

**The Globalization of
Knowledge Work —
A Thought Starter**

Executive Summary



Globalization of Work: Enabling Efficiency, Scalability, and Innovation Across Borders

The globalization of work has transformed how businesses operate, enabling organizations to access talent, services, and expertise beyond borders. This shift is evident in buy-side segments, where firms outsource non-core activities such as research, analytics, and operations to enhance efficiency and cost-effectiveness. Advisory segments, including consulting and financial services, also leverage global delivery models to offer specialized insights, on-demand scalability, and faster turnaround times for their clients. As companies strive to remain competitive in a fast-paced world, globalized work solutions help bridge capability gaps and foster innovation while maintaining a focus on core business priorities.



India: The Global Hub for Knowledge-based Outsourcing and Innovation

India has emerged as a global hub for knowledge-based outsourcing due to skilled workforce, the cost advantages, and growing technological ecosystem. It leads in Global Capability Centers (GCCs) presence, facilitated by a favorable business environment and government initiatives like Digital India, making it a preferred offshoring destination. Its emphasis on STEM education and digital literacy consistently produces a tech-savvy workforce with expertise in domains such as finance, technology, and research. Combined with the adoption of AI, advanced analytics, and automation, these skilled professionals enable firms to deliver high-value, innovative solutions to clients across industries.

Due to these multipronged reasons, India continues to attract multinational companies seeking offshoring and outsourcing opportunities in the knowledge work for growth and efficiency.



Benori: Empowering Businesses with Customized Insights, Analytics, and Benchmarking Solutions

Benori positions itself as a trusted partner in enabling businesses to make informed, data-driven decisions through tailored research, benchmarking, and analytics solutions. With a strong focus on delivering actionable insights and measurable outcomes, Benori combines domain expertise, AI-enabled methodologies and a client-centric approach to address complex business challenges. Leveraging India's skilled talent pool and technological capabilities, Benori ensures high-quality delivery at optimal costs, helping organizations unlock value, drive efficiency, and remain competitive in a globalized marketplace.

Trends Driving Globalization of Knowledge Work

Knowledge work refers to tasks primarily involving the creation, distribution, and application of knowledge. It relies on cognitive skills, creativity, and the ability to process complex information. This includes activities such as research, analysis, problem-solving, and decision-making performed by professionals. By leveraging their expertise, knowledge workers drive innovation and organizational success, playing a pivotal role in today's information-driven economy.

Knowledge Economy Key Segments

Every segment of knowledge economy is shaped by its unique requirements for expertise and the application of advanced analytical tools. The buy-side investment and consulting/advisory are two key segments of the knowledge economy that are benefitting from the globalization of knowledge work.



Buy Side

Knowledge work within the buy-side investment industry plays a vital role in informed decision-making and strategic planning. Professionals in this sector analyze extensive data sets, conduct market research, and evaluate investment opportunities to optimize returns. Hedge funds, asset management firms, and Private Equity (PE) companies depend on knowledge experts for comprehensive investment analysis including market trends, financial performance, and industry dynamics, uncovering high-potential opportunities, evaluating risks and forecasting trends. Collaboration and technology are key, enabling teams to streamline communication, enhance insights, and align investment strategies with organizational goals and client expectations in a competitive environment.

Private equity has seen strong performance in recent years, with firms managing nearly USD 1 Tn in capital. The growing influx of investors and funds has led many firms to outsource administrative and portfolio management functions. In a 2024 survey, private equity, venture capital and real estate fund managers unanimously expressed willingness to increase the level of outsourcing over the next three years with nearly half (46%) planning to increase the level of outsourcing by between 25% and 50%.

Example

Apollo Global Management's center of commercial excellence in India employs a team of 500—playing a pivotal role in its growth strategy and serving as a strategic hub for enterprise solutions. Similarly, in August 2024, Mars Growth Capital, a Singapore-based technology fund, announced its representation in India. Mars aims to provide enhanced support, customized financial solutions, and direct access to its global network of resources through this office.



Consulting/Advisory

Knowledge work in the consulting and advisory industry is essential for delivering strategic insights and solutions to clients. Professionals in this field engage in extensive research, data analysis, and problem-solving to address complex business challenges. They use expertise to develop tailored strategies that drive growth and efficiency. Consultants often work in teams to synthesize information and generate innovative ideas. By utilizing technology and data analytics, they enhance decision-making processes, helping organizations navigate change and achieve their objectives in an increasingly competitive landscape. Their contributions are vital for fostering sustainable success.

