi-Fi 6E, a new certification from Wi-Fi Alliance for Wi-Fi CERTIFIED 6™ devices with 6GHz support. MediaTek has both an access point wireless solution, MT7915-AP-AX, and a client-side wireless solution, MT7915-STA-AX on the test bed. These two test bed devices support unlicensed operation in the 6GHz and include many advanced Wi-Fi 6 features such as multiple resource unit (RU) sizes for optimal simultaneous OFDMA operation of multiple clients, along with other cutting-edge connectivity features.

"MediaTek has the broadest Wi-



Fi portfolio and is the number one Wi-Fi supplier across broadband, retail routers, consumer electronics devices and gaming with its Wi-Fi solutions that power hundreds of millions of devices every year," said Alan Hsu, Corporate Vice President at MediaTek. "With our access point and client-side solutions as part of the Wi-Fi 6E test bed for the product certification process, we look forward to helping our customers meet the latest connectivity requirements by bringing next generation connectivity features to the products consumers love."

boAt announces "Make in India" Earwear and Accessories

Home-grown audio & accessories brand boAt launches a series of 'Make in India' wired and wireless earphones as well as mobile accessories. Staying true to its commitment, boAt has started its Make in India journey with its top sellers such as Bassheads 100, Bassheads 152 and Rockerz 255 pro. These products will now be manufactured locally and will be available across eCommerce platforms including Amazon, Flipkart, etc. and their website starting 26th January 2021. It's a pleasant milestone that boAt has been eyeing ever since they received \$100



Million USD funding from Warburg Pincus earlier this year.

boAt plans on launching many more products in 2021. This includes launching headphones, speakers and true wireless earphones under their "Make in India" initiative. The brand has been nimble in redrawing its supply chain ever since COVID-19 struck and has been steadily shifting production to India.



itel Mobile becomes stronger with 7 Crore Happy Customers

Taking its success story forward, itel today announced seven crores+ happy customers in India. This milestone comes in less than five years of its operations. The journey from six crores to seven crores has been the fastest for itel so far – in over 6 months' time, which is a testimony of customers' trust, acceptance and reliability on the brand. Customer-centricity, robust distribution network backed with strong service support and localized marketing communication approach are the four key pillars for itel's success story in India.

Since its inception, itel has been instrumental in democratizing technology for all, thereby empowering consumers with trendy technology, backed with affordability and accessibility. itel has equipped, enabled and empowered customers with its magical portfolio over the last few years, aligned with its brand philosophy of 'Har Haath Mein Jaadu'. As it builds on this momentum, the year 2021 will see itel leapfrogging towards its new brand vision 'itel hai. Life Sahi Hai.' The new vision connotes - enjoying a better life with itel's range of products and services.

Goldmedal Electricals launches Suraksha Scheme for Electricians

The health and life insurance scheme announced by Goldmedal Electricals is a first of its kind in the industry and it was made available across India to all dealers, retailers, and electricians who are connected to Goldmedal through the Dhan Barse

app and fulfil some basic criteria. The life and health insurance scheme offers a total cover of Rs. 5 lakhs. This offers a cover-up to a maximum of Rs. 2 lakh for the hospitalization and treatment of all health issues, including those caused by COVID-19. The life insurance cover is Rs. 3 lakh for death caused by COVID-19. The scheme was launched after Diwali and it has received a favourable response from many parts of the country. With all details of the scheme available in the Dhan Barse app itself, affected users can directly contact the insurance company to apply for compensation. So far, over 7,000 people have availed of this scheme.



ASUS announces All-New Commercial PCs

Along with the Be Ahead virtual launch event during CES 2021, ASUS is introducing a wide variety of business laptop, Chromebook, and desktop, including ExpertBook B9 (B9400 vPro), ExpertBook B1 (B1400, B1500), ASUS Chromebook CX9 (CX9400), ExpertCenter D7 SFF and D5 SFF (D700SA, D500SA). The new lineup pushes the boundaries of design and innovation to deliver elevated productivity to business users.

Also, in response to these rapidly evolving trends and the particular needs of devices for younger students, we are going to release a series of education products that deliver child-centric innovation –starting with the all-new ASUS BR1100.

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Trio Digital Brings New Range of 'Make In India' Mobile Phones



The innovation challenge is well accepted and the company is focused to provide the best quality feature phones. Homegrown firm TrioSmart Digital Pvt Ltd on Thursday launched its 'Trio' series of feature phones in India, comprising of T8 Boss, T4 Power, T4 Jazz and T3 Magic. These feature phones

come with features such as dual sim support, large display, big battery, video/Audio player, wireless FM, bluetooth, big torch, auto-call recording and multi language among others. The company also has plans to launch smart phones & accessories, which could be positioned across price ranges in the coming months.

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IN CONVERSATION



BUDGET 2021

HUGE EXPECTATION
AFTER THE
TUMULTUOUS YEAR
2020

Akhilesh Chopra
Sales Director, Bluei

We have many expectations from the upcoming Budget 2021, after the tumultuous year 2020. India now lives in the third spot worldwide when it comes to Startup and MSME's generated economy, the government must think about introducing more tax benefits for startups and MSME's. This is of even greater effect now that businesses are trying to come out of the Covid-19 caused eclipse and work towards economic recovery. Also, as we expect the investment situation to gradually bounce back to the pre-Covid phase, a systematic yet simpler process for raising funds would help attract more foreign investment. This will also have a positive impact on the slow job market and improve the current employment situation.

E-COMMERCE- E-commerce is the backbone of Indian economy for many years and even through the pandemic, its frequent growth should be one of the areas of focus in the new budget. Among other measures, the government should consider reducing GST rates to boost the purchasing power of consumers. This step will not only ensure that e-commerce continues being a positive quadrant but will also help businesses in other sectors significantly curtail expenses and maintain healthier cash flows, which is vital right now.

INTEREST RATES- Small and Medium category Industries must be charged subsidised interest rates of 6%, and 7% on loan respectively as they are the major job creators, while their requirement is very limited 10, 20, and 75% of the total funding under this category. Their volume in percentage is 90, 7, and 3% in the respective category.

RAW MATERIAL- Another major issue faced by industries under the MSME sector is the steep rise in Raw Material prices which are as high as to the tune of 50 to 60% in the last three months. This issue has brought many of the Industries to the brink of closure. MSMEs should smooth the progress through Central or State Industrial Development Corporations to obtain Raw Materials on preferential pricing basis.

EASY IN THE LOAN APPLICATION- There are few hurdles in the current process for a loan application for MSMEs that can easily be addressed by the government. There are many documents that are requested while applying for a loan to prove the credibility of the lender. Most MSME loans are provided without any security, which makes such loans insecure and uneven for banks. While it is beneficial for the lenders as they do not have to bear any losses, it increases the chance of bad money for the banks. Since the security is not required, it leads to confirmation of the credit score of the candidate by the banks and other lenders. In case an individual doesn't have a good credit score, they cannot apply for the loans at all. Even if the loan is authorized, the whole amount is not always given and generally, only 50-60% is sanctioned.

MANUFACTURING- Indian manufacturing needs to become more competitive. For this, the industry and the government must work together. If manufacturing grows faster, the economy will also grow accordingly. The main driver for employment, even in the services sector, is manufacturing, due to the vast aftermarket. The industry is picking up, but there is not much difference compared to, years 2017. Also, the pandemic has provided the center an opportunity to attract global manufacturers and make the country a manufacturing hub emerging as an alternative to China.

While **'Made in India'** devices are not rare anymore, expect these devices to be more Indian than before as companies try to cut the cord with China when it comes to what goes inside these gadgets. India has the potential to put the foundation of a homegrown smart gadgets ecosystem this year, looking well

away from the software part.

The country is already rising as a smart gadgets manufacturing hub because of the large domestic

market.

ATMANIRBHAR BHARAT- The upcoming budget should keep the Atmanirbhar Bharat sentiments in mind while continuing to expand programs and fund allocations in this direction. This comprises further support to local production and supply chains by partnering with local MSME organizations in order to meet demands.



