



Flipkart's Smart Assistive Interface 'Saathi' aims to handhold first-time e-commerce users using audio-visual navigation

Aims to handhold new users, with a combination of text and audio-visual experience for product discovery

Bengaluru - November 27 2019: Flipkart, India's leading homegrown e-commerce marketplace, today announced the introduction of a 'Smart Assistive Interface' feature called 'Flipkart Saathi' to support first-time e-commerce users on the platform and enhance their overall shopping experience. This first-of-a-kind feature from Flipkart is available in Hindi and English to start with and is Flipkart's attempt towards further humanising e-commerce. With this feature, Flipkart aims to empower consumers across tier II, III cities and beyond in rural India, as it seeks to bring the next 200 million consumers online.

The assistive interface feature (audio-guided navigation) aims at mimicking the typical real-life shopping experience for consumers who are comfortable being assisted by a salesperson. It uses a combination of text and audio-based instructions to guide new users in their e-commerce journey. This includes a list of key actions in the form of pop-up texts followed by audio for a better understanding. As audio is simple to follow and offers relatability, consumers can follow the instructions in a more immersive manner.

The Voice of Convenience

Industry research suggests that 90% of new internet users in India are native language speakers, hence it becomes imperative to offer a native e-commerce experience to impart familiarity, comfort and aid in decision making. With this assistive interface, users will be able to see relevant information and search for their desired products in Hindi – a language whose internet user base is expected to outgrow English in India by the year 2021.

Flipkart undertook extensive research for nearly a year, speaking with consumers yet to transact on e-commerce, and occasional users in tier-II cities to understand how assistive interface as a concept, resonates with end users. In its study, the company realised that while new users are able to skim through some products on their own, filtering options and choosing brands or variants is where they required assistance and hence, audio visual guided navigation becomes essential. Through consecutive studies, Flipkart tested initial concepts and recorded how users react to onboarding, flow and what value they derive from assistive interfaces.

Solving for India

The smart assistive interface will play a significant role in eliminating obstructions to e-commerce and offers a sequential way of learning how to shop online. This will in turn reduce consumers' reliance on others to experience e-commerce and empower them to experience e-commerce independently. Furthermore, it will help offline users transitioning to e-commerce to input in the correct language,





offering them the ability to do tasks faster and enhance their confidence. The feature will also be made available in other regional language interfaces in the coming months.



Kalyan Krishnamurthy, Group Chief Executive Officer, Flipkart, said, “*Flipkart is committed to bringing the next 200 million consumers online and solving for that in every possible manner. Our talented technology team has worked hard to make Hindi interface and Smart Assistive Interface available to consumers at a time when an increasing number of consumers from smaller cities are getting access to data. This personalisation of technology is a key element of our vision for Bharat and all our innovations are centred around this. As 80-90% of our resources are devoted towards building the ecosystem for Bharat, we are confident of such initiatives bringing about a massive change in our efforts to democratize e-commerce in India.*”

Jeyandran Venugopal, Chief Product and Technology Officer at Flipkart, said, “*When solved well, language becomes more of a convenience than a barrier. Our efforts in this direction have been very satisfying, including the launch of Hindi interface and now the Smart Assistive Interface. This initiative will further make it easier for consumers especially in Tier-II cities & beyond to access & enjoy an online shopping experience. Through the combination of cutting-edge tech with our robust understanding of the diverse consumer base in India, the Flipkart team has created an offering to simplify e-commerce. It will bring us closer to our goal of democratizing e-commerce, bringing inclusivity, and onboarding the next set of consumers.*”

About Flipkart

The Flipkart Group is one of India’s leading digital commerce entities and includes group companies Flipkart, Myntra, Jabong, and PhonePe. Launched in 2007, Flipkart has enabled millions of consumers, sellers, merchants and small businesses to be a part of India’s e-commerce revolution. With a registered customer base of over 200 million, offering 150 million products across 80+ categories, Flipkart is known for pioneering services such as Cash on Delivery, No Cost EMI and easy returns – customer-centric innovations that have made online shopping more accessible and affordable for millions of Indians. Together with Myntra and Jabong, which hold prominent positions in the online fashion market, and PhonePe, India’s fastest growing digital payments platform, the Flipkart Group is steering the transformation of commerce in India through technology.

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