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**Fast facts**

**Dates**

18-19 November 2008

**Delegates**

Day 1: 163  
Day 2: 131

**SWIFT partners**

- ACE Software Solutions
- Bankersalmanac.com
- Cambridge Solutions
- Clearstream
- Misys
- Oracle Financial Services Software
- SmartStream
- Sun Microsystems

**Traffic**

- 622,781,628 messages (YTD 2008)
- Average daily traffic: 15,006,786
- 22.20% Growth YTD

**Live customers**

8,385

## India Business Forum Sees Positive Future for Indian Financial Sector Despite Turmoil

India's financial sector is expanding fast as its markets embrace globalisation. Even against the backdrop of the current volatile economic environment, the country is witnessing a steady influx of foreign investors. Indian corporations are meanwhile assuming global importance as they expand internationally with well thought-out merger and acquisition strategies. As Indian companies expand their footprint and the economy integrates with international markets, India's financial transaction messaging volumes are correspondingly witnessing robust growth. Consistent with this trend, growing payments messages represented 59 per cent of total volume in 2007 and securities messages represented 22 per cent.

Against this background, the SWIFT India Business Forum provided a platform for industry leaders to converge and discuss the broader financial trends and challenges. This included steps required by the industry to boost its competitiveness by creating simpler and more efficient processes and procedures.

Currently in its fifth edition, the SWIFT India Business Forum was held from November 18-19, 2008 in Mumbai, preceding the tragic terrorist attack by only a few days. It was attended by nearly 300 delegates, with 19 external speakers, representing a broad cross-section of regulators, bankers, corporates and service providers.

A range of plenary sessions focused on the current global slowdown and its impact on India and the Asia Pacific region. Each of these sessions reiterated the need for harmonisation, creating relevant market infrastructures, shaping the future of securities and straight-through processing.

A distinct set of sessions focussed on the advantages of SWIFT technologies and insight on SWIFT solutions for its members.





^ Well-attended Opening



^ [From left] Ian Johnston, SWIFT; Mark Troutman of J.P. Morgan, Kaiser Chowdhury of AB Bank, and Charles Legrand, SWIFT



^ Networking before the session starts

Opening the executive plenary session, Ian Johnston, Chief Executive, Asia Pacific, SWIFT, congratulated India on its achievements on multiple fronts including economic acceleration and high growth rates. He went on to share his personal views on the current economic slowdown, expecting a tough period ahead for the financial industry. However, he was optimistic the downturn was transient and that the industry would soon recover.

Despite the current volatility and downturn, he also noted that SWIFT had seen an increase in its message transactions. Ultimately, he foresees an increase in messaging next year, albeit at a reduced growth rate.

Mark Troutman, Managing Director, APAC Regional Head of Multinational Corporate, J.P. Morgan, added that Asia was very much a part of the global economy – and is better equipped and more resilient than most to weather the global downturn. He predicted: “The Asian landscape has a more positive role ahead and in the future Shanghai, Mumbai and Dubai will emerge as global financial destinations.”

Kaiser Chowdhury, President and Managing Director of AB Bank Ltd, Bangladesh, expressed his concerns for Bangladesh over the market meltdown. Bangladesh imports more than it exports, so is simultaneously influenced by both inflation and recession. As elsewhere, stock prices had experienced a correction in the present market conditions.

The executive plenary concluded with a positive long term view, however, convinced that the Asia Pacific, including the Indian subcontinent, would become home to future global financial hubs. In order to achieve this, however, both Mr Troutman and Mr Chowdhury agreed there remains an intrinsic need for our financial community to cooperate on a standardised and global platform.

The securities plenary was engaging as eminent speakers from the Indian financial sector discussed issues including managing growth through financial reforms, growing domestic volumes and increasing globalisation.

Addressing the globalisation of the securities market, Dr T.C. Nair, Whole Time Member, Securities & Exchange Board of India (SEBI), was positive about the current market situation. He believes India’s future potential is bright, with the current global crises only representing a “ripple effect” in India. Dr Nair noted that the Indian securities market is becoming more globalised, with numerous international institutions entering the markets, and steady cross-border investments flowing into the country. Some 1,500 Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) have injected over US\$70 billion into the economy. In the context of the current global economic landscape, he suggested: “India has actually come to the rescue of investors by allowing them to offset their losses overseas.”



Dr Nair also predicted strong growth of India's financial markets over the next 5-10 years, with contributors like SWIFT "definitely playing a critical role" in providing dynamic, vibrant and risk free infrastructure.

Dr A.P. Kurian, Chairman, Association of Mutual Funds India (AMFI), agreed India's financial sector is undergoing "exciting and dramatic" changes. The market has transformed itself, he said, and is now one of the best in the world in terms of infrastructure.