Travel, Music, and Technology:

By Arvind Passey

Travel changes you. So does music. I have always believed that a trek in the mountains is jazz for the nerves, a dip in the sea is pop for the mind, and steps into the diverse cultures

of the world are the ragas that connect life with creative thoughts. And if you aren't already aware, travel and music come together seamlessly through technology. You may call it audio technology or give it any other fanciful title, but it

is rock, folk, jazz, classical, marching band, experimental, and heavy metal with every possible combination possibility including Bollywood hits and other music genres specific to our nation that are forever present to bring out any emo-





tion at short notice.

Talking of emotions, Yasmin Anwar in an article has quoted Alan Cowen, a neuroscientist, who claimed that music tracks capture emotions and goes on to list amusement, joy, eroticism, beauty, relaxation, sadness, dreaminess, triumph, anxiety, scariness, annoyance, defiance, and feeling pumped up as the experiential ways in which music across cultures has been mapped. What this means is that music has the power to enhance a listener's experience of whatever he is doing. There are forms of music that help people focus or concentrate on the work that they are doing. There are forms that can help travel enthusiasts find more meaning during their journey and we know of forms that can bring about a spiritual alignment wherever this is necessary. However, we are focusing on music for the traveler in this article and I must admit that I have noticed lists on Spotify, Wynk, Gaana and other apps that attempt to make travel more enjoyable. For instance, one may not wish to listen to sad Bollywood film songs from the fifties and sixties during long drives. The truth is that technology has been

upped to such a large extent that one does not have to spend hours just finding the right type of music these days. We have the advantage of other technologies as well that bring the right music closer when we need it.

We live in an age of powered speakers that does away with separate amplifier- speaker systems and digital audio transport technology has obviously vastly improved and network control is now in the palm of our hands. These are times when lighter, smaller, and more powerful wireless technology that comes with reliability, reduced costs, and massive storage capabilities is within our reach.

With so much happening in the world of audio, is it even possible to imagine lugging a large and heavy Edison's phonograph for miles up a steep incline to just have a few hours of uninterrupted musical interlude under a clear blue sky?

It must be mentioned at this stage that though technology has made the nuances of musical notes to be carried at all times, we also need to be aware of not allowing betas and rhythms to interfere with the sensitivities of others. I have observed a lot of youngsters

carrying Bluetooth speakers in their backpacks during treks and loud music at such times can become rather unnerving for a lot of others who may be more intent on hearing the songs of bird and the way the wind whistles through the trees. There was a time when people carried transistors with them and then graduated to walkmans and portable CD players and then later on came the ipod and its various clones.

However, we have already entered times when even an inexpensive smartphone is capable enough to store hundreds of songs, if this what a listener wants.

Music isn't any more dependent on hardware specifically meant to store music. There are apps in smartphones that can do all this with just a few swipes and access to ready-made lists makes the task easier. This tilt towards instantaneous access to music has made even device manufacturers realize that smartphone hardware must be fitted with excellence in audio technology and this race has led us to find ourselves in the midst of an avalanche of wired as well as wireless headphones that can bring in all forms of music without making it a source of disturbance for others in the vicinity. So if you see someone with funny button-like things in the ear and no wires coming out, rest assured that it is the omnipresent technology at work. The music lover has more technology to make his life waltz through moments where even ambient sounds from outside can be filtered. This march of technology isn't over yet and I believe what we have is just the starting point in the march to listen to our choice of music any time we want to without making it intrusive.



Home Audio Segment: Growing at Rapid Pace

The home audio segment has continuously evolved over the years; commencing from the large cumbersome speakers for powerful sound to evolving into the sleek and small designs that offer high quality sound for a complete cinematic experience. Streaming music at one's

fingertips is growing at a rapid pace with true wireless audio taking a stand amongst the popular trends. There is always something new around the corner when it comes to the home audio system, manufacturers are delivering high-performance audio systems in sleek and sophisticated packages. The most significant development is

the democratization of home theatre brought by affordable, large-screen, high-definition television sets that display content in combination with super-high-quality audio. Consumers cannot only find remarkably clear and highly impacting sound from speakers today, but they can find them in extremely small packages.



TRENDS OF HOME AUDIO PRODUCTS AFTER COVID PANDEMIC

"Home Audio Segment has an amazing demand in the Indian market and the willingness to spend on some premium Home Theatre Systems has increased with the consumption of OTT cinema's at home. For Indian users, Home Audio has always been associated with loudness and power. People have been homebound in the year 2020 and the awareness for quality speakers has increased than the normal. People don't wish to compromise on the sound quality now and have the leisure of entertainment with top audio quality through Home Theatre Systems that offer cinematic sound experience. Users are not just craving for entertainment but were also looking for devices that could help them work remotely or take online education," explained, **Mr. Manvendra K Chandola, Riversong India**

According to Ajay Arora, Mata-ta, Very clearly, there is huge demand for home audio devices and its becoming better by the day. It has almost been a year since the pandemic took the world by the storm. The lockdown imposed to curb the spread of the pandemic has altered peoples' behaviour as they were confined to stay at home and in-house entertainment was their only hope. Even post the lockdown, the amount of time spent outdoors has been greatly reduced which has further resulted in people seeking entertainment at home. Hence, we are witnessing a noticeable increase in online content consumption through OTT channels and music streaming apps. These home entertain-



Manvendra K Chandola
CEO, Riversong India



Sanjay Kalirona
CEO at Gizmore

ment systems are even more useful with the growing popularity of video streaming services across all platforms. You don't have to go to a theatre for an amazing audio and video experience. According to a report by Tech Mahindra on 'Impact of COVID-19 on Media and Entertainment Industry' theatres are closed, production has come to a halt, advertising has been disrupted, and most importantly, consumption of entertainment at home has been on the rise. 2021 will be the year that will witness the technological advancements in the industry.

■ "There is huge demand for Home audio products as music is something for which craze is increasing with time. As party culture at home is increasing hence demand for Home Audio products," said, Sanjay Kalirona, Gizmore.

"India is increasingly becoming a big market for Home Audio segment. It is already one of the biggest markets for television segment and quite naturally, it must become a big market for Home Audio products as well. However, the penetration of Home Audio products is still lower as compared to televisions. Therefore, there is

a huge potential for Home Audio products to grow exponentially in the next few years. During the lockdown, we witnessed a big spike in demand for Home Audio products. In the first few months after lockdown was relaxed, we had registered growth of over 70% vs same period last year in Home Audio products and this growth could have been even bigger if not for the supply constraints due to supply chain disruption owing to COVID," said, Mani B, Sony India.

"The demand for home audio products has been ever increasing, thanks to the evolving technological innovations in the segment. The Covid-19 pandemic has also had its impact on the demand and supply in the segment. If the trends over the past few months are considered, it can be ascertained that there has been a surge in the demands for earphones, headphones and True Wireless Stereo or TWS devices. A major reason for the same is that people are keener on procuring devices that are of personal use. It is possibly because of this very reason that the demand in the party speaker category has not shown much growth," said, Mr. Achin Gupta, ZOOOK.



"This segment is growing at an unprecedented pace and in the coming few years also, it will keep growing. Home audio is no more a family decision, rather every individual now needs their own personal music device hence the numbers are growing like never before. During Covid, everyone was confined within their homes and work from home and study online became the new normal. This shift has increased the demand for BT speakers," said, Pawan Kumar, Elista.

"Home audio segment is growing at an aggressive pace and will keep growing in the months to come. With people getting more inclined toward the get-together and party culture at home and every room having its own personal music device, the demand is seeing a new peak every month, concluded, Mukesh Taneja, General Manager (Sales), Intex Technologies.

