Indian Language IT market may touch Rs. 100 Bn in 2001 - NASSCOM

Spurred by information technology spending by the state governments, Indian language software and hardware market was slated to touch Rs 100 billion by 2001, according to late Devang Mehta, president of NASSCOM. He spoke at a function to launch Devanagari font package 'Fontsuvidha'. IT spending for e-governance by state governments in local languages is growing rapidly and the language software market would grow from the current Rs 100 crore to Rs 250 crore by the end of year 2001. In the absence of compatibility among various font packages users had problems, limiting the use of IT in Indian languages. Language software companies should tie up with hardware manufacturers, especially printers, to capture large share of market in the country.

Microsoft Office XP with Indian Language Support

- Microsoft Office XP, the latest version of Microsoft Office, slated for launch in June 2001, now provides support for Hindi, Marathi, Nepali, Konkani, Tamil, Telugu, Kannada, Gujarati and Gurumukhi.

  Microsoft Office XP is primed to redefine the relationship between people and software by delivering an experience that provides a smarter way of working, increased productivity and heightened efficiency among your team members. A host of new Indic enabled features, such as Smart Tags, Task Panes, Auto-Correct, Water Mark, Password encryption, Hyperlinks, File search, Review options, Web page creation, e-mails, Watch Window and Refreshable Web Queries promise to open up a whole new world where users will finally experience the same technology for their language as any international user, anywhere in the world!

  Microsoft Office XP takes Indian language users into a whole new realm of usage by providing collaboration, increased productivity and simplicity for all their needs and requirements.

  Path-breaking technology such as OpenType fonts, multiple keyboards, Transliteration keyboards (for Hindi and Tamil), localized templates and a host of other Indian language specific functionalities help users experience a completely new Indian language working environment.

- Microsoft also plans to bring out Hotmail in Hindi. The launch date for the Hindi service has not yet been announced. While the Hindi Hotmail service will allow users to type their messages in Hindi, the e-mail addresses will continue to be in English. Explaining how the Hindi e-mail service will work to use Hotmail in a language other than English, one requires a keyboard and a computer operating system supporting that language. "Microsoft will introduce the service in Hindi, on the similar model". In addition, Microsoft will also launch its web-based messenger service, called MSN Messenger, in Hindi. MSN Messenger service allows users to send instant messages through the Internet. The MSN Messenger service, available as a free download at www.msn.co.in, Microsoft's general purpose portal, tells users when their buddies are online and enables them to exchange instant messages.

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CALL FOR TECHNOLOGIES

A number of technologies have been developed in academia and industrial R&D units at various centers. There is huge available market of Rs.100 Bn. (about US $ 2.2 Bn) of Indian Language Technologies. World market for multi-lingual computing is much larger. Indian Industry begins to realize potential of language technologies to capture domestic market and extend to global market of multilingual computing.

Ministry of Information Technology plans to organize the first **Language Technology Business Meet** in July/August this year. This meet will provide opportunity for closer interaction between technology providers and technology recipients. A number of language technologies will be demonstrated and technology transfer MOUs will be signed. Language technology providers and seekers may send information about the technologies to exhibit and/or likely interest in proposed technologies available for transfer are in the areas of Optical Character Recognition, Machine Translation from E to H ,Text to Speech synthesis for Hindi, OCR for Oriya and many other such Indian Language tools and technologies.

Available Technologies	Technology Providers
• OCR	Bangla, Hindi & Oriya : ISI Kolkata Hindi : IIT Kanpur Oriya : Utkal University
• Text-to-Speech & Speech Recognition System	Hindi : CEERI Delhi Tata Infotech Ltd. Mumbai Oriya : Utkal University Hindi, Tamil : IIT Chennai
• Word Net	Hindi & Marathi : IIT Mumbai Oriya : Utkal University
• Corpora, Lexical Resources & Content Development Tools	all languages : CIIL Mysore assigned languages : Resource Centers
• Machine Translation System	English to Hindi : IITK-ERDC/N C-DAC, Pune, NCST Tamil <–> English Translation Engine : Anna University Hindi to English : IIT Kanpur
• Language Accessor	Indian Languages to Hindi : IIIT Hyderabad
• NLP Tools : Morph Analyser & Generator, Spell & Grammar Checker, Word Processor, Office Suite, Internet Tools	Hindi : IIT Kanpur, NCST, C-DAC Marathi : IIT Mumbai Bengali : ISI Kolkata Tamil : Anna University
• Authoring Tools	Sanskrit : C-DAC Bangalore Hindi : Banasthali Vidyapith, NCST Hindi, Malyalam : ERDCI Trivendrum
• Code Conversion Utilities/Plugins	C-DAC, IIIT Hyderabad
• Fonts	C-DAC, Pune Modular Infotech, Pune

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> The success of a technology lies not only in its contents but also in its management.
>
> – V.S. Arunachalam