Example

In April 2024, BDO India LLP launched BDO EDGE (Exceptional Delivery for Global Enterprises), a Centre of Excellence (CoE) based in India. This initiative is a joint venture among BDO member firms across India, the US, the UK, and Germany. BDO EDGE operates as an independent entity within the BDO network, aimed at enhancing the capabilities and resources of member firms and their alliance programs.

The distribution of knowledge work has become increasingly global, reflecting the interconnected nature of today's economy and advancements in technology such as digital communication, high-speed internet, and cloud-based tools. Businesses are increasingly adopting hybrid models that combine onshore, nearshore, and offshore strategies to optimize knowledge work distribution to enhance flexibility and maintain competitive advantage.

Why India: Key Trends Driving Change Employee Distribution of Large Offshore Units

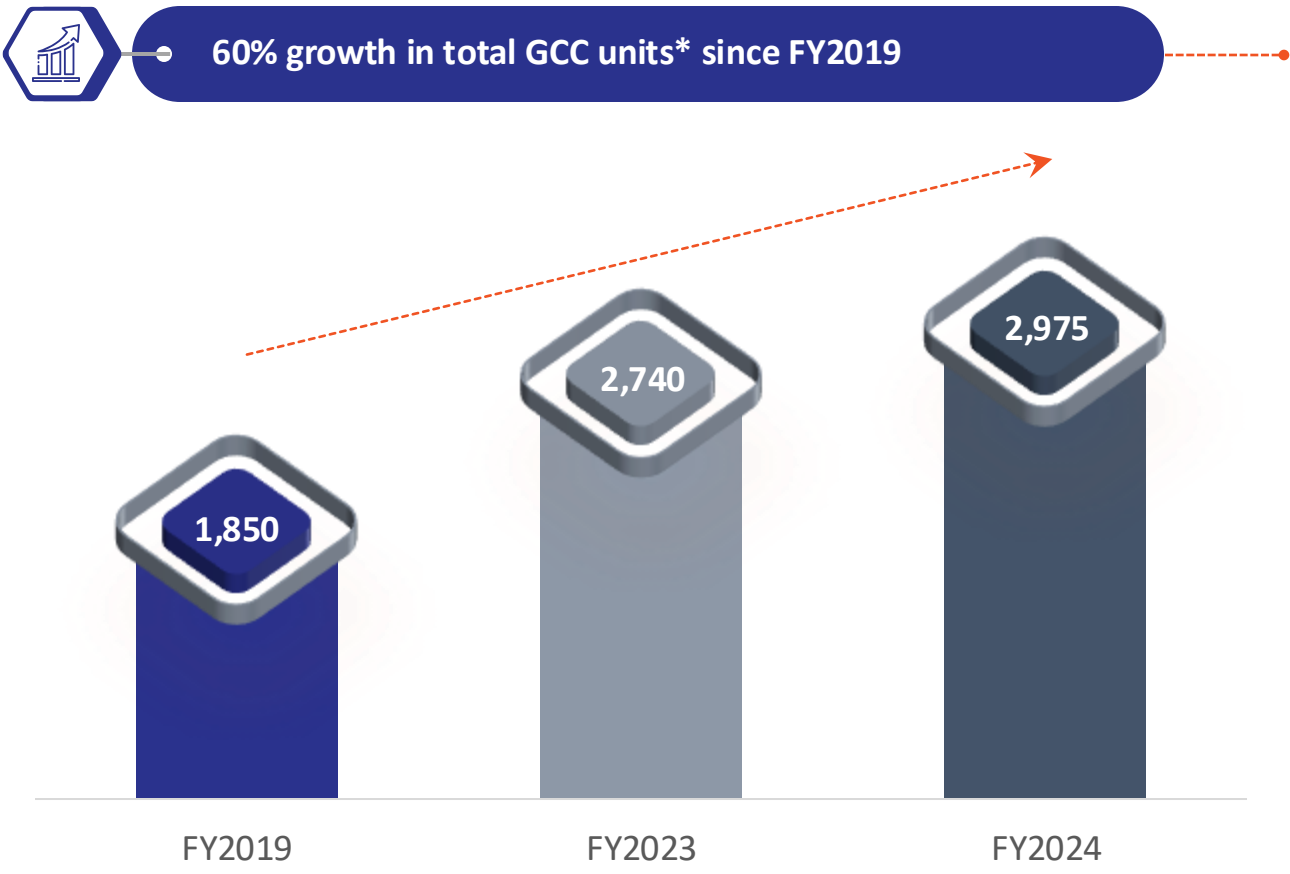
International consulting giants and private equity firms are setting up offshore units in favorable countries across the globe to augment and support a range of functions and services. They have a keen eye on India as it is developing into the global service delivery hub of the 21st century. Employing India’s large, skilled talent pool specializing in capabilities such as AI/ML, cybersecurity, and advanced analytics, offshore units foster innovation and ensure round-the-clock operations leading to accelerated project timelines. These units enable the parent company to execute large-scale projects and play a critical role in enabling firms to localize solutions for diverse markets while maintaining global standards, making them integral to their value propositions.