DRIVING TRENDS IN HOME AUDIO SEGMENT

According to Ajay Arora, Matata, "Ever since the lockdown occurred, online workout sessions, virtual challenges have become popular. These individual workout sessions have led to people investing in seamless and hassle-free immersive audio experience, thereby creating a need for technologically superior truly wireless earbuds. Seeing the potential of the TWS, **Matata** launched MTTT28 with superior features such as longer battery life, sweat resistance, better Bluetooth compatibility, enhanced audio quality, and ANC for noise-free listening feature amongst others. There is no denying the fact that entertainment and broadcast sectors will remain the audio market's biggest consumer drivers. Add to this, the rising popularity of house parties in young millennials, have created a lucra-

tive niche for portable, Bluetooth speakers. Speakers are now coming in vibrant colors and have become a style statement. Portable water resistant speakers with AI functionality are trending now and will soon capture huge chunk of this segment. The future definitely will be dominated by AI enabled speakers."

"With increase in demand for home audio segment, we have witnessed some shift within the categories. For example, music devices are not a family purchase anymore, everyone wants their own portable personal device hence the portable BT speaker demand has been growing leaps and bounds. Customer inclination is shifting from hefty multiple channel speakers towards sleek and premium looking sound bars. Trolley speakers are also becoming very popular due to the fact that they are movable / portable with ease. Karaoke

is getting popular in India hence the customer preference is also shifting towards the music systems which can enable the same," explained, Mukesh Taneja, Intex Technologies.

"WFH culture has driven the demand and the numbers have sky-rocketed already. There has been a shift from traditional music systems towards BT Wireless speakers and sleek systems. Smart music devices are also being well accepted and these categories will further grow very fast," said, Pawan Kumar, Elista.

"In the last few months, home audio segment has witnessed a robust growth in demand. Since the pandemic has created a new norm of operating from home, consumers are spending more time on entertainment, personal fitness and wellness through online resources which has heightened the need for home audio products like Soundbars, Headphones and Bluetooth speakers. Further, with the increased consumption of OTT content on apps such as YouTube, Netflix, Amazon Prime etc. consumers are also looking for a cinematic experience with enhanced sound quality at home. Looking at this rising trend, we are working towards addressing consumer needs by launching premium yet affordable tech devices like the Philips TAPB603 Dolby Atmos Soundbar, making the overall high fidelity audio category more accessible. In terms of demand, both offline and online channels are showing good growth post September 2020. Additionally, aggressive promotion by online players have further boosted Headphones and Bluetooth speaker categories," said, Shailesh Prabhu, TPV Technology India Pvt. Ltd.



Mani B
Product Manager, Audio
Business at Sony India

"Pristine sound quality holds the highest bar in the Home Audio Segment and we expect 2021 to withhold a minimalistic approach to this segment, with added focus on Soundbars, Trolley Speakers, compact Bluetooth speakers and none-the-less Tower Speakers will always hold the space in this segment. People have started to prefer Minimal audio equipment with Maximized sound with the space problems and also to avoid the hassle of wires. We designed our Home Audio series keeping in mind the latest trends and technology, and embedded the wireless technologies and touch controls to maximise the comfort level of users. Keeping in mind the upcoming audio trends, Riversong has planned to come up with is series of Soundbars and Trolley Speakers to help people stay connected to music with ease and not sorry about any space consumption problems," said, Mr. Manvendra K Chandola, Riversong India

"With time and need, there are change in trend for usage as earlier people used to have 2.1/4.1 speakers at home which lately changed to SOUND BAR which can be attached with TV, trolley speak-



Achin Gupta
Country Head-India, ZOOK

ers which one can move around in home or outside and small BT speaker for personal audio. Now many speakers are coming with mic where one can play karaoke music. We at Gizmore have complete range on Trolley, tower and Bar speakers," said, Sanjay Kalirona.

"Now that the impact of the pandemic has lessened and we have entered the unlock phases, there have been a few changes with regard to the trends in the sector. The trends that are currently driving the home audio segment are centred around products such as True Wireless Stereo products, party speakers and soundbars. For instance, we recently launched Thunder Bolt - the GenNext karaoke party speaker, Explode 111 - a new multimedia 2.1 speaker system and tower speaker Tornado 101, and the demand for all has been quite encouraging," said, Mr. Achin Gupta, ZOOK.

"Soundbars is becoming a massive growth driver in Home Audio segment. With traditional Home Theatre systems becoming a thing of the past, Soundbars have taken the market by the storm. With more attention to details towards the interiors and aesthetics of their



living rooms, people are preferring Soundbars over conventional Home theatres as they come with lesser cables and offer simple installation. Apart from Soundbars, Party Speakers or One Box music systems is another segment which is driving the growth. Although in 2020, this category was slightly muted due to weaker sentiments towards partying, this was a fast-growing segment till 2020 and we expect this to gain traction in 2021," concluded, Mani B, Sony India

COMPETITION AND DEMAND IN THIS SPACE

"The Home Audio Market is fiercely competitive owing to extensive brands and vendors coming up with diverse ranges of Home Audio products. There is a tough choice between Wired and Wireless for the sound lovers. The new brands launch speakers at

nominal prices to attract customers, and do not pay attention to the quality of features and sound. The premium brands struggle to make consumers understand the difference before experiencing the other systems. Although 2020 has increased awareness of the sound quality, the music lovers and tech-savvy people prefer to buy the best home theatre without compromising on the sound quality. The market is witnessing the change in the Audio segment with increased demand of wireless gadgets and also the need to stay home. The past year has made everyone comfortable at their homes and now Home Audio is helping them witness the cinematic experience without going to theatres," said Mr. Manvendra K Chandola, Riversong India

"The competition in the Indian market has always been tremendous. However, the niche category where we are playing is still be-

ing only by a handful of brands. ZOOOK has always been a pioneer in the audio segment and over the years, the brand has specialized in introducing products that can be considered industry first. Our USP has been coming up with products that offer something new to the consumers in the given segment. As mentioned earlier, the demand witnessed currently is for a wide range of products in the segment, from earphones and headphones to karaoke party speakers," said, Mr. Achin Gupta.

"There is huge competition in every category as both local and international players are there and it will remain there. We at Gizmore are very clear in our strategy and segment," said, Sanjay Kalirona.

"India will always have huge demand for affordable home audio systems which are light on pocket yet packed with features. Quality and after sales service plays a

huge role when coming to deciding about the products. With many domestic and international brands already present in this segment, the competition is huge. However, best products will survive and the market will consolidate in the near future," opined, Pawan Kumar, Elista.

"Of late we are seeing many brands, especially in the low-price segment, enter the market and helping to expand the market rapidly. However, in the Premium segment, Sony is the most dominant brand and we have maintained the pole position year-on-year by launching the most innovative products with best-in-class features. Currently, our Soundbar business is growing by over 50% versus previous year," said, Mani B, Sony India.

"India being a price sensitive market, the competition is and will remain intense. There is huge demand for affordable yet great quality products in the domestic market. Intex being synonyms with speakers, this segment is only growing for us and will remain one of the top categories for our business," said, Mukesh Taneja, Intex Technologies.

"The Audio Interface market is expected to grow from USD 149.02 Million in 2018 to USD 240.2 Million by 2026, at a CAGR of 5.9%. This forecast period, made us realize that this sector has a lot in potential. Matata wanted to come up with the latest and affordable technology for Indian consumers. The Indian market is very vast. We are coming up with new innovative products to give a wide range of options to our customers to choose from. Along with that, they are equipped with the latest versions of the technology which



Pawan Kumar
CEO of Elista



Shailesh Prabhu
Country Head, TPV
Technology India Pvt. Ltd.

makes them stand out from our competitive brands. In this pandemic phase, we have witnessed families investing in soundbars to spend quality time together. People are looking for immersive technologies to recreate the theatre-like experience from the comfort and safety of their homes, thereby creating a need for technologically superior soundbars. To keep up with the passion of constantly innovating, **Matata** introduced MTMS804 Soundbar which delivers a 3D home audio experience in one bar,"concluded, Ajay Arora, Matata.

UPCOMING TREND IN 2021

According to Mukesh Taneja, General Manager (Sales), Intex Technologies, Sleek looks, light-weight portable speakers will see huge demand. With music being streamed through apps mostly, wireless BT connectivity will remain one of the top features in 2021 to look for. Covid and lock down has boosted in-house entertainment hence the speakers with multiple connectivity options will remain on top of the game.

