

ONDC network starts beta testing with consumers in Bengaluru

By TIOL News Service

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significant milestone, Open Network for Digital Commerce (ONDC), an initiative of the Department of Promotion of Industry and Internal ade (DPIIT), Ministry of Commerce, Government of India has opened its network to consumers in 16 locations across the city of Bengaluru.

hegin with consumers car place their orders in two domains – groceries and restaurants through buyer apps participating on the ONDC network.

ONDC's beta test in the city of Bengaluru is a major first step in operationalising a network approach to e-commerce as an alternative to platform centric approach. This will make e-Commerce landscape more inclusive, accessible and experience driven for all consumers and sellers.

Consumers can now shop from multiple categories of products and services from a single buyer application of their choice. They can buy grocery products or order food from the stores and restaurants. In the coming weeks many more applications will join the network expanding both buyer and sellers who can participate in this transaction.

ONDC started its Alpha test phase with a closed user group of buyers first in Bengaluru in April 2022 expanding to more than 80 cities by September 2022. This validated the apps and confirmed business and operational flows. Now in beta testing phase, general public can experience shopping via ONDC and provide early feedback for necessary action if any before expanding further.

To build trust amongst consumers, sellers and Network Participants (Buyer Apps, Seller Apps & Gateways) in the open network, ONDC has consulted current ecosystem, experts and examined best practices for adapting and evolving the best approach to build trust in an unbundled decentralised network. This is explained in a consultation paper that is being made available for public consultation on the official social media handles of DPIIT, ONDC and the website.

Incorporated on 31st December 2021, Open Network for Digital Commerce (ONDC), a Section 8 company is an initiative of the Department of Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT), Ministry of Commerce, Government of India, envisioned to create a facilitative model to revolutionise digital commerce, giving greater thrust to penetration of retail e-commerce in India. ONDC is not an application, platform, intermediary, or software, but a set of specifications designed to foster open, unbundled, and interoperable open networks thereby eliminating the dependency on a single platform.

Major ONDC objectives are:

- Democratisation and decentralisation of eCommerce
- Inclusivity and access for sellers, especially small and medium enterprises as well as local businesses
- Increased choices and independency for consumers