| Offshore units | No. of employees in India (2024) | % of total employees | Services |
|--------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------|--|
| Blackstone | 201–500 | 10–20% | Alternative asset management with global investment strategies focused on real estate, private equity, growth equity, credit, real assets, secondaries and hedge funds |
| PwC Acceleration Centres | 7,000+ | ~2% | Consulting, assurance and tax services leveraging data analytics and AI |
| KPMG Global Services | 8,000+ | ~3% | Audit tax risk management, compliance and advisory services |
| Deloitte USI | 50,000+ | ~11% | Audit, consulting, financial advisory, risk management and tax services, and integrating blockchain and AI in service delivery |
| EY GDS | ~30,000 | ~8% | Assurance, tax, transaction advisory, and consulting with expertise in digital transformation and data analytics |

In recent years, companies across various industries have increasingly turned to offshoring knowledge work as a strategic move to optimize resources and maintain a competitive edge. This trend also reflects a shift toward value-driven partnerships, where companies prioritize strategic alignment with their outsourcing partners to maximize long-term benefits.

Core Value Proposition of Offshoring

Companies outsource knowledge work to access specialized expertise or focus on core competencies by delegating non-core tasks. For example, a tech company outsourcing customer support can reallocate resources to R&D, accelerating product innovation. Knowledge offshoring can be done through GCCs or third-party providers. The rise of GCCs in India has emerged as a significant trend, with their contribution to the country’s GDP projected to double and generate USD 100 Bn in revenue by 2030. India, hosts around 3,000 GCC units in FY2024, leading globally in GCC presence. By 2030, 70% of Fortune 500 companies are expected to expand operations in India, with 40 global unicorns already established as of 2024.

