

cnme

computer news middle east

WHERE TECHNOLOGY MEANS BUSINESS

ISSUE 350 | JUNE 2021
TAHAWULTECH.COM



**HUAWEI'S
CSO UAE**

**INTELLISOFT'S
CEO**

**SEIDOR
MENA'S
PROJECTS
DIRECTOR**

DINESH CHANDRA, REGIONAL
VP, MIDDLE EAST & TURKEY,
AUTOMATION ANYWHERE

GOVTECH:
CNS-SANAD

DEMOCRATISING INTELLIGENT AUTOMATION

AUTOMATION ANYWHERE EXECUTIVES DINESH CHANDRA AND MILAN SHETH OUTLINE HOW THE GLOBAL RPA LEADER IS ENABLING BUSINESSES TO ACCELERATE TRANSFORMATION BY LEVERAGING THE CAPABILITIES OF AUTOMATION IN THEIR EVERYDAY OPERATIONS.

MILAN SHETH, EVP-IMEA,
AUTOMATION ANYWHERE



 tahawultech.com

PUBLICATION LICENSED BY
DUBAI PRODUCTION CITY, LLC

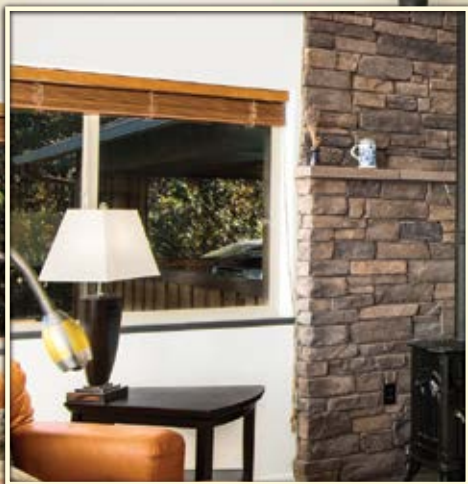




DAY



NIGHT



**Sleek and Discreet
Surveillance**

mydlink™



DCS-6500LH

Compact Full HD Pan & Tilt Wi-Fi Camera



Sound & Motion Detection



Pan and Tilt



Day & Night



Full HD



Smart Home Compatible



D-Link

D-Link®

Connect to more...

Our events



Our online platforms



Our social media



facebook.com/tahawultech



twitter.com/tahawultech



linkedin.com/in/tahawultech



Talk to us:
E-mail:
mark.forker@
cpimediagroup.com



The UAE is known as an oasis for technology and innovation, but it is fair to say that a lot of the technology is imported into the region, but there is growing momentum to create a better startup ecosystem in the country."

EDITORIAL

AUTOMATION IS THE FUTURE

There are very few industries in the world that have not adopted automation in some shape or form, as we increasingly become more connected and digitalised as a society.

There had been some resistance and a fear that automation would lead to multiple job losses. However, as we find out in our front cover story with global RPA leader Automation Anywhere, companies are astonished at the impact automation is having in terms of transforming their businesses processes, which is making them more productive, agile, and efficient.

It is also empowering and freeing employees from mundane roles to be able to focus on more high priority tasks.

In June's edition of CNME, we spoke to Automation Anywhere executives Dinesh Chandra and Milan Sheth, to better understand the role their company is playing in terms of democratising intelligent automation across the enterprise – and how the implementation of automation is helping businesses to completely transform their operations.

On the front cover of GovTech, we look at the partnership between Sanad and CNS, following the migration of their IT services to the cloud. Kashish Kohli, CFO at Sanad documents the role CNS played in helping the aviation company on their journey to the cloud.

We were also onsite at GISEC, and spoke to SentinelOne, Microsoft and Huawei executives to find out what the major challenges afflicting the cybersecurity industry, and what practices and measures do businesses need to adopt and implement in order to better protect themselves from ransomware attacks and other forms of security breaches.

The UAE is known as an oasis for technology and innovation, but it's fair to say that a lot of the technology is imported into the region, but there is growing momentum to create a better startup ecosystem in the country, and we spoke to Clark Dever, Senior Product Manager, at Techstars to find out how the renowned seed accelerator plans on leveraging its expertise to delivering on that mission.

In addition to this, we have interviews with Seidor MENA, Intellisoft and Procter & Gamble – as well as some exclusive op-eds from Veritas, App Dynamics and Pure Storage.

Later this month, we host our Transformational Leadership Awards, and this will represent our first LIVE physical event since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic way back in March 2020, so we are really looking forward to seeing you all at the Habtoor Grand Resort, JBR, on June 28th.

Enjoy June's edition of CNME – the region's leading B2B IT and technology publication.

Mark Forker
Editor



Boosting employee productivity still a dream?

Introducing **AARI** your digital assistant at work

Think of **AARI** as every employee's digital assistant. **AARI** helps you scale automation across your workforce by providing all employees easy access to RPA across platforms, applications, and devices.

What AARI can do for you?

- » Simplify everyday tasks like reporting.
- » Collaborate easily with Colleagues, Applications & Bots.
- » Automate escalations & approvals.
- » Increase customer satisfaction with faster call resolution.

Now every employee can tap into the power of automation!



Available now



web



Mobile



Desktop



Voice

22

Cover feature: Automation Anywhere

30

HUAWEI

10

TECHSTARS

18

SENTINELONE

6

News

CNME rounds up the biggest regional and global developments in enterprise technology, which includes the announcement that Mashreq Bank has partnered with Kore.ai to enhance its customer experience through the implementation of AI, StarLink announces its expansion plans for Africa, whilst Vectra has collaborated with Zscaler to provide end-to-end visibility for business-critical applications.

10

Clark Dever, Senior Product Manager at Techstars tells us about how the US seed accelerator is committed to fostering a better startup ecosystem in the UAE through its partnership with Hub71.

18

Tamer Odeh, Regional Director, Middle East, at SentinelOne,

outlines how they are leveraging the capabilities presented by AI technology to help companies become more resilient in the digital economy.

30

Aloysius Cheang, CSO, Huawei UAE, outlines the needs for a global cybersecurity framework, declaring that the current fragmented state of the security industry is leaving companies vulnerable and exposed.

40

Kashish Kohli, CFO at Sanad, and Hatem Hariri, Managing Director at CNS, discuss their recent partnership in this month's edition of GovTech.

46

Pure Storage's Dan Kogan stresses the need for businesses to adopt a multi-cloud strategy to thrive in Industry 4.0, in an exclusive op-ed for CNME

FOUNDER, CPI
 Dominic De Sousa
 (1959-2015)

Published by **CPI**

Publishing Director
 Natasha Pendleton
 natasha.pendleton@cpimediagroup.com

EDITORIAL
 Editor
 Mark Forker
 mark.forker@cpimediagroup.com

PRODUCTION AND DESIGN
 Senior Designer
 Analou Balbero
 analou.balbero@cpimediagroup.com

DIGITAL SERVICES
 Web Developer
 Adarsh Snehanjan

webmaster@cpimediagroup.com

Publication licensed by
 Dubai Production City, DCCA
 PO Box 13700
 Dubai, UAE

Tel: +971 4 5682993

ADVERTISING
 Group Sales Director
 Kausar Syed
 kausar.syed@cpimediagroup.com

Online Editor
 Daniel Shepherd
 daniel.shepherd@cpimediagroup.com

Senior Sales Manager
 Sabita Miranda
 sabita.miranda@cpimediagroup.com

© Copyright 2021 CPI
 All rights reserved

While the publishers have made every effort to ensure the accuracy of all information in this magazine, they will not be held responsible for any errors therein.

Westcon-Comstor to host second IMAGINE Middle East event



Rich Sharples, Senior Director, Product Management, Red Hat

Westcon-Comstor Middle East, a value-added distributor of leading ICT solutions has announced that it will host its next edition of IMAGINE Middle East, a 2-day virtual summit for IT resellers and integrators on the 21st & 22nd June, 2021.

The IMAGINE event was launched by Westcon-Comstor in November last year and based on the extremely positive feedback received from partners and vendors, it is now planned to repeat the event on a 6-monthly cycle.

IMAGINE Middle East will be themed 'Accelerating Digital Transformation-Reshaping the Digital Era'. Expected to be the largest distributor-led event of its kind in the Middle East, attendees will gain insights from authoritative keynote speakers and enjoy interactive digital experiences.

"As a true 'digital first, data-driven' organisation, IMAGINE has taken our engagement with our resellers and vendors a step further", said Steve Lockie, Group Managing Director, Westcon-Comstor Middle East. "As we further expand our presence in the region with the establishment of local offices, we look forward to having our vendors and many more partners join us to explore, identify and act on upcoming opportunities in advanced technologies and solutions".

Red Hat Brings JBoss Enterprise Application Platform to Microsoft Azure

Red Hat, Inc., the world's leading

provider of open-source solutions, today announced Red Hat JBoss Enterprise Application Platform (JBoss EAP) on Microsoft Azure, enabling organisations to tap into the benefits of a cloud-based architecture for modernising their existing Jakarta EE (previously Java EE) applications and building new ones on Azure. JBoss EAP is available as a native offering in Azure that comes fully configured and ready to run and will also be available soon as a fully supported runtime in Azure App Service that is managed by Microsoft.

By bringing JBoss EAP to Azure, Red Hat is easing the shift to the cloud and giving organisations greater choice and flexibility in how they plan for the future.

"Red Hat and Microsoft have long been strategic partners. Red Hat JBoss Enterprise Application Platform continues to be the cornerstone of Red



Rich Sharples, Senior Director, Product Management, Red Hat

Hat's commitment to enterprise Java, and Red Hat is the trusted leader in both open source and Java. By offering JBoss EAP on Azure, we are combining the best of our areas of expertise and enabling customers to successfully choose how they want to manage applications on the cloud".

Vectra and Zscaler Enable Zero Trust Visibility into Business-Critical Applications

Vectra AI, a leader in threat detection and

response, has announced a deep product integration with Zscaler Private Access to provide end-to-end access visibility and protection from remote workers to business-critical applications.

