

Noida's Payment Solutions Provider Firm Expands Biz

Pine Labs has accounted for over 200% growth in Point-of Sale (PoS) technology adoption by SMEs in tier-II, tier-III cities

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PINE LABS — a payment, loyalty and retail automation systems provider — has been taping the multi-crore retail market across India and NCR. From its Noida-based office, the company has reached out across sectors — retailers, malls, restaurants, banks, oil companies, insurance companies and many more — to spread the convenience of using plastic money.

The company has deployed payment solutions to carry out transaction from debit/credit cards and also distribute and manage loyalty cards. "Payment industry is rapidly reaching a point where competition will centre on innovations in technology," says Lokvir Kapoor, CEO of Pine Labs. "With the booming retail industry, we saw an opportunity for PC-based multi-bank card authorisation solution that was robust and reliable. Our client range from retail giants like Future Group, Shoppers Stop to Airtel, Samsung and numerous SME retailers in tier II&III cities."

The company's most sought-after product offerings include Plutus, a debit/credit card acceptance solution that streamlines operations to accept diverse payment options by merchants at the point of sale (PoS). Plutus EMI, allows instant EMI payment at the point of sale, Promozone promotions on charge slips and loyalty benefits and other innovative business solutions.

Plutus, launched in 2005, has the ability to integrate into a variety of PoS software applications and can even work on a variety of IP networks as well as on dial-up phone lines. It has recently developed a robust and dynamic platform offered for mobile PoS.

"Though large retail and oil retail-

ers constitute nearly 80 percent of the revenue, but malls offering loyalty, manufacturers offering EMI options, quick services restaurants and online retailers facilitating payment with Mobile PoS and SME retailers are showing an upward trend in the revenue share," said Lokvir.

According to the company, their solutions are being adopted by 1,000 plus small and medium size retailers every month. "In today's competitive scenario, a loyalty programme has become a necessary tool for customer engagement.

Businesses such as retail and others who deal directly or indirectly with end customers, have realised that it is much more cost-effective to retain and engage existing customers than to acquire new ones," added Lokvir.

He revealed, "The trend of offering value added solutions like gift cards, instant EMI is more in retailers from metros but we are seeing the growing eagerness of tier 2&3 cities retailers to offer value added services too."

Highlighting about business growth, Lokvir said, "As SMEs gear up to expand their scale of operations, it is imperative to invest in technologies that would give them an edge and cost advantages. Pine Labs has accounted for more than 200 percent increase in adoption of PoS solutions in tier II & III cities retailers over last three years."

The company focuses on innovation and creating customised solutions catering to client's unique requirement. Scholastic is a client for whom book fairs at schools and colleges form a major revenue source. They needed a solution for its book fair management. A GPRS PoS was integrated with the billing server. With Pine Labs system they were



able to merge both billing and payment in a single system improving logistics, costs and providing a complete data management solution.

Samsung has deployed Pine Labs' 'Plutus EMI' solution across several hundred Samsung Cafés and brand stores for enabling 0 percent financing on credit card transactions for selected products. This facility requires no down payment, no processing fee, pre-closure charges and paperwork. Samsung experienced splurge in not only sales but also the average value of transactions. The response has been positive and they have now agreed to rollout the same solution across 5,000 stores.

Traditionally in the Indian retail segment, the focus on technology investments is low. To change the mindset is the biggest challenge faced. But the trend is changing fast now.

"Reduced cost of transaction processing, reduced cost of training of cashier, opportunity to offer gift cards or offer loyalty programs or offer EMI facilities without incremental cost in infrastructure are the advantages that can facilitate and are the need of the day in the present economic conditions," added Lokvir.