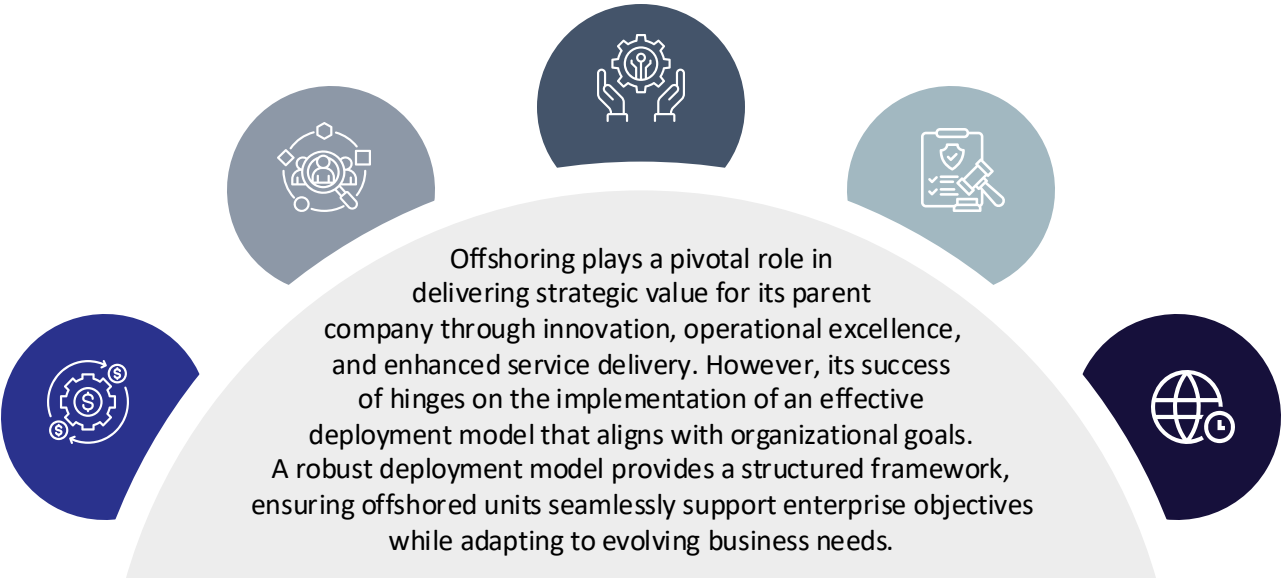


**Units refer to the offshore service facilities handled by the GCC. A GCC may have one or more than one facilities under its operations*

According to a report by reputed IT advisory firm, 85% of companies outsourcing to India experienced improved scalability and flexibility. Also, a Deloitte survey found that India is a preferred location for outsourcing shared services while a survey by the International Association of Outsourcing Professionals (IAOP) found that 72% of businesses saw improved customer satisfaction after outsourcing to India. As evident from the facts, many companies are increasingly shifting their operations to India due to strategic, economic, and operational advantages. These advantages have contributed to India's rise as a preferred destination for global businesses looking to optimize costs and enhance competitiveness.

Key benefits of offshoring to India are:

| Cost Efficiency | Access to Talent | Accelerated Technology Adoption | Supportive Policies | Time Zone Advantage |
|--|--|---|--|---|
| <p>Offshoring to India offers significant savings on skilled labor, office space, training, and infrastructure compared to Western countries.</p> <p>70%</p> <p>Saving on analyst cost as an analyst in the US might cost USD 50-80 per hour, while in India, the average is USD 20-40 per hour based on complexity</p> | <p>India is an ideal destination for businesses seeking specialized skills and expertise without the challenges of local talent shortages.</p> <p>4.5Mn</p> <p>Skilled professionals in the IT and BPM</p> <p>1.5Mn</p> <p>Engineering graduates produced annually</p> | <p>The growth of technology in India has allowed firms to utilize advanced tools like automation, AI, and cloud computing. Government initiatives such as Digital India and Startup India foster innovation in the service sector.</p> <p>75%</p> <p>Indian IT service providers had adopted technologies such as AI, machine learning, and blockchain by September 2024</p> | <p>Indian states offer incentives and specific supporting policies for the GCC ecosystem.</p> <p>500</p> <p>New GCCs to be established by 2029 under Karnataka's GCC Policy, launched in September 2024</p> | <p>India's strategic location offers a time zone advantage, enabling a 'follow-the-sun' model for continuous workflow and faster turnaround times.</p> <p>24/7</p> <p>Service delivery for seamless workflow continuity enabled by time zone differences in India and the west</p> |



Deployment Approaches

Organizations can select deployment models aligned with their business objectives, scale, speed, budget, expertise, and local market conditions while offshoring to optimize their knowledge processes.



Different deployment models

Captive Offshoring

The organization sets up a captive center from scratch, building infrastructure, hiring employees, and managing operations independently

Pros: Complete ownership, best aligned with company culture and standard, and flexibility to customize

Cons: Long implementation period, high initial investment in infrastructure and hiring

Build-Operate-Transfer (BOT)

An offshore partner sets up and manages the center initially, with full ownership and operational control transitioning to the company after the specified period

Pros: Faster setup, reduced initial risk, and leveraging the expertise of the local provider

Cons: Dependency on third party during the initial phase and risk of misalignment in goals during the transfer phase

Joint-venture

A BOT Vendor retains a minority equity interest in the GCC after transfer to the owner

Pros: Lower setup and operational cost, offers flexibility and scalability, and reduced investment risk

Cons: Higher coordination efforts, and loss of control over some operations

Third-party outsourcing

KPO firms, located around the world, provide "shadow employees" who act as extensions of companies, offering flexible, tailored engagement models