With this integration, security operation centres can achieve zero trust access visibility. To secure remote work Zscaler and Vectra combine zero trust access with AI-powered threat detection to help empower their joint customers with the ability to provide users with fast, secure, and monitored access to business-critical applications through modern security-as-a-service platforms.

"The use of legacy network security solutions has robbed many organisations of the visibility needed to withstand the fight against modern-day attacks", said Randy Schirman, Vectra VP,



Randy Schirman, Vectra VP, Partnerships

Partnerships. "Through our market-leading approach to NDR and this strategic integration with Zscaler, customers benefit from continuous account monitoring, quick identification of malicious intent or insiders, and full visibility into their ecosystem before attacks lead to breaches".

Provis Recognised at the G-Summit Middle East 2021 Awards

Full-service real-estate services company

Provis has won the 2021 CX Creator accolade during the 'G-Summit Middle East 2021 Awards' ceremony held recently in Dubai. The award recognises Provis's efforts to enhance the overall customer experience and deliver consistent and seamless customer journeys and user experience across multiple technologically powered touchpoints.

H.P. Aengaar, CEO at Provis, said, "Digital Transformation has been at the heart of our company and the driving force behind our ability to deliver unique customer experiences since day one. Property technology and innovation have been utilised to make our business more agile, more resilient and more efficient and have played an instrumental role in our growth and success".

Nihal Hakeem, Executive Director of Digitalisation and Customer Experience at Provis, said, "Our digital transformation roadmap has enabled us

to develop a state-of-the-art platform for our customer engagement centre that enhances our customers' experience. This allows us to cater to every customer's needs based on his/her personalised experience and requirements, as well as offer a consistent experience across all touch-points and communication channels including voice, web chat, email, and WhatsApp".

Hakeem added, "This platform has also enabled us to increase our productivity and enhance and facilitate our employees' desktop experience through the integration of core systems".

The advanced platform provided Provis customers with a consistent experience and optimised handling time by giving agents easy access to customers' information and history. The platform also helped generate reports and measure various evaluation topics with a simple click and in effect allowed Provis to have more visibility to troubleshoot more



H.P. Aengaar, CEO, Provis

efficiently and consequently enhance the overall customer experience.

Provis had embarked on a digital transformation journey when it was first launched two years ago. Ever since, the company has been utilising the power of technology and innovation to drive exceptional customer service, add value and positively impact the real-estate industry.

Corning Introduces Fibre Designed to Accelerate Network Transformation to 5G, Cloud, and Beyond



Corning Incorporated has introduced

its latest innovation, Corning SMF-28 Contour optical fibre, to help telecommunications operators address the ever-expanding number of connected devices, build-out of 5G networks, and advances in cloud computing.

Networks perform at their best when errors are minimised during fibre installation and when existing infrastructure is used efficiently during upgrades. Corning engineered SMF-28 Contour fibre to meet those needs.

This groundbreaking product will allow customers to seamlessly upgrade their optical infrastructure, enabling the cost-effective deployment of future-ready networks. The fibre offers:

Superior bend-ability designed to reduce the impact of errors during installation and optimise reach in densely cabled environments where 5G networks are being deployed. SMF-28 Contour fibre is an ITU-T G.657.A2 fibre that has 10 times the macrobend resilience of G.652.D fibres and seven times the macrobend resilience of G.657.A1 fibres. The associated increase in micro-bend resilience enables dense, high-fibre-count cables needed to meet the demands of future high-capacity networks.

Exceptional compatibility with legacy networks while providing superior bend protection, which can mean up to 50% faster installation by minimising

corrective splice loss work. Other G.657.A2 fibres also provide bend protection but with a compromised, lower mode field diameter. SMF-28 Contour fibre does not compromise, providing both G.657.A2 bend protection and a matched 9.2-micron mode field diameter in the same product.

Wide spectrum and industry-leading low-loss transmission across all the wavelengths that constitute the communication systems of today and tomorrow. First, SMF-28 Contour fibres industry-leading low attenuation delivers 10% longer reach in all networks and up to 20% wider access-network coverage. Second, SMF-28 Contour fibres bend loss protection enables up to twice the network reach in new long-wavelength fibre-to-the-home (FTTH) systems. Together, these features enable larger FTTH subscriber areas and greater revenue potential.

Ingram Micro approved for ISO 27001 Certification



Dr. Ali Baghdadi, SVP & Chief Executive of Ingram Micro, META

Ingram Micro, the world's largest wholesale provider of technology products and services, announced that its UAE operations, including its corporate office in Dubai, have been approved for ISO 27001 certification.

The ISO 27001 certification indicates that Ingram Micro operates an Information Security Management System that complies with ISO/IEC 27001:2013. Meeting the ISO standards is an essential prerequisite for companies doing business internationally.

Dr. Ali Baghdadi, SVP & Chief Executive of Ingram Micro, META; Chief Executive of Ingram Micro Cyber Security – EMEA, commented, "We thank Ingram Micro associates across the country for the great teamwork led by IS manager Biju Alex, that helped us to get the ISO 27001 certification. This Certificate acknowledges Ingram Micro's ongoing commitment to customer satisfaction and ensures the work we do is held to the highest standards. This competitive advantage gives our associates and business partners continued pride and confidence in Ingram Micro".

The certification was awarded in November 2020 and will be in effect for three years, where ISO continues to do random repeat audits in between. Ingram Micro maintains and continually improves processes, procedures and customer satisfaction, and ISO certification requirements.

Proofpoint Delivers Advanced Data Loss Prevention for Microsoft Teams

Proofpoint, Inc., a leading cybersecurity and compliance company, today announced Proofpoint Cloud App Security Broker is now a certified data loss prevention partner for Microsoft Teams. Available as part of Proofpoint's Information Protection platform, organisations worldwide can now ensure real-time data security and compliance while millions of users collaborate in Teams.

Ryan Kalember, Executive Vice President of Cybersecurity Strategy for Proofpoint said "Teams compliance is a must-have for regulated and highly litigious industries, while Teams DLP is a must-have essential for all organisations as their users increasingly rely on the Teams platform to collaborate with sensitive information".

Proofpoint Cloud App Security Broker (CASB) provides an additional option for DLP in Teams beyond the DLP capabilities in Microsoft 365. Proofpoint's advanced DLP capabilities for Teams allows organisations to:



Ryan Kalember, Executive Vice President of Cybersecurity Strategy for Proofpoint

Apply DLP to Teams messages and shared files to safeguard regulated data and intellectual property and notify users when sensitive information is removed.

Monitor confidential documents in Teams and across other cloud apps while applying Microsoft Information Protection sensitivity labels.

Maintain compliance with data protection and residency laws including HIPAA, PCI DSS, and GDPR.

Mashreq Bank selects Kore.ai to Elevate Customer Experience through AI

Kore.ai, a top conversational AI

software company, today announced its partnership with Mashreq Bank, one of the leading financial institutions in the UAE, to enhance digital engagement and support for customers through conversational AI. Mashreq will use Kore's BankAssist virtual assistant product to provide personalised self-service and enable faster resolution of customer queries in both Arabic and English.

The partnership will enable Mashreq's over half a million retail banking customers to use their voice or text in the communication channel of their choice to perform over 100 retail banking transactions. This will enable the bank's customer service team to spend more time with customers on advanced interactions, making Mashreq's service even more personalised.



Thomas Cherian, Executive Vice-President and Head of Technology at Mashreq

"Our customers have come to expect world-class customer service from us, and with Kore as our conversational AI provider, we hope to not only meet, but surpass their expectations", said Thomas Cherian, Executive Vice-President and Head of Technology at Mashreq. "We selected Kore because of the sophistication of the software's intent recognition, dialogue management, as well as ease of use, factors which will enable our customers to have access to even better support for all their banking requirements".

Al Zayani Investments Drives ERP transformation with autoExpress



Al Zayani Investment Group is a diversified group with a rich heritage involved in industries such as Automotive, Manufacturing, Real Estate, and Food & Beverages. Al Zayani Group recognised the limitations in the Traditional applications limiting the organisational capability and decided to abandon the existing legacy application and embrace digital transformation with autoExpress™ Dealer Management System on SAP S/4 HANA. autoExpress™, the cloud-based, next-generation ERP platform provided a robust foundation for Al Zayani group companies to drive real-time analytics and end-to-end digital transformation, improving organisational efficiency and user experience.

IntelliSoft's autoExpress™ – a DMS built on SAP's S/4HANA platform and applications, enables Automotive Dealers to reach out to prospects, engage them with market insight, maximise revenue and profits, improve customer satisfaction, streamline existing workloads, reveal optimal decisions, and capitalise on digitally transformed business models. autoExpress™ is pre-Configured and delivered with Best Practices which reduces the duration for adoption and therefore the cost of implementation.

The project was planned to go live in 9 months covering Human Resources & Payroll, Finance including inhouse Vehicle Financing, Marketing including Campaigns & Lead Management, Customer Relationship Management, Interaction Centre & Contact Centre, Procurement, Warehouse Management, Units & Parts Sales, After Service, Service Assembly Process & Maintenance, Real Estate for Property Leasing including Facility Management & Automotive Leasing. By switching to SAP S/4HANA with Industry-specific best practices delivered via autoExpress, Al Zayani are now shifting their focus from managing day-to-day operations to growth and expansion.

Our team of SAP S/4HANA consultants leveraged their deep domain knowledge and industry-leading best practices, tools, and templates to execute autoExpress implementation and going live on SAP S/4HANA. The project was delivered within the planned time & budget despite numerous constraints. Implementation was carried out without any disruption; exceptional business values were delivered. Al Zayani is considering rolling out autoExpress™ to the rest of their Automotive business divisions.

