

Paytm to distribute general insurance products this fiscal: CEO

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Mobile payments platform Paytm will undertake digital distribution of general insurance products this fiscal, said its Founder and CEO, Vijay Shekhar Sharma.

The proposed foray into general insurance distribution will come on the heels of Paytm expanding in the financial services space through wealth products (SIP registration already launched), stock broking, and planned offer of small

consumer loans through partnerships with banks and NBFCs.

At the same time, Sharma made it clear that Paytm was mainly focussed on building its payments system first before spreading its wings.

"We are conscious of the fact that we have to first build payments and then other financial services," Sharma told *Business-Line* in a free-wheeling chat on the sidelines of AIMA's 5th National Leadership Conclave in New Delhi. Sharma also said

that Paytm is aiming to double its active customer base as well as merchant base this fiscal.

"By 2020, we should be having 50-crore active customers. That is our aim. The biggest priority for us is to advance the payments system deeper into India," he said. As on date, Paytm has over 26-crore wallet users.

The focus will mainly be on plumbing deep into Tier 4 and Tier 5 towns and to make Paytm payments system as consumer-friendly and trustworthy as



Vijay Shekhar Sharma,
Founder and CEO, Paytm

possible, said Sharma. "We feel we are obligated to develop the payments system as that is our basic business model. We have been championing payments,

even though financial services provide huge opportunities," he said, adding, "We want to be the payment mode of this country at a different scale, and then we want to get into financial services in a big way."

Asked if general insurance distribution would be both online and offline, Sharma said that initially it will only be digital distribution.

"Response of technology-led distribution of financial services has been great. We want to try out things that can be com-

pletely digital first and then adopt assisted model," he said.

Sharma also felt that it was very important for 4-5 strong resourced companies to drive financial inclusion in Tier-2 and Tier-3 towns.

"It is very important for us, as a country, that we do not get stuck with top 100 million in top cities as cohort customers," he said.

Sharma also made it clear that Paytm has no plans to go public for the next two to three years.