"Dolby Atmos soundbars is

expected to be the new trend in Soundbars. With Dolby Atmos contents becoming increasing available, consumers are looking forward for devices that support the best Audio format for an immersive entertainment experience. Keeping abreast with this new trend, Sony plans to expand its Dolby Atmos range of Soundbars in the Indian market," said, Mani B, Sony India.

"The increased demand of the audio tech has also given a surge to the future demand of superior and premium products. The year 2021 is expected to see a rise in the sale of wireless multimedia speakers with an outstanding battery life which would help them carry the speakers with them while travelling or partying at the home of loved ones," said Mr. Manvendra K Chandola, Riversong India

"Smart sleek looks, multi connectivity and portability will remain the top feature apart from great sound, added, Pawan Kumar Elista.

"The Immersive audio experience is the ability of the speakers/ audio device to create a 3D space wherein people can not only hear sound coming from the source but can also sense the sound coming from all corners. In short, it is

devices that capture and amplify real life that transforms every moment into a supernatural experience. **Immersive audio** is poised to be the future of the audio industry in the coming years. It has the capability to completely revolutionise the way audio is consumed and created today. An increasing number of products and experiences these days are offering immersive audio across segments, but there is still a lot of uncharted territories when it comes to exploring the multiple possibilities this technology has," said, Ajay Arora, CEO, Matata.

"Wireless music and smart speakers is going to be trend along with more play time," added, Sanjay Kalirona.

"This year, we are likely to witness innovations in Alexa-based TWS and speakers. Needless to say, the surge in this segment is expected because of the instrumental lifestyle changes brought about by the pandemic. Apart from this, the segment of powerful party speakers is also most likely to dominate the trends," concluded, Mr. Achin Gupta, ZOOOK

RETAIL OUTLETS VS ONLINE SHOPPING

According to Mr. Achin Gupta, the offline Retail is gradually coming back on track, with shops now opening up and customers returning to the market. However, the fact cannot be denied that the Covid-19 pandemic has given an unprecedented boost to the ecommerce sector. This trend of relying more on online shopping is here to stay and will continue to increase the effect on offline channels.

"Riversong India works in the offline module and believes in of-



Mukesh Taneja
General Manager (Sales),
Intex Technologies

line marketing and works with the objective of giving customers the chance of experiencing the sound and quality of products before investing in them. We are looking forward to expand our distribution channel further in the year 2021," said, Mr. Manvendra K Chandola, Riversong India

"Offline retail remains the biggest channel for this segment as the buying decision is mostly taken after hearing the sound and experiencing it. Online buying is increasing for smaller products or repeat buying but offline still remains the biggest chunk.," said, Pawan Kumar, Elista.

"Shopping behaviour amongst Indian consumers has evolved during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. During the early stages, a large number of Indian consumers were either in containment zones or there were limited options available for making their necessary and discretionary purchases. This led to consumers trying new channels, products and brands, which in turns has resulted in changes to consumer's shopping habits and their path to purchase. The pandemic has accelerated the shift towards a more digital world and



Ajay Arora
CEO, Matata

triggered changes in online shopping behaviours but now things are getting better and people are back to their normal routine. So in coming month we can see demand in retails outlets," said, Ajay Arora, Matata.

"Online /offline is always have their own share . I feel music is all about experience and customer want to listen before buying so speakers are more about offline," said, Sanjay Kalirona, Gizmore.

"For smaller personal music devices, the online has become the preferred mode of buying. However, for bigger products and systems that are connected to TV, consumer still prefers to experience the music before making a buying decision. Hence offline trade still has greater role to play," said, Mukesh Taneja, Intex Technologies.

"Although our sales in online has grown bigger than offline in the last 6-7 months, the demand in offline has also come back similar to pre-Covid level. As product experience is one of the key components of customer purchase journey for Home audio products, offline will remain a main channel for this category," concluded, Mani B, Sony India.

Matata MTMS064: Good Sound for a Budget Soundbar

Soundbars are often seen as a more convenient alternative to traditional home theater speaker systems. As more speakers and sound-enhancing technologies are packed into a soundbar setup, they can get really big. Some soundbars are too wide to keep on your desk underneath your computer monitor or below your TV stand. Smaller soundbars generally don't sound as spacious as their wider counterparts, but their more compact form makes them easier to travel with or set up wherever you'd like.

The Matata MTMS064 – the 2.1 Wired Sound Bar with built-in amplifier and powerful 80W sound output. Redefine your entertainment quotient and enjoy the Surround Sound – meant for great gaming and cinematic experience.

This well-built bar has a slim, rounded design that looks sleek and stylish in any home. It has an easy setup, which allows you to quickly plug-and-play and comes with a full functional easy to navigate remote control. This design

marvel comes with LED display & Wooden Sub-woofer for better acoustics. The classy looks with premium black colour is just what is needed to uplift your surroundings. Optical cable connectivity along with multi-connectivity options such as USB/BT/AUX/DMI-ARC are meant to give you a lag-free experience

While it may look a little simple and unassuming, it has a solid plastic body that feels well-built.

Thanks to its Bluetooth connectivity, you can wirelessly connect to your smartphone and stream audio content.

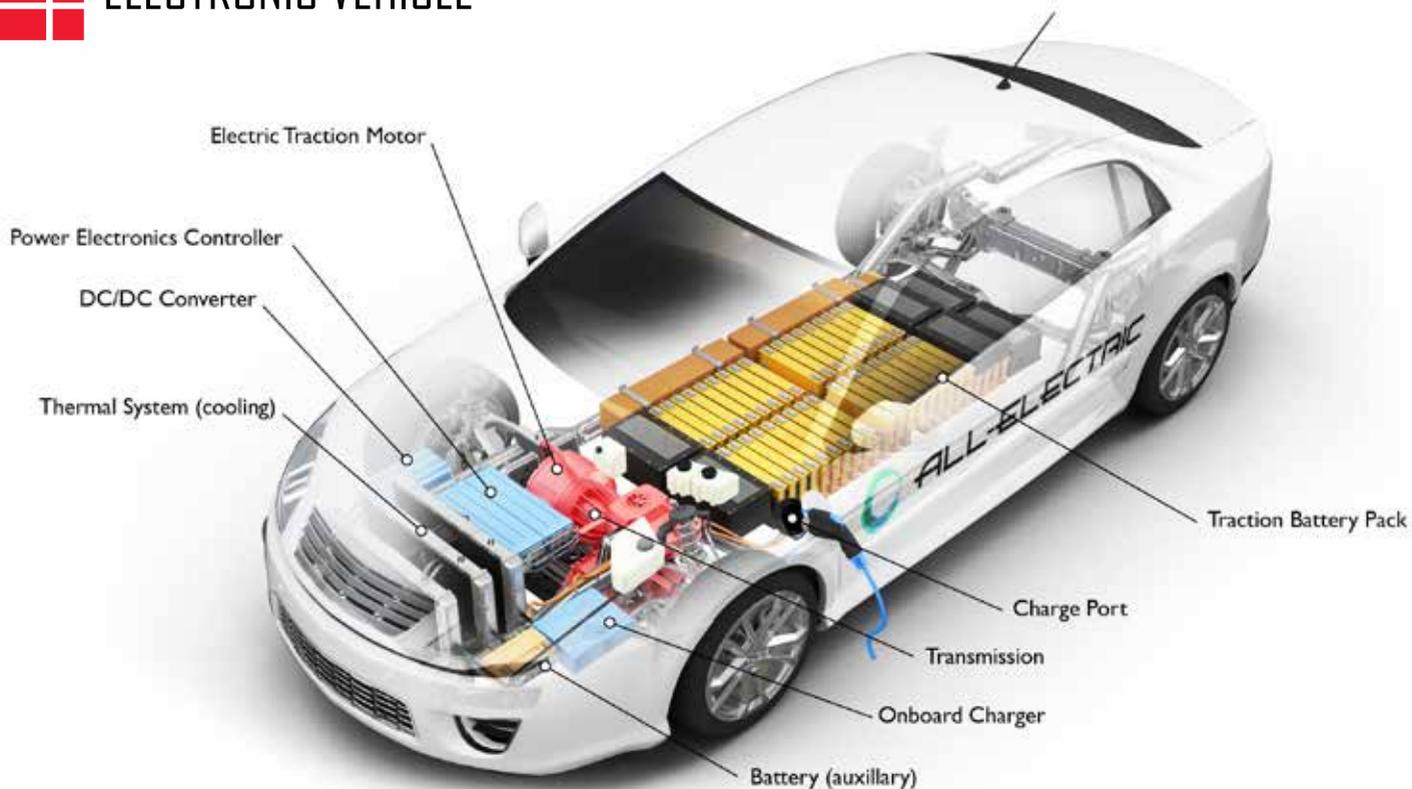
PERFORMANCE:

