

Information Technology: how employable, and how future-proof, is this trade?

India's CTS Information Technology trade equips graduates with hardware, networking, and software support skills at NSQF Level 4 over two years. The central question: as AI tools automate routine helpdesk and diagnostic tasks, does a vocational IT credential still open real doors in a sector adding 1.8 million job listings in 2025 alone? The honest answer is that outcomes are genuinely uncertain, and that uncertainty is baked into this trade's CES score.

47.2/100

COURSE EMPLOYABILITY SCORE (CES V2)

Uncertain outcomes, scored across all four CES pillars (\$02).

297B¹

India IT sector revenue FY25, USD (IBEF, 2025)

1.8M²

IT job listings in India in 2025, up 16% YoY (Quess Corp via AngelOne, 2025)

45.95%³

ITI graduate employability rate, India Skills Report 2026

2 yrs⁴

Duration of CTS Information Technology trade, NSQF Level 4 (DGT/MSDE program spec)

Subject: the "Information Technology" CTS trade (Engineering category) · Compiled from NSQF program spec + independent third-party research (see Sources).

Can AI or automation replace this job? The honest answer.

The CTS Information Technology trade trains graduates for roles spanning hardware repair, software installation, network configuration, and user support. AI is actively eating into the most routine of those tasks. However, the occupation sits at an important inflection point: the physical, context-dependent, and interpersonal layers of IT support retain structural resistance to full automation that purely digital roles do not.

The risk, stated plainly

ServiceNow and other enterprise vendors report that AI now handles approximately 80% of Tier 1 helpdesk interactions at a fraction of prior cost ⁴. NASSCOM data shows 13% of entry-level tech roles in India have already declined due to AI-led automation ⁵. The WEF Future of Jobs 2025 report projects that 39% of existing job skills globally will become obsolete by 2030, and that data entry and clerical processing tasks face the sharpest displacement ⁶. For CTS IT graduates who remain in basic password-reset and call-logging roles, this is a direct and credible risk.

What automates vs what stays human

THE TASKS AUTOMATION IS TAKING

- Tier 1 password resets and account unlock requests, now automated by AI self-service portals ⁴
- Routine software installation checklists via automated deployment tools (MDM, SCCM) ⁴
- Basic log parsing and error-code diagnosis using LLM-powered incident tools ⁵
- Structured ticketing, categorisation, and SLA tracking via AI-powered ITSM platforms ⁴
- Scripted network-status checks and alert triage using AI-driven monitoring agents ⁵
- Standard OS patch deployment and vulnerability scanning via automated patch-management suites ⁶

THE WORK THAT STAYS HUMAN

- Physical hardware repair, component replacement, and on-site device installation require hands and physical presence that remote AI cannot replicate ^P
- Network cabling, rack mounting, switch configuration at physical layer, and datacenter floor work remain in-person by necessity ^P
- Escalated troubleshooting involving ambiguous multi-system failures requires contextual reasoning and stakeholder communication ⁴
- Cybersecurity incident response under pressure, user-side security awareness training, and phishing triage demand human judgment ⁷
- Client relationship management, translating technical constraints into business-language for non-technical users ⁶
- Hands-on support for elderly, less-digitally-literate, or accessibility-needs users in government and public-sector deployments ^P

The resilient anchors

9.06% CAGR ⁸

India IT services market growth 2025-2030, sustaining demand for on-site and operational support roles

1M+ professionals
short ⁷

India cybersecurity talent gap by 2025, a higher-value pivot pathway for IT trade graduates with specialisation

42% of MSMEs ⁹

plan to increase digital budgets in 2025, expanding local IT support demand in Tier 2-3 markets

Moderate-to-high automation exposure at the entry level, but strong pivot pathways for graduates who specialise.

A CTS IT graduate entering a basic helpdesk role in 2025 faces real and documented displacement risk: AI-driven ITSM tools have automated the most repetitive Tier 1 tasks, and NASSCOM data shows entry-level tech roles already declining by 13% ⁵. This is not a hypothetical future scenario; it is already underway in large enterprise environments.

The resilience case rests on three factors: physical on-site work that AI cannot perform remotely, the massive and widening cybersecurity talent gap that rewards even modestly specialised IT technicians, and the explosion of MSME digital adoption that is generating localised IT support demand in markets where large IT firms rarely compete ^{7,9}. Graduates who treat the NTC credential as a foundation and stack CompTIA A+, Network+, or CEH within two years of graduation sit in a materially better position than those who do not.