The go-live was smooth, thanks to the leadership of Al Zayani Group IT Manager Mr. Deepak with extensive support from management, and Mr. Satish Kumar, IntelliSoft Project Director along with the business team from Al Zayani Group and consultants from IntelliSoft. The project showcases IntelliSoft's commitment to delivering high quality projects to the satisfaction of its customers within the agreed budget and timeline.

Mr. Ravi Pincha, CEO of IntelliSoft, said "Al Zayani Group is live on autoExpress DMS running on SAP S/4HANA platform. Zayani Motors, First Motors, Bodyworks are leveraging the digital capability of the sophisticated, powerful, yet simple, and user-friendly system. autoExpress is helping expand revenue, improve productivity, enhance visibility of operations, reduce costs, and improve the customer experience"

Mr. Sathish Kumar, Project Director at IntelliSoft, said the pre-configuration aspect of autoExpress™ enabled quick implementation as more than 80% of the key automotive business processes were already mapped in autoExpress™, "We worked closely with Al Zayani team to ensure that Al Zayani group run digital offering state of art experience to customer and employees."

TECHSTARS

REACH FOR THE STARS

CNME Editor Mark Forker secured an exclusive interview with **Clark Dever**, Senior Product Manager at TechStars, to find out how the globally renowned seed accelerator plans to leverage its knowledge and expertise to boost the startup ecosystem in Abu Dhabi.

10

TechStars is a global network, that acts as an incubator for startup companies through their early-stage accelerator programs – and it has enjoyed phenomenal success since their inception in 2008, which began with the launch of an accelerator in Boulder, Colorado.

It has proved to have been a very successful model and from there TechStars began to sell accelerators into other cities, and today have between 40–50 globally.

In a candid discussion with CNME, the dynamic Clark Dever explained the concept

behind TechStars, which he stressed is very much ‘mentorship-driven’.

“When the 10 startup companies come into a TechStars accelerator they go through three months of

programming, and our model is very mentorship-driven. We essentially take you from an idea stage, where you might have had some early market validation, but you are not in the position, or ready to raise venture capital yet, so what we do is drive you through all the learnings that need to occur to get you ready to raise that capital,” said Dever.

Dever also disclosed that each accelerator program is run by a managing director that is actively looking to invest in these companies, but in many cases is hedging their bets more on the founders than their business ideas.



Our role is to determine if there is a market for their product, and do we believe the problem that they are trying to solve is real, and are people going to pay for it.”



Clark Dever
Senior Product
Manager at
TechStars

“The investors are heavily betting on the founders, and TechStars is very ‘founder first’ in a lot of ways. We believe in founders and we try to create founder-friendly deals to help them throughout the entire lifecycle of the program,” said Dever.

As aforementioned above TechStars is mentorship-driven and Dever outlined that in many cases they completely reconstruct their business model following conversations with different mentors.

“At TechStars we have had companies come in and totally change their business idea halfway through the

program because some of the mentorship they have received has guided them in a different direction. Our role is to determine if there is a market for their product, and do we believe the problem that they are trying to solve is real, and are people going to pay for it. A founder could meet with 50 mentors in the first month, and all those mentors could have conflicting ideas about their business and some founders can get a little bit beat up by these experienced investors, but in many cases they accept that their business model doesn’t work, and decide to completely reboot

and start from the ground up,” said Dever.

The Senior Product Manager at TechStars also illustrated that the robust nature of the application process to get accepted into their accelerator program promotes confidence and trust amongst potential investors.

“After the three-month program we have what we call a ‘demo day’, in which 10 companies deliver their pitch to prospective investors. Incredibly, within 4-8 weeks of that pitch, 50% of the companies over our lifespan have raised on average of \$1 million dollars. The reason for this is primarily down to the fact that the TechStars brand has become a trust symbol for investors - because they are acutely aware of how difficult it is to even just get accepted into our accelerator program because we only select 10 companies,” said Dever.

The UAE is known as a global technology hub and over the last two decades has fostered an environment which lends itself to innovation, creativity and entrepreneurship. However, many tech analysts in the region feel they need to do more to support a startup ecosystem.

As Dever outlines TechStars have now launched their

tried and tested accelerator program in Abu Dhabi through Hub71 – and he believes the growing movement across the Middle East to build knowledge and innovation centric economies bodes well for the future.

“We have an accelerator in Abu Dhabi, which is known as Hub71. As the pressure on climate change continues to heat up, governments in the Middle East are cognizant of the fact that despite the traditional wealth coming from oil and energy resources, there is a growing amount of desire to enter the innovation economy. Those in the region understand they need to reduce its dependence on oil to fuel their economy in the future – and thought-leaders across the UAE and GCC, firmly believe that if they invest the capital resources’ they have into innovation then they will see big returns on that,” said Dever.

Dever also spoke of his own role within TechStars and explained how it differed somewhat from that of the actual accelerator program.

“My position at TechStars is focused on ecosystem development, which is separate from our accelerator platform, but not completely divorced from it, but in general it is a different concept. Accelerators are a product that we will sell into a city and then we bring those early-stage companies to a point where

they are investable. I work on ecosystem development, which essentially examines how we can build an exclusive startup community that takes all of the resources that are available to them and better connects them to allow that community to build synergies, to not only create more early-stage startups that can go into accelerators, but also support the startups that are in the community as they grow through talent and additional capital,” said Dever.

Dever added that one of

their primary objectives in terms of ecosystem development is to create a ‘give first’ culture.

“We want to create a culture which we call ‘give first’, so it is not like pure altruism where you don’t expect to get something back, but it’s that you’re willing to help everyone first because you realise that if we make our community better then it will come back to us in some shape or form at a later point,” said Dever.

Dever also feels that the ongoing global COVID-19





When the IO startup companies come into a TechStars accelerator they go through three months of programming, and our model is very mentorship-driven.”

pandemic has created a need for more startup ecosystems.

“The pandemic has flattened the earth and it has shortened the distance between humans everywhere and everyone has got so accustomed to being virtual. We have seen this trend in venture capital. Traditionally, you would have to go pitch to them in person, now they have just spent the last 12-18 months doing virtual deals, and they have come to realise that if they can do a deal with someone that is

in San Francisco virtually, then they can do a deal with someone that is in Abu Dhabi virtually! It has also allowed for the proliferation of expert knowledge. When we talk about the different forms of capital there is intellectual capital, human capital and obviously financial capital, but all of that has become much more accessible globally as a result of the pandemic – and has cultivated an environment in which we need more startup ecosystems,” concluded Dever. **enme**

VERITAS

FIGHT FOR YOUR DATA

Mark Nutt, Senior VP EMEA at Veritas Technologies, examines how businesses can mitigate ransomware and inside threats in an exclusive op-ed for June's edition of CNME.



Mark Nutt
Senior VP EMEA at Veritas Technologies

14

The Fight for Your Data

Ding! Ding! The prize fight for business data is about to begin. In the red corner, costing businesses an estimated \$20b last year, ransomware is getting ready to sucker punch the data centre. In the blue corner, the often-overlooked spectre of human error is making yet another comeback. But who's going to serve the knockout blow that could take the business to the canvas?

Every leader hopes that neither of these challengers will have their organisation on the ropes. In reality, both present a significant threat to data integrity and business continuity.

However, whilst the risks of ransomware are thankfully starting to be taken more seriously, the same care and attention that's spent defending against ransomware

is rarely lavished on barriers to protect against human error.

Where is the biggest risk?

According to recent Veritas research, the average enterprise has been the victim of 1.87 ransomware attacks. The risk is real and growing. In fact, ransomware attacks are believed to have increased in frequency by nearly 50% during the third quarter of 2020.

Attacks are getting more sophisticated as organised criminals focus in on high-value data from targeted organisations. And hackers are finding new ways to exert pressure on their victims to pay by bringing whole IT systems to a halt, or stealing sensitive data and threatening to publish it online.

As a result, just 43% of businesses who have been attacked have managed to avoid paying a ransom to the

criminals that initiated it.

Against this backdrop, anyone could be forgiven for thinking that the ransomware hackers were winning the fight to get to business data.

However, human error remains a far more common cause of data loss – and is also growing. According to analysis of their data, 90% of all breaches reported to the UK Information Commissioners Office (ICO) in 2019 were the result of mistakes made by end users. This was up from 61% and 87% over the previous two years.

Little wonder, in some senses, since human error is becoming a much more distributed challenge. Even if businesses train their entire workforce to exceptional standards, they're probably only reaching a fraction of the people who could put their data at risk. Business partners, contractors, third parties and all manner of

workers in the supply chain can impact data integrity.

So, even with the rapid growth and greedy expansion of attacks from ransomware, hackers still have a long way to go before they could have a broader impact on business data than simple human error.

What can we learn from the ransomware approach?

Whilst the motivation and circumstances behind these two types of data loss couldn't be more different, the solutions can actually have a lot in common. Here are five key lessons about dealing with human error that have been learned from protecting against ransomware:

Act as if a breach is inevitable

Businesses have realised that trying to protect the network perimeter against an incoming ransomware attack is like being the boy using his fingers to plug the holes in the dam: ultimately, something is going to leak through.

Planning for a worst-case scenario and being prepared to respond is absolutely necessary.

Avoid a single point of failure

If you only have one copy of your data and it's hit by ransomware, your options for getting it back are severely limited. The same is true in the event that a unique piece of data is accidentally deleted or overwritten.

Your chances of restoring

the information, however, are significantly increased already have a backup copy. Two copies are better than one and three copies, where one is offline and immutable, supports best practice.

Monitor your data

Data monitoring so that a business is able to recognise any material changes to files, can help businesses to spot a ransomware attack quickly and respond in good time. Monitoring data can also help



Attacks are getting more sophisticated as organised criminals focus in on high-value data from targeted organisations.”

to identify if files have been accidentally removed.

In the immediate aftermath of an accident, there are often ways to reverse its impact. Spotting changes quickly will nearly always give you an advantage.

Employee education, communication and trust are key

Sophisticated phishing schemes mean that employees are very often the gateway to a

ransomware attack.

