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THE VOICE OF THE CHANNEL

ISSUE 312 | OCTOBER 2023

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HIGHLIGHTS

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TRANSFORMING IT DISTRIBUTION

MANJU MATHEW, DIRECTOR STRATEGIC ALLIANCES AT STORIT, TELLS ANITA JOSEPH HOW THE COMPANY IS SPEARHEADING CHANGE AND INNOVATION IN THE DISTRIBUTION SPACE WITH ITS STRATEGIC ALLIANCES AND EXTENSIVE DATA MANAGEMENT CAPABILITIES.



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CONTENTS

STRATEGIC VAD PARTNER



ISSUE 312 // OCTOBER 2023



TOP STORIES

- 05** Top Stories from the channel industry in the region and beyond.

HIGHLIGHTS

- 30** Maya Zakhour, Director Area Partner Lead at NetApp, on how the company provides partners with a unified engagement model that helps accelerate their revenue.



- 32** Personality of the Month- Mario M Veljovic, General Manager, VAD Technologies.

- 42** Walid Gomaa, CEO of Omnix International, on how the company is helping partners bridge the digital divide.

THE DISTRIBUTION DILEMMA



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In the dynamic landscape of the Middle East's channel industry, staying relevant and competitive is a perpetual challenge. The region's strategic location, burgeoning technology sector, and diverse consumer base have made it a hub for distribution, with countless players vying for supremacy. To succeed in this fiercely competitive environment, companies must adapt, innovate, and, above all, add substantial value to their distribution networks.

The Middle East's distribution sector is a pivotal link in the global supply chain, connecting manufacturers and producers with an ever-expanding consumer market. Yet, the region's unique challenges, including diverse markets, cultural nuances, and regulatory complexities, require a nuanced approach to distribution. It's not merely about moving products from point A to point B; it's about optimising the entire process to ensure efficiency, cost-effectiveness, and customer satisfaction.

One of the most significant trends shaping the Middle East's distribution industry is the increasing emphasis on value-added services. In a market where price competition alone can be a race to the bottom, distributors are focusing on offering more than just products. They are becoming partners in their clients' success stories. From providing specialised logistics solutions to offering tailored marketing support and technical assistance, these distributors are creating a symbiotic relationship that goes beyond the transactional.

This shift towards value-added distribution is a win-win. Manufacturers benefit from reduced overheads, improved market access, and increased brand visibility. Meanwhile, end-users receive not just products but comprehensive solutions that address their unique needs. For instance, in the tech sector, distributors are offering pre- and post-sales technical support, helping businesses implement complex systems, and providing training to ensure optimal product utilisation.

In the Middle East's fiercely competitive channel industry, adding value to distribution isn't just a strategy; it's a necessity for survival and growth. We hope that the stories and insights shared in this edition will empower businesses to navigate these challenges successfully and build lasting relationships in the region's dynamic marketplace.



ADDING VALUE TO DISTRIBUTION

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COREWEAVE AND VAST DATA JOIN FORCES TO BUILD THE DATA FOUNDATION FOR A NEXT GENERATION PUBLIC CLOUD WITH NVIDIA AI

VAST Data, the AI data platform company and CoreWeave, a specialised cloud provider powering many of the world's leading generative AI efforts, has announced a strategic partnership that will further CoreWeave's mission to deliver highly scalable and performant cloud infrastructure for AI and accelerated compute workloads. CoreWeave has selected the VAST Data Platform, the world's first data platform designed for the AI era, to build a global, NVIDIA-powered accelerated computing cloud for deploying, managing and securing hundreds of petabytes of data for generative AI, high performance computing (HPC) and visual effects (VFX) workloads.

CoreWeave did extensive research and testing before selecting VAST Data to power all of its data centers. The VAST Data Platform has the necessary



scale, performance, and multi-tenant enterprise AI cloud capabilities required to power the massive AI and LLM training and inference

applications that are now transforming everything from business, to science, to society itself.

"CoreWeave's customers demand the most secure and scalable solutions on top of the industry's fastest and most flexible infrastructure to keep their data safe," said Michael Intrator, CEO and co-founder of CoreWeave. "We're delighted to partner with VAST Data to deliver a multi-tenant and zero-trust environment purpose-built for accelerated compute use cases like machine learning, VFX and rendering, Pixel Streaming and batch processing that's up to 35 times faster and 80 percent less expensive than legacy cloud providers. This partnership is rooted in a deep technical collaboration that will push the boundaries of data-driven accelerated computing to deliver the world's most optimised AI cloud platform."

VEEAM ACHIEVES INTERNATIONAL COMMON CRITERIA CERTIFICATION FOR CYBER RESILIENCE FROM U.S NATIONAL INFORMATION ASSURANCE PARTNERSHIP

Veeam Software, the leader in Data Protection and Ransomware Recovery, has announced that the Veeam Data Platform has achieved Common Criteria certification from the National Information Assurance Partnership (NIAP) and listing on the NIAP Product Compliant List (PCL), signifying a significant step towards reinforcing data security and ensuring confidentiality, integrity and availability of sensitive and critical information. Common Criteria certification assures partners, customers, and governments of Veeam's commitment to quality and risk mitigation, and validates alignment with the most stringent cyber security regulatory requirements. In turn, this provides proven competitive advantage, fosters trust, and reflects dedication to g-term viability. More than 450,000



enterprises around the world rely on Veeam - the #1 provider worldwide in the Data Replication & Protection software market - to ensure cyber resilience and rapid recovery from ransomware and cyber-attacks.

"State and government agencies are deploying Veeam technologies

at record levels. As they continue to be a target for cyber incidents, which threaten national security, critical infrastructure, privacy, and citizens, agencies are turning to us for the most reliable, secure and proven solutions as the #1 trusted and preferred vendor," said Anand Eswaran, CEO at Veeam. "Combatting cyber threats requires cross-industry partnership and the Common Criteria certification is a great example of how government bodies have come together to ensure technology meets the best standards to keep organisations safe. Veeam is dedicated to working alongside partners and alliances to innovate and create a united front against cyber threats and attacks. We are proud of the results of this rigorous testing and product evaluation, and that Veeam is a part of this global effort."

TOP STORIES

PARADIGM 3D ESTABLISHES FIRST-IN-REGION AED20 MILLION 3D PRINTING FACILITY IN DUBAI WITH STRATASYS TECHNOLOGY

Paradigm 3D has opened the doors to its state-of-the-art AED20 million 3D-printing facility in Dubai — the first in the Middle East capable of producing parts in accordance with the aerospace-specific EASA Part 21G regulation.

Outfitted with industry-leading industrial 3D printers from Stratasys Ltd. (NASDAQ: SSYS), the facility will initially focus on producing parts for the region's aviation industry. The 10,750 sq ft. factory in the Jabel Ali Industrial Area will initially have a production capacity of approximately 2,000 additively manufactured parts per year, with expectations to grow to around 20,000 per year over the next decade. Typical components produced at the facility will



include aircraft interior components for seating, lavatories, electronic cooling ducts, environment control system ducting, wire guides, filter boxes, micro vanes, gaskets, component connectors, air intake manifolds and more.

Across the world, leading aircraft and cabin interior product manufacturers

including Boeing, Collins Aerospace, BAE Systems, Airbus, Diehl Aviation, Safran Seats, use additive manufacturing systems from Stratasys. "What makes Paradigm 3D's facility unique is that it is the only 3D printing service provider in the Middle East that will be certified to produce 3D-printed parts for private and commercial aircraft," said Stratasys EMEA President, Andreas Langfeld. "Having this capability in Dubai will reduce

the lead time for replacement parts by weeks, possibly even months, helping airlines keep their planes in operation more predictably. This will not only reduce operational costs, particularly around logistics, but it will also reduce the environmental impact associated with transportation of these spare parts."

BEYONDTRUST ACHIEVES ISO 27001:2022 CERTIFICATION DEMONSTRATING COMMITMENT TO ROBUST CUSTOMER SECURITY

BeyondTrust, the worldwide leader in intelligent identity and access security, has announced that the company has achieved ISO 27001:2022 certification.

The ISO 27001 standard applies a holistic management system approach to information security to address governance, organisation roles and responsibilities, processes, and technology to meet the business's information security risk management objectives. ISO 27001:2022 is the latest version of the international standard for Information Security Management Systems (ISMS), published by the International Organization for Standardization (ISO).

Aprio LLP, a nationally recognised business advisory and CPA firm, conducted the meticulous certification process.

As one of the first in its industry to obtain ISO 27001:2022 certification, BeyondTrust demonstrates its



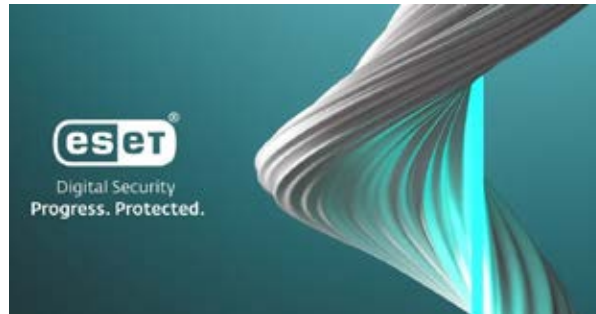
commitment to preserving the security and confidentiality of sensitive information and customer data. Certification underscores BeyondTrust's comprehensive Information Security Management System (ISMS) of developing, operating, and administering Privileged Password Management, Endpoint Privileged Management, and Secure Remote Access.

"ISO 27001:2022 reflects enhancements and modernisation to the internationally recognised ISO 27001:2013 information security standard," said Dan Schroeder, Leader of Information Assurance Services at Aprio. "We are excited and proud to serve as the ISO 27001 Certification Body for BeyondTrust as they leverage this important new standard to drive continuous improvement for security of their customer and other sensitive data amidst an ever-increasing threat landscape."

"BeyondTrust's ISO 27001:2022 certification reaffirms our dedication to prioritising customer data security," said Justin Sparks, Director, IT Governance, Risk & Compliance at BeyondTrust. "This achievement highlights our commitment to providing customers with the utmost protection against cyber threats and unauthorised access, ensuring their peace of mind and confidence in our products and services."

ESET PEER-RECOGNISED AS A CUSTOMERS' CHOICE IN THE 2023 GARTNER PEER INSIGHTS VOICE OF THE CUSTOMER REPORT

ESET, a leading provider of Endpoint Protection Platforms (EPP), announced that it has been named a Customer Choice in the 2023 Gartner Peer Insights Voice of the Customer for Endpoint Protection Platforms report for our EPP solution ESET PROTECT.1 This recognition means that ESET meets or exceeds both the market average in terms of Overall Experience and User Interest and Adoption. According to the report, 97 percent of Gartner Peer Insights reviews received for ESET indicated a 5-star or a 4-star rating.



In several hundred product reviews, customers expressed their appreciation for the ESET PROTECT solution for its product capabilities, sales experience, deployment experience and support experience. The report synthesizes the reviews of the vendors and focuses on

direct peers' experiences with implementing and operating a solution and, from our perspective, makes the report an invaluable resource for IT decision-makers seeking the best EPP for their organisation. ESET has also received a 91% Willingness to Recommend from our customers and the peer-distinction as an Overall Customers' Choice and as a Customers' Choice for the EMEA region.

The ESET PROTECT offering has been built around real-world customer needs and is under continual development to respond to businesses' changing security requirements.

MINDWARE AND BITTITAN SIGN VAD PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT

Mindware, a leading value-added distributor (VAD) in the Middle East and Africa, has announced its distributor partnership with BitTitan, a premier provider of cloud migration solutions. As per the terms of the agreement, Mindware will market and distribute BitTitan's suite of migration solutions for managed services automation, enabling the vendor to broaden its SaaS migration services within the Middle East and Africa region. This strategic partnership aims to provide regional businesses of all sizes with a seamless and efficient experience when they need to migrate data to the Cloud or between tenants.