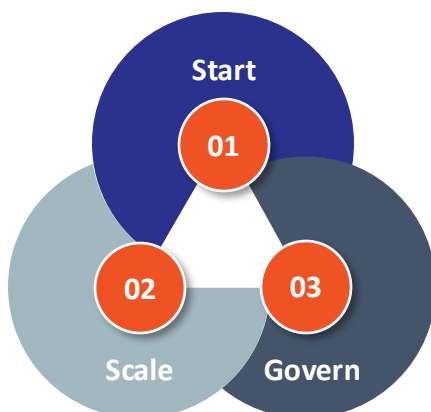
Pros: Cost efficiency, access to global talent, scalability and flexibility, and round-the-clock productivity

Cons: Data security risks, cultural and communication barriers, and over-reliance on external providers

Best Practices

As companies adopt the most suitable deployment models, it is equally important to recognize and implement best practices for managing offshored units. The "Start, Scale, and Govern" framework serves as a guide for companies to manage their growth journey through offshoring effectively.

- Defining clear goals and KPIs
- Conducting due diligence on culture, regulations, and compliance
- Building effective communication channels for collaboration



- Providing adequate support and training to ensure the team has the necessary skills to succeed
- Implementing standardized procedures to ensure consistency
- Leveraging advanced technologies such as AI to maintain a competitive edge

- Ensuring data security and compliance
- Monitoring of performance against established KPIs and reporting to key stakeholders
- Implementing a framework and ethical guidelines for responsible utilization of AI and mitigating associated risks

The Indian KPO ecosystem, leveraging its domain-specific knowledge and skilled professionals, can support companies through every framework stage with responsible integration of AI-powered tools.



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Up to **40%** cost reduction for KPOs currently leveraging AI

>80% of repetitive tasks in KPOs to be AI-automated by 2030

>USD 1Tn savings of KPOs with AI-enabled data analytics by 2030

While AI is transformative, it poses challenges such as data privacy, intellectual property concerns, and biases. A BCG survey found 79% of executives advocating strong regulations to mitigate these risks. Issues such as accountability and contextual misalignment persist, with a study showing AI-driven consultants were 19% less accurate than those relying on human expertise. Without proper governance, these risks can hinder AI adoption. Indian KPOs, with their skilled workforce, aim to integrate responsible AI to drive client value.

Success stories of multinational financial and consulting companies thriving in India demonstrate how they can harness the country's potential, delivering long-term value and operational excellence.

Case Studies

KKR

Strengthening global operations with Gurugram office expansion

Since opening its first office in Mumbai in 2009, KKR has grown into one of India's leading investors, with the establishment of its new office in Gurugram in 2023, marking another milestone in this success story. The new office will focus on finance, operations, human capital, and technology. As KKR's second office in India and ninth in the Asia Pacific, this expansion highlights the region's vital role in the firm's global strategy. By leveraging India's exceptional talent pool, KKR aims to scale operations and deliver services to clients across its network of 24 cities spanning four continents, further reinforcing its commitment to India's dynamic market potential.

Goldman Sachs

USD 7 Bn investment in India: Expanding GCCs and driving key initiatives in Bengaluru and Hyderabad

Since 2004, Goldman Sachs has invested over USD 7 Bn in India, establishing GCCs in Bengaluru and Hyderabad. The Bengaluru office, initially launched with 300 staff providing IT and back-office support, has grown to 8,000 professionals working across diverse banking and technical functions. Building on this success, Goldman Sachs opened a new center in Hyderabad in 2021, designed for 2,500 employees focused on client onboarding and enterprise partnerships. These centers played a crucial role in key initiatives, including the launch of cobranded credit cards with Apple in 2019 and credit solutions with Amazon in 2020.

Morgan Stanley

Strategic growth in India: Expanding GICs and driving global innovation across Mumbai and Bengaluru

Morgan Stanley has integrated India into its global operations over the past three decades. In 2003, it opened its first Global In-House Center (GIC) in Mumbai, focusing on institutional securities, wealth management, and investment management, while providing essential functions like technology and compliance. This was followed by establishing a GIC in Bengaluru in 2013, which has become a vital hub for technology and operations, now employing over 7,000 people in its technology division alone. Today, with a total of 9,000 employees in India, Morgan Stanley's investment in local talent is crucial for enhancing global productivity and innovation.

