

INDIAN ECO SYSTEM

An Overview Of The Indian Market By An Indigenous Solution Provider

This issue of the **PETROLWORLD** magazine focuses on the Indian Market and it seems appropriate to look at the market from the perspective of an indigenous solution provider. We spoke with Rakesh Sharma of Pine Labs about his perspective, his experiences of the Indian Market, where he believes it is heading and about Pine Labs' own suite of products and services.

The Indian economy is booming and exponential growth is being witnessed in areas of Retail, Banking, Customer Care, Education, Logistics & Distribution etc. Indian customers are demanding world class standards in everything they experience – quality of service & products. India has been a relatively safe haven of growth staying almost insulated from global economic turmoil. The Indian growth story is here to stay and will be throwing opportunities our way for many decades to come. Every year thousands of kilometres of roads, millions of vehicles, hundreds of millions of mobile users are being added to the Indian Economic Ecosystem.

The Indian market is not easy to satisfy; the size of the opportunity has attracted flocks of companies leading to ultra intense competition. The challenge here is to provide the best quality of products and services at affordable prices. Successful companies, products and services in India are bound to fit into emerging markets across the world. The Indian market has also been a cradle of innovation and change. There have not only been unique concepts developed locally but products and processes tried and tested

worldwide had to be adapted to suit local requirements.

Petroleum Retailing Technology – an area in which Pine Labs specialises has been a space of hectic activity. Petroleum retailing so far operated under the administrative control of the government. The government however had mandated the Oil Marketing Companies to modernise and upgrade the retailing networks – the focus being on control and customer service. Over the last four to five years the OMC's have been

the largest proprietary payment & loyalty solutions in India. We specialise in pioneering technology for Gas Station Automation (IRIS), Electronic Payment Systems (Plutus), Loyalty Programs (NOVA) and VAS Applications (Onedesk). IRIS has over 1500 installations; Plutus runs at 14,000 retailer Points of Sale and 2,000 gas stations; and OneDesk is providing value-added services like mobile recharge, train ticketing and bill payments at over 2000 merchant locations. Our success is based on our commitment to innovation: we

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working on replacing the dispensers with modern MPDs, providing automation solutions including site controllers, payment terminals, tank gauging systems, head office systems etc.

PINE LABS

Pine Labs Pvt. Ltd. is a young Indian Company who have embarked on a journey of creating solutions in the following areas for emerging markets.

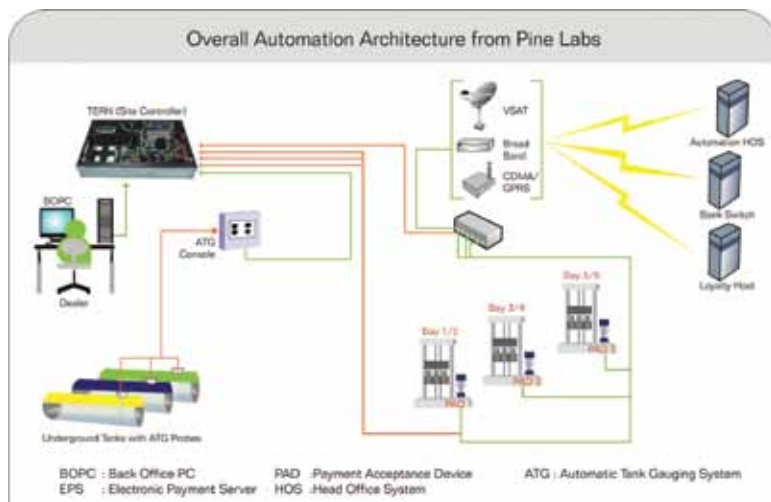
- Retail Automation
- Electronic Payment Systems for bank card acquiring
- Loyalty Management
- Fleet Card
- RFID systems

Pine Labs is the leading provider of retail transaction technology from India. We serve Blue Chip Indian and Global Corporations, and manage

strive to combine cost efficiency, out-of-the-box engineering, domain expertise, excellence in execution and regional knowledge to build solutions most suited to the needs of developing markets. This makes us potential partners for leading businesses seeking to tap the Asian growth market.

COST - EFFICIENCY

Pine Labs has pioneered the concept of cost effective solutions while retaining every functionality and solution feature. This was possible through the innovative design of the hardware and the application software. The versatility of the hardware reduced the different types of interfaces required for the different makes of dispensers thereby streamlining the bill of material. Rationalisation of software components also minimised the



Typical Architecture figure 1.

need for hardware devices such as back office servers and point of sale servers. This approach was made possible due to in-house capabilities of solution, design and understanding / control on the applications like EPS, Loyalty, MIS & HOS. The price points of our solutions have made it feasible to automate very large numbers of outlets, which would have otherwise not qualified for the capital expenditure.

OUT-OF-BOX ENGINEERING

Continuous innovation has been the cornerstone of our success in this challenging automation market. We have the capability to quickly understand the customer needs and provide for the same in our solutions:

1. Single Box Site Controller
 - a. All in One Controller,
 - b. Dealer Interface, MIS, Reconciliation
 - c. BOS + POS
 - d. EPS
2. FCC Based EPS
 - a. Integral EPS which does not require a standalone platform
 - b. Seamless integration with Transaction database
 - c. All modes communication to bank
 - d. All bank Certified including Amex
3. All Modes of Communication
 - a. PSTN
 - b. CDMA
 - c. GPRS
 - d. Broadband
 - e. VSAT
4. Value Adds for the End Customer
 - a. Instant Customer Alerts – esp. for Fleet Operators

- b. Dynamic communication on charge slip
- c. Mobile based loyalty solution
- d. RFID based vehicle tagging and tracking
- e. Transaction authorisation from the comfort of the car.

