

Headline: <a href="#">“Algo Trading in India is moving from Learning to Real World Execution” - Nitesh Khandelwal, QuantInsti Co-founder</a>	
Source: Outlook	Date: 1 December, 2025

## “Algo Trading In India Is Moving From Learning To Real-World Execution”: Nitesh Khandelwal, QuantInsti Co-Founder

Published on: 1 December 2025 5:16 pm

Algorithmic trading in India has entered a new phase—one defined less by curiosity and more by hands-on execution. As the ecosystem matures, the focus is shifting from learning the fundamentals to deploying real strategies in live markets. Few have witnessed this transformation as closely as Nitesh Khandelwal, Co-Founder & Director at QuantInsti. From pioneering structured education for aspiring quants to enabling real-world strategy development through technology platforms, Nitesh has seen algo trading evolve from a niche interest to a mainstream, innovation-driven domain. In this conversation, he reflects on the journey, the regulatory landscape, and what lies ahead for India’s new generation of quantitative traders.

### 1. How has your role within the algo trading space transformed over time?

QuantInsti started with a clear focus: to educate and empower people in quantitative and algorithmic trading, something we continue to do through our live-online certification programme EPAT, self-paced courses on our Quantra portal and our free & open source learning initiatives. But our scope has grown beyond just learning. A big shift has been Blueshift, our in-browser research, backtesting and trading platform. What began as a tool for learners is now used by major brokers as a full-fledged strategy development and algo execution environment, no setup, no heavy infrastructure, just plug and play in a fully compliant way.

Today, QuantInsti is not only educating individuals and institutions but also enabling real-world strategy deployment, bridging the gap between learning and execution. We’ve become part of the broader algo ecosystem, contributing to education, technology, and infrastructure.

### 2. What inspired the idea behind it?

QuantInsti really started from a need we felt firsthand at iRage, we just couldn’t find people who understood both tech and markets. So, we began training internally. Over time, that training turned into something bigger, and we thought, “Why not open this up?” That’s how QuantInsti was born.

Today, it's grown far beyond what we imagined, with learners in over 190 countries. Some are automating trades, some are building careers, and some are just exploring the space. At the core, it's still about the same belief: with the right mindset and access, anyone, not just those in big institutions, can be part of this world of algorithmic trading.

### **3. How do you assess SEBI's move on algo trading for retail investors — is it a step in the right direction**

Yes, I believe SEBI's move is a much-needed step in a positive direction. It brings structure and accountability to retail algo trading without shutting the door to innovation. By clearly defining roles for brokers, exchanges, and algo providers, it protects investors while still allowing tech-savvy traders to participate responsibly. It's a win for both market integrity and ecosystem growth.

### **4. How is the regulatory framework in HFT and quant trading evolving?**

I'd say the regulatory landscape for HFT and quant trading in India is maturing, and in a good way.

A few years back, things were a bit unclear, especially around latency access, API usage, and how black-box strategies were being offered to retail traders. Now, the regulator has become more proactive; they're putting in place frameworks that are clearer and more structured. We've seen this not just in the retail algo space, but also in how they're approaching the overall ecosystem across the segments.

### **5. Which algorithmic trading strategies do you find most effective or relevant today?**

I usually avoid "recommending" specific strategies because what works for one person might not work for another, especially in algo trading, where your edge depends on your data, infrastructure, and risk management systems.

That said, if you're starting out, I think there are a few foundational strategies that are great for building intuition and getting hands-on experience, like

1. Mean Reversion: Especially in large-cap or high-volume stocks. It's a great way to understand market microstructure and the role of noise vs signal.
2. Momentum-based strategies: Work well when volatility clusters. You can start simple, like moving average crossovers, and then evolve into regime-based or volatility-adjusted momentum systems.
3. Pairs Trading / Statistical Arbitrage: Still relevant, especially if you can combine price action with fundamentals or alternate data.
4. Intraday VWAP or Execution Algos: These aren't directional bets, but they help in optimizing how trades are executed. Great if you're managing larger capital or doing low-impact entries.
5. Event-driven strategies: Earnings, macro news, or even market micro-events are harder to automate fully, but can be quite effective in specific use cases.

## **6. What's your outlook for quant trading volumes in 2025/26?**

I think quant trading volumes in India are going to continue growing strongly in 2025/26. We're already seeing massive activity in the derivatives space, and a lot of that is quant and algo-driven.

Global firms are scaling up their presence here, exchanges are upgrading infrastructure, and now, with SEBI formalizing retail algo frameworks, the ecosystem is opening up even more. From what I see on the ground, across institutions, prop desks, and even tech-savvy retail, we're looking at a significant growth in quant & algo trading driven volumes over the next couple of years. It's not just hype, it's quite real, and it's structural.

## **7. How would you describe the current Quant trading landscape in India?**

Quant is a very infrastructure and technologically-intensive space, so it's naturally more firm-driven than individual. The edge doesn't just come from a clever idea; it comes from being able to execute that idea efficiently, at scale, and with precision.

In India, we're seeing some of the global firms setting up or expanding their presence. At the same time, we have many homegrown firms, including our own firm, iRage, that have been deeply involved in this space for over a decade and are making strong strides.

What's also really encouraging is the number of QuantInsti alumni, especially from our EPAT programme, who've gone on to launch their own trading outfits or added a quant layer to what they were already doing, whether at a brokerage, a fund, or independently. That's the kind of ecosystem momentum we are seeing: more people building, experimenting, and venturing out to contribute to this space!