The Matata MTMS064 – the 2.1 Wired Sound Bar is a good-sounding entry-level soundbar that's going to be far better than the terrible audio coming from your TV speakers. The MTMS064 delivers intelligible dialog and enhances movies and TV programming. The midrange sounds like it is voiced specifically to emphasize dialog. It's highly effective you won't feel it sounds a bit thin. Comparatively speaking, the MTMS064 deliver good sonic satisfaction that we got from the slightly more expensive soundbars that we have recently reviewed.

VERDICT:

The Matata MTMS064 – the 2.1 Wired Sound Bar may have some scope of improvement but it delivers lots of punch and excitement to delight those who want a better movie experience at home.





The Electric Vehicle Boom is About to Kick

Elon Musk is now the richest person in the world—richer than Bezos. And Tesla (TSLA) has gained over 700% in a year, while Chinese Nio (NIO) has soared over 1,300% ... Anyone who didn't get in on those before they were hot shots missed the really big upside ... and even diehard Tesla bulls can't grasp that sky-high valuation ... And there are other EV and EV-related stocks that are just growing their legs and have tons of room to run.

ANYTHING EV AND EV RELATED IS GOLDEN RIGHT NOW

Yes, EVs are golden... A Biden election win and a global push hastened further by a crippling pandemic seal the deal on a \$40-trillion energy transition of which transportation will be the Holy Grail. And while Tesla may continue to surprise us—and the markets, and all the bears and short-sellers who lost \$40 billion betting against the EV king in 2020, it's time to look for the next EV upstart.

Fisker, for one, has all the makings of a Tesla type EV maker. It's got a new idea in the right lane and a legend behind the wheel in the form of Henrik Fisker. And it's not just another EV SUV—it's a vehicle made partly with recyclable parts, a fact bound to ring loudly with all that environmental and social impact money floating around out there dying for someplace to call home. And dying for the next success like Tesla.

The only caveat—which is exactly what makes this a great time to get in early—is that Fisker isn't going to start producing its famed Ocean SUV until 2023, with significant revenues coming in from advance orders not expected until late 2021. That gives Wall Street cold feet ... or impatience. But the bearishness on Fisker reminds us an awful lot of the prior relentless bearishness on Tesla.

Facedrive—one of the most fas-

inating companies to come out of Canada's «Silicon Valley»--is another front-runner for future EV related success. While analysts love the flagship carbon-offset ride-sharing and food delivery side of this multi-vertical tech-driven business, analysts are even more excited about their most recent acquisition of Steer.

Just a year ago, no one could have imagined how successful the NIO Limited (NIO) was going to be. In fact, many shareholders were ready to write off their losses and give up on the company. But China's answer to Tesla's dominance powered on, eclipsed estimates, and most importantly, kept its balance sheet in line. And it's paid off. In a big way. The company has seen its share price soar from \$3.24 at the start of 2020 to a high of \$61 this month, representing a massive 1600% returns for investors who held strong.

In November, NIO unveiled a pair of vehicles that would make even the biggest Tesla devotees truly contemplate their brand loyalty. The vehicles, meant to compete with Tesla's Model 3, could be exactly what the company needs to take control of its domestic market.

Li Automotive (LI) is the newest Chinese electric vehicle darling. Founded just five years ago by Li Xiang, and backed by domestic investment giants Meituan and Bytedance, Li has taken a different approach to the electric vehicle market. Li specializes in plug-in hybrid vehicle. This means it can be powered by electricity or gasoline, or a mixture of both, giving customers a wider array of fueling options compared to its competitors. Its fashionable crossover SUV has been a hit in China, and thanks to its success, it's garnered a lot of investor interest.

[Click here for more information](#)



Products to Keep Your House Clean and Healthy

With the ongoing pandemic, the number of hours we spend inside our four walls is more than ever. Little do we know that our homes are not completely clean and there are traces of hidden dust consisting of Cockroach allergens, dust mites allergens, dog allergens, mould, bacteria and fungi are commonly present in surfaces where we eat, sit, play and sleep. The indoor pollution and dust in our

homes make the safest place also impact our health. While we believe that sweeping and mopping are effective in providing dust free home but you will be surprised to see the amount of hidden dust in our homes after traditional methods of cleaning are applied on regular basis. To clean our houses more efficiently and make our indoor environment safer for us and our loved ones, here are a few house-cleaning products that would do the job without you having to break a sweat.

Dyson V11 Absolute Pro



One of the most powerful vacuum cleaners, Dyson V11 Absolute Pro is cord free and with its attachments it is engineered to reach all surfaces and deep clean even the hidden dust across surfaces like mattress, sofa, carpet, cars in addition to hard floors. It uses six layers of filtration to capture 99.97% of particles as small as 0.3 microns, expelling only clean air. The stiff nylon bristles of the High Torque cleaner head dive deep into carpets to remove ground-in dirt, and anti-static carbon fiber filaments that capture dust from hard floors and crevices. With three cleaning modes such as – Auto, Boost, Eco, the vacuum cleaner is designed to remove dust from the neglected corners of the room. It comes with an in-built intelligence that automatically adjusts the suction setting depending on floor type, and provides an estimate of the remaining runtime. The Dyson V11TM vacuum is available in 2 variants starting from INR 52,900.00 across Dyson demo stores in DLF Promenade, Select City Walk in New Delhi and VR Mall in Bengaluru.

Dyson Pure Hot+Cool Cryptomic Air Purifier

The Dyson Pure Hot+Cool air purifier redefines air purification with the Dyson trilogy – Sense, Capture; and Project. With its unique algorithm, the three on-product sensors constantly monitors the air for particles, gases, temperature and humidity and adjusts the purifying settings to counteract the pollution and maintain the target air quality. It is designed to automatically sense the indoor air pollution and accordingly activate the machine to purify throughout the whole room, capturing 99.95 per cent of ultrafine particles and destroying formaldehyde continuously. Additionally, the Dyson Pure Hot+Cool range provide fast, safe, efficient heating and can be used all year round - it is able to purify continuously and warm users throughout the colder months. Priced at INR. 61,900, the air purifier is available on Amazon and Dyson's online and offline stores in India.



Amway Atmosphere Mini

Amway, the makers of Atmosphere™, has developed Atmosphere Mini™ which is equipped with better than HEPA grade filter to capture particles as small as 0.0024 microns with a single pass efficiency of 99.99%. Atmosphere Mini™ comes with the Allergy UK Seal of Approval, making it one of the very few air purifiers to be certified to remove over 100 contaminants identified by Allergy UK as common triggers of allergies. Designed in USA, Atmosphere Mini™ is a portable and compact device, which is suitable for Indian homes with an intuitive and simple user interface. It also comes with a companion app – Atmosphere Connect, which lets the users control and operate the unit remotely. The app comes with additional features such as tracking filter life and measure the system's reactivity to change in indoor air quality.