As a result, many businesses offer companywide training on how to respond, encouraging team members to communicate instantly if they think they've been the cause of a breach and to trust that they won't be blamed for it. The same approach is not often extended for data loss accidents but would help businesses to identify challenges, monitor risk and act accordingly.

Protection data is as vulnerable as any other

If left unchecked, ransomware can quickly move from primary data to its backups. Similarly, errors made in primary data will soon be reflected in the backup. Having the right policies and technologies in place to ensure that backup data is there when needed is critical.

Prize fight

So, is ransomware or human error the most likely to knockout a data centre? The reality of the situation is that they're both coming for the data, and it's almost inevitable that both will hit. The law of averages says that human error will occur most often – but ransomware will also get there in the end, and both can be devastating.

Business should be prepared to protect, detect, respond and recover from either threat to their data and, those that box clever, should be prepared for both. **crime**

PROCTER & GAMBLE

HARNESSING THE POWER OF DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES

CNME Editor Mark Forker spoke to **Hammad Sharif**, CIO, Middle East, Global Emerging Market & Africa at Procter & Gamble, to find out how the role of the CIO has changed in the digital economy, how their global supply chains coped during the COVID-19 pandemic – and how he is focused on harnessing the power of digital technologies to propel their business growth.



You have spent almost 15 years at P&G, in which you have held several key positions before being appointed as the new CIO for the Middle East & Africa in 2019. Can you tell us more about your journey with P&G during that period – and what your key role and responsibilities are as the CIO of the company?

I started with Procter & Gamble in Pakistan in 2006, where I spent the first four years of my career. Looking back at this period, I am proud of several

accomplishments that I had an influential role in achieving. These include our SAP ERP suite rollout and new digital supply chain infrastructure and capabilities, such as a new manufacturing facility and distribution center. My tenure in Pakistan undoubtedly prepared me for what was to follow and, in 2010, I was presented with the opportunity to work in Africa as part of P&G's Grow Africa strategy.

This next chapter was one full of excitement as we laid continent-wide digital foundations and a robust

P&G footprint. We digitised market sales operations in their entirety, establishing real-time data connectivity with our distribution and retail partners. I remained in Africa until 2014, when I relocated to Dubai, and this is where I have been based ever since, working on various Middle Eastern assignments in regional technology leadership roles. As a CIO, I lead our digital growth and value (DGV) strategy, which revolves around understanding consumers with digital engagement, superior retail execution in-store and online, and improving

operational productivity and digital capabilities across our organisation.

Earlier this year you were recognised as one of the region's top CIO's and decision-makers by IDC, which is all the more impressive considering you've only been in your role as CIO for less than 2 years. In your opinion, what projects and initiatives did you oversee that led to this recognition?

Innovation is at the heart of our digital strategy, and I am both proud and excited that P&G has been recognised as an innovation category winner at the IDC Middle East, Turkey, and Africa awards. Regarding the standout projects and initiatives that I believe led to this accomplishment, we shared a recent machine learning (ML) and artificial intelligence (AI) initiative aimed towards enhancing our market operations. This was the first-of-its-kind in the region and ultimately succeeded in guiding our salesforce on key business opportunities with much greater speed and accuracy than ever before. The initiative also helped us grow our regional business profile, presence, and acumen, and has since been utilised to bolster our retail execution practices.

We know that Procter & Gamble is the largest consumer goods company in the world. However, can you tell our readers about the challenges you were forced to overcome during the COVID-19 pandemic

as traditional global supply chains were ground to a halt?

Pandemic repercussions have given rise to an array of challenges in recent times, and we have seen several become apparent across the supply chain landscape. In addition to mass global supply chain disruption, there has also been an unprecedented shift in consumer behavior, with many now preferring to use online channels. As such, one of our priorities at P&G has been to ensure that we remain ahead of the curve, adopting a control tower approach to gain end-to-end supply chain visibility. At the same time, we continue to constantly add more data signals to optimise our supply chains and meet the demands of those we serve, including in-store and online availability.

We now live in an on-demand digital economy that is underpinned by technology. Can you tell us how P&G has leveraged transformative technologies



At P&G, we believe strongly in utilising technology to drive productivity, efficiency, and simplification across our organisation and scope of operations."

to enhance its productivity, efficiency and output?

At P&G, we believe strongly in utilising technology to drive productivity, efficiency, and simplification across our organisation and scope of operations. In line with this principle, we are currently working on multiple initiatives to ensure we achieve our aspirations in this direction. For example, we are introducing automation to our manufacturing operations to bolster both product quality and operational efficiency. Furthermore, we are introducing new cloud-based capabilities to enhance workforce productivity, and continue to work closely with our partners for integration and data purposes and to improve the speed and decisiveness of our decision-making.

What are your strategic plans to continue to solidify P&G's position here in the Middle East & Africa, and what are your primary objectives and goals for the remainder of 2021?

Looking ahead to the remainder of 2021, my primary objectives remain harnessing the power of digital technologies and data to propel our business growth and value creation efforts. Sustained success here will help solidify P&G's regional status, while another overarching ambition is for the Middle East and Africa (MEA) to be synonymous with thought leadership and digital innovation. **CTME**

SENTINELONE

STOPPING ATTACKS IN THEIR TRACKS

CNME Editor Mark Forker spoke to **Tamer Odeh**, Regional Director at SentinelOne, Middle East, onsite at GISEC 2021, to find out how their patented AI technology is equipping businesses with the solutions required to deter, mitigate and stop ransomware attacks - and why the end-point has become the first line of defence for enterprises.

Over the last six months there has been a plethora of ransomware attacks from the high-profile SolarWinds hack to the vulnerability that was exposed in Microsoft Exchange - and most recently the Colonial Pipeline attack in the United States.

Since conducting this interview with SentinelOne at GISEC, there has been another huge ransomware attack, this time on the world's largest meat processing company JBS.

In a compelling interview,

Odeh was candid about the severity of the ransomware problem on a global scale - but he highlighted how their Singularity XDR platform is helping enterprises to better prevent, detect and respond to ransomware attacks.

"We have never seen so many ransomware attacks in such a short period of time that has impacted so many different industry verticals. There is nobody in the security ecosystem that can present a solution and say that this is the remedy to deter and

prevent ransomware attacks. However, what distinguishes the XDR Singularity platform developed by SentinelOne, compared to other security vendors is our patented technology in leveraging AI. What that allows us to do is to stop ransomware attacks in their tracks. We can detect them at the very inception of the attack, and we can detect them in motion, and we have the capacity to stop it, mitigate it, and provide further analysis of the attack," said Odeh.

Odeh also added that their



What distinguishes the XDR Singularity platform developed by SentinelOne, compared to other security vendors is our patented technology in leveraging AI.”

Tamer Odeh
*Regional
Director at
SentinelOne,
Middle East*

mission was to not only stop attacks from happening, but to educate their customers through the compilation of their intelligence reports to give them the knowledge to improve their security posture in the future.

SentinelOne has enjoyed strong growth over the last few quarters, and many IT analysts have credited their success as a direct result of the unique capabilities provided by its XDR Singularity platform which is empowering enterprises to bolster their security portfolio.

“One of the key differentiators of the XDR Singularity platform against all the other market competition out there is that we utilise behavioral analytics through machine learning and AI to quickly detect an attack, or a malicious activity. Other market players have an element of the human factor, or a process in which the decision-making is delegated to an outside source, be it a

cloud, or a managed detection and response service. However, what SentinelOne does is provide intelligence that is based at the agent level, so even if the end point, or the agent is in a remote location with no connectivity it can understand and analyse the attack and defend itself automatically,” said Odeh.

The acceleration towards the cloud has undoubtedly been accelerated by the COVID-19 pandemic, but what has become evident is that many businesses are struggling to adapt to the demands of cloud transformation.

However, Odeh believes the pandemic has also resulted in a dramatic mindset shift from both CISOs and CIOs across the region – but said many businesses have overlooked their security strategy in order to facilitate their move to the cloud.

“The COVID-19 pandemic has applied a lot of pressure on CISOs and CIOs in relation to their cloud migration journeys towards digital transformation. The trend that we see in the Middle East is that we were very heavy on on-prem technology, and that was the most common architecture that we had. As a result, moving to the cloud was very steady, but also very slow, but the global health crisis and the need for digital transformation has accelerated that. There is a cost involved in this type of transformation, but

unfortunately many businesses compensated their security offerings to raise the capital needed for migrating towards the cloud,” said Odeh.

The regional director at SentinelOne also highlighted how their approach during the pandemic was very much customer-centric.

“At SentinelOne, we said come and use our platform for FREE, and make sure that your environment is secure and don’t worry about that, instead worry about the safety of your business. We approached certain industries,

such as the healthcare and education sector and said to them let us help you build out your security roadmap and accelerate that through various means, whether it was through offering the solution at an affordable cost, or through our services, said Odeh.

In April 2020, Odeh had previously stressed the importance of CISO’s reviewing and bolstering their end-point security policies, especially given the number of businesses that were adopting to remote working models. 12 months on he believes there is





The perimeter has widened, and the end-point has become your first line of defence towards your weakest link, which is us.”

acceptance in the industry that now that the end-point is the first line of defence.

“The dialogue around end-point protection has increased as has the consolidation of protection on the end-point. In the past significant investments were made into resources and technology being within the perimeter of the enterprise, but once we introduced working remotely the perimeter expanded and the vectors of attacks also expanded. Your average person now is working from home, and they are connected to an

unsecured Wi-Fi connection. The perimeter has widened and the end-point has become your first line of defence towards your weakest link, which is us. We are the most vulnerable and susceptible to a phishing email and attackers are preying on this. However, the end-point is the one point that gives you visibility in terms of how the attacker is trying to penetrate and infiltrate than most of the other technologies that are around,” said Odeh.

SentinelOne as aforementioned above have enjoyed strong growth, and Odeh declared that their mission was to continue that growth journey.

