

As Digital Takes Root, Mid-tier IT Cos Get Staff Upskilled

Firms invest heavily in reskilling staff in digital skills as customers shift technology budgets away from traditional services to digital

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Pune | Mumbai: Mid-tier IT services companies are training employees in digital technology skills, as they see increased business from clients intent on going digital to transform their business.

Indian IT firms have invested heavily in reskilling employees in digital skills as customers shift technology budgets away from traditional services towards digital services, which include using the cloud to host apps, analytics to look at internal and external data, cybersecurity and building apps for smartphones. Pune-based Zensar Technologies, which derives almost half of its revenue from digital services, says it has been working on turning itself into a digital enterprise over

the past two years, but has more to do. Zensar CEO Sandeep Kishore said the company had an internal deadline where all employees had to undergo at least a certain level of reskilling within a given time frame.

"All employees have finished the third level of courses and over half have done the fourth level," he said. The final stage involves selecting one of three areas of expertise as part of the company's new focus areas — research, design and experience — and all employees are expected to get themselves certified, irrespective of roles.

Bengaluru-based Mindtree, on the other hand, uses a credit-based system to keep track of its employees' progress. They were initially mandated to complete 35 hours of learning in a year before launching the digital learning platform Yorbit, where it moved to a credit-based system.

"When we moved to the credit system, we noticed that the learning hours per employee doubled from the 35 hours mandate we had earlier. This can also be attributed to the fact that Yorbit allows employees to learn anywhere, anytime," said Anish Philip, VP, People Function, Mind-

tree. Mid-tier IT firms in India hire over 1,00,000 people. In the past few years, these companies have seen digital revenues' contribution to the total go up steadily.

Even as companies look to hire people with the required tech skills, the bigger thrust is on up-skilling existing workforce.

Most companies have linked the training programmes to an individual employee's career path, suggesting what's relevant for the person based on experience and focus areas. Pune-based Persistent Systems has a dedicated 'growth and solutions' unit that focuses on market development and uses this to identify mid- to long-term technology trends, which are then used by Persistent University to create the necessary learning programmes, said chief people officer Sameer Bendre. "The timelines are shrinking on all fronts. We have

a multi-pronged approach to address this challenge. We design certain time-bound reskilling/upskilling programmes that are targeted towards immediate needs," he said. "These are high-intensity, high-impact boot camps covering a small number of individuals. We also take a mid-term view, which allows a large number of employees to acquire these skills at their pace."

NIIT Technologies, another of the prominent mid-tier IT firms, has partnered with SKillsoft to create a new learning platform, Percipio, which has over 26,000 learning assets across functions, including technology, sales, management and leadership.

The company has focused on data services, cloud/API, cognitive technologies and automation to capitalise on opportunities arising from disruptions in the sector.

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KEY SERVICES

Using cloud to host apps

Analytics to look at internal & external data
Cybersecurity
Building apps for smartphones

