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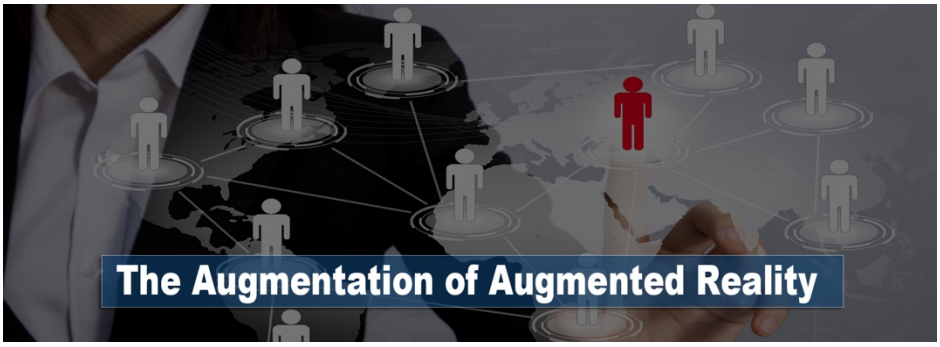

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"The secret of getting ahead is getting started", said Mark Twain. We are already in the third month of 2018 and the world is moving faster than ever. The transformation was, is and will always be a part of evolution on this planet. When we talk of businesses and its marketing, the word transformation seems to be an integral part of it. How we do marketing today is very different from what we did in the past. And, indeed we are significantly in the phase of "digital transformation". This transformation certainly indicates the creation of a wonderful website (for the visitors) to develop a marketing strategy while encompassing the brand presence and its safety.

When we talk about digital transformation in the businesses and their marketing, a lot depends on their consumer's behaviour. And the word "digital" is at the heart of it. As consumers are rapidly moving with the use of smartphones or tablets devices, the presence of physical markets is shrinking and is giving birth to e-commerce. In this scenario, if we talk about the content that we have online depends largely on what the consumers want to see and then what the marketer wants the consumer to see. The consumers follow the brand they have developed trust in. Or, sometimes they are bombarded with a firmly strategized brand marketing that they unconsciously fell into the brand's essence. These strategized brand marketing plans have swiftly moved from online paid advertising to social media to artificial intelligence and now augmented reality. And very particularly in the case of e-commerce. Augmented Reality is nothing but the superimposition of the virtual world into the real world via computer-generated images. The best example to relate to the buzz around AR (Augmented Reality) is "Pokemon Go". The game picked up like a wildfire as soon as it was released in 2016.

The concept of AR is really not very recent but it has always been in practice before we started using it in our daily lives. It had marked its presence for Archaeologists (to formulate possible site configurations) to Architects (to visualize building projects, where computer generated images superimpose into a real-life view to give an idea of how the property would look like). Coming back to its existence and usage in e-commerce, it has been pulled in by various multi-national brands to enhance their brand and thus the business. L'Oreal Paris is the first one, in 2013 to do so. It came up with an app where one could upload their photo and try out various make-up products and choose which is best suited for them. Similarly, KFC wooed Indian Audience by coming up with their "KFC WOW @ 25" app. When a general notion started plaguing the minds of Indian consumers i.e. KFC is expensive, they introduced the app. In the app, on scanning any currency note, would automatically put the available food items available in that price on the tray. The hit was to make believe that your wallet can easily afford KFC. In the Indian scenario, Abof (Aditya Birla venture), an online fashion and apparel portal brought an app, where the user could create a model of their own and can try out different outfits as per their needs and ultimately purchase when satisfied. Lenskart is another perfect example of Augmented Reality where the consumer could try out the varieties available in the eye frames and purchase the best suited thereby while being on your couch at home or any other comfort zone.

An article by DNA India tells us that, "the global AR market" is expected to grow to $111.7 billion by 2022 at a compounded growth rate of 76%". Indeed, there would be curiosity around knowing the software availability and the cost behind it. But as Ashish Limaye, CEO – APAC Happy Finish, a creative production and studio says, "the cost of an AR is as minimal as 10 Lakh to over Rs 1 crore".

India is waking up to a boom of digitalization in the market. And at the time it is increasingly becoming important to catch up with the heightened technologies.