

GOING DIGITAL

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Fintech: During and beyond Covid-19

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If you still think the only way to pay your bills is to walk to your bank, you're missing out on a key essence of being a 21st-century citizen. Financial transactions and services are integrated into our daily lives but these activities have always demanded physical presence. Now in the current world swarming and swamped with new innovations and technologies, that is not the case anymore. Fintech, a shortened form of 'Financial Technology', is a whole new branch of technology applied to the financial sector with the purpose of automating and digitising financial activities. Fintech competes with traditional, physical methods of monetary transactions and other activities and looks to apply technology to enhance

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and ease the experience. It is a broad term, covering a massive industry that is growing by leaps and bounds. In this current world, especially one that had been taken entirely by surprise by the sudden onslaught of Covid-19 in 2020 and is still struggling to come to terms with the new normal, Fintech is cut out to be a major player in shaping the coming days.

Fintech is being used by both Start-ups and established financial institutions. It includes the application of the internet, software, mobile apps and new hardware to day to day financial activities. Some of the key components of Fintech are Artificial Intelligence, Big Data, Robotic Process Automation (RPA), Blockchain, Cryptocurrency etc. These up and coming and forever-improving technologies are pulling different sectors of finance such as Banking, Payment, Lending, Insurance, Investment, Saving, Predicting, studying and investing in the stock market under the alternative umbrella of Fintech. Fintech owes its emerging popularity and rapid success to its ability to make financial services accessible without the need of being physically present at the spot of transaction. Which is also the primary reason why the Fintech industry has witnessed such a massive boom during the Coronavirus pandemic.

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ILLUSTRATION: EHSANUR RAZA RONNY

essential transactions were still carried out. According to Beauhurst, only 1 percent of the Fintech industry has been critically affected by the pandemic and 2 percent affected severely. Whereas about 17 percent of high-growth companies have fallen into these categories. Let's go through a brief overview of how Fintech has helped alter our financial practices

during these dire times and what are the likely outcomes of this industry beyond the pandemic.

BANKING

Even before the pandemic struck, mobile banking was rapidly gaining popularity. Most established and renowned banks were offering mobile banking services for the advantage

of clients. Since the pandemic forced regular life into a halt, the application of mobile banking has increased drastically. Neobanks, which are banking services without any physical branches, are on the rise. Most subscribers can access their accounts through their mobile devices and

CONTINUED ON PAGE 27




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