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The young turks
Isha & Akash Ambani

INDIA'S LARGEST IPO

Jio plans to raise up to ₹30,213 crore at a market capitalisation of ₹10 lakh crore

Octave's India ambition

Octave, as a newly carved-out entity, is turning to India to power its next decade of growth



When Octave Intelligence plc inaugurated its Global Technology and Innovation Centre in Hyderabad's HITEC City recently, it wasn't simply adding another office to its global footprint. The event, attended by Telangana's IT Minister Duddilla Sridhar Babu and Octave CEO Mattias Stenberg, marked a statement of intent from a company just three months into its life as an independent, Nasdaq-listed business: India isn't a cost centre for Octave – it's a nerve centre.

The US-headquartered Octave is a global enterprise software company that helps organisations design, build, operate and protect critical industrial assets and infrastructure through data, software and AI. It was carved out of Sweden's Hexagon AB, bringing together Hexagon's Asset Lifecycle Intelligence and Safety, Infrastructure & Geospatial businesses, along with ETQ and Bricsys, and became independently listed on Nasdaq in May 2026.

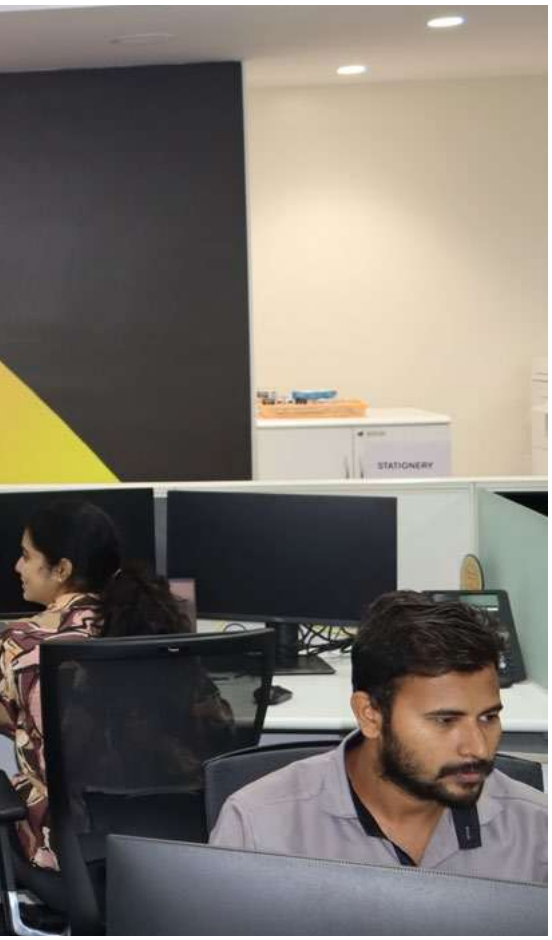
Today, it employs around 7,200 people across more than 45 countries and serves roughly 4,500 customers in some 180 countries, including over 60 per cent of the Global Fortune 500. For Octave, India is a significant operating base, with around 1,800 employees – the company's single largest country presence, ahead of the US – anchored by the new Global Capability Centre in Hyderabad, which supports software development, R&D, AI and other global functions.

The Hyderabad facility spans roughly 200,000 sq ft across multiple floors in HITEC City and houses Octave's Experience Centre, a showcase space where customers and partners can explore immersive demonstrations of the company's AI-driven products. Teams there work across software engineering, AI, data, cloud and product development, feeding directly into the technologies Octave sells worldwide.

At the inauguration, Stenberg framed the centre as central to Octave's next chapter: "Octave's global technology and innovation centre in Hyderabad is an exceptional location to continue our next phase of growth," he said, pointing to the city's "world-class engineering talent, a vibrant technology ecosystem and a strong culture of innovation". He described the investment as something deeper



Stenberg: powering Octave's India course



than physical expansion – a commitment "in our people and in the capabilities that will help shape Octave's future".

Telangana's IT minister was equally emphatic about what the centre signals for the state's ambitions as a global technology hub, noting that Hyderabad has become a magnet for global capability centres – the state welcomed 75 new GCCs last year and is targeting 100 more by next year, spanning sectors from sports technology and media to capital markets and energy.

Sekhar Konidena, Octave's India-based Vice President of Product and Services, put it in more operational terms: the centre would deepen engineering, AI, data, cloud and product capabilities, with local teams turning "complex operational data into actionable intelligence" for customers around the world.

The timing also works in Octave's favour. With Hyderabad attracting a steady stream of global capability centres, the city offers the ecosystem a company building AI-heavy products needs: deep talent pools, peer companies and a supportive state government. This also means competition for engineers is intensifying, which makes Octave's early investment in its people and campus partnerships all the more relevant.

It would be easy to read the Hyderabad launch as a familiar story: a Western software company scaling up its India delivery centre for cost efficiency. Stenberg, in a wide-ranging interview on the sidelines of the inauguration, pushed back hard against that framing. Octave – through its Intergraph legacy – has operated in India for close to 40 years and was among the first international companies to set up in Hyderabad. Today, the country hosts genuine strategy, product management, innovation and marketing functions, not just back-office work. "It is truly strategy, product management, innovation, marketing," The Octave CEO says, noting that several product lines are owned and run entirely out of India.