Focusing on the domestic market, Dr Kurian observed that only 10% of household savings are currently invested in the securities markets, including mutual funds. But with over 55 per cent annual growth until this year, mutual funds are the fastest growing investment instrument of the Indian economy. However, this year the sector fell back by 18 per cent.

Dr Kurian noted that India has 35 mutual funds helping investors build their wealth over a period of time. Though India's mutual fund industry is very 'paper driven', he insisted standards and practices were the best in the world. The next step, he said, is to provide a platform for easy movement of money. This is where SWIFT would play a major role.

Rajnikant Patel, President, Reliance Money & Former Managing Director and CEO, Bombay Stock Exchange (BSE), also insisted that India's fundamentals are strong. Though the downturn will inevitably affect the economy in some ways, he was confident that India would not be deeply impacted. There is a need to find the right level between irrational exuberance and pessimism, he urged, adding: "We need to be more realistic."

Debopama Sen, Managing Director, Securities & Fund Services, Citi India, agreed that India is strong on fundamentals and expected the economy to continue to grow at around 5-7 per cent, because the Indian middle class is growing, along with urbanisation. The country's saving rate has historically averaged around 30 per cent. She said this now needs to be harnessed in India's capital markets, which have fared very well around the world, largely due to efficient regulations.

Further sessions provided delegates an opportunity to discover SWIFT technology and discuss the advantages of implementing them in their organisations and day-to-day financial operations.

Presentations were made by users of SWIFT products and services as well as SWIFT employees and partners.

Ireza Chowdhury, Senior Executive Vice President, Bank Asia Limited, Bangladesh and Daniel Y. Son, Vice President, Global Payment Services, Wachovia Bank, provided an insight into SWIFT's Exceptions and Investigations solution, stressing its benefits to the bank and the community at large, and agreeing that it offers an agreed market standard with faster turn-around, enhancing customer service and providing operational control of case handling.



Questions from the floor



Ian Johnston chatting with Dr. A.P. Kurien from Association for Mutual Funds in India (AMFI)



The popular SWIFT stand at the Forum





Forum in session

During the focus session for corporates, Caroline Lacocque, Regional Manager Corporate Connectivity, SWIFT, presented an overview of SWIFT solutions for corporates. SWIFT does not change a corporate's relationship with a bank, but the way it communicates with their bank, she explained. Given the increasing globalisation of corporates and managing multiple complex banking relationships, there is greater need for effective technological solutions to manage these, she said.

M. Eugenia Forcat, Senior Product Manager, Product Commercialisation, SWIFT, provided an overview of the main new innovations to SWIFT's 2008 portfolio and upcoming enhancements in 2009. She outlined SWIFT's solutions across the spectrum of for low, medium and high volume customer segments and explained their operational differences. Products introduced during this session included Alliance Access, Alliance Connect Bronze, Alliance Connect Silver, Alliance Gateway, Alliance Integrator and Alliance Lite.



Opinion exchange at coffee break

Balamurugan Kalia, Vice President Strategic Business Development, SAP, Asia Pacific and India and Subcontinents, and Sandeep Sharma, Director, Transaction Banking, Head Solution Delivery, India and South Asia, Standard Chartered Bank, shared their views on implementing SWIFT connectivity for corporate customers.

Providing a customer perspective of implementing SWIFT solutions was Patrick de Courcy, Head of Markets and Solutions, Asia Pacific, SWIFT and Vandana Kulkarni, VP Senior Product Manager J.P. Morgan, shared her experience as a user with the business forum delegates.



Guest speakers with Arun Tiwari, Head of India and Subcontinent, SWIFT

Mr Kalia emphasised the need for innovation and better understanding of corporate customer requirements as two key enablers.

Mr de Courcy believed customer demand was growing for a strong emphasis on cost reduction, and need for a unified solution that caters to all customer requirements. "What customers are looking for is achieving the right balance between collaboration and competition," he said. "The solutions that customers ask for to meet the above challenges are process automation and scalability in terms of volume and geography. SWIFT solutions respond to customer needs without requiring heavy investment in platforms."

In the SWIFT solutions overview sessions, delegates were advised on how SWIFT solutions could assist their institutions to strategically address their business and operational needs, whilst allowing them to flexibly deliver a competitive service.



Ms Kulkarni provided an insight into latest developments in standardisation, exploring ISO20022 in detail. She stressed the fact that ISO proposes one single standardised approach to all financial standards initiatives. New players, new initiatives and new technology are driving the migration to ISO 20022, she said.

The Technology Stream gave an insight into how SWIFT customers benefit from SWIFT.