Speaking about the partnership, Silmi Khanfir, Director of Cloud & XaaS at Mindware commented: "Businesses are transforming, and so is their IT spend strategy. We live in a digital, and data-driven world where migration to the Cloud securely is a constant challenge faced by enterprises. BitTitan's fully automated, industry-leading SaaS solution simplifies Cloud migration projects. Mindware's collaboration with the company will give our current and potential customers



Silmi Khanfir

the tools required to expand and operate in the Cloud with enhanced efficiency, security, and productivity. The company's robust solution portfolio will help Mindware's channel partners to play a vital role in aiding enterprises to digitally transform with confidence while optimising time and resources."

Companies and organisations around the globe are migrating to the cloud and between cloud tenants in response to ongoing trends. Migration activity has increased as a result of mergers,



Lon Clark

acquisitions, and divestitures. Moreover, companies are requiring migrations as they move more to the cloud to support remote work and workplace modernisation. Technology changes, including cybersecurity concerns and Microsoft's upcoming end to active and security support for Exchange Server, are also driving migration activity. IT teams and Managed Service Providers (MSPs) are looking for an intuitive yet customisable migration tool that will handle projects of every size and type.

NEWSMAKERS

GITEX 2023: OPSWAT TO HIGHLIGHT CYBERSECURITY GAPS IN REGION'S CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE

OPSWAT, a global leader in critical infrastructure protection (CIP) cybersecurity solutions, announced its participation at GITEX Global 2023, where it will show attendees how critical infrastructure can be secured through the company's end-to-end IT/OT security solutions.

Exhibiting under the theme, "Modernizing Critical Infrastructure Protection (CIP)", OPSWAT will highlight the challenges in defending Middle East countries' evolving critical infrastructures and showcase the company's proactive measures that can bring new confidence to the region's OT security teams. "Our GITEX theme is designed to emphasize that merely maintaining the status quo in cybersecurity is not enough," said Sertan Selcuk, VP of Sales, Middle East, Turkey, Africa, and Pakistan, at OPSWAT. "We must take bold steps to address both current and future cyberthreats that



could potentially compromise our infrastructure."

Unlike other providers in the market, OPSWAT provides a single platform — built from the ground up — to protect against file-borne threats from USB, web traffic, storage, email, and API,

and delivers the zero-trust architecture needed for the protection of critical infrastructure. Furthermore, the company's solutions can be deployed in a wider array of setups than any other industry player — in the cloud, on premises, or even in air-gapped networks.

WSO2 TO ELEVATE DIGITAL EXPERIENCES FOR MIDDLE EAST BUSINESSES AT GITEX GLOBAL 2023

WSO2, the global leader in digital transformation technology, is set to participate at GITEX GLOBAL, where it will present its comprehensive product stack. This lineup includes core technologies encompassing enterprise integration, API management, and Identity and Access Management (IAM) solutions, designed to empower organisations in building robust digital platforms. WSO2 will also showcase the Choreo Internal Developer Platform, a Digital Platform as a Service (PaaS), aimed at accelerating the creation of digital experiences. This diverse portfolio caters to a wide range of industries, simplifying the application development process and removing the complexities that hinder innovation in various digital contexts, including B2C, B2B, and B2E use cases.

Under the theme of 'Providing Core Technologies to Create Awesome



Digital Experiences',

WSO2 is preparing to captivate visitors by showcasing how thousands of organisations, including hundreds of the world's largest corporations, top universities, and governments, harness

the power of the company's cloud-native Software as a Service (SaaS) offerings and open-source software to drive their digital transformation journeys.

Uday Shankar Kizhepat, Vice President and General Manager - Middle East, WSO2, expressed, "Digital differentiation is the key to success in today's competitive market, as every business needs to deliver exceptional digital experiences to their customers and stakeholders. WSO2 supports its customers in this endeavour by providing innovative and scalable solutions in the most critical and impactful areas of their business. We look forward to showcasing our capabilities and achievements at GITEX 2023, and connecting with other industry leaders and visionaries. Our solutions have proven to expedite app development and positively impact return on investment."

CISCO TO ACQUIRE SPLUNK, TO HELP MAKE ORGANISATIONS MORE SECURE AND RESILIENT IN AN AI-POWERED WORLD

Cisco and Splunk, the cybersecurity and observability leader, has announced a definitive agreement under which Cisco intends to acquire Splunk for \$157 per share in cash, representing approximately \$28 billion in equity value. Upon close of the acquisition, Splunk President and CEO Gary Steele will join Cisco's Executive Leadership Team reporting to Chair and CEO Chuck Robbins.

The acquisition builds on Splunk's heritage of helping organisations enhance their digital resilience and will accelerate Cisco's strategy to securely connect everything to make anything possible. The combination of these two established leaders in AI, security and observability will help make organisations more secure and resilient.

"We're excited to bring Cisco and Splunk together. Our combined



capabilities will drive the next generation of AI-enabled security and observability," said Chuck Robbins, chair and CEO of Cisco. "From threat detection and response to threat prediction and prevention, we will help make organisations of all sizes more

secure and resilient."

"Uniting with Cisco represents the next phase of Splunk's growth journey, accelerating our mission to help organisations worldwide become more resilient, while delivering immediate and compelling value to our shareholders," said Gary Steele, president and CEO of Splunk.

"Together, we will form a global security and observability leader that harnesses the power of data and AI to deliver excellent customer outcomes and transform the industry. We're thrilled to join forces with a long-time and trusted partner that shares our passion for innovation and world-class customer experience, and we expect our community of Splunk employees will benefit from even greater opportunities as we bring together two respected and purpose-driven organisations," Steele added.

SAS INNOVATE ON TOUR: REVOLUTIONISING DECISION-MAKING WITH MORE PRODUCTIVE, FASTER AND TRUSTWORTHY AI AND ANALYTICS

SAS Innovate, the exclusive global event series hosted by analytics leader SAS, visited Riyadh on September 27, 2023, to demonstrate how Saudi Arabian businesses can make data-driven, faster, and unbiased decisions based on AI and analytics. Held at the Crowne Plaza Riyadh Rdc Hotel & Convention, the Riyadh edition of SAS Innovate on Tour featured engaging sessions tailored to inspire regional business leaders into the future of analytics and the immense business opportunities they present.

As data and AI are essential components of the Kingdom's Vision 2030, Riyadh was one of the most significant stops for SAS Innovate. Notably, 66 out of 96 direct and indirect objectives of the nation's ambitious blueprint are related to data and AI.

Saudi Arabia aspires to rank among the 15 countries worldwide in AI, to transform the Kingdom's workforce by developing over 20,000 local data



and AI specialists and experts, and to position among the top 20 countries in scientific contribution to data and AI.

Bader Bahaian, Country Manager, KSA at SAS, said: "With a National Strategy for Data & AI in place and the ambition to establish KSA as the global hub where the best of data and AI is made a reality, SAS strategy is aligned with the country's visionary leadership. To make that effort a success, we must

invest in local data science talents. We are committed to the continuous development of in-country talents by building strong relationships with academia and establishing continuous education programs with our customers. Our commitment to investment and growth in the country is aligned with the vision of Saudi Arabia to be part of the best success story of 21 century."

MORO HUB FORMS PARTNERSHIP WITH DXC TECHNOLOGY TO ELEVATE UAE'S DIGITAL FUTURE

Moro Hub, a subsidiary of Digital DEWA, the digital arm of Dubai Electricity and Water Authority (PJSC), has partnered with DXC Technology, a leading Fortune 500 global technology services provider. Bringing together Moro Hub's local expertise and DXC Technology's world-class IT services at scale, this collaboration aims to deliver comprehensive business process services and state-of-the-art technology solutions to both the public and private sectors in the UAE.

The partnership was signed by Mohammad Bin Sulaiman, Chief Executive Officer of Moro Hub, and Seelan Nayagam, President, Asia Pacific, Middle East & Africa, DXC Technology.

The strategic alliance between Moro Hub and DXC Technology will offer a comprehensive array of services designed to empower UAE businesses and organisations to fully embrace the potential of digital transformation. Key offerings will include turnkey solutions in Service Automation, Sovereign Cloud Infrastructure & Services,



Business Process Services, Metaverse, Digital Workplace, Analytics and Artificial Intelligence.

"Moro Hub has always been committed to its customers, and this alliance with DXC Technology stands as a cornerstone in our shared commitment to redefine the digital landscape of the UAE. While this association will help cultivate an environment of sustained digital evolution, operational robustness, and technological mastery, it will also empower the UAE's enterprises to flourish amidst the opportunities of a digitised world," said Mohammad Bin Sulaiman, Chief Executive Officer of Moro Hub.

INGRAM MICRO AND CLOUDERA ANNOUNCE NEW DISTRIBUTION AGREEMENT TO HELP DRIVE AI ADOPTION



Ingram Micro Inc., a global leader in technology and supply chain services, has announced a distribution agreement in the Middle East and Africa with Cloudera, a data company for trusted enterprise artificial intelligence (AI).

This strategic collaboration will enable Ingram Micro's extensive network of resellers, system

integrators, and service providers to access Cloudera's powerful hybrid data platform, empowering businesses to efficiently manage, analyse, and leverage data to gain valuable insights, make informed decisions and use AI solutions based on trusted data.

The collaboration comes at a time when organisations across industries are increasingly recognizing the importance of data-driven innovations such as AI in gaining a competitive edge. Cloudera's comprehensive data management and analytics solutions provide enterprises with the agility, scalability, and security required to navigate the complexities of the modern data landscape.

EXTREME NETWORKS LAUNCHES REGIONAL DATA CENTER IN UAE



Extreme Networks, Inc., a leader in cloud networking, has announced the launch of a new regional data centre (RDC) in the UAE, to meet growing business needs for faster data transmissions, easy access to cloud solutions and heightened data security. Through AI and machine learning functionality with the ExtremeCloud IQ platform, the RDC enables both government and enterprise customers to run their operations more efficiently while in accordance with local data laws.

The new RDC is one of 18 regional data centres established by Extreme Networks and is expanding the company's cloud footprint globally. It includes the company's industry-leading cloud management platform ExtremeCloudIQ, which provides network insights and analytics that help organisations streamline operations, gain visibility into network performance and troubleshoot issues.

The need for data centres in the region continues to grow as local and global companies face added demand for cloud computing, smart services, next generation e-commerce experiences and remote work capabilities. The UAE also recently announced a landmark federal data protection law in 2022, that requires stricter data protection and storage efforts and also has a "Cloud First" policy, which requires government entities to prioritise cloud solutions when procuring IT services. Extreme's RDC is crucial to ensuring reliable and low latency services and greater data security and sovereignty.



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OPTIMISING WIRELESS TECHNOLOGY

Shaheen APM, Solutions Manager, Middle East and Africa at Allied Telesis tells Anita Joseph how the company, a leading provider of hardware and software products, is redefining enterprise networking with the first-of-its-kind hybrid wireless LAN solution that maximises both mobility and bandwidth.



Can you explain the “hybrid wireless LAN solution” and what inspired its development? What sets it apart from other wireless solutions?

Allied Telesis has introduced the world's first hybrid WLAN solution, designed to optimise wireless networking in enterprise environments. This innovative solution allows simultaneous multi-channel and single-channel WLAN operations using a single access point (AP) design. Network administrators can tailor their network to their specific needs, combining the performance advantages of both architectures.

For instance, in a traditional office setup with four access points, all operating on the same channel, this represents the single-channel architecture, which is relatively uncommon. In contrast, the multi-cell architecture employs four access points, each on different channels or frequencies. This eliminates interference and ensures greater bandwidth availability when multiple devices are connected. While this multi-cell approach offers benefits, it can lead to disconnections and disruptions as devices move between access points.

