

Expectations for 2020

TÜV SÜD South Asia's Sumit Singhal offers his perspectives on the way forward for the Indian market.

by Yash Pandya

Your author (YP) recently had an exchange with Sumit Singhal (SS), vice president of real estate and infrastructure, TÜV SÜD South Asia, to glean his perspective on India's elevator and escalator market.



Singhal

YP: What will the nation's vertical-transportation (VT) market look like over the next few years?

SS: The Indian market for elevators and escalators stood at US\$1.2 billion in 2017 and is projected to cross US\$2 billion by 2023 – a compound annual growth rate of 8.1%. Rising urbanization, the introduction of the Real Estate (Regulation and Development) Act, 2016 (RERA), and government initiatives such as Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana and the Smart City Mission have helped make India one of the fastest-growing construction markets in the world. This, in turn, is driving demand for elevators and escalators.

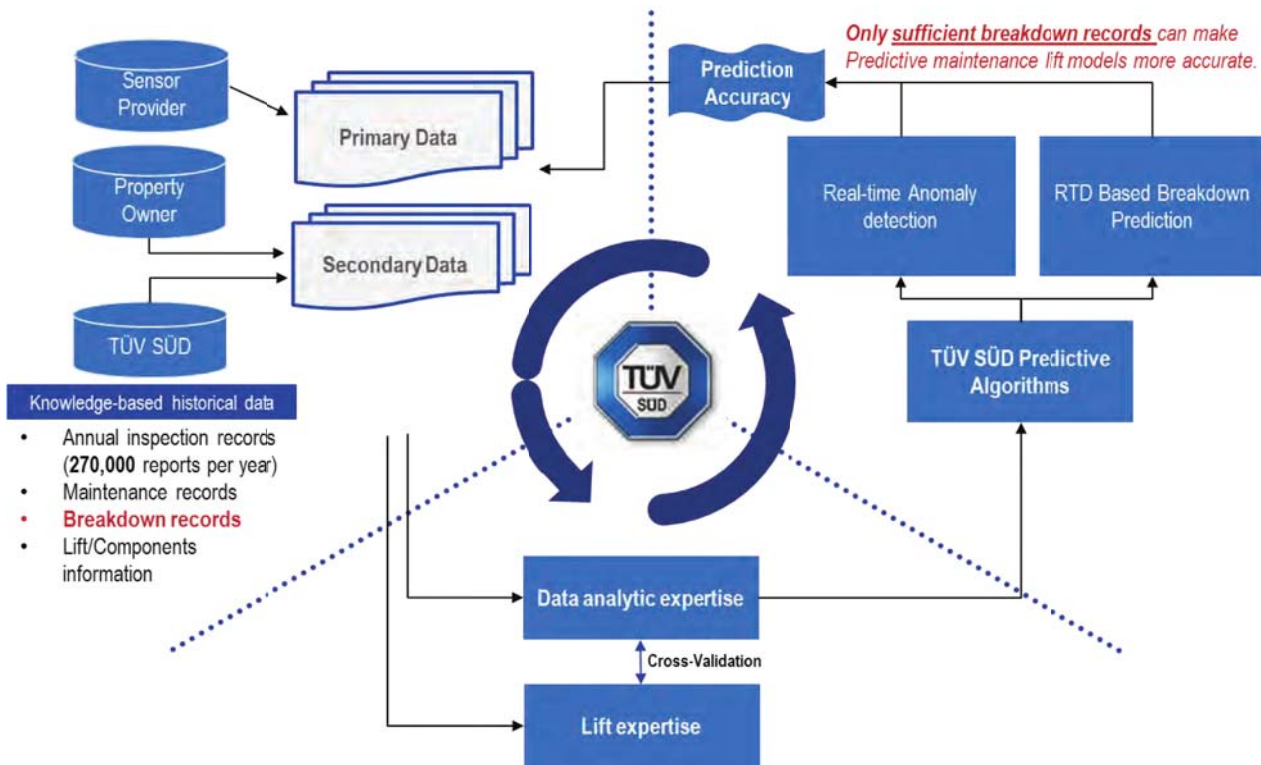
Gearless and machine-room-less elevators are growing at a faster rate than the geared type, and are expected to hold the major share in coming years. In the escalator/moving walks segment, escalators currently dominate the market, although moving walks are gaining popularity, with installations at airports and shopping centers.