Eufy HomeVac H11 Pure Handheld Vacuum Cleaner, Blue

Smart home product brand Eufy by Anker has announced its new handheld vacuum cleaner – HomeVac H11 Pure. This is a cordless model, with Ozone Air Purification technology for home cleaning. Priced at Rs 3,999, HomeVac H11 Pure is available on Flipkart. The product comes with a 7-day replacement warranty. The critically acclaimed designs ensure HomeVac fits seamlessly into any room. Ideal for Everyday Mess: Weighs just 1.3lbs but packs-a-punch! Quickly grab and tackle accidental mess using the 5500Pa suction power. Ozone Air Purification: The built-in Ozone air purifier allows you to take your cleaning to the next level. Simply place in your closet or in small areas and freshen up the environment. While using the Ozone function please ensure that no people or pets are within the immediate vicinity. Convenient Charging and Suction that Lasts: Simply use a USB charger anywhere in your home and charge with ease. Enjoy up to 13 minutes of max suction cleaning time or 15 air purification sessions from a full charge.



Panasonic AC with Air Purifier

To address consumer's concerns on comfort and convenience, Panasonic launched its futuristic range of connected air conditioners range. The IoT enabled Panasonic inverter split air conditioners, provide convenience with the AI-enabled Miraie App; comfort with better cooling via our unique JetStream and

aero-wings technology, and health with its Nanoe-G technology that removes bacteria and PM 2.5*. Priced starting INR 35,990, it also recommends the best mode as per the usage patterns and external weather conditions and can be operated via voice assistants such as Amazon Alexa/Google Assistant.



Atmanirbhar Bharat Does Not Mean Isolated India: Ravi Shankar Prasad



Shri Ravi Shankar Prasad, Union Minister for Communications, Electronics & Information Technology and Law & Justice, Government of India today clarified that **Atmanirbhar Bharat** doesn't mean isolated India. "Atmanirbhar Bharat means India is an active participant in the global economy and this is the crux of the whole PLI scheme. India's time in the global electronic manufactur-

ing has come," he said. The Minister was speaking at the **15th India Digital Summit**, organized by the Internet and Mobile Association of India (IAMAI).

Shri Prasad said that India have become the hub of mobile manufacturing and this process is irreversible. **Speaking about the success of the PLI scheme**, Shri Prasad said that the scheme was launched during the height of COVID in April 2020 just to test the ca-





capacity of India and the attraction of India. He added: "Thrilled to mention that all the top companies have applied, and they have committed to make mobile phone and equipments worth INR 10 lakh crores in the coming five years out of which INR 7 lakh crore is for exports.

Addressing the delegates, **Shri Prasad** said: "India is today the hub of mobile manufacturing and this process is irreversible. What future I further want to add up to this initiative is that India must become the biggest manufacture centre of laptop manufacturing, of machine 2 machine equipments, of tablets etc. I want to develop that ecosystem – from mobile phones, to smart phones to laptops to tablets to M2M equipments, to IoT devices, India must become a huge center of these equipment manufacturing."

He mentioned that in 2014, India had only 2 mobile factories, but now India is home to 268 mobile factories. "We have become the 2nd biggest mobile manufacturer in the world, and it is one of my wishes to make India number one," he added.

Talking about MSIPs he said that it is important to come up with

right set of policies. Based on the success of MSIPs and electronic manufacturing, "We decided to go in a big way on production linked incentives. The idea is to bring global champion companies to India and enable Indian companies to become national" he added.

Shri Prasad said that Digital India was consciously designed to empower ordinary Indians and to bridge the digital divide and bring in digital inclusion. "**Inclusion was the hallmark of Digital India.** In last 5 and a half years, we sent direct benefit transfer to close to 13 lakh crore and saved US\$24 billion dollars. We disbursed close to INR 8 thousand crores to Aadhar enabled payment during COVID and the postal department played a crucial role in this."

Citing the examples of Aarogya Setu and WANI, he said that these initiatives are indicative of tectonic shifts in the digital ecosystem of India. Even in vaccination, **COVID digital platform is going to play a crucial role in managing the logistics of vaccination in the entire country.** "Therefore, from vaccination to digital payment to digital delivery of services, direct benefit transfer, all these could fructify in a very effective manner because of the Digital India ecosystem which we have laid down in the last five years," **Shri Prasad** said.

On data privacy, Shri Prasad said, "I want India to become a big centre of data economy." **India has a huge potential to become a data refinery.** Therefore, data economy must prosper in India by developing a complete ecosystem in that regard and working towards that, he added.

On WhatsApp, Shri Prasad said, "Be it WhatsApp or any other

digital platform, you are free to do business in India but do it in a manner without in bringing upon the rights of Indians who operate and sanctity of personal communication needs to be maintained"

On 5G, **the Minister urged Indian players to create an Indian 5G model.** "As far as 5G is concerned, 5G is still evolving. We missed 2G and 3G but we don't want to miss 5G. Therefore, we developed an Indian test bed, and IITs are involved, so that all innovative aspects of 5G can be considered. He urged Indian players to contribute to 5G which is made in India. "Indian players must be proactive in creating an Indian 5G model. 5G must be developed in order to enable inclusive character of its processes for healthcare, education, farming. India's appetite for 5G will be overpowering as a good commercial enterprise, he said.

IDS 2021 will have speakers who are leaders in their own fields and from industries such as Logistics, FinTech, AdTech, Digital Health and beyond. The conference will also see industry stalwarts like Sanjeev Bikchandani of Infoedge, Deep Kalra of MakeMyTrip, Vijay Sekhar Sharma of Paytm, Rajan Anandan of Sequoia Capital, Ajit Mohan of Facebook share their insights with the delegates.

The event will comprise of six tracks: Building National Digital Infrastructure; Marketing for the Masses; Innovative digital services beyond the first 100 million paid customers; Digitally Recharging Small and Medium Business; Digital Policies from Global Perspective but Indian Reality; Nurturing Indian Startups.

[Click here for more information](#)

The Acer logo is displayed in a green, lowercase, sans-serif font.

Acer 11-inch Chromebooks for Education



Acer announced a pair of new 11-inch Chromebooks for the education market with well-rounded features intended to make it as easy as possible for a school to go digital: military durability standards let parents trust that the devices are reliable, Zero-touch enrollment makes it easy for IT to roll them out, and students will enjoy the intuitive responsiveness of Chrome OS.

The Acer Chromebook 511 (C741L) is an 11.6-inch notebook computer that simplifies the process of establishing a digital learning environment, including a number of features that will benefit both the students using the devices and the school administrators rolling them out. The Qualcomm Snapdragon 7c compute platform allows for up to 20 hours of battery life between charges on top of offering an efficient performance to



keep up with students' learning needs. Utilizing Snapdragon 7c, the Acer Chromebook 511 also delivers built-in 4G LTE connectivity to help protect the security of users' data and to provide fast, reliable access to learning apps in the cloud – enabling students to take the classroom with them and learn from virtually anywhere. Weighing in at just 1.3kg (2.87 lbs), this thin and light device is portable enough for students of all ages to easily transport between classes.

Equipped with a MIL-STD 810H tested and impact-resistant chassis, the Acer Chromebook 511 is more than capable of shrugging off daily wear and tear, whether it's a bump or elbows resting on a desk. The Acer Chromebook 511 also features widened brackets and reinforced I/O ports that help it stand up to rough handling, while a unique drainage system built into its keyboard helps to protect the device's internals from accidental spills. As a final touch, mechanically anchored keys serve to keep keys where they should be and easier repairs for IT personnel.

With Zero-touch enrollment, IT departments can drop ship both the Acer Chromebook 511 and Acer

Chromebook 311, which will automatically enroll into school administration as soon as the end user connects to the internet.

ACER CHROMEBOOK 311 – BUILT TO SURVIVE THE SCHOOL DAY

Made especially for K-12 students and those supervising them, the Acer Chromebook 311 (C722) is a reliable device with a MediaTek MT8183 processor designed around a number of industrial durability and safety standards. Compliant with the MIL-STD 810H[1], [2] standard, the device can survive falls of up to 122 cm (48.03 in) and withstand up to 60 kg (132.28 lbs) of downward force, feats accomplished with shock-absorbent bumpers and an enhanced interior design. Special attention was paid to the Chromebook's keyboard, a uniquely vulnerable area that receives significant wear and tear. It is capable of withstanding up to 330 ml (11.6 fl oz) of water, and its keys have been mechanically anchored with two wings that extend out under the chassis, protecting them from removal by restless hands and sticky fingers.