Automation exposure by task

Task in this trade	Automation risk	How this trade / program is positioned
Password reset, account unlock, basic helpdesk tickets	High	Largely automated by enterprise AI portals; avoid positioning here long-term ⁴
OS installation, imaging, and standard software deployment	High	MDM and deployment automation tools commoditise this; still entry point but low ceiling ^{4,P}
PC/laptop hardware repair, component swap, peripheral troubleshooting	Moderate	Physical dexterity, part identification, on-site access remain human tasks; resilient in SME/SMB markets ^P
LAN/Wi-Fi setup, structured cabling, basic switch configuration	Moderate	Physical layer work persists; network skill is a stepping stone to higher-value Network+ and CCNA roles ^{P6}
Cybersecurity awareness, firewall rule review, basic incident escalation	Lower	Growing demand; 1 million+ professional gap in India; high-value specialisation route for IT trade graduates ⁷
IT support for MSME clients, on-site field technician, AMC contracts	Lowest	Local market demand is structurally resistant to remote AI substitution; strong self-employment pathway ^{9,P}

How to read these numbers. Automation risk scores and displacement estimates vary significantly across studies because they model different task mixes, geographies, and time horizons ⁶. Frey and Osborne (2013, Oxford) projected occupation-level risk from a US task dataset; India's labour market structure, wage levels, and physical-infrastructure needs differ substantially. The 13% figure from NASSCOM covers the entire entry-level tech segment, not CTS IT specifically. Treat any single automation percentage as a directional signal, not a precise fate-assignment, and weight it against the specific tasks that graduate intends to perform.

02 THE COURSE EMPLOYABILITY SCORE (CES)

How this trade scores on Lakshya's employability metric

Lakshya's Candidate Employability Score (CES) for the CTS Information Technology trade is 47.2 out of 100, placing it in the Uncertain outcomes band. This score reflects genuinely mixed evidence: a solid sector backdrop and adequate government support are offset by weak live-hiring data for this specific credential, a low-confidence salary signal, and placement outcomes that lack a robust sample. The score is not a verdict on the IT sector overall; it reflects real uncertainty about whether CTS IT graduates, specifically, are connecting to employment at scale. Scored on the evidence in this report, this role earns a **CES of 47.2 / 100, "Uncertain outcomes."**

CES Pillar (CES v2)	Weight	What it measures
Training Quality	0.30	Regulatory recognition and licensure of the qualification
Market Dynamics	0.30	Demand, salary band, sector trajectory, automation possibility and displacement risk
Placement Outcome	0.25	Whether the market actually hires this role: live employers, openings, pay and recency
Government Support	0.15	Migration pathways, federal frameworks and policy backing the role

Score bands: ≥80 High employability (full financing exposure) · ≥60 Moderate · ≥40 Uncertain outcomes · below that Weak job linkage. Framework: CES v2.

Market Dynamics, by sub-signal

Sub-signal	Score/100	Sub-weight	Conf
Demand	29	0.40	0.65
Salary (vs country floor)	0	0.30	0.20
Sector trajectory	80	0.15	0.88
Automation possibility	50	0.10	0.30
Displacement risk	50	0.05	0.30
Market Dynamics composite	31	n/a	0.50

The four pillars, scored

CES pillar	Score	Conf	Weight	Evidence
Training Quality	65	0.95	0.300	65/100 -- the DGT curriculum is two years, NSQF Level 4, covering hardware, networking, OS, cybersecurity, and web development ^P , but the NQR status shows no green-list signal, capping the score.
Market Dynamics	31	0.50	0.300	31.08/100, low confidence -- sector sub-score is strong (80/100) reflecting India's USD 297 billion IT industry ¹ , but salary evidence is absent and automation/displacement signals defaulted to neutral priors, depressing the composite ⁵ .
Placement Outcome	32	0.12	0.250	Live market hiring of the role: 3 openings · 4 employers · 0 with pay · 9 recent postings
Government Support	70	0.90	0.150	70/100 -- Digital India, PM-SETU ITI modernisation, and the PLI IT Hardware scheme provide credible policy backing ^{10 11} .

Composite (applied weights, renormalised over scored pillars): $65 \times 0.30 + 31 \times 0.30 + 32 \times 0.25 + 70 \times 0.15 = 47.2$. Confidence 0.96 · evidence 9 clean / 12 rejected · 6 sources.

COURSE EMPLOYABILITY SCORE (CES V2)

47.2 / 100, "Uncertain outcomes"

The score lands here because two of the four pillars are constrained by missing evidence rather than confirmed negative outcomes: placement outcome (31.5/100) has a tiny live-hiring sample (3 listings, 4 employers, zero salary disclosures), and market dynamics (31.08/100) lacks reliable salary benchmarks for CTS-level IT graduates specifically. A weak signal is not the same as a weak market, but it is also not a safe lending signal.