This is where our hybrid solution comes into play. By combining the strengths of both architectures, we offer a unique and comprehensive solution. With multiple radios in our access points, we enable network segmentation. Stationary devices

in an office can benefit from the multi-cell architecture, guaranteeing higher bandwidth. Meanwhile, mobile devices in constant motion can utilise the single-cell architecture for uninterrupted connectivity. This hybrid approach maximizes both mobility and bandwidth, catering to a wide range of user needs.

How will this new technology impact businesses and organizations that rely on wireless networks, and what specific benefits can they expect from its implementation?

This hybrid wireless LAN solution holds great promise for businesses and organisations that heavily depend on wireless networks, especially in sectors like IoT, manufacturing, and logistics. In environments where devices are constantly in motion, such as warehouses with automated vehicles, this technology can significantly improve efficiency.

Consider an example in a vehicle manufacturing plant that uses automated guided vehicles (AGVs). These AGVs move materials across the factory, but with a multi-cell architecture, they could experience disconnections as they move between access points. This disrupts operations and affects efficiency.

With the hybrid solution, such disruptions are minimized. The AGVs can smoothly seamlessly traverse through the coverage area of multiple access points without any disconnection or reconnection, as from the AGV's perspective it is not seeing the multiple AP's but a single Access point which has a very vast coverage area. Allied Telesis uses the term “Channel Blanket” to describe this.

This technology's advantages

become increasingly evident as more devices and sensors rely on wireless networks in industrial settings.

Moreover, Allied Telesis offers a one-stop solution for all networking needs. We provide a wide range of network infrastructure components, ensuring seamless integration and interoperability. This eliminates the complexity often associated with integrating solutions from multiple vendors and enhances the overall user experience.

How does the hybrid wireless LAN solution address security and data privacy concerns, especially when managing different types of wireless clients or devices?

In terms of security, the hybrid wireless LAN solution maintains robust standards and protocols, whether it operates in single-cell or multi-cell mode. We comply with industry requirements, including IEEE standards and encryption and authentication protocols such as WPA2 and WPA3. Additionally, we support features like RADIUS authentication and captive portals for enhanced security.

One unique security feature we offer is the Autonomous Management Framework (AMF) Security. The Allied Telesis AMF Security (AMF-Sec) Controller is a powerful security solution with an intelligent, fully-featured SDN controller. With AMF Security, we extend our capabilities to integrate with leading security vendors, including endpoint security, SIEM, antivirus, and firewall providers.

When these third-party security solutions identify a threat, they communicate with AMF Security, which has comprehensive control over the network. In response, AMF Security can isolate or disconnect the affected device or port, whether it's wired or wireless. This rapid response capability is vital for mitigating security threats effectively.

Overall, the Hybrid Wireless LAN solution not only offers flexibility and performance but also maintains a high level of security to safeguard sensitive data and protect against emerging threats. 



OVERALL, THE HYBRID WIRELESS LAN SOLUTION NOT ONLY OFFERS FLEXIBILITY AND PERFORMANCE BUT ALSO MAINTAINS A HIGH LEVEL OF SECURITY TO SAFEGUARD SENSITIVE DATA.



ACER EMPOWERS PARTNERS WITH FIRST UAE CHANNEL EVENT

During the sessions, partners were presented with Acer's global, regional and local strategies.

Acer expanded its support for Small and Medium Business (SMB) resellers, dealers, value added resellers (VAR) and system integrators in the country with a first-of-its kind UAE Channel event. The event featured insights into Acer's global strategies, comprehensive product training, an overview of the benefits of its quarterly channel partner programs, and more.

The event, which took place on September 12, reaffirmed Acer's support for the dealers and resellers of the UAE channel. The event featured a morning session dedicated to commercial and education partners and an afternoon segment dedicated to consumer partners, aligning with Acer's commitment to foster a greater collaboration with their channel partners. This in turn aims to enhance the company's business growth and deliver a more satisfying and fulfilling customer experience.

Commenting on the initiative, Michele Montecchio – General Manager, Acer Middle East said: "At the heart of Acer's business model are our valued partners whose contribution is immeasurable: our success wouldn't be possible without theirs. Additionally, the

channel plays a significant role in the economy, contributing to 25% of the UAE revenue market in the PC segment, according to International Data Corporation (IDC) figures for the first half of 2023. That's why we are thrilled to have hosted our UAE Channel event for this valuable segment, expanding their presence into Acer's existing programs, campaigns, and discount schemes. This strategic shift ensures a more comprehensive and inclusive approach to our market presence."

"Our unwavering dedication to our channel partners will not only help them transform potential challenges into new opportunities for business growth, but also ensure that they are suitably rewarded for performance, capabilities and collaboration within Acer's evolving and expanding portfolio. This milestone event reaffirms Acer's steadfast commitment to our valued dealers & resellers."

During the sessions partners were presented with Acer's global, regional and local strategies, guiding and advising them on how Acer has successfully kept pace with the ever-changing business models regionally and globally. The briefing also shed light on Acer's strategy for maintaining sustainable operations and elaborated

on Acer's quarterly Channel Partner Program benefits, which facilitate successful collaborations with partners and help deliver market-leading solutions. This session included an array of tools and instruments designed to help resellers and dealers effectively market Acer's products and solutions to their target customer base in the UAE.

Acer's experts at the UAE Channel event showcased the brand's class-leading products and solutions, including Desktops, Notebooks, Monitors and Projectors, demonstrating how the company can enable partners to deliver superior business solutions that best fulfil the needs of their end customers. The sessions also introduced Acer's powerful Altos Computing which provides the most streamlined and cost-effective integrated solutions such as servers, workstations, thin client, networks, and storage

The UAE Channel event concluded with hands-on demonstrations of selected Acer products that were on display throughout the day. With decades of experience in the world of computing, the event not only reaffirmed Acer's commitment to UAE channel partners but re-affirmed continuous support for partners and end customers across all levels. 

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Visit us at GITECH Global 2023 (16-20 Oct) - Hall 5, Stand A1

TRANSFORMING IT DISTRIBUTION

Manju Mathew, Director Strategic Alliances at StorIT, tells Anita Joseph how the company is spearheading change and innovation in the distribution space with its strategic alliances and extensive data management capabilities.

In the dynamic landscape of Enterprise IT, staying ahead of the digital curve is paramount for businesses seeking to maintain their competitiveness and safeguard their data assets. Value-Added Distributors (VADs) play an indispensable role in this journey by serving as the crucial bridge between manufacturers and end-users. In an era marked by rapid technological evolution and a constant influx of new products and solutions, VADs emerge as invaluable intermediaries, offering more than mere products. They provide the expertise, support, and customisation essential for businesses aiming to maintain a competitive edge.

However, with data fueling today's businesses, VADs face the challenge of stepping up and sifting this data to drive positive business outcomes. Businesses now require more than just off-the-shelf solutions; they need tailored strategies that align with their unique data needs and objectives. Distributors are being called upon to offer specialised services, including consultancy, data strategy development, and ongoing support, to help organisations harness the full potential of their data. Furthermore, with data residing in diverse environments such as on-premises, cloud, and hybrid infrastructures,

distributors must navigate these complex ecosystems to provide seamless data management solutions.

One of the critical challenges in contemporary data management is the need for real-time insights. In a world where data is generated at lightning speed, businesses must move beyond batch processing and embrace real-time analytics to make informed decisions promptly. Distributors play a vital role in connecting organisations with the latest technologies that enable real-time data processing, ensuring that businesses can stay ahead in today's fast-paced digital environment.



**StorIT HAS
IMPLEMENTED
2500+ PROJECTS
ON BEHALF OF
RESELLERS ACROSS
THE MENA REGION.**

Reshaping the digital landscape

Enter StorIT with two-decades of experience, unrivaled data management capabilities and an extensive partner ecosystem that focuses on collaboration and strategy to generate insights and drive business outcomes. Working with 1500+ channel partners across the Middle East and North Africa region, StorIT is committed to their growth and empowerment, equipping them to add value to their offerings and resonate better with their customers. The comprehensive suite of solutions that the company offers, backed by the solid support of their vendors, ensures that partners have a smooth and seamless journey into the digital realm. This effective partnership, ably supported by value-added services, guarantees that StorIT remains the VAD of choice for its ever-growing customer base.

StorIT has carved a niche for itself by placing resellers at the heart of its operations, while simultaneously maintaining a sharp focus on nurturing a portfolio of niche vendors such as Dell Technologies, Commvault, Quantum, AutomationEdge, opengear and NetBrain, to name a few, that provide unique, market-defining products and services.

StorIT's commitment to resellers goes beyond conventional notions of distribution. Here, resellers are



not mere intermediaries; they are strategic partners, indispensable players in the technology ecosystem. StorIT understands that resellers bridge the gap between cutting-edge technology solutions and end-users' evolving needs. Consequently, the company has woven its approach around empowering resellers to excel in their pivotal role. In fact, they have implemented 2500+ projects on behalf of Resellers across the MENA Region.

The philosophy at StorIT revolves around the idea that resellers are not just channels for products; they are valuable advisors and enablers of technology adoption. The company equips resellers with an array of resources, including not only top-tier products but also knowledge, tools, and unwavering support. StorIT stands as a trusted ally, providing resellers with a consultative edge that extends far beyond traditional distribution services.

In a bustling marketplace dominated by industry giants and ubiquitous solutions, StorIT scours the tech landscape for hidden gems – innovative vendors offering distinctive products and services that address critical market gaps, often overlooked by mainstream players.

The process of selecting these niche vendors is rigorous and meticulous, driven by a shared commitment to customer-centricity, quality, and long-term vision. These vendors offer solutions that dovetail seamlessly with

one another, creating a comprehensive array of technologies, ranging from cutting-edge Artificial Intelligence and machine learning to robust security and data management solutions.

This curated selection empowers resellers to offer their customers a tailored suite of options designed to meet their specific needs. It enables resellers to differentiate themselves in a competitive marketplace by providing unique, high-value solutions that tackle precise pain points.

In essence, StorIT acts as the bridge that connects resellers with these niche vendors, thereby fostering a symbiotic relationship that serves the best interests of both parties. StorIT is not just a distributor; it is an orchestrator of innovation, a catalyst for success, and a curator of enduring partnerships. In a reseller channel where resellers and niche vendors unite to deliver technology solutions that matter, StorIT stands as a beacon of specialization and commitment.

“Collaboration remains the cornerstone of our ethos,” says Manju Mathew, Director Strategic Alliances at StorIT. “We actively engage with our channel partners and resellers, creating a network of innovation and excellence. Together, we work tirelessly to identify and address the unique needs and challenges faced by our clients. Our consultative approach involves understanding not only the technology they use but also why and how it fits into their broader objectives.”

In this dynamic tech landscape, staying ahead requires a collective effort, and StorIT prides itself on being the catalyst for these synergistic partnerships and collaborations. “Together, we ensure that our partners and customers are not just in sync with today’s technological trends, but are also well-prepared for the challenges and opportunities of tomorrow,” she adds.

The Consultative Approach

StorIT prides itself on a unique consultative approach that considers each customer carefully and understands their individual requirements. This goes well beyond surface-level comprehension, delving



deep into an organisation’s core, business objectives, and long-term aspirations. StorIT doesn’t merely seek to understand the technology an organisation employs; it strives to fathom the ‘why’ and ‘how’ behind its use, seamlessly integrating it into the very fabric of the organisation’s operations.