Striving to create a device that not only was capable of surviving the mishaps of a typical school day but was also suitable for more vulnerable young learners, Acer built the Acer Chromebook 311 (and Acer Chromebook 511) in compliance with a pair of leading toy safety standards. Plastic coatings on the computer have been strictly tested and certified under the ASTM F963-16 Toy Safety Standard and the device also meets the UL/IEC 60950-1 standard, covering everything from chemical and material safety to sharp edges to ensure that the Acer Chromebook 311 is safe and suitable for use by younger children.

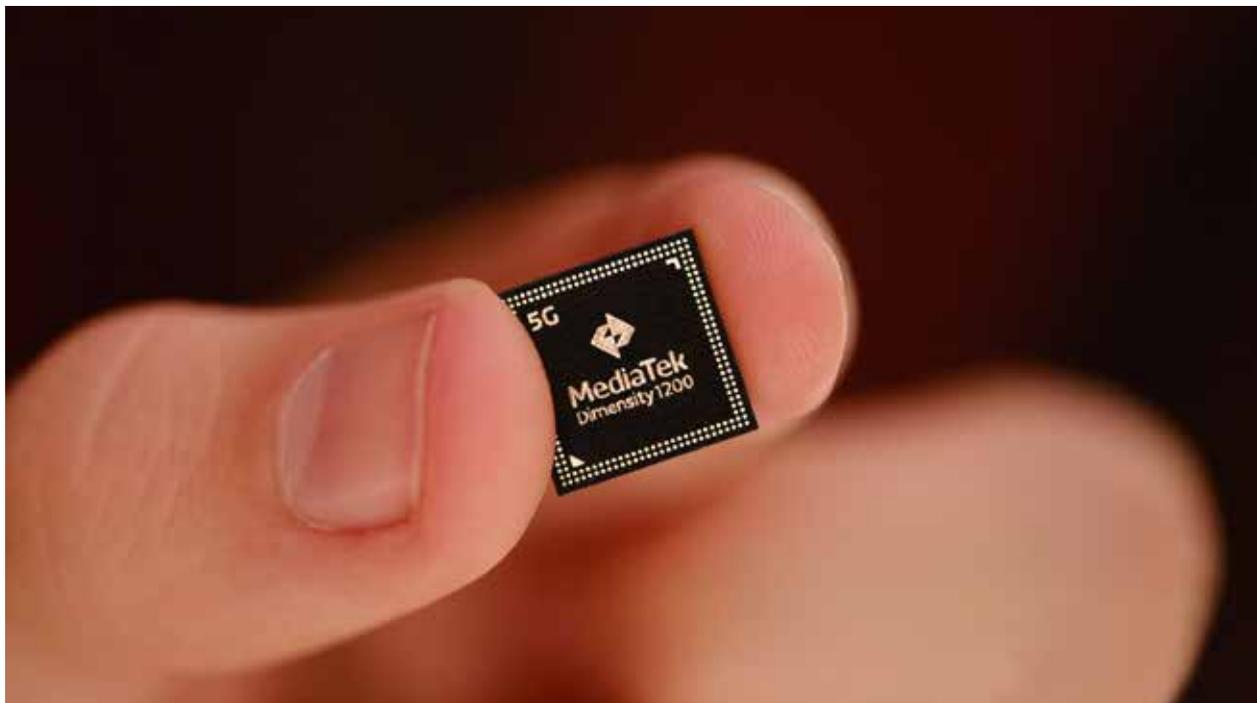
Ultimately, the Acer Chromebook 311 offers durability and peace of mind so that users can spend less time worrying about the device and more about what really matters: learning. The Chromebook features up to 20 hours of battery life so that it's capable of getting through the school day and back home with young learners. It also includes a number of features to enhance collaborative learning, such as an optional touch screen^[7], an HDR webcam with a wide field-of-view for online classes and all the advantages of Chrome OS: quicker boot times, an easy-to-use interface, built-in malware protection, access to millions of Android™ apps on Google Play and much more.

APP SUPPORT

The new Acer Chromebook 511 and Acer Chromebook 311 both support apps via Google Play and web based apps, so customers will have access to all the apps they love for productivity, creativity, services and more.



MediaTek Launches 6nm Dimensity 1200 Premium 5G SoC with Unrivaled AI and Multimedia



MediaTek unveiled its new Dimensity 1200 and Dimensity 1100 5G smartphone chipsets with unrivaled AI, camera and multimedia features for powerful 5G experiences. The addition of the 6nm Dimensity 1200 and 1100 chipsets to MediaTek's 5G portfo-

lio gives device makers a growing suite of options to design highly capable 5G smartphones with top of the line camera features, graphics, connectivity enhancements and more.

"MediaTek continues to expand its 5G portfolio with highly integrated solutions for a range of devices from the high-end to the mid-

tier,” said JC Hsu, Corporate Vice President and General Manager of MediaTek’s Wireless Communications Business Unit. “Our new Dimensity 1200 stands out with its impressive 200MP camera support and advanced AI capabilities, in addition to its innovative connectivity, display, audio and gaming enhancements.”

KEY FEATURES OF MEDIATEK DIMENSITY 1200 AND 1100 5G CHIPSETS INCLUDE:

- **The Most Out of 5G Every Day:** The Dimensity 1200 and 1100 pack a highly integrated 5G modem with MediaTek’s 5G UltraSave technology for big power savings. Both chipsets support every connectivity generation from 2G to 5G, in addition to supporting the latest connectivity features including 5G standalone and non-standalone architectures, 5G carrier aggregation (2CC) across frequency division duplex (FDD) and time division duplex (TDD), dynamic spectrum sharing (DSS), True Dual SIM 5G (5G SA + 5G SA) and Voice over New Radio (VoNR). The chipsets also integrate 5G HSR Mode and 5G Elevator Mode enhancements to ensure a seamless, reliable 5G connection across networks.
- **Flagship AI Multimedia:** The Dimensity 1200 supports 200MP photos for stunning photography with its five-core HDR-ISP. It boasts staggered 4K HDR video capture for significantly greater dynamic range. The chipset integrates an updated version of MediaTek’s hexa-core AI processor (MediaTek APU 3.0), which has an enhanced