A graduate who stacks industry certifications on top of the NTC (CompTIA A+, Network+, or CEH within 18-24 months of completing the trade) would, on current evidence, shift their individual risk profile materially upward. The Lakshya financing recommendation of reduced exposure with safeguards reflects the data gap honestly: if placement-tracking data for CTS IT graduates were available and showed above-50% formal employment within 12 months, this trade would almost certainly score into the Moderate employability band ^P.

Pillar scores map cited evidence to the published CES v2 rubric; the live figure refreshes as cohort outcomes feed Lakshya's engine.

03 EMPLOYABILITY & DEMAND

A sector growing at 9% annually -- but graduate-level demand is concentrated at the skilled, not entry end.

India's IT services market is expanding at a 9.06% CAGR toward USD 57 billion by 2030, the broader IT ecosystem revenues crossed USD 297 billion in FY25, and IT job demand reached 1.8 million listings in 2025. The structural demand story is real. The distributional reality is harder: mid-career professionals took 65% of hires in 2025, entry-level fell to 15%, and AI, cloud, and cybersecurity roles dominated new openings.

India's IT sector employed approximately 6 million people in its tech and AI ecosystem as of 2025, with NASSCOM projecting the total workforce at 5.8 million in FY25 ¹. The GCC (Global Capability Centre) segment alone is projected to grow from 1,700+ centres in 2024 to a workforce of 3.46 million by 2030, with strong hiring in Tier 2 cities including Pune, Coimbatore, and Jaipur ¹². India's digital economy is expected to reach USD 1 trillion, and digital adoption among MSMEs has jumped from 29% in 2015 to

69% in 2022, creating persistent localised demand for field-level IT support ⁹. India needs 30 million digitally skilled professionals by 2026 according to NSDC projections, and currently faces a gap of 14-19 lakh tech workers ¹³. IT spending by Indian enterprises is projected at USD 176.3 billion in 2026, driven by data-centre expansion and AI software rollouts ¹.

9.06% CAGR⁸

India IT services market growth 2025-2030 (Mordor Intelligence, 2025)

14-19 lakh¹³

projected skilled tech worker shortage in India by 2026 (NASSCOM-Zinnov, 2022)

170 new GCCs¹²

set up in India in 2025 alone, expanding localised IT support and operations demand in Tier 2 cities (NASSCOM, 2025)

04 LIVE HIRING EVIDENCE (2025/26)

What employers are actually posting

Captured from live job boards (Indeed, LinkedIn, Naukri) in the current scrape window: **3** openings across **4** employers, **0** with disclosed pay, **9** recent. These are real postings.

The live-hiring aggregate for CTS Information Technology shows 3 active listings from 4 distinct employers (Adweb Technology, Dixit Infotech, Elfonze Technologies, with roles spanning technical support engineer, IT infrastructure, and Oracle HCM functional). Zero of the three listings disclosed salary. Nine recent signals were recorded. This is a thin but real data point: it confirms that IT-related employers are listing roles on general job platforms, but the sample is too small to derive placement rates or salary norms.

Employer (live posting)	Posts	Disclosed pay	What they want
Adweb Technology Pvt Ltd	1	n/a	**Role:** Technical Support Engineer **Experience:** 2 Years to 5 Years **Industry:** IT Services & Consulting **Employment Type:** Full-Time, Permane
Dixit Infotech	1	n/a	**About Company** Dixit Infotech Services Pvt. Ltd. is one of India's leading information technology service integrators and solution providers. Dixit
Elfonze Technologies	1	n/a	### **Job Information** Date Opened 06/09/2026 Job Type Full time Industry IT Services Remote Job ### **Job Description** This is a remote position. O

Employer names and counts are from live job boards in the current window; counts fluctuate daily and are date-stamped in the engine. This sample is smaller than a mature occupation's; the scraper is being scaled to widen coverage.

THE SIGNAL IN THE DATA

- All three listing employers are mid-sized IT services and integrator firms, not tier-1 IT majors -- consistent with the SME/SMB segment where CTS-level IT technicians are most likely to find their first role.
- Technical support engineer roles (Adweb Technology) match directly to the trade's core competencies: hardware support, OS troubleshooting, customer-facing technical assistance.
- The absence of salary disclosures in all three listings is a structural feature of Indian SME hiring norms and does not necessarily signal below-market compensation.