This consultative philosophy operates on the principle that one-size-fits-all solutions are inadequate in today’s multifaceted technological landscape. StorIT’s approach seeks to uncover not only what technology is in place but also why it is there and how it aligns with the broader strategic vision. This in-depth understanding allows StorIT to provide solutions that are not just technologically sound but also intrinsically tied to the



**StorITs CORE
COMPETENCIES LIE
AT THE HEART OF ITS
MISSION TO DELIVER
EXCEPTIONAL VALUE
IN THE WORLD
OF TECHNOLOGY
DISTRIBUTION.**



organisation's overarching goals. In essence, StorIT's consultative approach transforms technology from a tool into an enabler, ensuring that every technological facet is a contributing force in the organisation's journey towards success.

No surprise, then, that StorIT has earned the distinction of being the foremost distributor in the Middle East and North Africa to introduce IT Infrastructure Managed Services, High-Performance Computing Hybrid Cloud Solutions, Hyperautomation and Network Management Solutions to the Reseller Channel.

This journey was no overnight feat for StorIT. It was achieved through a focused approach, profound industry knowledge, and advanced technical skill sets. Today, the company

offers a full spectrum of IoT, digital transformation, data availability, information management, high-performance computing, cloud, and hybrid cloud solutions to SMBs, SMEs, and large enterprises. Its consulting team delivers additional value-added services, including business needs assessment, architecture, and proof of design, to optimise solutions for customer requirements.

GITEX 2023

StorIT Distribution is gearing up to make a significant impact at GITEX Global 2023, cementing its reputation as a leader in Enterprise Data Management, Data Storage, Data Protection, and Hyperautomation solutions. With GITEX being the largest technology exhibition in the

region, StorIT recognises it as the perfect platform to unveil its latest innovations, engage with potential partners, and demonstrate its commitment to pushing the boundaries of enterprise solutions.

At the mega event, StorIT will feature a powerhouse of vendors such as Dell Technologies, Quantum, NetBrain, Cornelis Network, Digi, AutomationEdge, Opengear and Commvault. Each of these companies will unveil their cutting-edge technologies, providing attendees with a glimpse into the future of enterprise solutions.

Visitors to StorIT Distribution's stand F2 in Hall 2 can expect a holistic experience as they explore the exhibits. They will witness the seamless convergence of Enterprise



**StorIT's JOURNEY IN THE
TECHNOLOGY SPACE
REFLECTS A REMARKABLE
COMMITMENT TO BREAKING
FREE FROM THE CONFINES OF
TRADITIONAL DISTRIBUTION.**



Data Management, Data Storage, Data Protection, and Hyperautomation, showcasing the integration of these critical components in modern business operations.

Beyond the exhibits, StorIT Distribution is set to captivate the audience with daily presentations throughout the event's five-day duration. These presentations will offer deep insights into the latest industry trends, technological marvels, and the future roadmap of enterprise solutions, ensuring that visitors leave with a wealth of knowledge and inspiration.

Core Competencies

StorIT's core competencies lie at the heart of its mission to deliver exceptional value in the world of technology distribution. As a Value-Added Distributor, the company goes well beyond the conventional role of distribution. StorIT's commitment is to enhance the value of the solutions it delivers, thereby setting a higher standard in the industry. This approach means that StorIT's partners can anticipate more than just top-tier products; they can expect unparalleled support and added value in every interaction.

Behind the scenes, StorIT boasts a team of dedicated professionals with over 2 decades of experience, who are the driving force behind its success. This team includes experienced Solution Architects, Implementation Engineers and Support Services experts who are deeply committed to ensuring that clients receive tailored, effective solutions that precisely align with their specific requirements. This commitment to excellence extends

throughout every phase of the client journey, from initial consultation to implementation and ongoing support.

Manju affirms, "Our core competencies encompass advanced technology skills, profound industry expertise, a robust reseller network, and extensive market experience. In addition to introducing cutting-edge technology to the region, we offer advanced Pre-sales Consultancy, Project Assessment, Solution Planning & Design, Technical Implementation & Deployment, and Technical Support & Maintenance Services as pivotal value additions to our clients."

StorIT's operational reach extends across the MENA region, a testament to its commitment to effectively serving a wide geographical area. This presence underscores the company's dedication to providing timely support and delivering solutions that meet the unique needs of its resellers, regardless of their location.

One of StorIT's standout strengths is its comprehensive portfolio of vendor solutions. Covering a wide spectrum of technology domains, from Infrastructure and Backup to Hyperautomation, Data Management, Reporting, Analytics, and Security, the diversity of this portfolio is a testament to StorIT's versatility and adaptability. This diversity ensures that the company can offer a wide range of options, thus empowering clients to address their varied and ever-evolving needs. StorIT's portfolio is not just a collection of products; it is a curated selection designed to empower organisations with the right tools and technologies to navigate the complexities of the modern technological landscape.

StorIT's journey in the technology space reflects a remarkable commitment to breaking free from the confines of traditional distribution. The company has recognised that the digital conundrum businesses find themselves



StorIT PRIDES ITSELF ON A UNIQUE CONSULTATIVE APPROACH THAT CONSIDERS EACH CUSTOMER CAREFULLY AND UNDERSTANDS THEIR INDIVIDUAL REQUIREMENTS.

in today, demands a departure from the status quo. Instead of merely supplying hardware and software, StorIT has ventured into uncharted territory by offering specialised services that encompass consultancy, data strategy development, and ongoing support. This transformation positions StorIT as a strategic partner, not just a distributor, in helping businesses navigate the complexities of data management and analysis. In a world driven by technology, StorIT guides enterprises to harness the power of innovation, seize new opportunities, and navigate the digital future with unwavering confidence. StorIT isn't merely distributing technology; it's distributing possibilities, enabling businesses to embrace digital transformation and embark on a journey of enduring success. With StorIT by their side, the future is undoubtedly brighter and more technologically advanced than ever before.

As a beacon of positive change and a customer-first mindset, StorIT exemplifies what it means to be a true partner in today's dynamic technology ecosystem. Its journey is a testament to the power of embracing change and leading with a forward-thinking mindset, and its impact on businesses is nothing short of transformational. StorIT's legacy is one of empowerment, innovation, and a relentless pursuit of excellence in the digital age. 



StorIT GUIDES ENTERPRISES TO HARNESS THE POWER OF INNOVATION, SEIZE NEW OPPORTUNITIES, AND NAVIGATE THE DIGITAL FUTURE WITH UNWAVERING CONFIDENCE.

ONUR TEPELI APPOINTED CEO OF FEATUREMIND

Onur will work to support the continued growth of the businesses, adding momentum to the region and scaling the team.



FeatureMind, a leading provider of digital solutions within the retail environment, announced that Onur Tepeli has joined the company as Chief Executive Officer (CEO).

In this role, Onur will develop and execute a growth-oriented strategy that will help to build on the company's presence in the region, leading the FeatureMind team based out of the Middle East, Turkey and Nigeria and supporting the growth of partnerships with Salesforce, Mulesoft, Akeneo and other leading providers.

As CEO, Onur will work to

support the continued growth of the businesses, adding momentum to the region and scaling the team. He will prioritise innovation, imagination and excellence in implementation that bring value to FeatureMind's clients as customers' businesses and operational needs shift, streamlining complex requirements.

Onur is a proven technology leader with decades of international experience in customer-centric business growth. Most recently, he served as Head of Digital Engagement Practice, Turkey at EPAM Solutions – a digital transformation services and product engineering company –

where he headed up digital customer services functions for the Middle East. Before this, he worked at Emakina (now acquired by EPAM Solutions) – a full-service digital agency with global reach, as the Managing Director, UAE, having been based in Dubai for over twelve years.

Edwin Stonestreet, Managing Director at FeatureMind, said:

"I could not be more excited to welcome Onur to the team. This is an appointment that reaffirms our commitment to servicing our clients in-region with a wealth of expertise and proven competence. Onur's knowledge and ability to take a holistic view of our business in the retail-tech space will bring great value to our company and our customers. We look forward to him continuing to drive growth and innovation within our business model, with his integral contribution to our customer-centric promise for service and results."

Onur Tepeli, Chief Executive Officer at FeatureMind, said:

"FeatureMind brings together all the components of what is required and appreciated in this industry from world leading middleware through Order Management, Content Management, Product Information Management and innovative In Store solutions. Acting as a leader of change in end-to-end omnichannel support and management, FeatureMind is well-positioned to help customers address some of the biggest challenges and complexities that clients face today, as the march to enhanced customer experience journeys continues at pace. I am looking forward to working with this highly talented team." 



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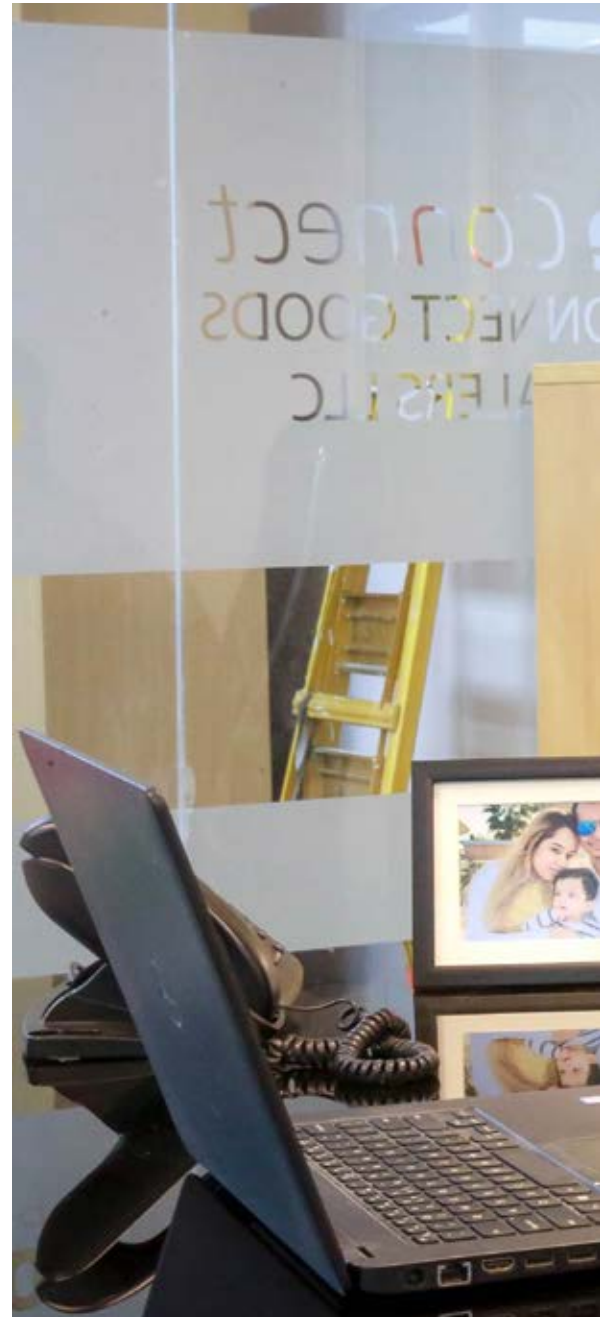
Irfan Shaikh, Chairman, Office Connect Group, Azeem Ahmad, Founder & CEO, Network Binary and Mohammed Gufran, Director-Technical & Operations at Network Binary, speak to Anita Joseph about how the two companies have strategically joined hands to bridge the IT skills gap.