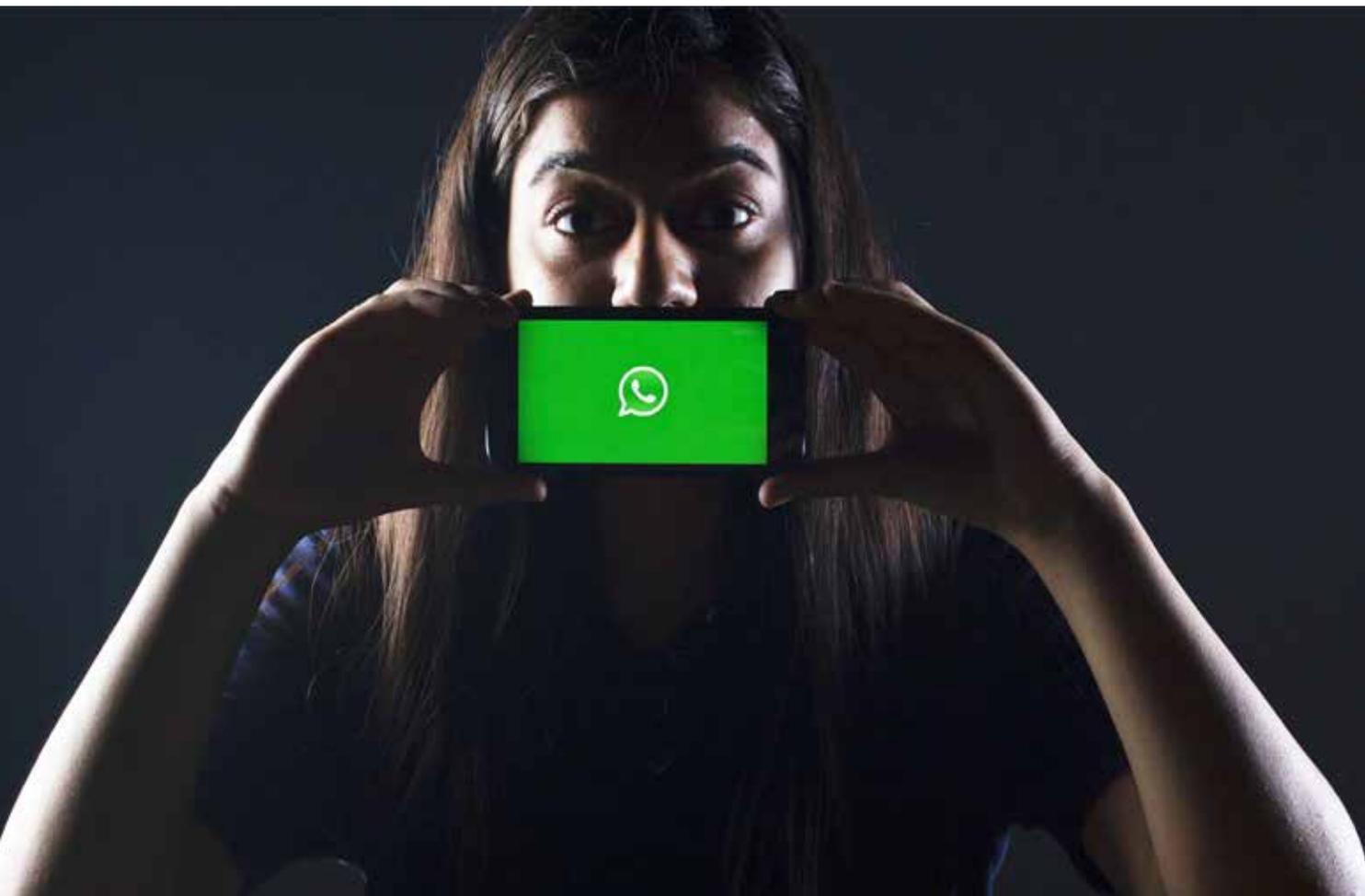
multi-task scheduler that reduces latency and improves power-efficiency. The Dimensity 1100 also packs impressive camera capabilities with its 108MP camera support, and integrates MediaTek’s existing APU 3.0 for high performance computing that’s also super power-efficient. Both chipsets support AI camera features including AI-Panorama Night Shot, AI Multi-Person Bokeh, AI noise reduction (AINR) and HDR capabilities. The chipsets also support new AI-enhanced video playback features including AI SDR-to-HDR.

- **Premium Performance:** The Dimensity 1200 has an octa-core CPU designed with an ultra-core Arm Cortex-A78 clocked up to 3GHz for extreme performance, three Arm Cortex-A78 super cores and four Arm Cortex-A55 efficiency cores. With a nine-core GPU and six-core MediaTek APU 3.0, the Dimensity 1200 delivers a new level of premium performance. The Dimensity 1100 is designed with an octa-core CPU which includes four Arm Cortex-A78 cores operating at up to 2.6GHz and four Arm Cortex-A55 efficiency cores, along with a nine-core Arm Mali-G77 GPU. Both

chipsets are manufactured on TSMC’s advanced 6nm process technology.

- **Incredible Displays:** The Dimensity 1200 supports ultra-fast 168Hz refresh rates for a fast, fluid user experience. The Dimensity 1100 also supports cutting-edge displays with 144Hz refresh rates for ultra-sharp, zero-lag visuals. Both chipsets support MediaTek’s HyperEngine 3.0 gaming technologies, which includes 5G call and data concurrency for more reliable connectivity, plus multi-touch boost touch-screen responsiveness. The new chipsets also support ray tracing in mobile games and artificial reality applications for more realistic visuals, along with super hotspot power savings which let users go longer in between charges.
 - **Dual-Link True Wireless Stereo Audio:** Dimensity 1200 and 1100 both support Bluetooth 5.2, which lets users stream to multiple wireless devices simultaneously. The chipsets also support ultra-low latency true wireless stereo audio and LC3 encoding for higher quality, lower latency streaming audio that’s also very power-efficient to prolong the battery life of wireless earbuds.
- Dimensity 1200 has already received TÜV Rheinland certification for its 5G performance, with tests covering 72 real-world scenarios. The certification verifies that the chipset provides reliable, high-performance 5G connectivity and offers users high-quality 5G experiences across a wide variety of scenarios.

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Better World WhatsApp Privacy Policy Survey

Market research and communications advisory firm BM Nxt has released the results of its recently conducted Better World WhatsApp Privacy Policy Survey. The online survey was carried out to gauge the mood and response of WhatsApp users in the wake of the WhatsApp's intent to change its privacy policy and open select user data with parent company Facebook, other group

companies such as Instagram, as well as third-party service providers. The survey was conducted among 565 respondents between 9 January and 25 January 2021.

The survey results show that an overwhelming 82% of the respondents have disapproved of WhatsApp's move. While 37% users said they considered the move a serious breach of their privacy, another 45% said they didn't find it (change of privacy policy) good, albeit they

could live with it. Only 18% said the change didn't bother them.

Moreover, 18% of the overall respondents said they had already started using an alternative or additional platform or were considering to do so soon. While 25% said they would do so within a week's time, another 29% said they would be making the switch in a month's time.

Nevertheless, 28% users said they had no plans to do so.



Deepak Kumar, Founder Analyst, Better World–BM Nxt, notes, “The row emanating from the planned privacy-policy change has created a greater awareness around non-WhatsApp messaging platforms and even contributed toward expanding their user base. A lot more people now know of Telegram and Signal as viable alternatives to WhatsApp, with more users considering switching over to these options. More Business WhatsApp users are also likely to explore and embrace non-WhatsApp platform, if a certain threshold of their customers switch to these platforms.”

However, Kumar adds, “Despite the displeasure expressed by the users, there is likely to be a mismatch between what they are saying and what they will eventually do. While user responses to the survey are genuine expressions of their dislike for the privacy-policy change, the actual act of switching to another messaging app will be based on more practical considerations. If a good number of one’s friends, families, and peers also don’t make a switch to another common platform, users are likely to reconsider and stay on.”

Significantly, 22% of the survey

respondents were Business WhatsApp users, with a majority of them having individual WhatsApp accounts as well. While these users were mostly unlikely to discontinue with their WhatsApp accounts, a majority of them said they were signing up for alternatives like Signal and Telegram.

The respondents have also emphasized the need for government’s intervention in some way. As many as 43% stated that there needs to be a more holistic regulation in place while another 24% of the respondents said the government should ask WhatsApp to roll back the changes.

However, 33% of the users said that it would be better to let users be the best judge. The survey showed that there was a high degree of awareness among users with regard to the development, with 80% users stating they were aware that WhatsApp was changing its privacy policy, and would be sharing a range of user data with Facebook and Instagram platforms in the near future. The remaining 20% users said they were not aware of such changes.

Further, 47% of users said they understood the implications of

WhatsApp’s new privacy policy for users reasonably well and another 18% said they understood that fully well. By contrast only 29% said they didn’t understand it well enough while another 6% said they didn’t understand it at all.

“Signal, which is considered to be the most privacy-oriented messaging app, was the second choice of those survey respondents who said they will look for WhatsApp alternatives. In this case, respondents had the option of selecting one or more apps, including WhatsApp.

Telegram, which is considered second-most privacy-friendly app, emerged the app with the highest user preference,” Jatinder Singh, Director, Research and Insights at Better World–BM Nxt, says.

“The choice of Telegram as the foremost alternative to WhatsApp may also be driven by the fact that it has a more sizable user base than Signal,” Singh added.

While 34% of the users voted for Telegram as a WhatsApp alternative (and in some cases, as a replacement), a good 24% voted for Telegram also.

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