WHY THIS MATTERS

- CTS IT graduates should look beyond large-platform job boards to SME-focused portals, ITI placement cells, and NSDC's apprenticeship pathways, where competition from degree-holding candidates is lower ¹⁰.
- Annual Maintenance Contract (AMC) and IT field-support roles in Tier 2 and Tier 3 cities are typically filled through local networks and state employment exchanges, not aggregated in national job-board data ⁹.
- Apprenticeship under the National Apprenticeship Promotion Scheme (NAPS) provides a structured entry path: over 49 lakh apprentices have been engaged since 2016, and IT hardware and networking firms are eligible principals ¹⁰.

Bottom line: Three live listings from four employers is thin evidence of demand; it neither confirms strong placement nor rules it out, and graduates should use multiple parallel channels rather than relying on a single platform.

05 ROLES, PATHWAYS & EARNING POTENTIAL

What the trade leads to, and what it pays

The CTS Information Technology NTC is best understood as a foundation credential that unlocks entry-level roles in IT support and infrastructure, with the real earnings and security uplift arriving at the first or second certification layer above it.

Role this prepares for	Indicative pay in India	Automation resilience
IT Support / Helpdesk Technician (Tier 1-2)	INR 2.0-3.5 LPA entry ¹⁴	Moderate -- AI displacing Tier 1; Tier 2 more secure
Hardware / Field Service Technician	INR 1.8-3.0 LPA + allowances ¹⁴	Resilient -- physical and on-site work AI cannot substitute
Network Assistant / Junior Network Admin	INR 2.5-4.0 LPA ¹⁴	Resilient -- structured cabling and physical-layer skills persist
Cybersecurity Analyst (after CEH/CompTIA Security+)	INR 4.5-9.0 LPA ⁷	Strongly resilient -- 1 million+ national shortage, growing regulatory demand
Freelance IT Support / AMC Contractor	INR 1.5-4.0 LPA variable ^P	Resilient -- local market, low platform-AI penetration in SME segments

PHASE 1 Foundations (Years 1-2, during CTS training) Complete the two-year CTS Information Technology trade across four semesters, covering PC hardware, OS installation, LAN/Wi-Fi setup, server basics, web development, and employability skills. Sit for the NCVT-administered trade tests and secure the National Trade Certificate (NTC) at NSQF Level 4 ^P.	PHASE 2 First Job and Certification Stack (Years 2-4) Enter the workforce via ITI placement cells, NAPS apprenticeship, or SME job portals. Simultaneously pursue CompTIA A+ (hardware/OS foundation) and Network+ (networking depth). Consider CCNA if employer provides access or reimburses fees. Target Tier 2 city employers and IT integrators where NTC-level credentials are competitive ⁶⁷.	PHASE 3 Specialisation and Earnings Step-Up (Years 4+) Pivot into cybersecurity (CEH, CompTIA Security+, DPDP Act compliance roles) or cloud operations (AWS/Azure certifications). Both paths command materially higher salaries and face structural talent shortages in India. Self-employment via AMC contracting or IT-support franchises remains viable for those in Tier 3 markets ⁷⁹.
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06 SKILLS BUILT & WHY THEY'RE AI-RESILIENT

Trained for the floor, not just the test

WHAT CANDIDATES ACTUALLY WORK ON - PC assembly, component identification, and systematic hardware troubleshooting using manufacturer diagnostics ^P - Operating system installation, configuration, and multi-OS (Windows, Linux) administration basics ^P - LAN/Wi-Fi network setup, IP addressing, switch and router basics, structured cabling ^P - Web development fundamentals (HTML, CSS, basic scripting) and database operations ^P - Cybersecurity foundations: firewall configuration, user access control, basic intrusion awareness ^P	WHY THESE RESIST AUTOMATION - Physical hardware repair and on-site installation: AI systems cannot perform hands-on device work ⁴ - Client-facing communication and translating technical problems into plain language for non-technical users ⁶ - Network physical-layer troubleshooting: identifying cable faults, verifying patch-panel integrity, rack work ^P - Security incident escalation and user-side phishing response, which requires human judgment and empathy ⁷ - Self-employed AMC and field support in SME markets, where personal trust and local relationships drive retention ⁹
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The positioning in one line: A CTS IT graduate's core advantage is physical, contextual, and client-facing work that remote automation cannot replicate, especially in India's underserved SME and Tier 2-3 markets.

07 THE CREDENTIAL & QUALITY LAYER

The NTC is nationally recognised and stackable -- it is a floor, not a ceiling.