Growth momentum

Beyond Hyderabad, Octave operates from Mumbai, Pune, Delhi and Gandhinagar. Stenberg describes India as one of the fastest-growing markets in Octave's global portfolio, alongside the Middle East, with growth rates comfortably above 20 per cent – though he declines to give exact figures given Octave's status as a newly listed public company. Asked what share of global revenue currently comes from India, he offers an informal estimate of around 5 per cent, a figure the company doesn't officially disclose, while predicting that share will keep rising because "it should grow faster than the group".

In Stenberg's assessment, the capabilities India brings go beyond headcount or cost: four decades of institutional knowledge, deep engineering talent and a customer base that has matured from price-conscious to value-driven. He describes India's mission-critical industries – energy, infrastructure and defence – as catching up with the technology-adoption curve already established in banking, even as heavy industry inherently moves more cautiously than consumer-facing sectors. Energy is Octave's largest vertical in India, spanning refineries, petrochemical plants, power generation and nuclear facilities, alongside a growing book of business in airports, railways, metro systems and defence, where the company counts the Indian Army and Bharat Electronics among its users. Data centres, driven by India's current infrastructure investment wave, are an emerging growth pocket.

Stenberg makes Octave's work tangible with consumer-facing examples: Mumbai's fire service runs its dispatch operations on Octave technology, and Uttar Pradesh's emergency-response systems field more first-responder calls during Holi than New York City handles in an entire year – all coordinated through Octave's command-and-control software.

On why customers stay rather than trade down to cheaper alternatives,



Octave leverages India as a strategic hub for technology, engineering and global delivery



the CEO describes a standing, unaccepted challenge: "If you have a meeting and you flip your computer around and you show me your business case... I will take one per cent of that number... and I will give you all the software for free." No customer has taken him up on it – proof, he argues, that the value proposition isn't price but outcomes: safety, uptime and – in cities like Rio de Janeiro, where fire-dispatch times fell from over an hour in 2016 to nine minutes today – quite literally, lives.

These examples translate directly to the Indian context. When a fire service in Mumbai dispatches crews, or when emergency systems in Uttar Pradesh handle a surge of calls during a festival, the software is judged not by its licence cost but by its response time. That is increasingly how Octave's Indian customers evaluate it: as critical infrastructure rather than as a routine IT purchase.

Octave is led globally by CEO Stenberg. In India, the leadership team includes Sekhar Konidena (VP, Product and Services), Raj Sekhara Rao Sakhamuri (VP, Software Development), Suresh Kadambari (VP, Software Development), Ballav Mundra (VP, Finance), Chanpreet Sahni (VP, Sales) – reflecting Octave's positioning of India as a hub for genuine product and innovation leadership, not just delivery.

To understand why Octave is investing so visibly in India now, it helps to understand where the company came from. Octave is the software business spun out of Hexagon, the Swedish measurement-technology and industrial-software conglomerate, following a board-driven review that began roughly two years before the split. Hexagon had grown through years of acquisitions into a company straddling two increasingly distinct businesses – hardware-oriented measurement technology and enterprise software for mission-critical industries – with different customers and capital needs. A roughly six-month feasibility study concluded that a separation would create more value for both resulting companies. The actual spin-off took about 18 months to execute, complicated by the fact that Hexagon was listed in Sweden while Octave needed to list in both Stockholm and New York.

Turning a new page

The formal separation from Hexagon was completed on 22 May 2026. Octave's Swedish depository receipts began trading on Nasdaq Stockholm on 25 May, followed by its Class B ordinary shares on the Nasdaq Global Select Market in New York under the ticker OCTV. At listing, Stenberg framed it as a new chapter built around focus: "Organisations responsible for the world's most critical assets are generating data that creates intelligence everywhere but is connected nowhere," positioning Octave as the company built to close that gap.

Rather than present itself as an entirely new entrant, Octave is building on a technology legacy that stretches back decades. Much of its core software heritage can be traced to Intergraph, founded in 1969 and acquired by Hexagon in 2010. Stenberg cites long-standing customer relationships, including the use of the company's technology at Reliance Industries' Jamnagar refinery for more than 25 years, as evidence of the trust underpinning the new brand. Octave unveiled its identity in March 2026, ahead of its stock-market listing, bringing its portfolio under four pillars: Design, Build, Operate and Protect. These span 3D modelling, engineering analysis and simulation; engineering, procurement and construction coordination; operational intelligence and asset performance; and public safety, physical security and industrial cybersecurity.

The underlying logic was straightforward: a dedicated management team and dedicated investment could grow the software business faster than it could as one division within a larger, more hardware-oriented parent. Freed from competing internally for capital, Octave's leadership argues that it can now pursue enterprise software's growth economics on its own terms.