“Our mission is to protect customers from breaches and the best way to do that is by getting closer to the customer. We have invested in channel programs to get closer to our customers across the Middle East, Turkey and Africa. We also want to add to our team and increase the resources that we have both from a sales perspective and a support perspective. It’s not just about breaching the technology, it’s also about the after-sales element, as we want to maintain a consistent experience to our customers. The region is witnessing an immense amount of growth, and we are very fortunate to be centralised in Dubai, and are very close to all our major markets,” said Odeh. **cme**

APPDYNAMICS

THE DEMANDS OF DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION

David Noël, Regional Vice President, Southern Europe, Middle East & Africa at AppDynamics, has highlighted the need to protect technologists as digital transformation continues to ramp up across the region.

Despite a year fraught with challenges, the mood of UAE technologists remains surprisingly buoyant. Findings from AppDynamics' Agents of Transformation 2021: The Rise of Full-Stack Observability report showed 80% of UAE IT professionals see the current crisis as an opportunity for them to create value for their organisation and shine, whilst 78% believe that the role of IT has never been more valuable to the business and is the greatest it has ever been.

This commitment is what made the difference last year when pandemic-related lockdowns led to great demands

being made of IT teams across the country. Professional insights and hard work came together to deliver not only business continuity, but newly agile technology stacks. Some organisations did more than survive, they thrived.

Technologists delivered time after time across industries, rolling out projects in weeks that had been planned previously over many months or even years. They managed to keep up with constantly shifting business priorities and customer demands. Despite having to adapt to more complex environments, they also managed to create new and engaging digital experiences for customers and employees.

Pressure leads to stress

But while IT teams were making the lives of others easier, the Agents of Transformation research shows a degradation in the personal wellbeing of technologists themselves. Some 90% of UAE technologists report feeling considerable pressure at work,

and 85% experience difficulty switching off when they get home. This is understandable. In the current economic climate, technologists likely fear making a mistake that could have cost implications for their employer.

It is therefore also unsurprising that 96% of surveyed technologists are prioritising work-life this year. This intention can be seen across industries, even among remote workers. COVID has forced us into uncomfortable conditions. Work has changed, as has life. In a Harvard Business Review study of 1,500 employees, across sectors, roles, and seniority in 46 countries, 89% said work was becoming more pressure-filled and 85% were concerned about their health and wellbeing.

As any good manager knows, stressed-out employees are less productive and more likely to seek alternative employment than those who are fulfilled. There is a fine line between challenge and stress.

People need support



UAE enterprises need to find a balance between rapid digital transformation and the welfare of the technologists who deliver it."



David Noël
*Regional Vice President, Southern Europe,
Middle East & Africa at AppDynamics*

UAE enterprises need to find a balance between rapid digital transformation and the welfare of the technologists who deliver it. Digital technologies, used shrewdly, are great levers for competitiveness and prepare businesses for future challenges. But without the professionals who design, implement, and test such tools, business models will collapse. We need to consider the wellbeing of IT staff as part of due diligence.

Digital transformation continues to accelerate across all industries, so it is unrealistic to expect technologists' workloads to decrease any time soon. In response to the change in pressure on employees across roles and industries, some organisations have taken bold steps to support staff and maintain morale where they can, especially with remote workers. Much of the focus has been on balancing productivity with

home life and taking the time to address mental health issues.

Easing the pressure

With technology professionals, organisations may need to become a little more creative when easing pressure. The Agents of Transformation 2021 revealed a feeling among technologists that their time was not being used efficiently and their productivity was not optimal. Two thirds of UAE respondents said they lacked the strategy and tools to measure the effect of technology on business outcomes. And almost all of them (98%) predicted negative consequences to not having comprehensive visibility of the entire technology stack.

Without accurate, real-time visibility in the new, more complex IT environments brought about by rapid digital transformation, IT teams are lost. They will simply not have the

means to flag emerging issues and track down their causes before they negatively affect digital experiences. Some 73% of UAE technologists say that, given new complexities, they can no longer rely on their gut to troubleshoot problems. They need accurate, real-time data.

If technology professionals are unable to tie performance issues to business outcomes, entire digital transformation programs may be derailed. After all, how can stakeholders make informed decisions if they are not properly informed? And so, technologists become frustrated at not being able to perform optimally.

Remember, your IT people have big ideas for your business. They believe in the power of digital transformation. But to add value they need a detailed view of the IT infrastructure.

Investing in tools and skills

The need for full-stack observability combined with the ability to correlate technology and business data has never been greater. Deploying this technology enables IT teams to move beyond constant fire-fighting and make smarter, strategic decisions based on actual business impact.

UAE technologists may need to face up to a future where an ever-increasing number of deliverables are required of them. But they need not feel the level of pressure indicated by the Agents of Transformation report. Smart decisions made now can pave the way for greater innovation, deeper levels of insight and increased efficiencies for years to come. **anme**

AUTOMATION ANYWHERE

DEMOCRATISING INTELLIGENT AUTOMATION

CNME Editor Mark Forker spoke to **Dinesh Chandra**, Regional VP, Middle East & Turkey, Automation Anywhere, and **Milan Sheth**, EVP – IMEA, Automation Anywhere, to find out how the company is determined to augment and converge human and digital workforces, the impact of its IQ Bot and AARI solutions – and how automation can empower workforces to be more productive, efficient and effective.

24

The COVID-19 pandemic has presented challenges for companies transitioning from a physical environment to a virtual one. How has the introduction of millions of 'Automation Anywhere Bots' equipped organisations with the tools needed to empower their workforces to work remotely in an effective way?

The unprecedented disruption brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic forced companies to adapt to a new normal across the board. Automation has a big role to play in terms of resolving

these challenges currently facing companies. One of the most important aspects of AI-powered RPA is that it provides organisations with the agility to protect their business processes, adapt to the existing workflows – and empower employees to work more effectively.

What companies have come to realise is the effectiveness and efficiency of automation, whereas previously they may have been skeptical, but now they can see firsthand the transformation it can have on your business processes.

With Automation Anywhere Bots companies have been able to focus on their

critical areas of need and this could be accelerating business transformation, or a COVID-19 response by enlisting a digital workforce of RPA bots.

However, the critical part to focus on is the convergence of human and digital. This is our motto as a company and our mission is to determine how do we bring the human workforce and digital workforce and augment them together. This will help to create a large remote workforce. The bot can buffer additional capacity and that helps in supply chains and the effective utilisation of your workforce.

A professional portrait of Dinesh Chandra, a man with a beard and mustache, wearing a dark blue suit, white shirt, and red tie. He is standing with his arms crossed against a light yellow background.

Dinesh Chandra

*Regional VP, Middle East &
Turkey, Automation Anywhere*

If we look at the healthcare industry as an example, with bots you can do multiple things from adequate staffing to managing the restocking of inventory, but most importantly trying to simplify the paperwork.

A great example is the NHS in the United Kingdom, they had to process hundreds and thousands of tests at the peak of a pandemic, and that was the norm globally, but the key difference here was they

had to also process forms like E28 and case reports forms (CRFs) and that generates a phenomenal amount of data that had to be manually logged into their systems.

This could significantly delay testing and diagnosis, so this was a big challenge for the NHS, so what Automation Anywhere did was to build a solution that helped accelerate the reporting and processing of these forms, and the solution helped to capture information from these forms automatically and populate it into their systems.

It could also

automatically extract data from both handwritten forms and checkboxes,

so just imagine the amount of manual work that they avoided by deploying this solution from Automation Anywhere.

The solution also has the capability to be deployed on cloud, or on-prem which gives you the ability to scale and include hundreds of thousands of pages every day. By digitalising this whole process, the NHS were able to improve their decision making, but most importantly free-up their frontline workers from doing these manual and time-consuming tasks to do more tasks that are of higher priority, such as testing – so this is a great example of how organisations can leverage the power of automation.

Automation Anywhere has been recognised again in Everest Group Intelligent Document Processing PEAK Matrix Assessment 2021. What is it about IQ Bot that has resonated with so many enterprises in the market and made it such a phenomenal success?

It is fantastic to once again be recognised in the PEAK Matrix Report. IQ Bot is the only cloud-native intelligent

Milan Sheth
EVP-IMEA,
Automation Anywhere

document processing solution that uses the power of AI and RPA to enhance workforce productivity by extracting data automatically from documents and emails.

If you examine it closely, you will find that 80% of business processes depend on people to locate and organise unstructured data before the process even begins, so that is a lot of human work that is required in that. IQ Bot specifically addresses this.

Intelligent document processing is a set of technologies that can be used to identify unstructured and semi-structured data and convert that into a structured format. Unlike OCR, the solution uses AI technology like machine learning and natural language processing to capture and verify data. As you feed more data into a system it starts to understand what this document is all about and starts to build that intelligence.

There are many reasons as to why we got into the PEAK Matrix report companies want a solution to be easy to use, easy to deploy, it should be able to read multiple formats, should integrate with a lot of the existing applications and these are some of the core functions, but more importantly we also have a lot of pre-trained and pre-built document extraction use-cases that comes with the solution and that gives you



One of the most important aspects of AI-powered RPA is that it provides organisations with the agility to protect their business processes, adapt the existing workflows - and empower employees to work more effectively.”

a jumpstart on how you can start using IQ Bot and it's also available on the cloud.

With IQ Bot we are virtually eliminating so much manual processes which is giving organisations a huge savings on costs and time management and that is ultimately what IQ Bot is all about.

Can you tell our readers about AARI – ‘The First Digital Assistant at Work’, which was launched last October? What are the key capabilities that this smart assistant can provide organisations?

AARI is a digital assistant and like Alexa and Siri in our personal lives serves as a digital assistant in our workplace. Automation Anywhere Robotic

Interface was launched in October, and we have seen a tremendous adoption of it because we are trying to address a problem here.

When you say automation, you always think about the back office and its role in finance functions, receivables, payables, and other heavy lifting operations. However, nobody has thought about how we can empower those who work in the front office to be part of this automation journey.