Successful completion of the CTS Information Technology trade earns the National Trade Certificate (NTC) issued by NCVT (National Council for Vocational Training) under the Directorate General of Training, MSDE. From admission year 2025 onwards, the e-NTC and e-Marksheet carry the trainee's APAAR ID and total credits earned, improving portability and digital verifiability ^P. The NTC is recognised by employers across India and enables equivalence for further study (Diploma in Computer Engineering, BCA) without repeating foundational subjects.

The NTC's strongest function is as a base on which to stack industry certifications. CompTIA A+, Network+, and Security+ are globally portable and employer-recognised. CEH (Certified Ethical Hacker) or equivalent opens cybersecurity roles where India faces a shortage of over 1 million professionals ⁷. Employers in India's GCC segment and IT services sector increasingly screen for these stackable credentials alongside or instead of degree qualifications, making the NTC-plus-certification pathway a viable and lower-cost alternative to a full B.Tech or BCA for entry-level IT support and infrastructure work ¹².

08 THE INDIA TALENT CONTEXT

Abundant graduates, scarce job-readiness

India's broader graduate employability stands at 56.35% in 2026 (India Skills Report 2026), while ITI graduates specifically sit at 45.95%, up from 41% in 2025 ³. This gap is real and reflects the persistent perception among employers that ITI credentials lack industry-alignment, despite the DGT's curriculum updates under CTS 2.0 ^P. The national context also includes a projected workforce skill deficit of 47-49 million workers by 2027 (NSDC/WEF), and a specific IT shortage of 14-19 lakh tech professionals by 2026 (NASSCOM-Zinnov), which creates structural demand that does not automatically translate into placements for CTS IT graduates without active job-seeking and credential stacking ¹³⁶.

A CTS IT graduate is entering one of India's largest and fastest-growing sectors, but at its most competitive and AI-disrupted entry point -- the credential alone is necessary, not sufficient.

09 STAYING FUTURE-READY

How a candidate stays on the resilient side

LEAN INTO

- Cybersecurity specialisation: India's 1 million+ professional gap and new DPDP Act compliance requirements create durable demand for even foundational security-aware technicians ⁷
- Cloud operations basics (AWS/Azure fundamentals): 78% of Indian enterprises now pursue cloud strategies, creating persistent demand for hybrid on-prem/cloud support roles ⁸
- GCC and Tier 2 city job markets: 170+ new GCCs opened in India in 2025, with explicit expansion into lower-cost Tier 2 hubs where NTC-level IT skills compete more effectively ¹²
- MSME and SME IT support: 42% of MSMEs increasing digital budgets in 2025 creates localised demand that large IT firms do not serve, and which AI-driven remote tools penetrate slowly ⁹
- Apprenticeship pathways: NAPS has engaged 49+ lakh apprentices since 2016; IT hardware and services firms are eligible; this is a structured, paid entry route into formal employment ¹⁰

AVOID BEING DEFINED BY

- Positioning exclusively in Tier 1 helpdesk and password-reset roles: AI-driven ITSM platforms have automated 80% of these interactions at enterprise scale, and the trend is structural ⁴
- Relying solely on the NTC without adding any industry certification within the first two years: the bare credential is not enough to differentiate in a market where 35% of IT fresher hires go to CS/IT engineers ³
- Targeting only large IT services firms (TCS, Infosys, Wipro) for entry-level roles: these companies increasingly hire at higher credential and skill levels, with entry-level hiring falling to 15% of total in 2025 ²
- Staying in routine software deployment roles without upskilling: MDM and automated deployment tools are commoditising this work, and there is no floor on how far downward the salary can be pushed ⁵

10 SOURCES & CITATIONS

Every figure, traced to a source

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2 AngelOne / Quess Corp: India's IT Job Market Grows by 16% in 2025, 2025

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<https://www.angelone.in/news/economy/india-s-it-job-market-grows-by-16-in-2025-quess-corp> · 2025 · accessed Jun 2026

3 India Skills Report 2026: CS, IT engineers most employable, Careers360, 2025

Overall national employability 56.35% in 2026; ITI graduate employability 45.95% (up from 41%); CS engineers 80% employable; IT sector takes 35% of fresher hires.

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<https://www.salesforce.com/au/service/will-ai-replace-helpdesks/> · 2025 · accessed Jun 2026

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ITI enrollment rose from 9.5 lakh to over 14 lakh trainees; PM-SETU launched May 2025 linking ITIs to industry clusters; 49.18 lakh apprentices engaged since 2016 under NAPS; 27.08 lakh trained under PMKVY 4.0.

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India projected to need 93-96 lakh tech professionals by 2026 against an estimated supply of 75-78 lakh, implying a structural shortage of 14-19 lakh; AI, cloud, and cybersecurity roles face 25-50% talent shortage.
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