Octave enters independence as a business of meaningful scale – roughly

$1.6 billion, which Stenberg says represented just under 30 per cent of Hexagon before the split.

Its first quarterly results as a standalone public company offer an early indication of its performance. For Q2 2026, ended 30 June, Octave reported annualised recurring revenue (ARR) of $1.143 billion, up 7 per cent year on year, while SaaS revenue grew 21 per cent. Recurring revenue rose 6 per cent to $283 million. Total reported revenue declined 4 per cent to $398 million, although the fall was just 1 per cent on an organic, constant-currency basis. The company generated $125 million in cash flow from operations and $93 million in free cash flow. Octave says ARR and recurring revenue are better indicators of underlying performance as it shifts towards a subscription-led business model.

These figures help explain the importance of India to Octave's growth ambitions. While group ARR grew 7 per cent, SaaS revenue advanced 21 per cent. India's growth, which Stenberg puts comfortably above 20 per cent, would make the market an important contributor to that transition, if sustained.

Octave's customer base reflects the critical nature of the work its software supports. Its solutions serve energy industries, including oil and gas, nuclear, petrochemicals, chemicals and power, alongside public safety and a range of other sectors. Its technology is used in environments such as refineries, power plants, transport networks, high-rise buildings and data centres, where errors can carry significant operational, financial or safety consequences. In these settings, reliability is not simply a convenience; it is fundamental to the business.

Octave's technical pitch centres on connecting data that typically sits in silos. Stenberg cites an industry estimate that roughly 96 per cent of engineering and construction data goes unused once a project moves from design into operations. Octave's platform keeps that data connected across the lifecycle, so a design change propagates through scheduling, costs and suppliers – producing a genuine digital twin rather than a static model that drifts out of sync. As facilities move into decades of operation, the same data model feeds the Protect layer: safety monitoring, predictive maintenance, and physical and cyber security.

AI is becoming baseline functionality rather than a differentiator: Octave ships new AI agents and embedded AI every quarter. What separates it from generic AI tools is the depth of proprietary engineering context the company possesses, since a probabilistic answer isn't good enough for a nuclear facility or a refinery pipeline. That thesis is now packaged into a new unified platform with an agentic AI layer, currently in beta with select customers, though no public launch date has been announced.

Betting big on India

Backed by these capabilities, Octave is betting big on India. Strip away the ribbon-cutting and ministerial handshakes, and what's left in Hyderabad is a bet with real weight behind it. Octave didn't send a token delegation to open a satellite office; it sent its CEO to inaugurate a facility that already houses its largest national workforce, several fully owned product lines and a flagship customer showcase designed to demonstrate Octave's capabilities to the rest of the world. That is not the profile of a company hedging on India. It is the profile of a company that has already decided where a meaningful share of its future will be built.

The arithmetic makes the case on its own. A market growing at over 20 per cent a year, within a company whose overall ARR is expanding at roughly 7 per cent, cannot remain a rounding error for long. If India continues to compound at multiples of the group's blended growth rate – even allowing for a slowdown as the base grows larger – its 5 per cent share of global revenue is on course to look structurally different within a few years, not decades. Stenberg's own words point in that direction: India, in his telling, isn't catching up with the rest of Octave's portfolio so much as pulling the average up.

What makes this more than a numbers story is where that growth is coming from. It isn't being driven by a single product line riding a temporary wave; it is broad-based, spanning energy – with India expanding its refining and petrochemical capacity at scale – alongside infrastructure, defence, and a nascent but fast-growing data centre business tied directly to the country's digital infrastructure build-out. Each of these represents a multi-decade investment cycle in its own right, which means Octave's Indian revenue base isn't dependent on the fortunes of one sector; it is spread across several of the country's biggest capital-spending priorities simultaneously.

The talent pipeline reinforces the same trajectory. Octave and VIT-AP University have recently signed a two-year memorandum of understanding to strengthen industry–academia collaboration in AI/ML and software engineering. The partnership isn't a philanthropic sideshow: it is Octave seeding its future workforce years before it will need it, embedding the company's AI/ML and software-engineering challenges into classrooms so that graduates arrive already familiar with how Octave works. Paired with a leadership bench that already owns entire product lines out of Hyderabad rather than merely executing decisions made elsewhere, this suggests India's role is set to expand from engineering execution towards strategic ownership of an increasing share of what Octave builds and sells globally.

There is also a symbolic dimension that shouldn't be understated. Octave chose to stage one of its first major public moments as an independent company not in Huntsville, Stockholm or New York, but in Hyderabad – putting India deliberately at the centre of the story it wants investors, customers and talent to believe about its future. For a company that has just spent around 18 months untangling itself from Hexagon specifically to invest with greater focus, that choice of stage is itself a signal: India isn't where Octave happens to have scale. Increasingly, it looks like where it intends to build the next chapter of the company – the place where product ownership, R&D depth and workforce scale are converging fastest, and where the compounding effect of a growth rate above 20 per cent means today's largest employee base could, within a few years, also become its most consequential engine of revenue. ◆

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