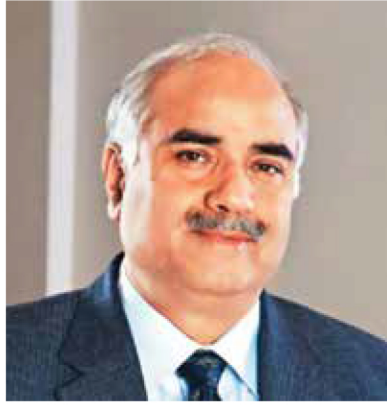


Some Hits, Some Misses

The proposals of Union Budget 2020-21 have evoked mixed reactions from captains of the Building Products & Home Improvement (BPHI) and allied industries. They feel that Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman could have done more on the real estate and 'Make in India' fronts, which are strategic for the growth of the industry.

BY MRINMOY BHATTACHARJEE



"The Make in India Envelop is Left Wanting"

Rajesh Mehra, director & promoter of Jaquar Group says, "The ease of doing business in the country has improved significantly. But its real indicators in the manufacturing sector are yet to be seen. Boosting the electronics and medical manufacturing market is welcome. However, policies for companies like Jaquar that are pushing the Make in India envelope are left wanting. The industry seeks incentives for local manufacturers, reduction in taxes on eco-friendly and energy-efficient products, and waiver of customs duty on imported inputs to make components."

Mehra also observes that the Finance Minister's proposed allocation of ₹12,300 crore for the government's flagship 'Swachh Bharat Abhiyan' mission is a "crucial" measure towards the country's collective vision to become Open Defecation Free. "But how the government progresses towards this goal without rationalisation in the consumer durables sector, especially on products like pipes, faucets and sanitaryware, is yet to be seen."

A GDP Booster

K E Ranganathan, managing director, Roca Bathroom Products Pvt Ltd, welcomes the Finance Minister's efforts to make more monies available to the common people by reducing income tax rates to spur consumption. He adds, "It is laudable that focus has been given to agriculture with a simple aim to double earnings of farmers. Our farmers are the backbone of the economy, and this intention shows genuine care for them. It is a good Budget with a clear focus to revive the GDP growth and make people of India lead a happy life in 2020-21 and beyond."



Echoes Keshav Bhajanka, executive director, Century Plyboards (India) Ltd. "I think that the Finance Minister is trying to increase the disposable income of people by proposing a new income tax system and initiatives for the agricultural sector." He notes, "The proposed reduction in the compliance burden on MSME sector should help our channel partners." These steps, he hopes, will bring "slight" economic revival.

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DIGITALISATION

connected factory is a strong start, and will significantly improve the production process by enabling end-to-end product visibility. Further, predictive analytics will aid decision-making and promote responsiveness at our Chennai plant," says the company's CEO & managing director Dhirup Roy Choudhary. Industry 4.0 is considered the newest phase in the Industrial Revolution that focuses on interconnectivity, automation, machine learning, and real-time data.

Roy Choudhary adds that real-time machine parameters are being captured through digital logbooks, sensors, Programmable Logic Controller (PLC), Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition (SCADA) systems. Plant-level dashboards have been created to monitor and review critical parameters. The entire digital platform generates instant alerts, which can be leveraged by the operations team for prompt corrective actions.

The current phase of industry 4.0, HIL's CIO Murali Raj G R elaborates, helps digitise data, trigger alerts, and monitor and provide detailed insights. "The next step would be to generate predictive insights by leveraging data from the current phase, and eventually generate prescriptive insights, which would focus on finding the best course of action in a given scenario."

USER EXPERIENCE



Building glass giant Asahi India Glass Ltd (AIS) has launched an Augmented

Reality (AR) app, a first-of-its-kind for the glass industry. The 'AIS World of Glass' app helps users visualise the doors and windows of their homes on their mobile devices.

"Through this mobile app you can explore your space, select the window frames, frame colour, glass, and hardware of your choice, and visualise the entire space. The app also has a feature that will help in experiencing an acoustic solution. It also shows the energy-efficiency which helps you chose the perfect doors and windows for your space," says the company's COO Vikram Khanna.

MARKETING

For plywood and laminate major Century Plyboard (India) Ltd, digitalisation is prominently being pursued on the marketing side.



"As customers' get involved in multiple tasks and their travel time increases, they will always be online. If earlier the principle was 360-degree marketing, the new norm would be 365-day marketing," says the company's executive director Nikita Bansal, as she justifies the imperative for digitalisation.

Century's initiatives on this front span e-commerce, digital communication, geo-location and fencing in sales, digital content, and customer experience. In 2018 the company had launched a film for the digital platform, which generated over six million views and was judged as one of the 50 most impactful branding campaigns of the year.

EXPERT VIEW

'PARTNERSHIPS, COLLABORATIONS ARE KEYS TO UNLOCKING DIGITALISATION POTENTIAL'



Enterprises that are trying to embrace digitalisation need not themselves invest in talent and technology. They can instead explore partnerships and collaborations with startups for gaining the competitive edge in their markets.

"Companies that have incorporated innovation, say by joining hands with AI-based route or warehousing optimisation startups and new-age companies, have emerged significantly more cost-efficient," says Alok Agrawal (alok@thegrowthlabs.in), founding partner at The Growth Labs, a platform for 'Innovation as a Service'. Through a pool of over 3,000 startups cutting across industries and functions, The Growth Labs offers its clients