To truly democratise automation in an organisation you need everybody to be using it – and that is the objective of AARI. AARI has been specifically designed so automation is accessible for everybody within an organisation.

For example, take a contact centre at a bank, we call them for a credit limit increase, a change of address, account information and everything else in between, but if you think about it that call centre agent needs to look at multiple systems to gather all this information, and then report back to the customer in a reasonable period of time – and that is a major challenge.

You need to train the agent on multiple things, and there is a lot of complexity involved and not everyone can absorb and manage it, and this results in a lot of customer dissatisfaction. 35% of these processes get delayed because

the agent is attempting to log-in and understand where he can find information, and it also emerged from a report that was conducted found that 89% of customers who were upset with this delay look elsewhere.

In addition to this, there is also a huge turnover of employees in contact centres because there are tired and frustrated at the complexity of this whole process, so if we can make their lives easier by having this interface where you capture the information the customer is requesting and the bots go fetch that information and bring it back to you in one form, which is easy for the contact centre agent to work on, understand and manage. This is an example of where AARI can make a huge difference.

Can you provide us with more information on Automation 360, labelled as the world's only unified cloud-native platform for intelligent automation across the enterprise? How does this platform transform employee and end-user experiences?

Our cloud-first solution came out in 2019, and it was called A-2019, but we recently renamed it Automation 360. The pandemic has massively accelerated cloud adoption and that has really taken cloud to the next level.

Automation Anywhere has more than 50% of the cloud RPA market share worldwide. In the Middle East, there has been a huge push from governments and all major industry verticals into cloud. In the cloud we have Discovery Bot that will help you to record and track your user activities, and it also helps you better understand the business processes - and identify what processes are candidates for automation.

Discovery Bot is on the

cloud, as is IQ Bot and RPA, so you have got all of this on the cloud, and we work on AWS with Azure, and we also have a very strategic partnership with Google Cloud. Cloud is the future without doubt in all technologies and RPA is no exception, but it makes it easier for us and our customers because all our solutions are on the cloud, but at the same time we can still do on-prem deployments. Our solutions were built for the cloud.





What were the most eye-catching findings uncovered in the comprehensive research commissioned by Automation Anywhere regarding the impact intelligent automation will have on the economy in the KSA?

Intelligent automation offers the potential to double the economy of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) to US\$ 1.6 trillion, which will add an additional US\$293 billion by 2030, according to the comprehensive research we conducted in conjunction with



Cloud is the future without doubt in all technologies and RPA is no exception.”

Ernst & Young.

The EY modeler computed the impact of incremental automation adoption across all sectors of Saudi Arabia for three scenarios, which were the following: Optimistic scenario – which projected a 50% incremental intelligent automation adoption by organisations across the region would add US\$ 293 billion to the nominal gross domestic product.

A moderate scenario – projected a 30% incremental adoption would add US\$ 184 billion to the nominal GDP – and a conservative scenario projected a 15% incremental adoption would add US\$ 103 billion to the nominal GDP.

We believe that Intelligent Automation has the potential to act as a key lever in realising the technology led productivity enhancements as it can empower rapid end-to-end business process automation and accelerate digital transformation. IA will also play its role by focusing on training and development of the local talent in digital skills to make them future ready.

With KSA's ambition and zeal in place, capitalising on the IA opportunity will yield tangible results, and act as a catalyst for growth and bring the country closer to achieving its vision of transforming the economy, society and improving its citizen's lives. **crme**

HUAWEI

SECURITY FOR ALL

CNME Editor Mark Forker spoke to **Aloysius Cheang**, CSO, Huawei UAE, onsite at GISEC 2021, to find out how the global ICT vendor is investing in its own cybersecurity lab to create better solutions to keep its customers protected - and how countries need to abandon geopolitics to create a global security framework designed to address the ever-evolving cybersecurity threats in the digital economy.

The last time CNME spoke to Aloysius Cheang, was during GITEX Technology Week in December 2020, but the cybersecurity ecosystem is once again under the microscope following a spate of high-profile and hugely damaging ransomware attacks that have occurred over the last few months.

Cheang has enjoyed a decorated and distinguished career in cybersecurity, that has seen him work in different global markets, so there is arguably nobody better placed to comment on the ongoing situation.

According to Huawei's UAE CSO, these threats have always been present, but companies are now more vulnerable as a direct result of digital transformation.

"These attacks have always been there, but the security landscape has changed drastically since COVID-19, and as a result more enterprises have become digitalised. Businesses have been forced to transition to a remote working environment and that has presented new challenges in terms of cyber hygiene amongst employees," said Cheang.

Interestingly, Cheang also pointed out that ransomware attacks had now become mainstream in the public domain because unlike in the past it was now affecting people on a much larger scale.

"In the past these ransomware attacks were happening, but to be frank, nobody really cared because it was not impacting them, but now these ransomware attacks are impacting people and it has changed their attitude to these



In the UAE, we actively support public and private partnerships that are designed to drive and cultivate better cybersecurity."

cyberattacks, and personal experience counts better than anything else," said Cheang.

The charismatic CSO at Huawei UAE, is always an extremely enlightening executive to speak to, but he was robust in reinforcing his belief that many enterprises need to change tact when it comes to their security blueprint.

"Businesses simply have to revise their security strategy from the top down, as the old approach to security is now inadequate and not fit for purpose. Your home is now an extension of your office, so if you are infiltrated, you have no idea where the hack has come from. In the office you felt safe, but now employees feel exposed. Wi-Fi is an inherent design flaw, it is an unsecure connection, so right from the off you are vulnerable when working remotely and this is a major challenge for businesses to overcome," said Cheang.

Huawei have produced some of the best technology and ICT solutions in the world, but they are also placing a huge emphasis on their security portfolio - and have invested heavily into their cybersecurity research lab to equip enterprises with the products they need to

better protect themselves in the digital economy.

"Internally, we examine our cybersecurity strategy and look at ways in which we can improve it and make it better. We have an end-to-end cybersecurity assurance framework that enables us to embed security into every aspect of our business - and we also have invested significantly into our cybersecurity research lab, which is designed to create our own security technologies that will help the security ecosystem fightback against these bad actors. At Huawei, we always think about security and privacy first," said Cheang.

Cheang bemoaned the geopolitics at play, which has caused the global security ecosystem to be so fractured and fragmented - and has called for a collective approach to tackle the major issues that are facing the industry.

"In the UAE, we actively support public and private partnerships that are designed to drive and cultivate better cybersecurity. We do not want to get dragged into geo-political issues, we are solely focused on developing technologies that will make us and our customers globally better protected and that is what we strive to achieve. The security community in its current state is very fragmented and is geo-political - and that needs to change if we are serious about really tackling these threats that are in some cases having a devastating economic impact on businesses across multiple industries as we have witnessed in the last few months," said Cheang. **CNME**

INTELLISOFT

EXPRESS YOURSELF

CNME Editor Mark Forker spoke to **Ravi Pincha**, CEO, IntelliSoft, to find out how its autoExpress DMS solution gives its customers greater flexibility to change their processes as their business evolves – and the incredible success of its recent Go Live in Bahrain.

Can you outline to us what the unique capabilities of the autoExpress DMS is – and how if leveraged properly it can help automotive companies and traditional dealerships completely transform their operations to become more efficient?

IntelliSoft's autoExpress – is a Cloud DMS, which covers Marketing, Call Centre Operations, Passenger & Commercial vehicle Procurement & Sales, Leasing, Rental processes, Vehicle/ Equipment financing, Parts Procurement & Sales, Inventory & Warehouse management.

In addition to this, we also have Barcode handling and operations using Hand-held Terminals, After Sales Service, Service Contract Management, Repair & Warranty Handling, Body Works, Recall Management, Workshop Loading, Workshop Technicians, and a Clock-in Clock out process and Billing to manage complete Dealership Operations.

Embedded analytics helps in decision making as it is incorporated with transactions. autoExpress provides many

channels to connect to the customer, offers mobile apps to automate business processes.

Customer-facing mobile app and B2B & B2C portal offers self-service for customers. With autoExpress we offer a single integrated system covering business processes for end-to-end dealership needs; it helps dealerships to become agile, efficient, laying a strong foundation for growth.



Can you also inform our readers of the benefits and impact the implementation of autoExpress Cloud can have for businesses seeking greater autonomy, flexibility, and customer experience?

IntelliSoft's autoExpress – a Cloud DMS built on SAP's S/4HANA platform and applications, enables automotive & heavy equipment dealers to reach out to prospects, engage them with market insight, maximise revenue and profits and improve customer satisfaction.

It helps streamline existing workloads, reveal optimal decisions, and capitalise on digitally transformed business models.

Our solution is offered on cloud, we are also able to cater to the complex business needs of dealerships on a digital platform and provide enough flexibility to change the processes as businesses evolve. The layer of easy-to-use UI, embedded analytics supplemented with our customer facing mobile apps offers enhanced customer experience.

Can you tell our readers about the incredible success of your recent Go-Live in Bahrain?

Al Zayani Investment Group is a diversified group with a rich heritage involved in industries such as Automotive, Manufacturing, Real Estate, and Food & Beverages.

The company was founded to meet economic recovery challenges and take advantage of growth opportunities in a virgin environment.

The group embarked on the project in 2020, with a scope of Finance & Accounting, Human Capital Management, Procurement, Warehouse Management, Manufacturing, Marketing including Interaction Centre, Sales, Service, Real Estate Management, Leasing, Plant Maintenance & Quality Management.

The Go-live was smooth, thanks to the leadership of Zayani Group IT Manager Mr. Deepak with extensive support from Al Zayani Group Management, and Mr. Satish Kumar, IntelliSoft Project Director, and the hard work from Business, IT, and the team of IntelliSoft consultants. The project showcases IntelliSoft's commitment to delivering High Quotation Projects to the satisfaction of its customers within the agreed budget and timeline.