Umashekar Kanchi, Senior Manger, Cambridge Solutions Limited, led the session while Rajesh Kapoor, Assistant General Manager, Payment Systems Group – IT, State Bank of India, gave an insight into the different benefits derived from SWIFT solutions.

Speaking about the potential benefits of Exceptions and Investigations in Sri Lanka, Premasiri Ratnayake, SWIFT User Group Chairperson for Sri Lanka/Chief Manager International Operations and Chief AML officer, Hatton National Bank, said it would reduce the number of messaging coming back for repairs and investigation, which at present accounts for 40 per cent of messages.

Further, in the technology stream session Malai Subramanian, Customer Engineer, Customer Services, SWIFT, explored how SWIFT Alliance supported customers businesses by supporting the implementation of different SWIFT solutions.

Speaking on Trade Services Utility, K.S Ramakrishnan, Assistant Vice President, Senior Product Analyst, J.P Morgan Treasury services explained that Trade Services Utility benefits banks with standard XML messaging and timely discrepancy checks. "All banks can benefit from this industry-wide solution", he stressed.

In closing, Ian Johnston of Asia Pacific SWIFT moderated keynote panellists debating the emerging changes in the region's financial landscape and how the financial community is working its way forward with the current challenges and opportunities.

In this debate were: Mahmud Sattar, CEO, City Bank, SWIFT User Group Chairperson for Bangladesh; Murugank Pranjape, Head Domestic Custody Service, Deutsch Investor Services; and Thomas Schickler, Head of Payments and Cash Management, HSBC India.

Mr Sattar noted the world had undergone strong growth for a prolonged period. How long and severe the upcoming recession will be are now the two most pressing issues. He recommended cautious positioning. Mr Schickler suggested that harmonisation in Asia may take a while, explaining: "Asia does not have a centralised market like the European Commission and will therefore take a longer time to achieve harmonisation."

Mr Pranjape saw Mumbai emerging as a major financial centre by 2020. "We have grown in the past eight years and India has the infrastructure in place," he said.

The Forum concluded with a generous donation by SWIFT to St. Catherine's Society in Mumbai, which educates children and young adults with special needs.



Mr. Sandeep Sharma from Standard Chartered chatting with Arun Tiwari

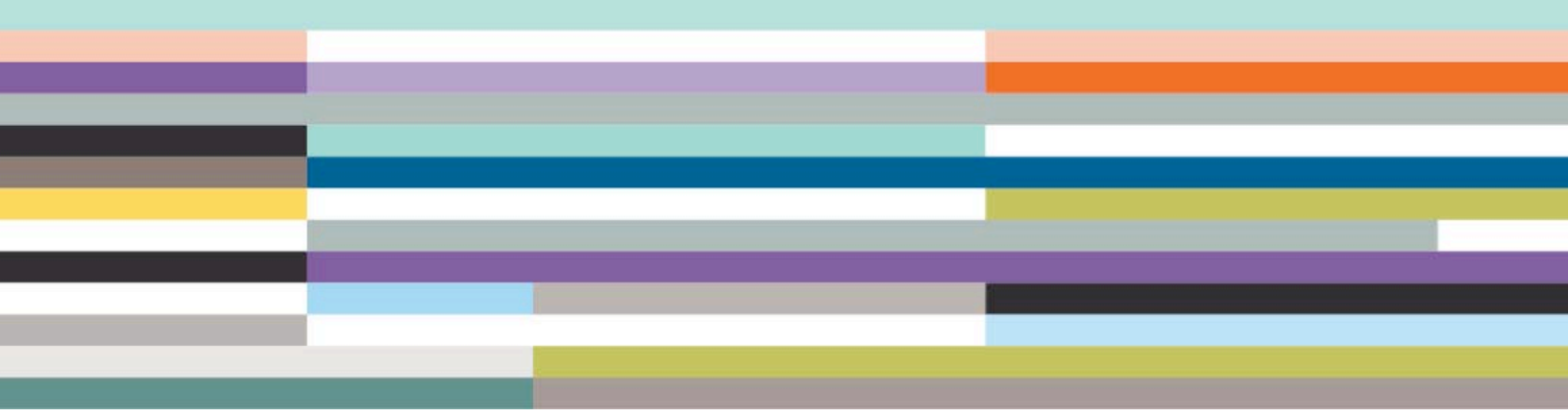


Media surrounding Dr. A.P. Kurien from Association for Mutual Funds in India (AMFI)



Closing Debate





More information at the Events page on  
[www.swift.com](http://www.swift.com)

To join the community debate  
visit [www.swiftcommunity.net](http://www.swiftcommunity.net)

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