



TATA COMMUNICATIONS



Unlocking the **Top Growth Drivers** in a Hyperconnected Ecosystem

Using Agility and Scalability to Accelerate Business Growth

A LUNCH THINK TANK

Moderated by Nishchal Khorana, Vice President of Research, Digital/AI

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IT thought leaders from a variety of industries participated in a Think Tank luncheon hosted by Frost & Sullivan, the global growth advisory company for over 60 years.TM The group assessed the evolving role of technology and digitalization as it pertains to high-impact organizational growth. This article will explore their key insights, providing a framework for enterprises ready to begin their journey to secure hyperconnectivity.

The discussion with industry thought leaders was engaging and insightful, bringing forth several insights, including the following key takeaways.

Key Takeaways from the Discussion



DIGITIZATION IS THE CORE OF BUSINESS

Business model disruptions are reshaping industries and transforming ecosystems, customer engagement, and the future of the workplace. These changes are driving organizations and business leaders to rethink their technology strategies and make greater investments in digitization.



SCALABILITY AND AGILITY ARE TOP BUSINESS PRIORITIES

Of paramount importance is for organizations to leverage technology so they can scale up business and achieve growth while ensuring agility through the integration of people, processes, and devices.



TECHNOLOGY ARCHITECTURES MAY NEED TO CHANGE

While organizations seek to leverage several technologies that will support business outcomes, they need to modernize the underlying architecture to deliver a secure and seamless digital infrastructure across an extended ecosystem.



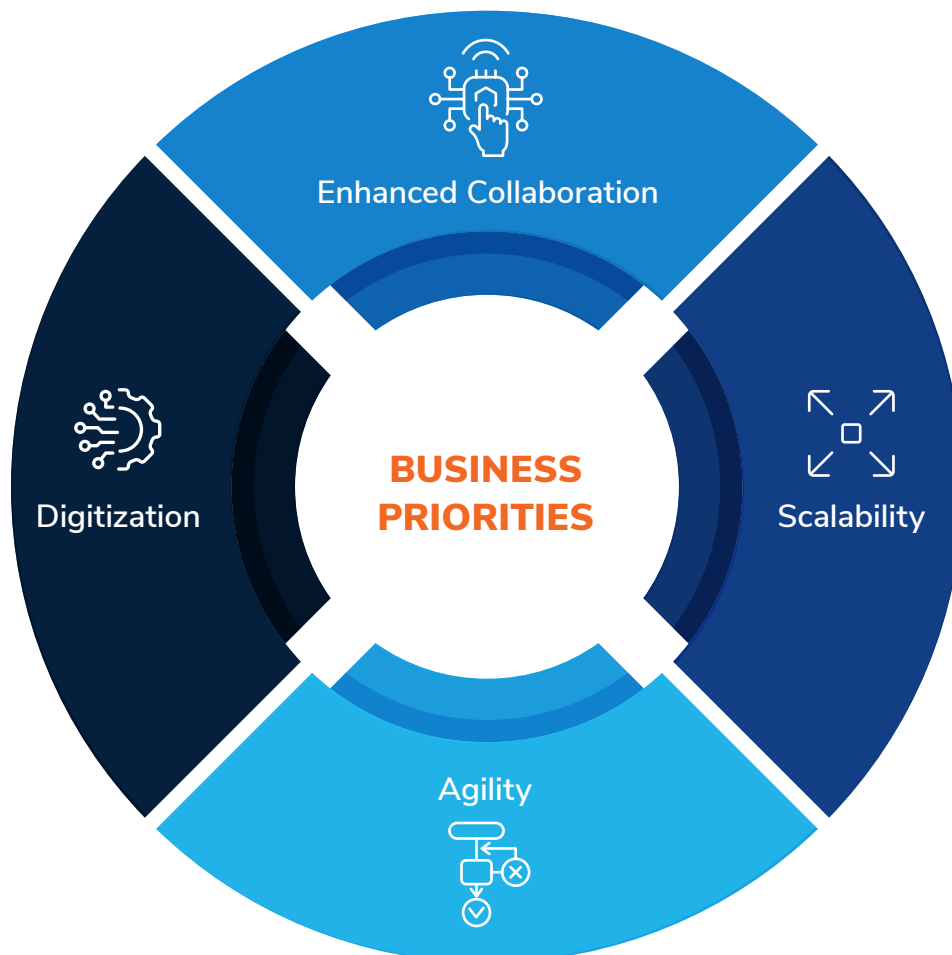
BUILDING A HYPERCONNECTED, COLLABORATIVE, AND SECURE ENTERPRISE IS THE NEED OF THE HOUR

