

# Preparing for a contextual, real-time future

**IBS Journal talks to Arun Jain, CMD, Intellect Design Arena, about what a digital future entails for the industry and how Intellect is discovering willing pioneers across the globe**

Senior Reporter  
**Alex Hamilton**



**D**igital is a shade of technology that Intellect Design Arena is embracing with open arms. “Digital is becoming a major part of the industry,” says Arun Jain, chairman and managing director of Intellect Design Arena. “When you combine that with AI, machine learning and other trends, it’s an essential factor for banks.” Intellect’s knowledge of the sector, he believes, gives it a “cutting edge” when it comes up against rival vendors.

Appropriately defining the customer’s problem is crucial for any financial technology player, and Jain says that Intellect is able to find exactly the right solution for clients. For Jain, everything revolves around the implementation of ‘Digital 2.0’. Intellect Design Arena has done deals across the globe in recent months, winning mandates in Australia, Lesotho and Mongolia.

“We’re finding that countries such as Malaysia, Vietnam, Thailand and Indonesia are in the right frame of mind, looking for expansion to a new type of digital use,” says Jain. The UAE and Qatar are also ripe for new digital offerings. Jain also mentions South Africa, Sweden, Turkey, the Americas and Kenya.

## Time’s up

The competition is too busy to notice countries that are crying out for more digital solutions says the Intellect CMD. Companies are too busy conducting mergers and acquisitions, he says, pointing to the recent combination of Misys and D+H. While mega-vendors are busy consolidating, Intellect is out there winning deals.

Customers are coming to Intellect looking for smaller projects, admits Jain, but soon find themselves taking up larger offerings, as Jain claims that Intellect Design Arena has the largest suite of banking products in the world.

Banks are also looking for core banking switches that take up far less time. Intellect’s framework-based approach, says Jain, enables it to approach banks with an offering with a much shorter implementation life cycle.

## Let’s get digital

Cloud acceptance, he adds, is on the rise. Until 2016, he admits, the conversations Intellect was having were educational, addressing concerns about feasibility, regulatory issues and security. The firm, says Jain, was keen to show these companies what cloud could do, rather than explaining what it was. “This year the acceptance of the cloud has improved. In India it has improved substantially; we are receiving proposals from firms asking about going cloud-first.”

When it comes to banks ‘lagging behind’ on new technology, Jain admits that sometimes technologists can forget about the political issues within large banking organisations. “If the CIO wants to take control of a technology they usually want to keep it in-house. So, there are more dimensions than just the product.”

Looking ahead, Jain believes that API banking and open-source technology will play a major role. “The next stage is fully open-source, fully API-enabled, fully cloud-native and fully real-time. We need to look at more integration. You may have the best machine learning application but if it isn’t supported by the best UI or deployment methods, you’ll get stuck one way or the other.”



**Arun Jain: Cloud is gaining acceptance from all sides**