

Zero-touch Ops: SuperAIway to Fast Track Business

Automation & integrated digital system in ITes sector have cut costs by 65%, enhanced customer satisfaction by 25% and increased revenues by 10%, shows study

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Mumbai | New Delhi: Artificial Intelligence (AI)-driven automation and digitisation in India is leading to intangible benefits to organisations as zero-touch processes reduce friction across industries, experts said.

Several industries are creating seamless services and workflows in finance, IT, healthcare, manufacturing, and citizen services.

Zero-touch operations are processes run end-to-end either without or minimal human intervention by leveraging automation, AI, and integrated digital systems.

According to a study by Deloitte, low-touch operations in the BPM/ITeS industry have caused productivity gains and cost savings of 65%.

Customer satisfaction has improved by 25% and revenues grew by 10%.

For instance, deploying AI chatbots for handling routine inquiries and AI voice bots for more complex customer interactions, has helped a global e-commerce giant to improve its inconsistent customer experiences, explained Siddharth Tinnis, partner and technology sector leader, Deloitte India.

"For BPM organisations, low touch opportunities have impacted business KPIs positively along 3 key levers: bottomline (through productivity improvements), customer experience, and even topline in certain cases," he said.


DIGITAL INDIA STACK

India's digital public infrastructure has created some unique success stories in zero-touch operations—such as the Unified Payments Interface (UPI) and DigiYatra—which today act as a model for the world.

With round-the-clock availability, flexibility in transactions, QR code integration, UPI has had a profound impact on small businesses, street vendors, and

All About Zero-Touch Operations

Any processes run end-to-end without or low human intervention by leveraging automation, artificial intelligence, and integrated digital systems.



PATH TO OPERATIONS

- ▶ AI Integration
- ▶ Seamless and automated processes
- ▶ Data Driven Decision Making
- ▶ Use of E-KYC and Chatbots for customer services

BENEFITS

- ▶ Contact reduction
- ▶ Higher productivity
- ▶ Improved quality controls
- ▶ Significant cost savings
- ▶ Diverse product processing

Several industries are creating seamless services and workflows in finance, IT, health-care, manufacturing, and citizen services

ZERO-TOUCH GAINS

Enterprises

BPM & ITeS: cost savings of 65%, revenue growth 10%; Deloitte

eSIM: 10% of all smartphones (14-15 million) in India supported eSIM

UPI

Round the clock availability of payments

Unified banking access - 632 banks connected to UPI

Contactless payments through QR codes

45% YoY growth in transactions

DigiYatra

Paperless boarding at airports based on facial recognition

Simplifies managing multiple documents

55 lakh users on DigiYatra app

3 cr passengers have used DigiYatra

24 airports have DigiYatra facility

UPI achieved 16.58 b transactions in a single month processing **₹23.49 lakh cr** in October 2024

Reduced average entry time for passengers from 15 seconds to 5 seconds

less, and paperless processing and helped save thousands of sheets of paper daily across airports, supporting sustainable development in the aviation sector.

According to the government, the airport entry time for a passenger has been reduced from an average 15 seconds in manual process to 5 seconds. Over 55 lakh users have already downloaded the app, and more than 5 crore passengers have used DigiYatra to travel. The service is presently available across 24 airports in India since its inception in December 2022.

In the telecom sector, eSIM is another example of zero-touch operations. Embedded SIM (eSIM) cards, which reside digitally inside a device, are gaining significant traction among telecom operators and Internet of Things users for acquiring, accessing, and consuming connectivity. For mobile operators it reduces overheads and customer acquisition costs.

According to Counterpoint Research, players such as Uber are jumping onboard the eSIM bandwagon to drive new business models and remove customer pain points by offering uninterrupted connectivity.

However, eSIM growth has been sluggish in India as affordable handsets do not support eSIMs. As of 2023, only about a tenth of all smartphones sold in India (around 14-15 million) supported eSIMs, according to Counterpoint. In comparison, eSIM penetration in the US has reached 70%.

ROBOTIC PROCESS AUTOMATION

The race for humanoid tech has heated up at the global stage with the emergence of GenAI. Giants like NVIDIA believe robots will soon be the new avatar of human agency in India, companies like Reliance Jio and Adverb have embarked on this journey.

WITH DIGIYATRA, ENTRY TIME FOR A PASSENGER HAS BEEN REDUCED FROM AN AVG 15 SECONDS IN MANUAL PROCESS TO 5 SECONDS

"Zero touch operations are gaining traction in the manufacturing sector by increasing precision, efficiency, and safety," said Bir Singh, co-founder and chief business officer of homegrown robotics company Adverb.

The Reliance Group-backed firm counts global companies like Flipkart, ITC, Unilever, as its customers and plans to launch 100 humanoid robots in 2025 built of Jio's AI stack.

Jio did not respond to ET's emailed queries.

"At Adverb, we deploy advanced robotics such as automated storage and retrieval systems and autonomous mobile robots to develop smart, automated operations with minimal human interference. Our humanoid robots will be a giant leap forward as they will undertake complicated and repetitive work, allowing organisations to realign their human labour into more strategic functions," he said.

However, India's industries heavily depend on 110 million micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) which contribute about 45% of the manufacturing output. These MSMEs neither have the capital investment nor technology skills to adopt robotics.

But Adverb's Singh said India stands at the threshold of a change.

"The initial investments can be offset by long-term benefits—contact reduction, higher production, and improved quality controls," he said.

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