Give us an overview of Network Binary and its major activities

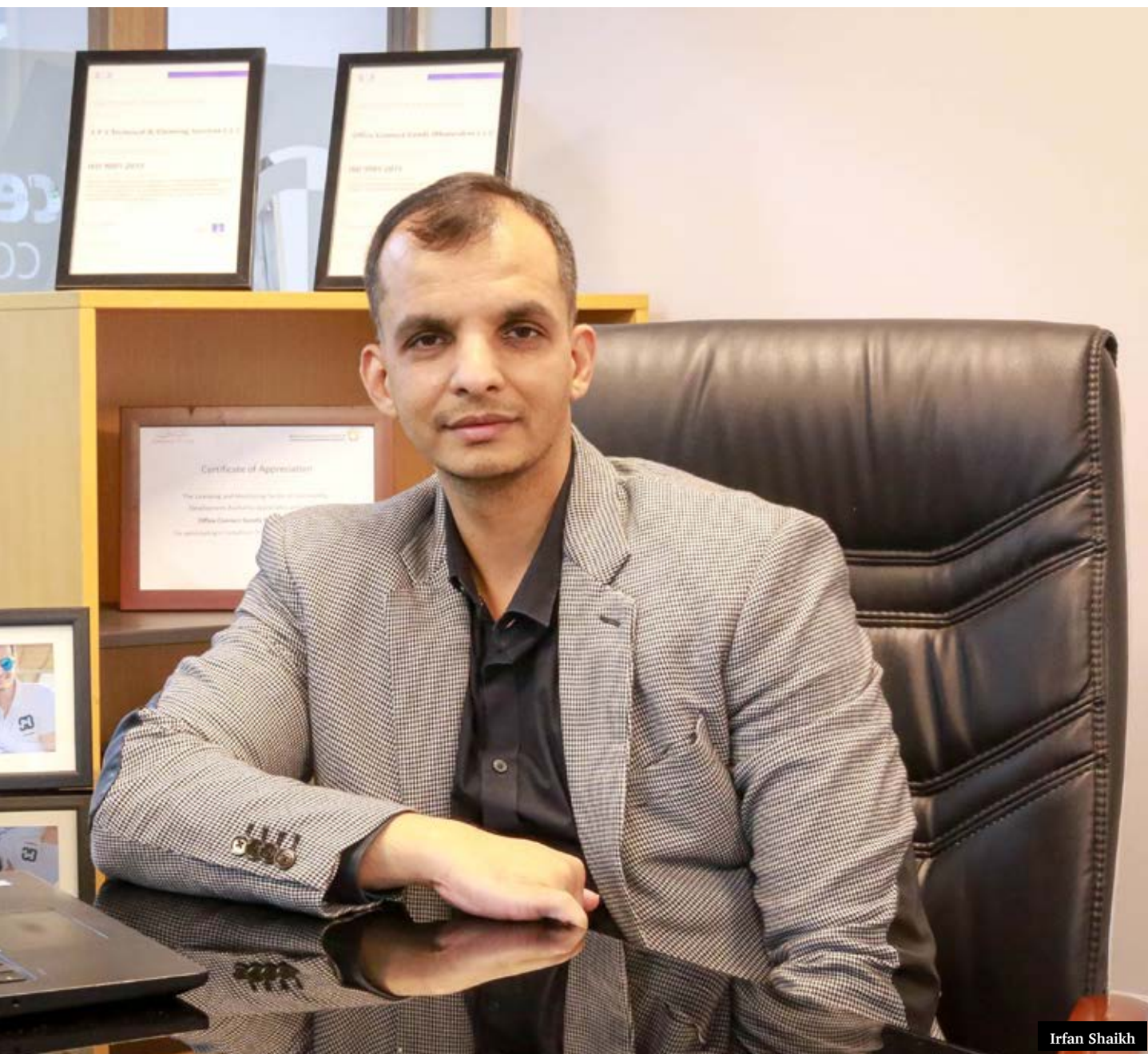
Network Binary, based in Dubai, is a burgeoning IT training provider that serves not only the Middle Eastern region but also the global market. We specialise in delivering advanced training solutions to empower both professionals and organisations in the rapidly evolving fields of networking, cybersecurity, virtualisation, cloud technologies, and more by specialise in delivering cutting-edge training solutions in the ever-evolving fields of Information Technology. Our vision is “Elevating the learning industry through benchmark-setting excellence.” Network Binary recently won the award for ‘Outstanding Excellence in IT Training Programs of the Year’ at FSA2023.

Here’s an overview of our major activities:

- **Comprehensive IT Training:** We offer extensive IT training programs covering a broad range of technologies from leading vendors like Cisco, HPE Aruba, Huawei, and Microsoft to name a few. With expert skilled trainers we are providing trainings to many reputed firms including Amazon (US), TCS, and Microsoft.
- **Corporate Social Responsibility:** We are dedicated to giving back to society, with our CSR program being instrumental in making IT training accessible to deserving individuals who may lack financial means or access to education. This initiative aims to nurture future IT leaders and bridge the skills gap, current batch of 200 engineers are being trained under our CSR initiative.
- **Strategic Partnership with Office Connect Group:** As part of this group, we leverage



this partnership to reach out the wider range of customer bases for rendering our training solutions aligned with Office Connects excellence. The group of companies, such as Office Connect Goods Wholesalers, Connect Infotech, Connect Print Me, Connect Creative Media, SPS Design & Fitout and The Allure Automation jointly enhance our portfolio.



Irfan Shaikh

Our key offerings include:

- **Tailored IT training solutions:** We customise our training programs to meet the unique needs of our clients, ensuring that they acquire the skills and knowledge necessary to excel in their roles.
- **Adaptable schedules:** We offer flexible training schedules

to accommodate the busy lives of professionals, enabling them to upskill without disrupting their work commitments.

- **Client-centric training modes:** Whether it's on-site training, classroom training in our premises or virtual classrooms, we provide training modes that suit our clients' preferences.

- **Hands-on skill building:** Our training emphasises practical skills development through hands-on labs led by industry-experienced instructors.
- **Industry-proven instructors:** Our team of certified instructors is dedicated to facilitating learning and ensuring that our clients stay at the forefront of technology trends.

In today's accelerated digital transformation and rapidly changing scenario, what can customers look forward to from Network Binary?

At Network Binary, we understand the ever-accelerating pace of digital transformation and its profound impact on businesses across industries. We recognise the fact that "Change is unstoppable", according to research conducted by Oxford University, it is projected that, by the conclusion of this decade, automation will impact approximately 25-47% of the workforce, leading to the automation of millions of jobs. Several other studies validate this finding, even going beyond. Now, the big question posed to the organisations is "How to adapt to the speed of this radical change?"

We believe that for the organisations and individuals to remain relevant and thrive in the industry, they will need to continually update or learn new skills. Network Binary stands for the same reason: to facilitate Life Long Learning. In the past 15 years, we've worked with global industry leaders, particularly in the Middle East, to create a Learning Environment fostering active participation, critical thinking, group activities, problem-solving, and hands-on exercises led by experienced, certified instructors.

In essence, customers can expect Network Binary to be their trusted learning partner in navigating the digital transformation journey, offering them the expertise and skills needed to succeed in an ever-evolving IT landscape.



WE BELIEVE THAT FOR ORGANISATIONS AND INDIVIDUALS TO REMAIN RELEVANT AND THRIVE IN THE INDUSTRY, THEY WILL NEED TO CONTINUALLY UPDATE OR LEARN NEW SKILLS.



Azeem Ahmad

There is an acute shortage of skilled workers in the security domain today. How do you view this and what do you think can be done?

In response to the shortage of skilled workers in the security domain, we align with the UAE Skills Survey report by the Institution of Engineering and Technology (IET), as published in

Khaleej Times. The report states that 93% of firms struggled to find qualified engineers, and employers seek ready-made, fully trained employees, as emphasised by Sir Julian Young, IET's president. We also acknowledge the rising threat landscape where organisations and individuals facing growing information security concerns.

Network Binary offers a two-fold solution to this challenge:

Firstly, recognising the importance to train the current crop of security engineers, we believe it's equally crucial to take technology training--specifically security--to the schools and universities. To achieve this goal, we've established a Learning Ecosystem for universities, enabling the nurturing of technology leaders, with a specific

focus on security, through tailored programs spanning one-to-three months as required.

Secondly, as we are aware, the UAE is undergoing a significant transition, shifting away from its historical dependence on oil and gas to a knowledge-based and technology-driven economy, it attracts a diverse workforce from Asia and Africa. Therefore, it's crucial to extend our efforts beyond borders and provide technology training, with specific focus on security, to underserved individuals in various Asian and African

nations. Network Binary has, so far, served thousands of learners in this regard through our Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) program, as part of our commitment to giving back to society.

These two steps will create skilled, job-ready candidates from both within and beyond borders, aiding the UAE in achieving its long-term goals. We emphasise that a collective effort from educational institutions, the industry stakeholders, and training providers like Network Binary is crucial in addressing the shortage of skilled workers in the security domain.



Mohammed Gufran

How would you describe the Middle East market, and what are your plans for the region, going forward?

The Middle East IT market is a dynamic hub for digital transformation, innovation, and technology-driven initiatives. Demand is surging for skilled professionals in networking, cybersecurity, AI and cloud technologies. Organisations in the region recognize the need to upskill their workforce to meet the challenges of the digital age.

At Network Binary, we recognise the immense potential of the Middle East market. Over the years, we have had the privilege of working with renowned institutions and corporations in the region.

Our future plans for the region align with our vision of "Elevating the learning industry through benchmark-setting excellence."

- **Expanding Our Course Offerings:** We will continue to enhance our training programs to address emerging technologies and industry trends to cover areas such as artificial intelligence, data science, and IoT.
- **Partnering with Local Institutions:** We are keen on collaborating with universities, educational institutions, and government bodies in the Middle East to promote technology education. Our Learning Ecosystem for universities is one way we are nurturing technology leaders.
- **Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR):** Our CSR commitment stays firm. We'll keep making IT training accessible to underserved individuals in neighboring nations, bolstering the region's human capital.
- **Supporting Digital Transformation:** We support Middle East organisations' digital transformation with essential training and skill development programs. Essentially, our Middle East plans center on training, and collaboration to help the region reach its technological goals, fostering a knowledge-based, tech-driven economy. 

KASPERSKY DISCOVERS HARMFUL PHISHING SCAM



Kaspersky has uncovered a concerning phishing scheme that poses a threat to corporate systems by targeting employees. This deceptive scheme presents itself as a self-evaluation form originating from HR departments but has a sinister agenda of stealing sensitive information.

It is a common practice within large organisations that employees seldom have share their thoughts regarding career aspirations, areas of interest, or achievements beyond their job descriptions. Typically, such discussions only take place once a year during performance reviews. Yet, many employees would like to have more opportunities to communicate with management. When an email inviting them to participate in a self-evaluation arrives, especially one that claims to be mandatory, they often seize the opportunity without hesitation. This is the very opening that cybercriminals are exploiting in their latest spear-phishing campaign.

In this fraudulent scheme, cybercriminals send emails convincingly crafted to appear as if they originate from HR departments. These emails offer a self-evaluation form as a way for employees to engage with their managers. However, these deceptive emails exhibit several clear

signs of phishing.

Firstly, the sender's email address doesn't align with the company's, raising suspicions from the outset. Secondly, the email exerts pressure by insisting that everyone must complete the form by the end of the day, a common tactic employed by scammers to create a sense of urgency. Furthermore, when recipients click on the provided link, they encounter questions that, at first glance, seem innocuous. However, the scheme's true nature becomes apparent in the final three questions, which request the victim's email address, password, and password confirmation.

This deceptive approach catches victims off guard because it asks for sensitive information towards the end of the process. To further avoid detection, the word "password" is concealed, adding some sophistication to the scam.

"We urge corporate employees to exercise caution when receiving such emails, especially those resembling HR communications. To protect their data, it's crucial to verify the authenticity of unsolicited self-evaluation requests directly with their HR department," comments Roman Dedenok, a security expert at Kaspersky.

Read more about this spear-phishing campaign on Kaspersky Daily.

