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World Auto Forum on Information Technology [WAFit! 2018] comes to a conclusion with great ideas and extensive debates.

World Auto Forum on Information Technology [WAFit! 2018] held in Delhi on 16th of March 2018 at Radisson Blu Plaza, Delhi Airport came to conclusion amidst great ideas and extensive debates. Presented by World Auto Forum that connects the Auto industry across 125 countries, this day-long event brought together industry veterans, industry experts, new-age entrepreneurs and professionals from across the spectrum, representing emerging technologies that will be impacting Automotive sector in a major way in the years to come. Artificial intelligence, Augmented reality, Virtual reality, Machine learning, Cloud and Cyber security were some of the topics that were warmly discussed and some of them, hotly debated! It was this interesting mix of divergent opinions and different perspectives that made WAFit! 2018, an exciting blend of Technological innovations at play and Auto industry's readiness to adapt to this changing environment.

Our Keynote speakers and Power Panellists were experts from the industry who shared their experiences and personal stories to bring to fore, the challenges and the opportunities that will show up and what needs to be done to enable a smooth transition to these emerging technologies. For a detailed account of what our speakers had to share, you would need to watch the WAFit! video coverage on official WAF website. But allow us to give you a snapshot of some of the thoughts shared by our speakers during the event.

The event started with **Anuj Guglani**, CEO, World Auto Forum setting the tone for all that was to come – Power panels and Keynotes. Debates and Dialogues. Ideas and Inspiration. Opportunities ahead was what he focussed on. He spoke of how by 2020, the world would have 250 million connected vehicles making Automotive IT, US\$ 80 Billion industry. With that huge opportunity, it was only fair that IT and Auto worlds collaborated to ensure a great working partnership.

Sanjeev Garg, Director, SAR group spoke of how Augmented and Virtual reality solutions can help save substantially on prototyping and design costs. According to him, AR/VR put together could help reduce expenses on development by up to 60%.

Various use case scenarios of Virtual Reality and Augmented reality were presented by **Dr. Ojaswa Sharma**, Professor from IIIT, Delhi. He elaborated on how real time exchange of data is critical and can be enabled through AR/VR. As per him, the best use of AR / VR was in bringing user manuals within easy reach of consumers, who rarely go through printed user manuals.

Mohit Ramani, CEO, Digital Agents shared an interesting perspective on how AR / VR can lead to empathy between road rage initiators and their victims. According to him, AR / VR can help each of the parties to understand the other side of the story, thereby creating an empathetic bond between the two. Bots being great enablers to automated driving and acting as informers on dangers ahead was another topic he spoke about.

Kanishk Gaur, Senior Manager, Deloitte India was of the opinion that AR / VR remains under utilized, especially in the E-commerce space. A lot needs to be done to attain full potential of these emerging technologies. He feels that it is up to the CIO's and senior IT professionals to drive the innovation and business for tomorrow.

Connected factories was a topic very close to **Bhupinder Singh**, CEO, Sunbeam Auto. He spoke at length on his company's focus on building a connected factory, where real time information from all assembly line action was shared with all stake holders to bring in transparency. He extensively spoke about Cloud and Data security emphasizing on the need for IPR protection for designs developed.

To talk on Auto CRM, who better than the man credited for building India's largest Auto CRM company, **Kshitij Saxena**, CEO, Autoninja. He spoke about the high human intensity in current car selling processes. His take on Mobile CRM was very lucid. He strongly believes that Mobile CRM can help improve sales responsiveness, thereby positively impacting sales cycle time.

Speaking on leveraging Artificial intelligence and Machine learning in Automotive was **Vijay Sethi**, CIO & Head-CSR, Hero MotoCorp. He established early on in his talk that whenever general-purpose innovations happen, they change the world. For him, Artificial intelligence is one such innovation that will define and shape the years ahead for the Automotive sector. While advocating the use of artificial intelligence for fraud detection and cyber security, he also subtly warned that Artificial intelligence is a double-edged sword and organizations need to be careful while devising and actioning their AI plans. AI / ML, he believes, can't be implemented for their hype. There needs to be an alignment with strategic intent & company culture.

Cyber security was next on the agenda and **Rajesh Shewani**, Head-Technology and Solution Architecture, Teradata India shared his vision on what can happen with real time connectivity being introduced in organizations. He segmented the dangers into three categories – at the core internet properties, at the shop floors and in the vehicles. He emphasized on the fact that with real time connectivity, you also expose your systems to data vulnerabilities and data thefts. In this scenario, cyber security becomes an extremely critical piece to ensure safety of vital information.

Gautam Kapoor, Partner, Deloitte India emphasized on the need to have stringent cyber security measures considering high connectivity & massive data sharing in present times. He was of the opinion that with Machine learning and Artificial intelligence, will come issues related to privacy. Privacy implications will be severe when AI is full blown, with our entire life cycle out in the open. With codes now ruling the Automotive sector, his take was that cyber security will now be as critical as functional safety.

Rahul Shandilya, CIO – Customer Experience and Product Development, Mahindra & Mahindra commented on the changing paradigm within organizations, vis-à-vis their willingness to engage with their retail channel & end customers. He shared that over the last few years, organizations that were previously closed-door entities are now seeking to make their end customers an integral part of their enterprise processes. With this shift taking place, there was an urgent need to redefine cyber security measures to address current challenges.