DOMAIN EXPERTISE

Pine Labs has accumulated extensive expertise in the area of petroleum retailing, payment processing and loyalty management through a decade long association with the leading oil marketers in the Indian Market. The solutions designed by Pine Labs are based on a sound understanding of ground realities and are customised to suit the needs of the end user. The

“Successful companies, products and services in India are bound to fit into emerging markets across the world.”

bottom up approach has made Pine Labs solutions readily acceptable at all levels and activation levels are very superior. Pine Labs is the only end-to-end provider of retail automation solutions in India with its in house Site-controller cum BOS cum POS, EPS, payment terminals software, Head Office System and also Loyalty cum Fleet application.

EXCELLENCE IN EXECUTION

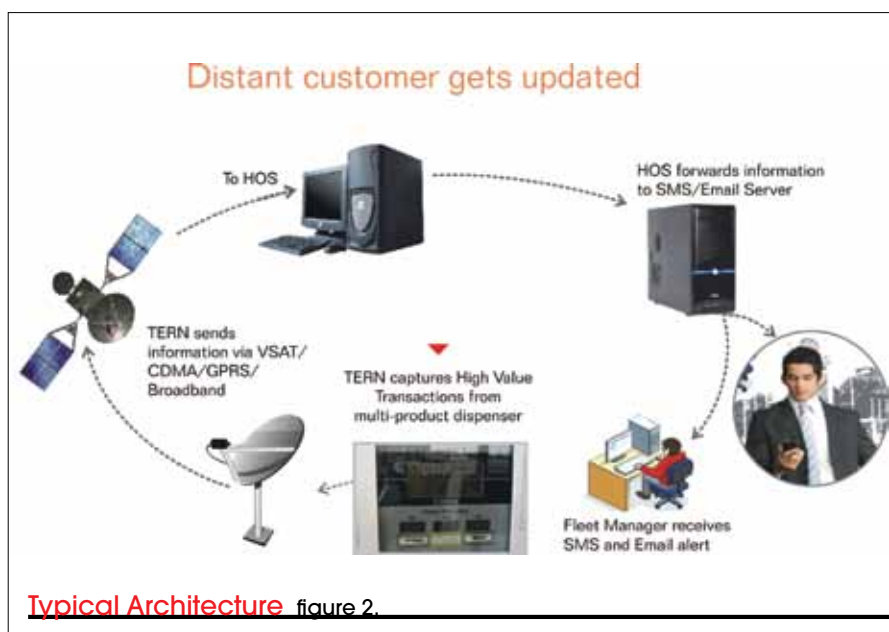
Any design or strategy without smart execution is of little value to the customer. Understanding this reality, Pine Labs has always planned and managed its deliveries on time. Over the last two years Pine Labs has on and average deployed over 100 automation systems per month.

TYPICAL ARCHITECTURE

See figure 1 (left), figure 2 (below) and figure 3 (page 68).

SUMMARY

The changing Retail Petroleum environment demands that automation solutions for the forecourt need to evolve further to become a business tool in the hands of Oil Marketing companies. They need to further take



Typical Architecture figure 2.

“OMC's will focus their energies on upgrading the entire value chain of the energy sector from upstream refineries to downstream retail outlets. India is going to be a very exciting place for players in the energy sector for many years to come.”

advantage of advances in telecommunication and new generation computing platforms. Pine Labs automation solution takes advantage of advanced telecom infrastructure by enabling remote real time access to the forecourt for retail organisation. The solution has been designed keeping in mind not only the traditional automation functions such as sales/stock management, but also includes built in support for payment card application, prepaid/Gift programs, loyalty programs and several other useful features.

The solution has been deployed in some of the most demanding environments and has performed exceptionally well, and as a result, has become the leading automation solution in the Indian market. With decontrol of petrol prices and those of diesel visible on the horizon the approach to petroleum retailing



is likely to go through a paradigm shift. OMC's will focus their energies on upgrading the entire value chain of the energy sector from upstream refineries to downstream retail outlets. India is going to be a

very exciting place for players in the energy sector for many years to come. ■

Pine Labs

<h3 style="margin: 0;">Retail Automation...</h3> <p style="font-size: small; margin-top: 10px;">Retail Automation is aimed at enhancing the efficiency of retail outlet operations and facilitating the management of retail network.</p>	<h3 style="margin: 0;">Ensuring Customer Loyalty...</h3> <p style="font-size: x-small; margin-top: 10px;">Nova Loyalty Solution help organizations derive maximum benefits out of their day to day interactions with customers and help them build long-term, sustainable and rewarding relationships. We also specialize in fuel and fleet card solutions.</p>	<h3 style="margin: 0;">Process, Capture & Secure...</h3> <p style="font-size: x-small; margin-top: 10px;">Pine Labs PLUTUS (Plutus™) family of products constitute the next generation PC-based payment platform for enabling EFT, POS, credit/debit card transactions at merchant counter tops.</p>	<h3 style="margin: 0; font-weight: bold;">onedesk</h3> <p style="font-size: x-small; margin: 0;">Look no further</p> <p style="font-size: x-small; margin-top: 10px;">Book tickets, pay bills, get mobile top-ups and a host of other services at your neighborhood retail store.</p>
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