

# Business Today, India: Brian Humphries Says “We Want Our Swagger Back”



*Excerpts from Business Today's Interview with Brian Humphries:*

**“Q: The global economy is cooling. How does that impact the services business?”**

A: It depends. I am not of the opinion that services necessarily follow macro demand cycles. Very often, it is counter cyclical. So if people are tightening belts, they will outsource certain tasks to others. But (one must) also recognise that services is a cottage industry and nobody has more than 3-4 per cent share. Regardless of the macro demand, I will always want my team to spend more time with customers than our competitors to make sure we get a fair share of the market, to make sure that we gain share. Due to the shift to digital transformation and because of the agendas of the C-suite (beyond the CIO), growth will be in digital.



**What have been the shifts in Cognizant after you joined?**

I don't know about the shifts because I wasn't there in the past. And to be clear, it is a company with 25 years of track record. What Frank (Francisco D'Souza, the previous CEO) and the team have done is truly remarkable. Shareholder value created is second only to a few. One could argue that in recent years things have slowed down a bit. I am very focused on reinvigorating Cognizant and unlocking the true potential once again. This is a company that has growth at its core - it is the DNA of the company. We are highly customer centric. I have tried to accentuate those values. I have taken an explicit lens on being extremely client centric, getting out in front of customers all the time and leading by example.

**In the last earnings call, you spoke on cost optimisation. How is that going to play out because you have also put in a huge hiring engine?**

Cost is not the same as investment. If I paint a wall, that could be a cost. If I re-skill somebody, that is an investment that will pay back over time. The real story is Cognizant is investing once again in growth. We want to get our mojo back. We want to get our swagger back. If you see any of the messages that I send internally to Cognizant employees, every single message is around embracing change, being client centric, the importance of having a winning attitude, and the importance of investing in growth. That will again be the story of Cognizant in the coming years.”

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