Exciting opportunities await organizations committed to enhancing their digital capabilities. A critical next step will entail building a digitally connected ecosystem that encompasses customers, employees, and partners across the value chain.



As enterprises continue to evolve into multilayered digital networks, devices and platforms will continue to connect customers, employees, partners, and supply chain stakeholders. Collaborative technology services that are accessible from almost any location will become the norm, enabling new, real-time ways of working and interacting with internal and external stakeholders. This evolving hyperconnected network will need an underlying, seamless digital infrastructure, one that allows enterprises to integrate partners easily and securely into their systems and processes.

These elements of organizational growth need to work together with zero friction to enhance customer and employee experiences and create greater business value, including the following four priorities.





Scalability: Focus on Growth

Scaling up is a key organizational priority, and it requires providing an infrastructure to support sustained growth. The COVID-19 pandemic necessitated equipping a distributed workforce with secure, increasingly advanced digital tools. Other ongoing global events—geopolitical unrest, supply chain disruptions, and a huge shift to online transactions by both consumers and businesses—are likely to continue and will require revisiting traditional strategies to enable scaling at an accelerated pace. Integrating new systems and updating processes will be part of the revised playbook.

Soubhanick Routh, Tata Communications, summarized it this way: “With a hyperconnected model, we are creating an ecosystem by which you connect multiple types of devices and collaborate. The ecosystem enables agility, and scalability is coming.”





Making Businesses More Agile

As organizations seek agility by leveraging technology to integrate devices, people, and processes and to drive greater visibility and effectiveness in decision-making, cloud-based deployment models are playing a greater role in the technology stack. The ongoing paradigm shift from on-prem to the cloud has enabled greater enterprise agility.

It also brings new capabilities and opportunities for faster, better customer service and organizational pivots based on real-time data as applied to supply chain decisions or consumer behavior. Enhanced digital collaboration tools including agile platforms and services will be the foundation of this business agility. **Vikas Dureja**, HCL Technologies, stated: “Our whole focus is around agility, to do more with less. That’s how we can enable our customers. Agility is how the elements of your technology process and people come together to deliver the best for the business, in a most optimum way.”

Enhanced digital collaboration tools including agile platforms and services will be the foundation of this business agility.

But such agility and hyperconnectivity come at a price. As large volumes of data are shared in both secure and unsecure environments, protecting it becomes a big concern. Borderless organizations, which many see as the future, will change business dynamics. Cloud applications will remain pivotal in building borderless enterprises and helping address business disruption and supply chain challenges.





