



Speaker interview with **Bob Gill, General Manager, Southeast Asia, ARC Advisory Group, Singapore.**

He will be chairing the plenary keynotes *“Industry in transition: navigating the new age of innovation”* on 25<sup>th</sup> October and *“Future of digitalization in oil & gas”* on 26<sup>th</sup> October. He will also be presenting on the *“Proactive Downstream Operations in the Age of Cognitive Computing”*.

**1. What are the latest technology adoptions by downstream operators in Asia? Are there any success stories that other operators can learn from?**

At last year’s Asian Downstream, Reliance Industries’ Vishal Mehta, head of digital strategy, offered what I thought was very valuable advice for companies looking to embark on a digital transformation journey.

To begin with, ensure that all the stakeholders – employees (from across the business), partners, customers – participate and understand that they are a part of the transformation. Focusing only on one or some of the stakeholders will lower the expected outcome from the initiative. And given the plethora of areas that digital transformation can potentially touch, it's important to set boundaries and define exactly what it should encompass and what can be realistically achieved.

After defining a digital vision, design a portfolio of digital initiatives along short term goals and allow longer term ones to evolve with the future state business model. As for technologies, he emphasised that from sensors to drones to analytics, all these need are to be understood and incubated in order to successfully realise the digital vision.

**2. What are your views on Asia’s downstream industries rate of digitalisation as compared to counterparts in other regions i.e. America, Europe and the Middle East markets?**

Speaking for my region, Southeast Asia, while full-fledged digital transformation is very much in its infancy, the good news is that awareness and understanding of digitalisation technologies has grown significantly over the past two years. So you rarely now hear questions such as *“What is Industrial IoT?”*. In addition, and notably, quite a number of downstream operators have set up digital transformation teams and taskforces just over the last 12 months, which indicates a level of seriousness in moving towards digitalisation and a desire to reap the many benefits of adopting these new technologies.

**3. What's the greatest impact IoT, data analytics and AI will have on the industry? What lies ahead of operators and how will they adapt?**

With the type of large, critical capital equipment employed in the downstream industries, operators can see fast ROI from deploying much more effective and sophisticated plant asset management strategies, such as predictive and prescriptive maintenance, which are only now becoming possible with the arrival of cost-effective Industrial IoT and advanced analytics solutions.

**4. What will be the highlight of your presentation at Asian Downstream Summit?**

My presentation, *Proactive Operations in the Age of Cognitive Computing*, will describe how the next wave of process improvements and asset performance will be led by innovations in operational and process engineering and process optimization. Raising decision support to a new level will allow downstream companies to move from reactive operations and maintenance to proactive, predicting outcomes using data that in many cases they already collect.