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Digital Health in India is certainly one of the sunshine sectors:Adrit Raha

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Adrit Raha, CEO, Vivant talks about digital health in India



Can you throw some light on Vivant & the type of services the company provides in India?

Vivant is one of Asia's leading healthcare technology ventures, focussed on preventive care side. It is trying to address the growing challenge of Non Communicable or Lifestyle related diseases such as Diabetes, Hypertension, Obesity, Heart conditions, Mental Health, etc. Vivant provides an extremely comprehensive AI powered Health Management platform which focusses on three crucial elements. It helps individuals identify their risk towards various health conditions and then provides them various resources to track and manage the same. From options such as digitizing health information, booking health tests, online pharmacy, telemedicine and access to personalised health coaches, Vivant's wellness offerings ensure that every aspect of an users health journey is covered. Recently, it also forayed into the femtech side through its period and fertility tracking app "NYRA".

Since its Inception, Vivant have had a meteoric rise and its unwavering focus on B2B2C model has paid off very well. At present, Vivant is working with over 70 leading enterprises (Insurance Providers, Brokers, Corporates and Healthcare Providers) and managing the health of over 900,000 end consumers. It has also been part of the prestigious Microsoft Accelerator and Malaysian Global Accelerator programs. Vivant was also recognised by World Economic Forum and Duke Health to be among the top 10 global health innovators.

Do you see any gap as far as digital health in India is concerned? Your views on digital health? (Challenges, opportunities & possible solution)

Digital Health in India is certainly one of the sunshine sectors. We have always been good in medicine and in the last 2 or 3 decades, have grown to be a superpower when it comes to technology. When you tag these two with an increasingly technology oriented and progressive population, digital health was bound to take centre stage. It would not be incredulous to suggest that India might actually be far ahead of many other developed nations, when it comes to digital health.

However, much still needs to be done and there are gaps which need to be filled in. If we look at any other industry and some of the path breaking products coming out of it, one of the crucial factors behind it has been the regulatory environment. Having a good, solid regulatory framework ensures a level playing field for everyone and same time spurs product innovation as you are aware of the boundaries to operate within and the leniency you can take. Hence, your product has more chance of scaling up with minimal changes. Currently with different stakeholders having their own interpretation of the regulations, look to come up with their own version of a product, thereby making it difficult for innovators to stick to their core offerings.

Opportunities are certainly massive. Whether it is in the form of technology innovation and brining in AI/ML and deep tech into healthcare or improving provider efficiency though adoption of EEHR/RIS/PACS solutions or even disrupting traditional business models through telemedicine, online health coaching etc., digital health promises amazing ways to transform current health models. From brining consumers to the centre of the value chain to arming doctors with decision support systems, digital health holds significance to each and every stakeholder in the healthcare ecosystem.

If we have to make a larger impact in this this space and in a short time, it is imperative that government and private players focus more on a PPP model. While government can bring in the required regulations and a larger canvas, digital health players bring in the required level of innovation and agility. Going forward, this has to be a key aspect to be worked upon.

How do you see the competition in the market?

Digital health space is garnering a lot of attention from investors and innovators alike. While some are redefining the traditional business models, be it though online pharmacy or teleconsultation, there are others such as Vivant who are banking on technology innovation to bring about disruption in this space. This could mean harnessing the power of AI/ML and BIG data to shift the industry from a curative to preventive care model.

Having said that, we believe, competition is always good. Given the size of the Indian healthcare market, along with the magnitude of problems ailing it, we believe it is not necessarily a winner takes all proposition. As far as we are concerned, we are building a moat through our incredibly diverse and talented team with expertise drawn from various fields, from the founders of AllizHealth to the new influx of people with start-up experience, background in managing wellness initiatives for billion-dollar companies and a Board of advisors with significant expertise in the health and wellness space. The second factor is our singular focus on the B2B2C model and ability to work on frugal innovation. When we started, there were several players offering similar services, but the long gestation period of healthtech took a toll on many of our peers. Even with limited access to capital, we stood firm with our vision and market approach. We never took our foot off the pedal and as result today we are foremost when it comes to wellness technology ventures, not just in India, but in whole of Asia.

What are your expansion plans in India? Any new collaboration or product launch in the pipeline?

India is, and, will always remain our key market and we are extremely bullish on the Indian Healthtech space. We believe it is at the cusp of a massive paradigm shift with respect to how health is perceived and delivered. With a burgeoning millennial population who is extremely technology savvy and getting more and more health conscious with each passing day, digital health is bound go mainstream in India. Vivant has already established itself as a formidable player in the Indian healthtech space and is now looking at several different ways to make further inroads, and, more significantly make a deeper impact. We are quite excited with few areas in particular. One, with the entire occupational health and wellness space, given a large number of manufacturing setups and base of pyramid workforce, there is a tremendous amount of value addition that a healthtech venture like ours can bring in. Second is through our Vivant Innovation labs and its mandate to focus on cutting edge innovations such as voice enabled applications, image and hand writing recognition to easy digitization of prescriptions and reports and investing in building a vernacular platform to make the offerings more inclusive. Lastly, we are also quite excited about the femtech side. We believe, slowly but, surely some of the taboos around women’s health is starting to come down and is going to be a key area of focus from innovators and policymakers likewise. In order to stay ahead of the curve, Vivant recently launched a very robust period and fertility tracking app. Within a month or so of its launch, it has already been downloaded over 70k times. So, we are furthering our presence and investment in India to take advantage of these shifts.