Digitization Is a Top Mandate

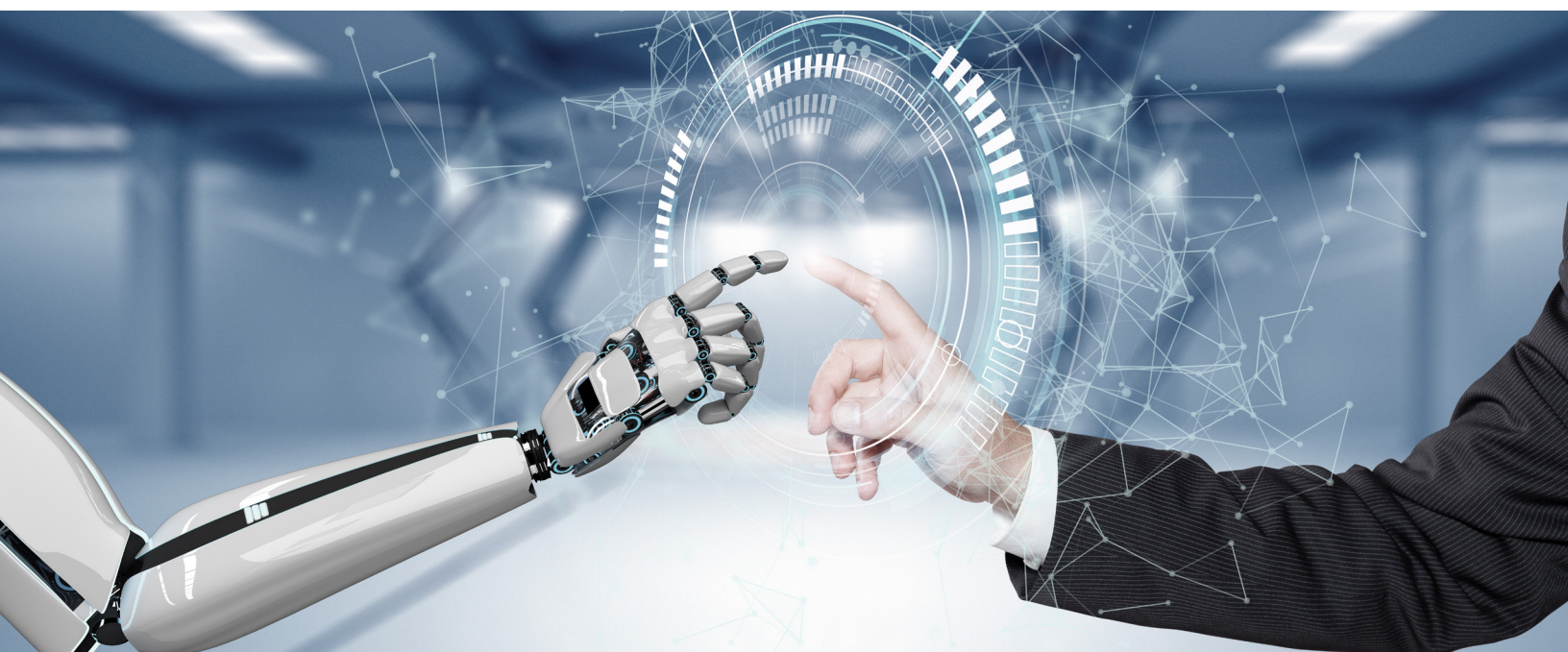
Technology requirements used to be based on a bottom-up model, with incremental technologies applied as needed, but this has changed. As **Sanjay Chowdhry**, Hamdard Wakf Laboratories, stated, “After COVID hit, the perception changed, and an imperative to digitize has come from top management. The thinking has moved towards digitalization.” Today, all companies are technology companies, and digitalization and the growing hyperconnectivity that accompanies it is a top-down business imperative.

Nishchal Khorana, Frost & Sullivan, added:

“

Across industries, everyone is embracing digitalization. For some it's operational, for others it's an integration of ERPs, for some of us it's more to do with new technology; some of us are changing legacy systems. The reasons could be different, but there is an underlying digitization, and that's probably why we're here...it's mandatory now.”

Increased automation, Internet of Things, and numerous other nascent technologies are increasingly enabling new processes, disrupting industries, and creating new business models.