AON

Leveraging GCCs for global operations and growth

AON Business Services, the India-based GCC of AON Plc, has grown from its inception in Bengaluru with seven employees in 2006 to a ~5,500-strong workforce, supporting global operations in risk, reinsurance, and HR solutions. Through strategic initiatives such as acquiring Hewitt Associates and expanding to Gurugram and Noida, alongside innovations including proprietary tools, digital platforms, and real-time analytics, AON's GCCs have optimized operations, improved scalability, and demonstrated resilience during challenges like the pandemic. These advancements have strengthened AON's position as a leading HR consulting and services provider while leveraging India's skilled talent for global impact.

Offshoring knowledge work to India through GCCs or third-party outsourcing offers cost efficiency, access to a skilled workforce, technological advancements, and operational flexibility. India's stable government policies and business-friendly environment make it attractive for global companies seeking reliable and efficient knowledge services.

As businesses seek competitive advantages in the global market, India's role as a hub for knowledge services is likely to grow further. KPO providers are essential in helping companies determine the best deployment approach, balancing speed, scale, budget, and

market dynamics. Acting as strategic partners, they support organizations through all stages of managing offshore units while enabling the adoption of emerging technologies such as AI and mitigating associated risks. By outsourcing non-core activities to KPOs, companies can focus on their core strengths, driving innovation and operational excellence.

Is your organization ready to leverage India's innovation-driven, cost-efficient knowledge economy? Discover how KPO partnerships can help you harness AI, reduce risks, and unlock new opportunities. Learn why Benori is your ideal research partner below!

Why Benori

Benori is a trusted global knowledge partner, supporting a diverse client base across multiple geographies, industries, and functions with actionable insights to drive decision-making and performance improvement.

With a proven track record of serving 200+ global clients, completing 800+ projects, and covering 75+ countries through in-depth research, Benori leverages the expertise of 130+ knowledge architects, researchers, and data analysts to deliver impactful solutions.



Excellence in Client Delivery

At Benori, our commitment to excellence ensures every engagement is anchored in detailed, actionable research customized to your goals. Each project benefits from our deep industry expertise and focus on delivering results that consistently meet and exceed expectations. Leveraging broad market insights and awareness of evolving business landscapes, we rapidly adapt to dynamic requirements, employing innovative methodologies and AI technologies that keep you ahead of the curve.



Integrity, Ethical Standards, and Collaboration

We adhere to the highest ethical standards, guided by ESOMAR principles, ensuring credible, transparent, and client-focused research outcomes. Our rigorous compliance with GDPR and ISO 27001 certifications guarantees data security, confidentiality, and best-in-class governance of client information. This trust and transparency extend to every collaboration—with stakeholders, panel partners, and industry experts—ensuring our insights are reliable and organic. Open communication channels and proactive feedback loops ensure that each deliverable aligns with your expectations and evolving needs.



People First and Innovative Approach

At Benori, we maintain a human-centric approach tailored to your unique challenges and goals, ensuring that every insight resonates with your strategy and vision. Our teams excel in navigating complex business data, financial analyses, and commercial diligence, delivering actionable outputs that drive decision-making. Continuous training keeps our team proficient in the latest technologies, including AI and generative AI, enabling us to streamline processes, simplify large datasets, and enhance knowledge management. While automation helps improve efficiency, the human touch remains central to every deliverable, ensuring insights are thoughtful, relevant, and impactful.



A Strategic Partnership

Partnering with Benori is a strategic advantage. Our global presence and flexible time zone coverage enable us to serve clients worldwide, ensuring timely support and culturally nuanced insights. By entrusting your strategic operations to us, you gain value-added insights, unmatched confidentiality, and a reliable partner committed to your growth. We don't just deliver research—we provide trust, innovation, and results that empower your business to succeed.



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Benori is a trusted partner for knowledge solutions across the globe, serving clients from a wide range of industries including Professional Services, Financial Services, Consumer Goods, Technology, and more. Our customized solutions strengthen the insights value chain of our clients, empowering them with key insights needed to drive intelligent decision-making and accelerate growth.

Headquartered in India, Benori is uniquely positioned to deliver multilingual research needs of global clients, powered by its digital agility, deep research capabilities and a highly experienced leadership team. Adopting an AI-enabled 360-degree approach, our team employs a combination of diverse methodologies including primary research, secondary research, and data modeling, offering a detailed foresight on market trends, competitive shifts, regulatory changes, and technological advancements.

Powering Growth Through Knowledge



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