By switching to autoExpress on SAP S/4 HANA with industry-specific best practices embedded in autoExpress, Zayani group is now shifting its focus from managing day-to-day operations to growth and expansion.



The internal processes are much simpler, and many manual processes have been eliminated as autoExpress is able to cover most of the processes.”

What sort of response and feedback has there been regarding the impact following the implementation of the solution from clients?

With autoExpress powered by SAP's Digital core S/4HANA, Al Zayani group are able to reach out to its prospects via multiple channels and engage with them with the right information at the right time.

The internal processes are much simpler, and many manual processes have been eliminated as autoExpress is able to cover most of the processes. The customer journey from the initial engagement till closure is greatly accelerated leading to increased efficiency.

With the same infrastructure, workshops can receive a higher number of vehicles for service/repair. They are able to accommodate larger number of walk-in customers for service offering a better customer experience. This is all resulting in expansion of revenue, reduction in cost of operation due to automation and most importantly happy and satisfied customers.

Why do you think clients that have used autoExpress DMS are now recommending that other dealer companies adopt the solution?

Our clients are able to run efficiently on SAP's S/4HANA Digital Platform, and leverage this digital transformation to expand their revenue, reduce the overall cost and offer a better customer experience. They strongly recommend autoExpress as a premier Dealer Management Solution. **cnme**

SEIDOR MENA

EXPERTS IN PROJECT DELIVERY

CNME Editor Mark Forker spoke to **Juan Carlos Carracedo**, Head of Consulting at Seidor MENA, to find out how the IT leader leverages SAP solutions to successfully deliver its projects – and why its customer-centricity is one of its key differentiators.

We know that **Seidor MENA is a global leader when it comes to end-to-end IT solutions. However, can you outline to our readers what are the SAP services that you provide – and how do you leverage those key SAP implementation solutions to successfully deliver projects?**

When it comes to SAP, our services start before the project commences by designing the right solution architecture that is specifically tailored for customers – because SAP solutions are very diverse, and they are not a one-size fits all.

We would also strongly recommend the best-fit in terms of technical deployment

architecture (cloud/hybrid/on-prem) as we also have a deep knowledge along with deploying and managing SAP workloads on hyper-scalers such as AWS/Azure.

Following the commencement of the implementation phase of the project we would then typically move on to handle the end-to-end project management, organisational change management, fit-to-gap/fit-to-standard analysis, solution design, application configuration, application customization, data migration and training.

We prepare the test scripts required to accelerate the UAT and provide hyper-care support. Following the completion of the project our

services extend to providing our customers with operational support and enhancement support agreements.

Seidor is among a very exclusive group of companies that can support the entire landscape of SAP products and this support is subject to a very robust and strict auditing process, which is conducted by SAP every year. We have dedicated support teams that they are more than capable of handling all requests and support for our customers.

Can you tell us more about some of the complex projects that you have delivered successfully for customers here in the Middle East?

Well let me start by first stating that here is no easy project!

“

Seidor is among a very exclusive group of companies that can support the entire landscape of SAP products and this support is subject to a very robust and strict auditing process.”



Each project has its own risks and complications. I prefer not to call them complex, but instead label them as interesting and extremely challenging. Our team relishes a challenge as it gives them the opportunity to grow.

For example, one of our customers is a food production company where they need to buy their raw material from the local markets and transport it to the production site in the shortest time possible to maintain its freshness. However, the application to be able to achieve this needs to be as simple as possible, as mobile as possible, and without any compromise on the control and integration part of the process, which is the primary reason companies go for these types of enterprise applications.

We managed to deliver a seamless solution for them, and this project was recognised by SAP as a Quality Award winning project – a very prestigious award which recognises the best projects in each region.

To deliver any project from start to finish is certainly not easy, but especially in IT, when you are dealing with legacy systems and other legacy architecture. What way do you approach a project in terms of the fundamental processes and steps that you take to ensure that the project journey is a success?

The business users are the center of any enterprise

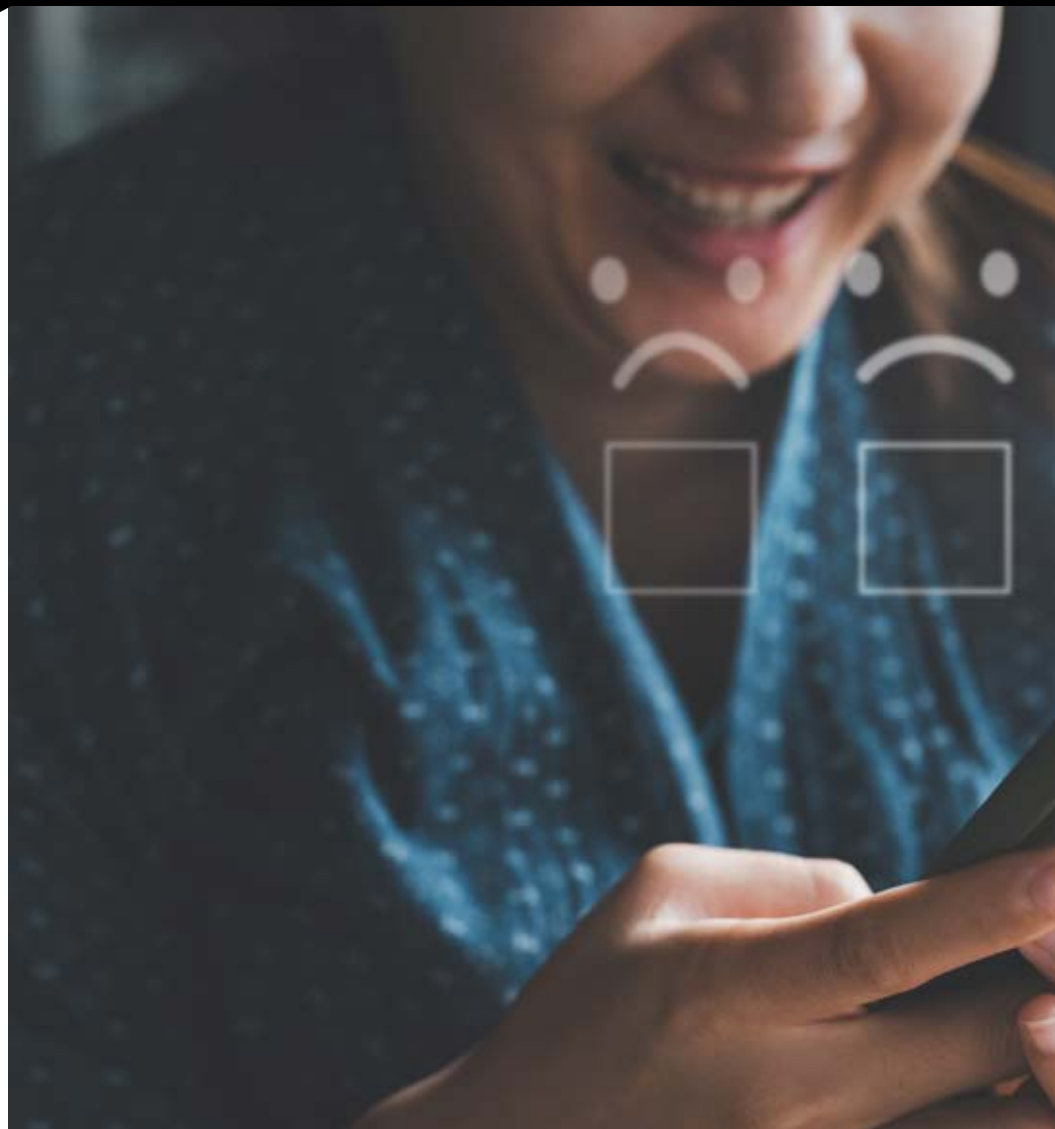
system implementation, and you need to make sure that they are fully onboard in this transition process. You need to involve them always in the key decisions and get their buy-in.

In addition to this, availing the system for training with some dummy data from the very beginning of the project is crucial as well – as it helps the user to break the ice or fear of the unknown.

Data needs to be collected and prepared from the early stages of the project, because at the end of the day systems are all about people using them, and data being fed into them.

If we do not take care of those two elements, then the best system in the world implemented by the best implementer in the world can still fail. We strive to help customers establish clear metrics required to measure the users' adoption of the system through consumption monitoring.

Seidor MENA is known for being customer-centric – and likes to engage with customers onsite to be able to get a better understanding of their business challenges. Is this intimate approach what





It is very important to be fair and transparent with your customers especially if you realize that they do not have any previous experience with enterprise applications.”

primary factors that allow the collaboration to continue to flourish?

It is important to highlight that SAP and Seidor have a very close relationship that is built on mutual respect globally and locally. We value their solution and innovation and they value our knowledge and customer-centric approach.

They know that customers who implement SAP solutions with us will be happy and satisfied customers. We make sure that our teams are always up-to-speed with the latest updates in terms of technology, products and solutions by attending all the necessary trainings and certifications.

We discuss everything openly with them regarding every challenge before, during and after the project to make sure that our mutual customers are realising the desired values that they want at the end of the project. **.cme**

differentiates you from other system integrators in the Middle East region?

It is very important to be fair and transparent with your customers especially if you realise that they do not have any previous experience with enterprise applications. These types of projects cannot be taken lightly, and they require adequate time and effort to deliver them with quality.

We are not shy to say no, and we have said it a lot. It is better you lose the business, and you keep your reputation intact, as we are a company that thinks long term, and

we are not a company that is simply looking to maximise its revenue for few years off the expense of unhappy customers, and then exit the market hastily through a merger or acquisition agreement, or whatever. We are not one of those companies, we are transparent and customer-centric and quality-driven.