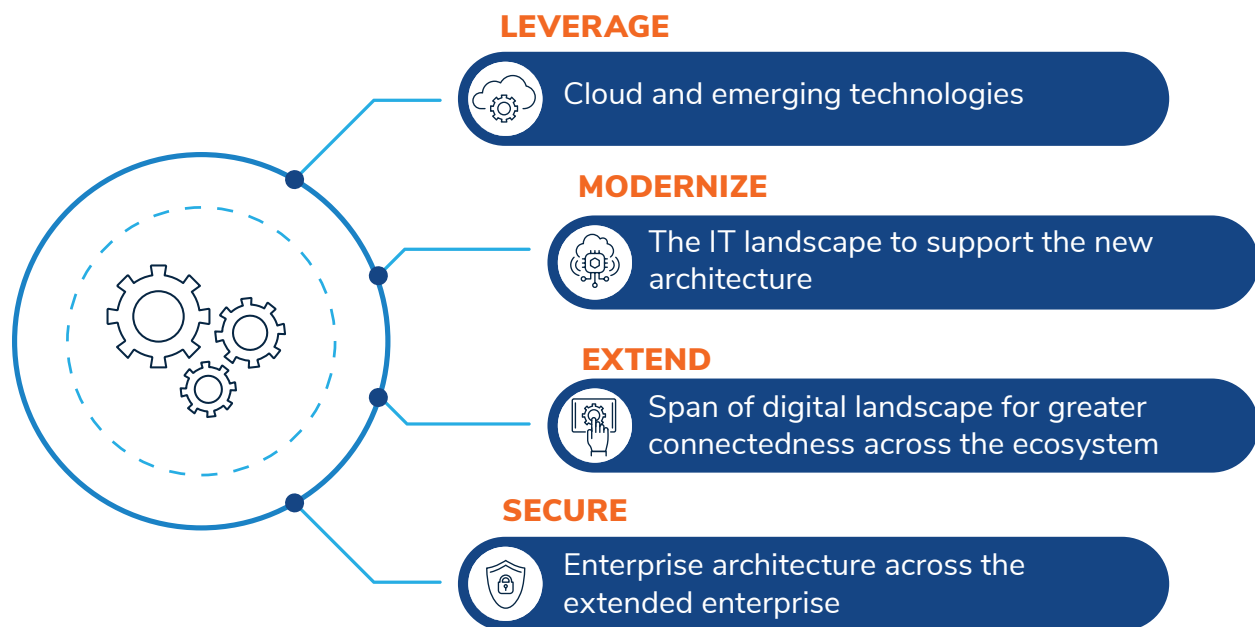
Connectivity Drives Collaboration

A distributed workforce creates greater need for digital communication, and technology that enables enhanced collaboration is the order of the day. New types of partnerships with suppliers and customers will continue to emerge, underpinned by evolving technologies.

Scaling Up for the Future: Technology Priorities

Each organization is unique, but all share factors needed to build a connected ecosystem and a clear path forward, including building and modernizing an IT infrastructure that is connected, agile, and secure.

It is now widely accepted that all companies are essentially technology companies, and organizational growth and digitalization have become inextricably linked. It is critical to leverage current and emerging technologies to provide the best product or service, or even to be a pioneer in the field.



It will not be easy for many enterprises, particularly those with legacy architectures, to move to a multilayered hyperconnected model. Determining which technologies they need will mark an important part of the journey as organizations move to become hyperconnected. They must assess their needs from an infrastructure standpoint, from a network standpoint, and from a cloud standpoint. They must ask: What do we need to build this whole hyperconnected ecosystem?



Some key points that were analyzed based on the discussion include:

Leverage

Taking a cloud-first approach by leveraging cloud-based technologies is emerging as a building block of transformation. The paradigm shift from on-premises to the cloud is a key enabler of the new IT architecture. As **Vineet Chawla**, GMR Group, stated, “The major impact coming to the industry is a paradigm shift from on-prem to the cloud. People are working from home. All the data is now being accessed via multi-factor authentication and VPNs; there is a lot of technology coming in. We are die-hard fans of cloud-first technologies.”

Modernize

Modernizing applications, platforms, and infrastructure can be challenging but will become essential. Legacy architecture can pose challenges, and it may become essential to redesign the architecture to support faster adoption of technologies.

Ravinder Bhardwaj, Samsung SDS, emphasized the changes needed and the importance of modernization:

“

The earlier systems and the applications running on those systems will not survive for a long time. The time for modernization has come. We have to shift from the traditional setup application to new applications, new platforms.”

