

Five sutras for digital infrastructure

As the digital world becomes increasingly complex, need for dependable solutions has never been greater. Citizen stack fills the gap

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India's remarkable achievement of over 80% financial inclusion within just six years has garnered global acclaim, especially as a beacon of hope for the Global South. This feat demonstrates how India has successfully achieved digital and financial inclusion at scale for over a billion people. Consequently, a key highlight of the G20 summit in New Delhi in 2023 was the emphasis on digital public infrastructure.

India's G20 task force recently released a comprehensive report outlining a global strategy for digital public infrastructure development. India now shoulders the responsibility of enabling countries worldwide to achieve digital sovereignty, financial inclusion, and self-reliance.

As this vision unfolds, the digital landscape is bustling with diverse stakeholders—from private enterprises and government bodies to non-profit organizations and think tanks—all striving to develop and promote their DPI solutions. Amid this dynamic environment, two fundamental questions arise: How can we discern authentic and reliable DPIs from the multitude of offerings? And, crucially, what distinguishes a "good DPI" from a "bad DPI"?

In the many digital public infrastructures, the challenge lies in identifying authenticity and maintaining the core essence of the practice. A good DPI should harmonize technology with societal needs, ensuring security, scalability, and inclusivity. As we navigate these complex landscapes, the principles of authenticity and fidelity remain our guiding lights.

The Unique Position of Citizen Stack

Citizen Stack emerges as a trusted ecosystem rooted in the proven success of India Stack. India Stack, a comprehensive digital infrastructure platform, has already demonstrated its efficacy and security on an unprecedented scale, serving over a billion citizens. This established foundation lends Citizen Stack a distinct advantage in terms of credibility and reliability.

However, what truly sets Citizen Stack apart is its role as a regulatory body or auditor, not a manufacturer of DPIs. It certifies and authenticates DPIs, ensuring they meet stringent standards of quality and security.

As the digital world becomes increasingly complex, the need for dependable DPI solutions has never been greater. Citizen Stack, endorsed by the Government of India, stands as a paragon of excellence and authenticity in this domain. This signifies a commitment to quality and trustworthiness that few can rival.

Citizen Stack's model is not just about technological prowess; it embodies a holistic approach to digital infrastructure that prioritizes security, scalability, and inclusivity. Citizen Stack approved DPI platform design ensures that it can cater to the diverse needs of a vast population while maintaining stringent security protocols to protect user data and privacy. By acting as an auditor, Citizen Stack guarantees that the DPIs it certifies are reliable, secure, and beneficial to the public.

Defining a "Good DPI"

In an era where digital solutions are proliferating and promises abound, the ability to identify a truly reliable and original platform is crucial. Citizen Stack offers this assurance. It is not just another DPI solution; it is the gold standard against which other solutions can be measured.

To delineate what constitutes a "good DPI," Citizen Stack has formulated five guiding principles, or sutras. These principles serve as the benchmarks for evaluating the integrity and efficacy of DPI solutions:

- Uphold Citizens' Relationship with the Market and the State: Ensure that the digital infrastructure is free from adverse influences that could distort this relationship.
- Safeguard Citizen Empowerment and Privacy: Implement a consent-based system for sharing data, prioritizing individual empowerment and data privacy.
- Prevent Lock-in by Competing Monopolies: Ensure interoperability to prevent citizens from being trapped by monopolistic entities.
- Techno-Legal Regulation: Combine public technology and law to govern ethical tech use, ensuring innovation, security, and societal rights in the digital age.
- Public Plus Private Innovation: Promote innovation through public and private sector collaboration, while avoiding domination by corporate interests. The future roadmap should be driven by public good, not corporate monopolies. Technology implementation should prevent exploitation by state or corporate actors.

These guiding principles are non-negotiable. A DPI must meet all these criteria to be classified as a "good DPI." While countries may choose to adopt DPIs that fall short on one or more of these principles, Citizen Stack remains committed to advocating for DPIs that uphold these high standards.

The Path Forward

Citizen Stack represents a commitment to excellence in digital infrastructure, mirroring the trust and reliability found in the most respected and time-tested practices. In the rapidly evolving landscape of digital public infrastructure, Citizen Stack stands out as a beacon of integrity and innovation, ensuring that digital solutions serve the public good while adhering to the highest standards of security and inclusivity.

As we advance into an increasingly digital future, the principles and practices exemplified by Citizen Stack will be crucial in building and maintaining the trust necessary for widespread adoption and success. Whether through the harmonious balance achieved via India's ancient gift of yoga or the modern offering of digital public infrastructure—both selflessly given to the world—authenticity, quality, and reliability serve as essential foundations that underpin our societies. India is dedicated to enhancing this model of fidelity for the benefit of the global community.

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