

Printed from

THE TIMES OF INDIA

Device helps local stores stave off e-commerce sites

TNN | Jul 18, 2018, 06:18 AM IST



HUBBALLI: In the growing business of online fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG), and leading e-commerce sites coming as a dampener for small merchants, small businesses have no option but to incur losses as consumers' interest shifts towards e-commerce sites.

In order to help them fight back online competition, a startup has been helping small merchants build hyperlocal stores with easy to use technology.

Shopgro India Pvt Ltd, the Bengaluru-based startup, has developed a plug and play device that connects the barcode scanner and PoS (point of sale) at stores.

The startup, started jointly by entrepreneurs Ravindra Kanchikare, Abraham Joseph and Prasanna Gopinath, developed the device at Sandbox Startups electronics system design and manufacturing (ESDM) facility of the Deshpande Foundation in Hubballi.

Kanchikare, co-founder and CEO, told TOI that small businesses have difficulty creating online stores.

“They find it difficult to set up hyperlocal stores and deliver their products to nearby customers. They face a lot of challenges, including collecting inventories, pictures and product name. It also takes a lot of time for them to do these things. To address the issue, we have built the hardware product. It can sit between the barcode scanner and PC. With Shopgro pro device, shops can build a hyperlocal store in less than five minutes,” he said.

He said the device sends the barcode to the company's cloud every time it is scanned at the PoS. The company sources the product names and images and creates the page for the store and products.

"The company also does a search engine optimization for these pages and brings them up on search results when someone searches for the products nearby. The customer finds the product in a nearby store. We also provide an optional e-commerce platform for stores," he added.

Shopgro.in, the website of the startups, states: "We figured that most retailers don't have the expertise and time to build an online store, simply because they don't understand it. But they don't really need to. That's what we are here for."

Kanchikare said Shopgro enables retailers to list their products on Google instantly. The device helps the store appear high up on search engines like Google. When someone is looking for something the store sells, shopgro sends customers to their store. Shopgro helps shoppers find products for sale in their local area.

While leading e-commerce sites take much time to deliver the products, the device helps the people find the products in their locality and buy instantly, instead of waiting for days to product to get delivered, he added.