Extend

The new architecture and technology enterprise must extend beyond the traditional enterprise boundaries to encompass a wider ecosystem of partners, customers, and employees. Building out a resilient yet agile digital infrastructure will be a critical step in the transition to hyperconnectivity. It will include a shift from a tech product focus to a customer focus and will be supported by agile software platforms and services. This evolving digital framework will underpin the workplace and be driven by business objectives. As **Upkar Singh**, RMSI, stated, “We can choose and plug and play the different blocks and capabilities, according to business requirements.”



Secure

How to effectively secure these hyperconnected networks is another critical consideration. Security by design, or the use of software products and capabilities that are intrinsically configured to be secure, is one way to address the issue. Implementing a zero trust framework is another. No conversation about attaining hyperconnectivity Nirvana would be complete without examining the costs and complexities involved in achieving it and the need for stringent security.

The Think Tank technology thought leaders recommended implementing technologies and capabilities on a use case basis and factoring in an organization's budget, needs, and capabilities when strategizing and implementing solutions.

Chawla shared the 5 pillars that are guiding his enterprise:

1. Move from a CapEx model to an OpEx model.
2. Prioritize cloud-first technologies.
3. Avoid compromise on security—the plan must include constant evolutionary upgrades in products, services, and strategies.
4. Take a hybrid approach, as opposed to a total paradigm shift.
5. Test technologies and applications thoroughly throughout diversified businesses.

Regardless of their strategies or technology plans, IT leaders all face strong business directives and pressure to shorten time to market. To meet these goals and stay agile in today's volatile economy, some will look to flexible platforms and plug-and-play solutions that they can alter in response to changing business scenarios. They must also consider the compatibility of systems, platforms, and applications. However, the scarcity of DevOps talent needed to design and oversee these newer solutions is another complication.



THE WAY FORWARD:

Building Hyperconnected Ecosystems

As the world becomes more and more digitized, hyperconnectivity, which allows everything and everyone to connect from almost anywhere and at any time, will continue to evolve. These connections will be person-to-person, person-to-machine, and machine-to-machine; interactions will be one-to-one, one-to-many, or many-to-one.

Hyperconnectivity will enable greater collaboration between employees, customers, partners, and vendors across the supply chain. As a result, swifter decisions will be made, more data will be accessed more quickly, and strategies and plans may even be adjusted in real time. Revenue, customer service, and operational efficiencies will improve.

As **Routh** summarized:

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With the hyperconnected model, we are creating an ecosystem which you can use to connect multiple type of devices via various communication methods. It could be voice, it could be video, or it could be instant messaging. Or maybe chat. You are enabling an ecosystem through which anybody, sitting anywhere, with any sort of device, can connect and collaborate.

5G is now coming in...so you can conceivably allow almost one million devices to be connected per square kilometer. Whereas with 4G you could only connect 60,000...so you can see the jump.

The technology is helping to accelerate the concept of the hyperconnected process. It's basically moving from technology to an experience.”

As technology marches forward and the hyperconnected ecosystem continues to grow, another digital iteration or innovation will always be available to apply. Emerging technologies like artificial intelligence and edge computing (a paradigm that references computing near the user) will continue to evolve. Enterprises that offer the best digital experiences will be the most likely to survive and succeed.



But creating these advanced, customer-friendly digital experiences is a complex, multilayered undertaking. Even the best companies will find it difficult to manage these operations in-house, and most would benefit greatly from a seasoned technology partner that can provide the latest solutions and informed strategic oversight.

To achieve this continuous transformation, enterprises will need a technology partner that

- understands unique business needs;
- delivers a product/solution portfolio that cuts across cloud, network, security, and other collaboration solutions;
- offers proven global capabilities and experience; and
- provides a strategic partnership within the ICT ecosystem and a one-stop shop for solutions.

Discover more insights on building hyperconnected ecosystems here:
Tata Communications





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