To keep your data protected from phishing attacks and leaks, Kaspersky experts recommend:

- Be cautious of messages from unknown senders: Phishing attacks often come from unknown or suspicious-looking senders. If you receive a message from an unfamiliar user or number, don't click on any links or provide any personal information.
- Use strong passwords: Use unique passwords for all your messaging app accounts. Avoid using the same password across multiple accounts, and consider using a password manager to generate and store strong passwords – such as Kaspersky Password Manager.
- Verify the authenticity of links: Before clicking on any links, check to see if they're legitimate. Scammers often create fake websites that look similar to the real ones, so it's important to double-check the URL before entering any login credentials or other sensitive information.
- Use two-factor authentication: Adding an extra layer of security to your account can help prevent unauthorised access. Enable two-factor authentication on your messaging app to ensure that only you can access your account.
- Use security solutions: a reliable security solution will protect your devices from various types of threats. Kaspersky Premium prevents all types of fraud and keeps your data safe. 

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EMPOWERING THE PARTNER ECOSYSTEM

Maya Zakhour, Director Area Partner Lead at NetApp tells Anita Joseph how the company provides partners with a unified engagement model where they can move seamlessly between sell-to, sell-through and sell-with sales motions that accelerate their revenue.

What is NetApp's focus going to be at GITEX?

We are thrilled to participate in Gitex this year, which offers us an excellent platform to showcase our solutions in the Middle East. Our main objective is to have a significant impact in this region by presenting practical use cases of our technologies and strengthening partnerships with collaborators. We are committed to demonstrating how our solutions effectively address the business challenges of both existing customers and potential prospects. Our event approach has three key objectives: meeting customers at the venue for direct engagement with our NetApp team, a comprehensive partner approach featuring our branding on the show floor and specific collaborations with our wider hyperscaler ecosystem. In fact we'll also be present at the Ingram, Google Cloud and Logicom booths.

Web 3 is this year's GITEX theme. How is NetApp empowering its partners to seamlessly navigate the fast-growing technology landscape?
Web 3 is a concept that envisions a



PARTNER-FIRST PROGRAM APPROACH INCENTIVISES ALIGNMENT WITH NETAPP'S STRATEGY WHILE DELIVERING GREATER CUSTOMER VALUE AND ACCELERATED GROWTH.

decentralised and user-centric internet ecosystem. It aims to address some of the limitations and challenges of the current web (Web 2.0) by incorporating blockchain technology, decentralised networks, and cryptographic principles.

NetApp's commitment to data portability, protection, and personal data protection is reflected in its product offerings and security features. NetApp's data fabric architecture allows organisations to easily migrate, replicate, and manage data across various platforms, ensuring data portability and flexibility. NetApp's snapshot technology allows for quick and efficient point-in-time copies of data, enabling rapid recovery in case of data loss or corruption. Additionally, NetApp's backup and recovery solutions provide comprehensive data protection strategies, including backup to secondary storage systems or cloud repositories. And in terms of Personal Data Protection, NetApp's solutions include built-in security features, such as data encryption, access controls, and data classification, to protect personal data from unauthorised access or breaches. NetApp also provides data governance capabilities to help organisations manage and comply with data privacy regulations (as GDPR).

Why is participation at shows like GITEX important for NetApp?

At GITEX we'll showcase how our customers can modernise infrastructure to deliver new capabilities to the business, faster. Build a seamless and unified hybrid infrastructure with a consistent operating model on-prem and in the cloud, so you can flex and scale anywhere your apps and data need to be.

NetApp will be at GITEX with a meeting room located on Concourse 2 on the 1st Floor, above Hall 6. Room Sharjah D will be the centre of all our activities and meeting with customers, partners and prospective clients.

Give us an overview of NetApp's partner ecosystem. What are the latest features?

Our new NetApp Partner Sphere Program, which has been announced recently, further solidifies NetApp's commitment to driving a partner-first culture that creates an ecosystem of collaboration and innovation to capture greater market share by growing flash revenue, accelerating cloud adoption, and leveraging partner-led solutions and services.

Partner-first program approach incentivises alignment with NetApp's strategy while delivering greater customer value and accelerated growth. Partner Sphere provides a unified engagement model where partners can move seamlessly between sell-to, sell-through, and sell-with sales motions that accelerate their revenue by driving customer-based outcomes and outpacing competition.

The program offers 11 Services Certified tracks and 19 Solution Competencies aligned to 3 key focus areas that enable partners to expand their services portfolio and become trusted advisors to their customers -unlocking greater value and accelerating revenue growth through ongoing service engagements.

Now that we're in the last few months of the year, what are the key learnings?

I think that a key learning we can



mention is that data continues to play a crucial role in today's world, serving as a valuable asset for businesses, organisations, and individuals. And at NetApp we help organisations harness the power of data through our solutions and services. The exponential growth of data and the increasing importance of effective data

management we are facing, with the proliferation of digital platforms, IoT devices, and emerging technologies, businesses are generating and storing vast amounts of data is an evidence of the importance of providing scalable and efficient data management solutions to help organisations handle and derive value from their data. 

LIVING THE DREAM

*Our personality of the month is **Mario M. Veljovic**, General Manager at VAD Technologies, who has completed 20 successful years in the region. Here's a glimpse into his journey.*

You've completed 20 years in the region. How has the journey been?

The last 20 years just flew by, and I am not lying saying that it feels like it all just happened recently. I am incredibly grateful to have witnessed the changes in the region and certainly the rise of Dubai to a true global city. My wife has been visiting Dubai frequently since she was a child. When I got the opportunity to permanently move to Dubai in 2003 it was not just a great career move, but also about making my wife's dream come true. Happy Wife, Happy Life!

From my professional career perspective, I had the opportunity in the last 20 years, to build and execute strategies that have helped transform organisations from traditional ICT Distribution to Value-Added Distribution, as well as founding





a distribution business that is focused on Next-Generation and Disruptive Technologies. Something that has always been my dream and goal.

What's the secret to success, from your experience?

Everyone defines “success” differently. For me, success is to see my family living a happy & safe life and everyone pursuing what they enjoy doing, whether it's in education, business or sport. It is also about socialising with friends, family and colleagues. Our daughter – having lived most of her life in Dubai - went abroad for studies a few years ago, and we are very happy to see her back in Dubai to



build her career and live her own independent life in the city we love so much. Dubai is the city of opportunities for everyone.

It's a fast, competitive world out there. How do you relax/de-stress?

Dubai by DNA is fast & competitive that's why it's even more important to find ways to relax and de-stress. I am fortunate to have found Golf as my way unwind and find time away from screens and the busy city life. The fact, that my wife enjoys a good round of Golf, too, makes it the perfect sport and an opportunity to spend some quality



time together. But I have fun watching my wife and daughter playing Padel and just be there to support them.

What's your ideal weekend like?

With Weekends being different around the region you really have only the Saturday as a quiet day, which we use to spend time at home and in the garden. When the weather allows, we like to take a nice drive to Fujairah with other car enthusiasts or venture into the desert with friends. For the cooler season this year, we plan to go for hiking and explore the mountainous side of the UAE a little bit more. Something we usually do only during the summer vacations, back in Europe.

What's your advice to young professionals looking to make a mark in the market?

Don't trade your passion for money! Once you decide on the right Industry for you, look for a good company with a great reputation. Today it's easy to make a solid background check. Search for a great leader within the company you joined and grab every opportunity to show your willingness to work hard and going the extra mile. Never leave your job only because someone offers you more money. Give yourself time to learn, mature and grow. 

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EMPOWERING CREATION

Fissal Oubida, GM of Middle East, Africa, and the Indian Subcontinent, and Global Marketing Director at Lexar, spoke to CNME Editor Mark Forker, to explain how their suite of solutions enables their content creators to weave their magic, the importance of data storage in the current and complex digital economy – and he highlights the cutting-edge products Lexar will be demonstrating at GITEX Global.



For our readers who may not be aware of what Lexar does, can you please provide them with a brief overview of the company's journey - and what your mission statement is as an organization?

For over 25 years, Lexar has been a

leading global brand in memory and storage solutions.

Our award-winning lineup performs second-to-none and includes memory cards, USB flash drives, readers, and solid-state drives for retail and OEM customers.

Whether shooting photos, capturing video, or simply transferring and sharing files on the go, Lexar memory

solutions provide the performance and reliability needed to get the most from your digital device.

All Lexar product designs undergo extensive testing in the Lexar Quality Labs with thousands of digital devices, to ensure performance, quality, compatibility, and reliability. Lexar products are available worldwide at major retail and e-tail stores.

Lexar has enjoyed tremendous success since its inception in 1996, but in our fast-paced and volatile world, where data is king, how have you evolved as a company and adapted your products and solutions to meet the changing demands and expectations of your customers?

Data storage has become indispensable amidst the rapidly growing internet users in the region, coupled with the steep rise in the volume of data generated from various digital platforms.

This has resulted in a significant demand for more advanced and secure data storage solutions, a trend we expect will continue to grow for the foreseeable future.

Data storage for professional photographers, videographers, and content creators from the media and entertainment industry can be rather complex and challenging.

Given that both these industries

continue to face unprecedented challenges in the digital era, the demand for high-quality content, the proliferation of formats and platforms, the need for scalability and agility, and the threat of cyberattacks are some of the factors that put pressure

on the industry's data management capabilities.

Lexar is not just perfectly positioned to capitalize on the growing demand for memory and storage solutions through our wide range of products, we also have been able to anticipate



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and respond to the evolving needs of our target market.

Moreover, data security is of topmost importance for Lexar – all of our new portfolio of memory solutions features data security technology called ‘Lexar DataShield’, which is an advanced software that keeps files safe with 256-bit AES encryption.

In terms of industry verticals, what would you say is your biggest market? Is it the gaming sector, or professional content creators?

Lexar’s award-winning product portfolio has a proven track record of allowing content creators to capture for longer, while offering blazing transfer speeds to accelerate workflows.

Our products are designed to

enable photography and videography professionals and enthusiasts get their best shot, while allowing gamers to play at their peak without worrying about load times, stuttering graphics, or game lag.

We are diligent in working to consistently improve our storage offerings for photographers, gamers and professional content creators around the world.

We know that those who provide memory solutions operate in a saturated marketplace, and it is an ultra-competitive environment. With that in mind, what is it that ultimately differentiates Lexar from other providers of memory solutions?

It is a combination of factors that gives



DATA STORAGE FOR PROFESSIONAL PHOTOGRAPHERS, VIDEOGRAPHERS, AND CONTENT CREATORS FROM THE MEDIA AND ENTERTAINMENT INDUSTRY CAN BE RATHER COMPLEX AND CHALLENGING.

Lexar a definite competitive edge in today’s marketplace.

To begin with, our focus on Research & Development. Over the years Lexar has invested millions of dollars in its world-class R&D facilities with the overarching goal of bringing to market memory and storage solutions that are technologically superior and address the evolving needs of today’s consumers.

Our product designs undergo extensive testing in the Lexar Quality Labs, facilities with more than 1,100 digital devices, to ensure performance, quality, compatibility, and reliability.

And we are committed to providing outstanding customer service, with friendly interactions, personalized advice, and expert support.

With this dedication to performance, reliability, and support, customers can count on Lexar when it comes to storing the memories that matter.

Moreover, innovation and customer-centricity are at the core of everything we do at Lexar, as is evident from the superior performance of our products and the trust shown in us by our ever-growing customer base.

GITEX Global will be a forum for



us to demonstrate how we harness the wonders of technology to create cutting-edge memory and storage solutions that thousands of our customers rely on every single day.

GITEX Global is the region's flagship technology and IT conference, what can attendees expect to see at Lexar's stand



INNOVATION AND CUSTOMER-CENTRICITY ARE AT THE CORE OF EVERYTHING WE DO AT LEXAR, AS IS EVIDENT FROM THE SUPERIOR PERFORMANCE OF OUR PRODUCTS AND THE TRUST SHOWN IN US BY OUR EVER-GROWING CUSTOMER BASE.

during the event - and will you be launching any new products or solutions?

