

## Internet use vital to empower women

**T**oday is the era of digitisation. It has changed and added new dimensions to our day-to-day lives. Besides communication and connectivity, digitisation has made a significant impact on economy, education, agriculture, entertainment, to name a few.

It is essential, in the present scenario, to understand the importance, impact and challenges in the process of digitisation. In this perspective, FLO organised an interactive session on 'Digitising India' with Rajan Anandan, Vice President and Managing Director, Google, on August 12, 2014 in New Delhi.

The session was enriching and informative, with Anandan updating the audience on various initiatives taken up by Google to widen the scope of digitisation globally, with special focus on the Indian scenario.

Neeta Boochra, President, FLO, said, "In conjunction with the theme of the year 'Educate & Empower', the session has been conceptualised with the objective to educate ourselves on the impacts of digitisation and at the same time, empower and equip ourselves with the knowledge pertaining to it."

"Digitisation process is exhilarating, impacting and connecting. It is amazing to see how fast technology is impacting our lives. Reaching one billion users takes half as long with each new technology," said Anandan in his address. He added that by the year 2020, internet users will reach to a whopping five billion with 40-50 billion smartphones from a figure of 2.8 billion people and 1.75 billion smartphone users in 2014. In India, the growth rate is phenomenal, which is expected to reach a user rate of 500 million by 2018, from 200 million in 2013, with five million users being

added every month.

Anandan talked about Google Glass, which is a type of wearable technology, developed by Google with the mission of producing a mass-market ubiquitous computer, displaying information in a smart phone-like hands-free form. This device is available in USA but as of now is not available in India. 'Project Chauffeur-Google Self Driving Car' is another wonder of technology, made possible by Google.

He said that Google had launched a campaign called 'Helping Women Get Online' to encourage more women to use internet and reap its benefits. "Only one-third of internet users are females. This needs to change to achieve the desired goal of women empowerment," he stated.

Archana Garodia, Senior Vice President, FLO, said that the transformational ability of digitisation should be leveraged to promote entrepreneurship and help in bridging the gap in the lesser connected areas. ■

### Key Takeaways

- Leveraging technology for business growth
- Digitisation is accelerating and future is already here
- 5 million internet users added every month in India, scaling user rate to 500 million by 2018
- Women internet users should be increased from the current percentage which is only 30% of the total users
- Google Glass and self-driving cars can be expected to be in India, if infrastructure permits



L to R: Dr. Manju Kalra Prakash, Executive Director, FLO; Rajan Anandan, MD & VP, Google India; Neeta Boochra, President, FLO; Ritu Vadehra, Governing Body Member, FLO and Archana Garodia Gupta, Senior Vice President, FLO.