YP: What are some of the immediate issues faced by the industry, as you see them?

SS: There are challenges faced by the VT industry, in light of real estate compliance in the post-RERA age, but these can be resolved even as we facilitate compliance and timely completion.

The elevator industry will grow at about the same pace as residential and commercial space. Growth is also being fueled by consumer demand. Until a few years ago, elevators and escalators were considered a luxury. Now, however, they are deemed a necessity, even in low-cost and affordable-housing projects. This demand is coming largely from Tier-2 and -3 cities.

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Sufficient data enables predictive maintenance.

INDUSTRY DIALOGUE

The regulation pertaining to the safety guidelines for VT is currently only a recommendation; it must be made mandatory in the interest of safety. This could then be followed by revisiting the current process of seeking approvals or licenses for installing and using lifts.

YP: What is the role of technology, and how can the VT industry best leverage it?

SS: Technology, such as the Internet of Things (IoT), is a powerful tool today, when building designs are getting more complex and VT is in a state of strong innovation. The IoT is enabling such features as enhanced security systems, cloud-based predictive maintenance, interactive touch panels, biometric access control, energy efficiency and faster and easier movement in elevators. IoT monitors operating parameters, such as traffic trends, waiting time, number of trips, safety circuits, ride quality and others. They are analyzed in real time to enable predictive maintenance that reduces downtime and helps prevent accidents.

In the future, IoT will also be able to incorporate behavioral insights and act accordingly, such as when there is an expected influx of visitors during conferences or peak-hour traffic. IoT will increase the reliability of the product and the efficiency of facility-management services. I expect we will see hybrid elevators – ones that move horizontally, as well as vertically – in coming years. IoT-enabled services will help the VT industry provide a superior experience to the riding public.

YP: What are some VT applications on the horizon?

SS: VT will see increased scope as elevators, escalators and moving walks will be a given in airports, metros and railway facilities. These transportation facilities are integral parts of the government's program for developing smart cities. These are the kinds of infrastructure facilities that see heavy footfall daily and require efficient, reliable escalators and moving walks. Metro rail projects alone are expected to lead to a 20-25% rise in demand for escalators. The government's push to improve public-transportation infrastructure in the 12th Five-Year Plan has also given a major boost to the VT industry.

YP: How do sustainability and safety figure into the future of VT in India?

SS: A top priority will be ensuring sustainability and safety in elevators, escalators and moving walks. Today's user interface displays elevator operational status in real time and informs maintenance personnel when any operational anomalies or emergency situations are detected. TÜV SÜD's Predictive Maintenance System predicts failures with operational, environmental and secondary data, thus enabling customers to take necessary steps to mitigate the risk of elevator failures. Furthermore, useful data, such as traffic studies, passenger identification and floor-usage distribution, among others, can help address the issues of long waiting times during peak hours and high energy consumption.

Providing such levels of maintenance helps ensure the serviceable life of the equipment is achieved. This negates the need for premature major alterations or replacements, thereby reducing lifecycle costs. 🌐

The graphic features a teal brick wall background. At the top left, a white speech bubble contains the text "Follow us!". To the right, the text "DON'T MISS" is positioned above the "Elevator World UNPLUGGED" logo, which includes a plug icon and the website "elevatorworldunplugged.com". In the center, a stylized figure of a person holding a globe is positioned to the left of the large, bold letters "E W". Below "E W" is the text "ELEVATOR WORLD". At the bottom, a row of six circular social media icons is displayed: LinkedIn, Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, and Pinterest.