Explaining on the responsibility and accountability in case of autonomous / AI driven vehicles, **Garima Sahney**, Associate Partner, Sai Krishna & Associates said that eventually the responsibility will be transferred back to the user. She was of the opinion that India still lacks clear cut guidelines or legal framework to address challenges thrown up by use of Artificial intelligence in Automotive. This needs to be done at the right stage, so courts can make the right decisions.

Blockchain was one of the most hotly debated technology during WAFit! 2018. And for a good reason. For, on our panel were both supporters of Block chain and also experts who felt it was an over-hyped idea. With virtual battle lines clearly drawn, the discussion was an exciting one.

Gary Bhatti, CEO, NetSet software opened the discussion on Blockchain calling it the best way to ensure authenticity of data across the entire supply chain. He spoke of how through blockchain, data can validate itself without interference of third party. And this technology can also be used to create smart invoices and smart contracts.

Supporting blockchain again was Ravish Sahay, Head of Sales, Quality Kiosk. He stated that with Blockchain, you can actually ensure the genuineness of parts shipped from & to across the world. It was the best way to ensure that single version of truth got passed on across all stake holders and there was little chance of data manipulation.

On the other side of the Blockchain spectrum was **Kshitij Saxena**, CEO, Autoninja who was very clear that Blockchain was more hype than real stuff. He iterated that all across the world there have been very few use cases of Blockchain apart from it being an enabler of crypto currency. The clash of opinion was an interesting one and only time will tell, who wins this one!

AI, Machine Learning, Blockchain are just about to evolve in the industry was the thought shared by **Anuj Guglani**, CEO, World Auto Forum. He was of the opinion that we can pioneer their application and take transparency, productivity & responsiveness of the entire supply chain to a different level. The caveat here being that we don't implement them solely for hype but to solve business challenges by taking people along.

Our final power panel discussion on connected vehicles was the perfect closing debate that WAFit! truly appreciates and deserves too! It was wonderful to chat with professionals from across domains on the possibilities and challenges India faces vis-à-vis connected vehicles.

Santosh Dutta, Lead-Automotive Systems Integration, India Bosch Ltd started with a humorous take on how Indians are already connected on roads with our road rage showing in our expressions even without technology! He went on to explain that for connected vehicles to truly become a reality, we need to go hand-in-hand with airwave ecosystem technology partners, mobile operators. They are the one's who will enable this shift.

Rajesh Loomba, Managing Director, Eco Rent-a-car provided some great customer insights on how customers view connected vehicles. He actually brought the focus back on car makers who, he feels, should own up any technology related issues. When software crashes, no lives are lost but if a car crashes, lives are at stake, he mentioned. So, car makers need to be extremely responsible and vigilant regarding use of automotive IT.

Anuj Guglani, CEO, World Auto Forum spoke about how India sadly tops the world in road fatalities. The common reasons of accidents being over speeding, over loading, drunken driving, badly maintained vehicles, unskilled, distracted drivers and spurious spare parts. He was of the opinion that a connected vehicle can help eradicate these problems by sharing real-time notifications on such issues with government authorities, vehicle makers and families of the driver / owner.

The need to introduce standard security protocols for bikes was the need of the hour as per **Saurav Arora**, Co-founder & Director, I'm here 24x7. The reason he stated was the simple fact that every 13 minutes, a vehicle is stolen in Delhi, most of them being bikes. Hence, security of bikes and bikers is truly important.

Speaking on the need to give real time data back to the customer, **Rajesh Muraleedharan**, Sr. Vice President, Performance Engineering said that it is important that software quality matches manufacturing quality and this can be ensured largely through mobile network interoperability.

Kunal Khattar, General Partner, AdvantEdge Founders brought in the much-required financial perspective to the debate. As an investor, what he looks for is the marketability of a concept. How widely acceptable it would be in India. The best use case of technology according to him is in mobility and public transport solutions. This was so because on an average, 300 million people use transport every day. They have options on extreme ends – cheap but uncomfortable or costly but luxurious. The chasm between the two extremes is an opportunity to be tapped.

Prof M P Gupta, Dhananjay Chair Professor & Head of Department – DMS, IIT Delhi expressed concern over excessive surveillance and misuse of real time data available with multitude of agencies. He also called for clear division of responsibilities when it came to use of technology.

Sudatta Kar, a research scholar at IIT Delhi explained the V2X concept and how it could be used to issue warnings or give heads up on potential dangers ahead.

Where our amazing speakers brought in valuable insights to make WAFit! 2018, a successful collaboration between IT and Auto Worlds, our partners brought in the valuable resources. As a sign off until next year WAFit!, we would like to extend our heartfelt thanks to all our speakers and to all our partners – **Autoji, Motor Uncle, Gallops Motors, Quality Kiosk, Sai Krishna & Associates, Autoninja, 4th Smart Cities India 2018 Expo & Teradata India**. We thank our partners, **GI social** and **24 frames digital** who helped us take WAFit! 2018 across 125 countries, where WAF members reside.

It's been a pleasure bringing to you, World Auto Forum on Information Technology. World Auto Forum shall be organizing the 3rd IVSMS - India Vehicle Sales & Marketing Summit on Saturday, July 21, 2018. The Marketing & Sales heads of Auto Makers, Owners of Dealerships, Heads of Marketing Agencies, Digital Evangelists, in short, the entire Marketing & Sales eco system of Auto Industry shall come together again for the third time. Seating in the hall shall be limited and it shall be prudent to book your seat in advance! #IVSMS. For more information, please feel free to reach Anuj Guglani | anuj@waf.bz | 9810552425 or Gazala Khan | gazala@waf.bz | 9811703955.

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