GITEX Global is the world's largest technology show, bringing together exhibitors and visitors from across the globe.

The event is an ideal platform for us to showcase our award-winning range of memory and storage solutions that are designed to specifically meet the unique needs of consumers in the Middle East and Africa region.

Lexar aims to showcase the future of flash memory solutions at Gitex Global

2023.

We will be demonstrating our new, expanded portfolio that is designed on Lexar's corporate pillars of Reliability, Data Security and Quality for photographers, videographers, gaming professionals, content creators and PC enthusiasts.

The new product lineup includes microSD™ cards, internal SSDs, DRAM and portable SSDs, which are designed to work seamlessly with multiple devices such as sports camcorders, tablets, smartphones, and even drones.

As is the case with all Lexar products, the newly expanded portfolio will offer high-speed performance combined with higher memory capacities, allowing users to capture, access, play video/games and transfer high-definition multimedia files including 4K video at blazing speeds.

Lexar will also be showcasing memory solutions with a unique rugged design that are water and dust resistant, capable of handling shocks from a height of 3 meters. 

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GALAXY BUDS2 PRO EVOLVES LE AUDIO CAPABILITIES, BRINGING NEW AURACAST TO SAMSUNG SMART TV

Samsung Electronics Co., Ltd. announced new software updates to Galaxy Buds2 Pro and Samsung Smart TVs reshaping the audio experiences across even more connected devices. The new updates extend LE Audio capabilities to Samsung TVs with Auracast broadcast audio technology, enabling rich and complex audio transmission to nearby Bluetooth devices.

LE Audio, an advanced Bluetooth audio standard, broadens the spectrum of audio experiences to deliver more complex and richer sound that goes beyond providing better-sounding music, but also allows users to share sound with others as they personally experience it. As a pioneer of innovative technologies, Samsung has been leveraging new LE Audio-based features that further elevate sound experiences, including 360 Audio Recording, enabling Galaxy

smartphone users to capture sound on video precisely as they hear it without the need for professional equipment. Additionally, the select Galaxy Book3 devices offer a crystal clear listening experience with improved latency — perfect for immersive gaming and multimedia consumption.

And now, with Auracast broadcast audio technology for Galaxy Buds2 Pro and Samsung 2023 Neo QLED 8K and 2023 MICRO LED, Samsung is again upleveling and expanding connected experiences beyond mobile devices to home appliances. With Auracast, users can turn their device into a shared radio station able to broadcast across connected devices. Leveraging the new LE Audio, it allows users to connect multiple sets of Buds to a TV while users could only connect a maximum of two devices previously. Auracast opens a variety of potential use cases and possibilities for further device applications — from augmented or assistive listening in a theater or

lecture hall for those who want hear better, to sharing a playlist from your smartphone while on a run with friends, to even multi-language support without translation devices by sending different language interpretations via different channels.





“As an innovator across a wide range of electronic devices — from smartphones to wearables, and from TVs to home appliances — we at Samsung are in a unique position to capitalize on delivering more seamless and extended experiences,” said

Junho Park, VP and Head of Galaxy Ecosystem Product Planning Team, MX Business at Samsung Electronics. “LE Audio is a perfect example of that shows our commitment to connected experiences across our entire library of devices, and how Samsung is

introducing new capabilities and technologies that bring them all together.”

The new Auracast feature is just one example of how Samsung is connecting devices and services and offering novel experiences to users. 

NAVIGATING THE DIGITAL DIVIDE

Anita Joseph caught up with **Walid Gomaa**, CEO of Omnix International, to find out how the company is helping partners bridge the digital divide.



In the rapidly evolving landscape of digital technologies, how do you ensure that your digital solutions are not only current but also future-proof for your clients?

Digital solution delivery starts by focusing on end user needs and preferences with a user centric design approach. Digital solutions must be relevant and end-user friendly. Future-proofing digital solutions requires a combination of proactive planning, adaptability, collaboration, and a commitment to staying informed about the ever-changing digital landscape.

Solution partners should develop strategic roadmaps that outline how digital solutions will evolve over time with defined milestones and goals. To be able to do that, partners must evaluate technologies with long-term viability and community support. Partners need Partners to monitor industry trends, emerging technologies, and market developments to anticipate future changes. A key initiative is to embrace open standards and avoid lock-in technologies.

An architecture review could be required. Partners need to adapt modular and scalable architecture and build solutions that can scale seamlessly to accommodate increased user loads and data volumes. Partners need to consider adopting agile development methodologies to

respond to changing requirements and integrating customer feedback.

Partners need to form alliances and partnerships with technology vendor partners, startups, and research institutions to access cutting-edge solutions and expertise. While doing that, partners need to keep enhancing organisational skills through training and skill development. This is an ongoing process that requires willingness to evolve with technology and end users' needs.

Collaboration and communication are key when aligning digital solutions with business goals. How do you approach working with diverse stakeholders within partner organisations?

It is crucial to understand the end user's business model, customer base, and strategic goals to identify their pain points and specific challenges related to digital solutions. Solution partners should determine who the key stakeholders are, within the end user organisation. This includes executives, sales teams, marketing teams, product managers and technical staff.

Building relationships with key stakeholders is important. This often involves regular meetings, calls, and face-to-face interactions. Solution partners should establish clear and relevant communication channels with end user stakeholders.

Solution partners provide enablement and support for end users about digital solutions at various levels for technical, sales, product development, and marketing teams. They work with end users to address issues and challenges promptly and professionally.

Solution partners should create feedback mechanisms to gather input and insights from stakeholders, act on their feedback to improve products and processes. All the above should be built on trust. Communication and trust are the foundation of successful collaborations.

What are some of the key learnings this year, as partners enter the final quarter of 2023?

As solution partners enter the final



PARTNERS NEED TO ADAPT MODULAR AND SCALABLE ARCHITECTURE AND BUILD SOLUTIONS THAT CAN SCALE SEAMLESSLY TO ACCOMMODATE INCREASED USER LOADS AND DATA VOLUMES.

quarter of 2023, several key learnings and trends have emerged:

- Remote collaboration tools and solutions are likely to remain in high demand.
- Hybrid work models, which combine in-person and remote work, are expected to continue.
- The pace of digital transformation has accelerated. Vendors and resellers should continue to prioritise digital solutions and services that support this transformation.
- Vendors and resellers should continue to explore opportunities to work together (strategically) to reach new markets and/or offer complementary services.
- The integration of AI and automation into various business processes continues to grow.
- Data privacy and security concerns are ongoing issues. Vendors and resellers should prioritise robust cybersecurity measures and compliance with data protection regulations to build trust with customers
- Sustainability and ESG (Environmental, Social, Governance) considerations are now important. Vendors and resellers should be prepared to

address questions and concerns related to their environmental and social impacts.

In summary, the final quarter of 2023 presents an opportunity for vendors and solution partners to build on learnings and trends, adapting strategies and offerings to meet evolving customer needs and market conditions.

Digital transformation can often be disruptive to established workflows and company culture. How do you work with clients to ensure a smooth and seamless digital transformation journey?

It is important to start with clear objectives and expectations. Solution partners should work closely with end customers to establish specific and realistic objectives for the digital transformation journey with defined key performance indicators (KPIs) to measure success and align expectations. Solution partners must get the buy-in and sponsorship from end-customer leadership.

Solution partners work with end-customers to understand their current state, then set a vision and roadmap that outlines the steps and milestones for the journey. They work with end-customers to choose technologies and solutions that align with the end-customer's objectives and integrate well with existing systems. Solution partners maintain transparent and frequent communication with stakeholders at all levels and provide updates on progress, address concerns, and share success stories. They monitor the performance of the new digital workflows and systems and optimise processes and technologies based on performance data and user feedback.

After the initial implementation, solution partners conduct an evaluation to assess the transformation's impact on business goals. By following these steps and maintaining an end-customer-focused approach, solution partners can help ensure that the digital transformation journey is smooth and seamless, minimising disruption and maximising the benefits for the organisation. 

NIAGARA NETWORKS AND SCOPE ME ANNOUNCE STRATEGIC VAD PARTNERSHIP

Niagara Networks, pioneers of the award-winning Open Visibility Platform, recently announced a new partnership with SCOPE Middle East, a Value-Added Distribution leader in the region.



This strategic partnership will help support the increasing demand for Niagara Networks products throughout the channel program and improve customer access to Network Visibility solutions prevalent in today's modern SOC infrastructure.

"Niagara Networks is empowering its expansion strategy in the Middle East, and we are delighted to collaborate with SCOPE Middle East, one of the top IT distributors in the region. By partnering with an industry-leading distributor, we can expand our reach to help significantly more organisations get visibility into their networks, digital assets and empower security

posture. SCOPE Middle East portfolio aligns seamlessly and strategically with our solutions and will enable strong synergy to meet organisations' digital transformation demands", said Ben Askarinam, founder and CEO, Niagara Networks.

"We are confident that this partnership with Niagara Networks will be extremely beneficial, given the growing cyber security needs in our target markets. Niagara Networks' hybrid and multi-functional visibility solutions help businesses achieve end-to-end visibility with increased security, enabling them to gain actionable insights into network traffic without compromising on speed, reliability, or performance. We believe that this collaboration will strengthen

our overall IT solutions offering and help us deliver even greater value to our customers," said Fadi AbuEkab, Founder and CEO, SCOPE Middle East.

As part of Niagara Networks' global strategy, investing in partnerships with unique expertise is paramount. The combination of its Channel Partner Program and the Open Visibility Platform Technology Partners Program, enables a unique alternative for the right trusted advisor to form a world-class cybersecurity solution.

Niagara Networks will be present at GITEX Global 2023, meet the team at the SCOPE Middle East Stand in Hall 25 Stand number H25-C10 from 16th October, 2023 to 20th October, 2023. 



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SAUDI'S DIGITAL GOVERNMENT AUTHORITY AND NUTANIX SIGN MOU TO SUPPORT DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION & INNOVATION

Nutanix, a leader in hybrid multi-cloud computing, announced today the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Digital Government Authority (DGA) in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, with the aim of developing mechanisms for government agencies to benefit from cloud services, explore digital business opportunities and intensify ways of cooperation to accelerate innovation and digital transformation in Saudi Arabia.

The memorandum was discussed – in New York City - during a meeting involving a high-level delegation from the Authority, headed by His Excellency Eng. Ahmed Alsuwaiyan, Governor of the Digital Government Authority, with representatives of Nutanix - Pai Venugopal, Chief Customer Experience Officer, and Talal Al-Saif, Nutanix's Sales Director for Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Qatar, and Egypt. The agreement was signed in Riyadh.

H.E. Eng. Ahmed Alsuwaiyan said that this memorandum supports the Authority's initiatives aimed at accelerating the adoption of cloud computing services, and applying international best practices in various fields related to digital government - in order to enhance the Kingdom's digital leadership, localise the technology industry, provide the necessary support for the process of adopting cloud computing services, and raise the quality of digital services. This is in line with the strategic directions of the digital government and achievement of the goals of Saudi Vision 2030.

Talal Al-Saif added that the Nutanix platform enables hybrid cloud computing for public sector agencies by allowing them to run and manage workloads and applications across on-premises



THIS MEMORANDUM SUPPORTS THE AUTHORITY'S INITIATIVES AIMED AT ACCELERATING THE ADOPTION OF CLOUD COMPUTING SERVICES.

data centers, public and private clouds, multiple hypervisors, and containers as a single cohesive infrastructure. By simplifying IT infrastructure and associated tasks by Nutanix, government IT teams are freed to focus on new projects and initiatives. "Our technologies keep critical services running smoothly," he said.

Under this agreement, Nutanix strengthens its cooperation with the Authority and approved XSP service providers, to develop skills and expertise, by providing resource enablement as part of Nutanix's pre-sales activities, in addition to supporting government and public institutions to adopt public cloud computing services, by creating smooth, fast and scalable methods. 

STRENGTH OF PARTNERSHIP

Alfred Chrispanous, Managing Director, TechAccess Cloud & Karim Assem, Regional Sales Manager, EnterpriseDB speak to Anita Joseph about their partnership and what it means for the Middle East Region.

How do you plan to work with TechAccess Cloud?
Karim Assem: Our main objective is to establish a healthy and mutually beneficial relationship by aligning our goals and objectives. We will create a plan to ensure that we are both working towards the same goals and continuously improving our skills, awareness, and expertise to guarantee the success of our partnership. Our top priority is to work together towards better awareness, adoption, and enablement of open-source technologies for our end customers. Techaccess Cloud has a proven track record in building a full open-source stack and providing the market with the necessary tools and solutions to meet market demands.

What will be their role in your Middle East strategy?

Karim Assem: The strategy of EDB is to rely on TAC as a Super VAD. We will leverage TAC's vendor portfolio, rich channel network, and access to end customers. With the increasing popularity of Postgres among enterprises, TAC provides the



right level of advocacy for the Postgres movement as well as for the open-source movement in general. This is a great strategy that benefits both parties.

Please share your go to market strategy for the region and what support can customers and partner expect from your team?

Karim Assem: For the past two decades, EDB has been dedicated to enhancing Postgres for enterprises through its energy and expertise. The company collaborates with a thriving independent community to build and improve Postgres. As a result, EDB has become the largest contributor with the most committers. Partners and customers have direct access to the experts who are shaping the technology's direction.

Tell us more about TechAccess Cloud and your services? Has your business focus changed recently?

Alfred Chrispanous: Over the past two decades, our company has undergone a significant transformation in our approach to strategy, reflecting our unwavering commitment to staying ahead in a rapidly evolving vendor landscape. Looking towards the future, we believe that the future of value-added distribution is closely connected to the limitless potential of cloud services. This future will shape how we operate and support our partners and vendors within the ICT value distribution ecosystem.

At TAC, we have adapted to this paradigm shift by establishing strategic distribution partnerships with infrastructure cloud and open-source services. We operate across the MEA region and have positioned ourselves as a crucial link in this ecosystem. Our aim is to provide access to the vast and dynamic landscape of open-source software while offering a diverse range of services and benefits in the infrastructure cloud space.

This partnership between infrastructure cloud and open-source software and services distributors creates a powerful combination of technological resources for businesses. It allows organisations to leverage



the flexibility and innovation of open source while taking advantage of the scalability and convenience provided by cloud infrastructure.

Moving forward, data analytics and AI-driven insights will be vital for optimizing distribution. They will revolutionize route planning, inventory forecasting, and demand projection. Cloud-native solutions provide agility and scalability to our operations, enabling us to pivot according to market fluctuations. In essence, cloud services will transform distribution with increased efficiency, data-driven decision-making, and improved customer satisfaction. We pledge to lead the way on this transformative journey, driven by renewed vigour and vision.

Why do you call yourself Super VAD and what does that mean to your vendors and partners?

Alfred Chrispanous: TechAccess Cloud proudly announces its identity as a "Super VAD" or Super Value-Added Distributor, marking a milestone in its approach to technology distribution. This encapsulates TAC's unique philosophy and the benefits it delivers to vendors and channel partners within the technology ecosystem.

As a Super VAD, TAC goes beyond the traditional distribution roles. It not just facilitates the movement of products from manufacturers to resellers, but puts a strong emphasis on enterprise sales and a value-centric sales approach that can revolutionise the distribution ecosystem.



TAC's Super VAD status offers a comprehensive enterprise-class sales service that includes market research, demand generation, technical support, and comprehensive training. It ensures that vendors' products reach their intended markets with precisely targeted messaging backed by essential expertise. As a result, it accelerates go-to-market strategies and improves market penetration, allowing vendors to thrive in a competitive landscape.

TechAccess's reseller partners can benefit greatly from this alliance. By affiliating with TAC, resellers can gain access to a wide range of resources and expertise. We offer an array of specialisations, certifications, training programs, technical support, and pre-and-post-sales assistance, empowering resellers to better serve their clients. Additionally, TAC's market insights and demand-generation initiatives equip partners to identify new growth opportunities and enhance business effectiveness.

In sort, TechAccess's Super VAD status signifies a profound commitment to bridging the gap between vendors and partners, providing tools and the knowledge required for mutual success. The company firmly believes that its prosperity is intertwined with the success of its ecosystem. As a Super VAD, we are dedicated to cultivating a win-win environment where every stakeholder thrives.

You recently signed EnterpriseDB as a vendor partner. Why is this partnership important to you and your network?

Alfred Chrispanous: We are excited to announce our new partnership with EnterpriseDB. This collaboration is set to bring significant advancements in the technology distribution landscape.

The partnership with EnterpriseDB enriches our product portfolio, introducing a range of robust, scalable, and reliable solutions tailored to address

critical data management challenges encountered by businesses of all sizes. Postgres, EnterpriseDB's open-source database solution, is rapidly gaining popularity. This invaluable knowledge resource is available to our channel partners through comprehensive training and support programs. It equips partners to deliver value-added services, thereby, enhancing their client offerings.

To summarize, the partnership with EnterpriseDB signifies a strategic leap forward for TechAccess Cloud. It enhances the company's product portfolio, extends its market reach, and equips its network with the essential tools and expertise required to flourish in an increasingly data-centric business environment.

It also underscores TAC's unwavering commitment to delivering value-added solutions and remaining at the forefront of technology trends, ultimately reinforcing the success of its vendors, partners, and the organisation as a whole. 

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PFU (EMEA) LIMITED LAUNCHES DYNAMIC, NEW RICOH SMART MEETING DEVICES CATEGORY

EROS Group is the exclusive distribution partner for Amazfit products in the UAE

PFU (EMEA) Limited - A RICOH company, has announced the launch of a new Smart Meeting Device category. Launched in EMEA exclusively through PFU and designed with the hybrid working world of today

in mind, the new suite of products, will comprise audio visual devices that will improve collaboration quality and enhance meeting productivity for anyone from individuals to large organisations.

The launch comes at a pivotal

time for the workplace where hybrid meetings have become part of day-to-day business – Gartner predicts that by the end of 2023, 39% of global knowledge workers will work hybrid. The launch of the Ricoh Smart Meeting Device category will offer products

that not only align with today's now-familiar collaboration software, but also make meetings more immersive, engaging and collaborative. The first products to launch in this specialist category are the Ricoh Portable Monitors with more new products to arrive later in the year.

The Ricoh Smart Meeting Device Category will also provide channel with an additional market opportunity. Resellers will be able to package and cross-sell the products from one vendor and have conversations not only about product specifications but about the value they can deliver across an organisation, supporting strategic goals.

"Hybrid working has changed how we meet for good. Businesses need flexible, scalable options for running engaging and productive meetings. They require smarter technology – and our new Ricoh Smart Meeting Device category will bring significant benefits



specialist local channel partners such as Saudisoft and EMPA. The ultra-lightweight portable monitor is currently the lightest* on the market, featuring OLED quality, 15.6" touch screen display in both wired and fully wireless options. An optional stylus pen that enables the user to directly write, draw and annotate content for fast, efficient communication is also available.

The monitors will also be on display at ICA (Stands D18/19 or D23) and GITEX GLOBAL (Concourse two, stand number CC2-17). Visitors will have the chance to experience the devices first hand and learn more about PFU's offerings.

* Weight comparison of 15.6" OLED touch screen models as of February 2023, based on Ricoh research.

RICOH Portable Monitor 150 is priced at AED 2,374.00 excl. VAT

RICOH Portable Monitor 150W is priced at AED 3,200.00 excl. VAT

RICOH Monitor Stylus Pen Type 1 is priced at AED 331.00 excl. VAT 

to businesses all over the world, and all from the same trusted brand. With our new product suite presentations can be more visually impactful, and meetings more immersive, bringing an in-person energy to hybrid environments," said Hiroaki Kashiwagi, President, and CEO of PFU (EMEA) Limited.

The Ricoh Portable Monitors are the first products to launch within the Ricoh Smart Device category. Available now via Amazon and www.PFUEMEA.com, and through



NEW STUDY REVEALS CLOUD GIANTS ARE HOLDING BUSINESSES CAPTIVE

Independent study finds that 96% of respondents would find value in a connectivity cloud approach

Cloudflare, Inc. (NYSE: NET), the security, performance, and reliability company helping to build a better Internet, Cloudflare, Inc., the leading connectivity cloud company, released a commissioned study conducted by Forrester Consulting that underscores companies' growing need to connect everything in their business, while maintaining control over their security, productivity, and competitive growth. To help the industry address this emerging challenge, today Cloudflare is introducing the concept of the connectivity cloud – a unified platform of cloud-native services designed to help enterprises regain control over their increasingly complex and sprawling technology and data.

“Today, the big clouds have built business models on capturing your data, making it hard to move your data. These captivity clouds will lure you in with one product, and make it near impossible to mix and match competitive offerings across the cloud space,” said Matthew Prince, CEO, Cloudflare. “Cloudflare offers an alternative: the connectivity cloud. Fundamentally, we are a network that makes it easy for you to connect and protect everything. We sit atop everything else and connect anything that's online — whether it's a cloud, a device, a database, or on-premises hardware — so businesses can escape the grasp of the cloud captors.”

Organisations Are Losing Control Over Their IT and Security Environments

In the last several years, organisations across the globe have seen a dramatic

increase in the adoption of more applications, often SaaS-based, to help teams efficiently and collaboratively operate in a hybrid work environment. However, this has introduced new risks and challenges and led nearly 40% of organisations to agree or strongly agree that they are losing control over their IT and security environments. Specifically, organisations ranked the top four factors that are contributing to the overall loss of control as an increase in the overall number of applications (66%), an increase in locations for applications (62%), the shift from on premise to cloud (54%), and the shift to remote/hybrid workforces (49%).

New and More Complex Responsibilities Are Burdening Today's IT and Security Teams

IT and Security teams are now tasked with responsibilities to remain productive and compliant while managing an increasingly complex landscape — and a third of organisations say these new responsibilities weren't in their purview five years ago. For instance, 52% of IT and security teams were not responsible for ensuring security for all in-office, remote or hybrid workers five years ago, but are today. What's more, greater than 40% are also now responsible for managing and securing applications in public cloud environments or managing and securing data in SaaS environments, despite not owning these areas five years ago. These tasks are also becoming harder since 2020, with 30% of teams noting that managing and securing both public cloud environments, and data in SaaS

environments, is significantly more complex today than ever before.

Ignoring the Challenges of Today's Changing Landscape Will Have Real Business Impact

IT and security leaders see their major challenges revolving around managing a growing business landscape while ensuring their team remains productive and secure. Nearly 50% of organisations see the growing number and types of users — spanning human, machine, and third party — as one of their top five challenges they face today. The top five challenges also include the difficulty of maintaining or improving their team's productivity (44%) and addressing growing attack surface areas (44%). If not adequately addressed, these challenges are expected to have a direct impact on the customer experience, productivity, and their organisation's competitive advantage.

A Connectivity Cloud Can Help with Digital Transformation, While Decreasing Risk and Increasing Productivity

98% of organisations agree that today's businesses would gain value from a connectivity cloud that provides secure, performant, “any-to-any” connectivity (i.e., connectivity between more people, apps, data, devices, networks, and clouds) more now than ever before. Nearly half of respondents believe this type of solution would accelerate digital transformation, while reducing attack surface area. 58% of leaders also believe this solution would increase productivity, 54% see it improving time to market, and 54% of businesses believe it would grow overall revenue. 📈

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STANDING BETWEEN
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