Seidor MENA is regarded by many IT analysts as one of the top strategic partners of SAP in the Middle East. How has the partnership been such a success for such a sustained time – and what are the

It's your turn to **Earn**

Capitalize on digital opportunities
today and be relevant for tomorrow

2002 ESTABLISHED IN DUBAI | 10,000+ HAPPY CUSTOMERS | 1,000+ CHANNEL PARTNERS | 500+ POSITIVE GOOGLE REVIEWS | 24/7 LOCAL SUPPORT

START A FRANCHISE



Start your own managed IT
services business with support
of a trusted brand

WHITE LABEL RESELLER



Get up to 20% off retail price.
Sell online, offline or work
with us to close sales

AFFILIATE MARKETING



Market online or refer offline
& get 20% one-time & 5%
lifetime commissions

Sign up for FREE at www.buzinessware.com/partners





GovTech

JUNE 2021
TAHAWULTECH.COM

**CNS HELP SANAD
'SOAR' ON JOURNEY
TO THE CLOUD**



**REACHING
NEW
HEIGHTS**

CNS-SANAD

REACHING NEW HEIGHTS

In this month's edition of GovTech, we take a closer look at the partnership between aerospace engineering and leasing business Sanad, and IT company CNS – by speaking to **Kashish Kohli**, CFO, Sanad Aerotech and Powertech, and **Hatem Hariri**, Managing Director at CNS, to find out more about how CNS helped Sanad migrate their IT services to the cloud.

A portrait of Kashish Kohli, a man with dark hair, wearing a dark blue suit, a light blue shirt, and a yellow tie with small dark spots. He is looking directly at the camera with a neutral expression.

Kashish Kohli
CFO, Sanad Aerotech
and Powertech

Can you outline to us how CNS leveraged their expertise and product portfolio to enable Sanad to completely migrate their IT services to the cloud?

Kashish Kohli: Sanad is an integrated industrial provider of MRO services and lease finance solutions across the global aerospace, industrial, and energy sectors with advanced technology at the heart of our DNA.

In early 2020, we decided to embrace digital transformation and defined a clear roadmap for migration to cloud for multiple key applications.

This was based on a comprehensive

assessment of the current environment and the vision for the future that mitigates risks and unlocks opportunities.

As we all know that cloud implementation is a complex activity and could present significant business continuity risks if not done by an experienced service provider.

We considered various factors in our assessments including the capability and experience of CNS in selecting them as our implementation partner. CNS is a cloud neutral vendor, with a particular focus on solution architecture. CNS leveraged their expertise and experience to support us in a seamless and streamlined transition to cloud.

We will continue, working with our long-term partners like CNS, to invest in monitoring and managing our cloud-based services, applications

and infrastructure to drive further cost optimisation and performance improvement without compromising security.

What were the immediate business benefits for Sanad in having access to remote and in-house managed services for all their IT operations following the execution of the project by CNS?

Kashish Kohli: In today's digital transformation era, Information Technology (IT) forms a critical path for the business success which requires IT teams to be agile in managing their infrastructure and applications.

Sanad has experienced exponential growth in recent years and to ensure that IT aids competitiveness whilst providing impetus to growth, we decided to opt for a managed services IT model.

We believe this will better allow us to focus on our core business competencies, while a capable Managed Service Provider (MSP) takes care of requirements such as IT infrastructure, enterprise application and functions related to network and security.

Based on the long experience of CNS with multiple reputable industry players – ranging from healthcare, government, education, retail to real estate, CNS brings:

- Access to best practices, proven expertise, and round-the-clock experienced resources
- Predictable and lower costs with ability to scale
- 24/7 monitoring and proactive maintenance
- Robust and secure IT

“

In early 2020, we decided to embrace digital transformation and defined a clear roadmap for migration to cloud for multiple key applications.”

environments through active management of network performance, security, backup, email, helpdesk, and more.

Overall, this would help improve the business productivity, significantly enhance end-user experience, application performance and reduce overall IT cost.

Can you tell our readers more about the impact invoice process automation via RPA technology had on your day-to-day business operations?

Kashish Kohli: Sanad is known for its integrated industrial services, which provide customers and partners with the highest levels of reliability, quality, performance, world class turn-around-times and ensuring the availability of MRO services at the time and place that customers and partners need.

On one hand, Sanad



Hatem Hariri
Managing Director
at CNS

guarantees to airlines and OEM's the availability of aircraft engines according to the flight schedules of customers and partners without any delay or concerns on the quality of the services provided. On the other hand, Sanad provides access to a distinctive financing portfolio that is specially designed according to customer needs and promotes a number of benefits including capital preservation, cost reductions and increased asset utilisation.

Because of its excellence in specialised industrial services, Sanad has become a major contributor to the industrial services sector locally and globally. It has strong partnerships with major OEM's, airlines and financial institutions such as Pratt & Whitney, Siemens, Rolls-Royce and GE, in addition to more than 18 international airlines. Thanks to its strong partnerships around the world, the company's exports of industrial services amounted to between 80-85% of its total revenues.

The sophisticated customer base, spanning from South East Asia to South America, and the stringent industry regulations requires us to prepare detailed invoices which further requires screening of documents from multiple internal and external sources with high volume of transactions for each invoice, all done manually.

We decided to initiate a Robotic Process Automation (RPA) initiative to achieve cost savings, improved efficiency and accuracy whilst adhering to regulations and compliance

guidelines. Invoicing was the natural candidate considering the high volume of transactions, repetitive tasks, extraction and analysis of large set of data and requirements of timely and accurate delivery of data. However, this was also one of the most complicated processes.

RPA Solution, utilising unattended robots, automated the invoicing process and offered the following benefits:

- Reduced invoicing workload
- Significant reduction in processing time
- Automated validation of information extracted from multiple source reports and documents
- Ensuring data accuracy by generating error logs and communication through emails
- Enable audit trail of process documents and records
- Better insights and visibility on total costs at a one place

What cybersecurity assurances did CNS provide SANAD and what solutions are you deploying to keep them protected following their migration to the cloud?

Hatem Hariri: When we approached Sanad to take on this project, we assured their team of the latest Cloud security, that being of course the full protection of their data, applications, and infrastructures while migrating to the cloud.

The peace of mind we offer our clients comes from four essential pillars we apply to the process, that being visibility and compliance, compute-based security, integrated network protections and finally identity security.

CNS then addressed the above and worked with Sanad on their security assurance strategy with a Zero Trust approach, by implementing:

1. Secure Server Policies defined and rolled out
2. Endpoint Security and Remediation with AI powered tools
3. Advanced Network Threat Management solutions deployed in layered approach.
4. Identity Management with Multi-Factor Authentication
5. Device Management with Security Policies rollout and compliance
6. Hybrid Cloud Security Enterprise, Server Middle East Edition
7. Primary, DR & HQ Site Perimeter Firewalls with centralised management & logging
8. Security Awareness Platform.



Do you offer 24/7 support operations to Sanad now that the project has been complete, do you provide end-to-end services?

Hatem Hariri: CNS's competitive edge is based on our managed services capabilities, and we're leading the industry in on-and-off-site security monitoring. To provide Sanad the best end-to-end service, we designed the best solutions for their needs by splitting our support team into three categories:

- Service Delivery Centre: Agents are assigned for call logging, system monitoring, first call resolution and L1 support.
- Onsite Support: To help the end users in their daily challenges and to provide complete infrastructure support

when needed

- Level 3 Support: Where our SME will be engaged in case of higher experience needed.

Not only will this provide adequate support when needed, but it is also the most efficient and cost-effective solution for our client.

Why do you think more and more businesses are choosing CNS as their partner of choice for cloud migration and an



CNS's competitive edge is based on our managed services capabilities, and we're leading the industry in on-and-off-site security monitoring."

overhaul of their IT operations?

Hatem Hariri: Our full-service Cloud offering leaves nothing out. When you come to CNS, you know you're going to leave your business in the right hands, with the right tools to manage your total Cloud needs, from the ground up. CNS's innovative cloud portfolio's and services offer:

- Risk free migration
- 0% Business downtime during migration
- Hybrid/Multi cloud management
- 24/7 Managed Services
- Cost optimisation as an ongoing activity
- Pro-active monitoring of Cloud resources
- Handholding and Enablement

During the last few years, CNS has proved itself to be the best option for the integration of new technologies, including Cloud from all aspects of a client's IT requirements.

Commercially, we are extremely competitive in the market as we guide our customers through their migration to the cloud, hopefully to gain their trust and continue this digitalisation journey with them.

We're extremely systematic with our Cloud Managed Services as we capably implement all the required policies. Our customers' complete satisfaction is ensured with our handling of their technology pain points.

And technically, with the presence of our SME in all the domains, we are able to promise efficient business continuity for our customers at all times. **crme**

MICROSOFT

MICROSOFT EXECUTIVE HIGHLIGHTS THE IMPORTANCE OF 'TECH INTENSITY'

CNME Editor Mark Forker spoke to Leila Serhan, Public Sector Director, Microsoft UAE, at GISEC 2021, to learn more about the need for tech intensity, how the US technology leader is helping to drive the digital transformation of the UAE economy – and how the security landscape has changed since COVID-19.

The term tech intensity has become prevalent since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic as the need for greater resilience and agility has been exacerbated in the new digital economy – and Serhan explained what she believes defines tech intensity.

“Tech intensity is a term that our CEO came up with long before the COVID-19 pandemic, and it is all about a combination of the readiness, capabilities and technology adoption that companies really need to possess in order to be able to accelerate their own digital transformation,” said Serhan.

However, she stressed that for all of this to happen you need the right ecosystem of partners and companies and cautioned against companies trying to reinvent the wheel every time they encounter disruption.

“There are certain technologies in the market that we label as commodity technologies and what that means is essentially how the company is going to take this technology and really build their own unique value proposition. So many companies and startups have access to the immense power of cloud computing, so they do not need to always try to reinvent the wheel. Taking advantage of cloud computing for any organisation will help them scale, save costs and go faster-to-market, and this is what we believe is tech intensity,” said Serhan.

The Public Sector Director at Microsoft UAE also said companies that had already adopted this tech intensity mindset prior to the global health crisis had thrived and survived in comparison to those that came

late to the game and had to make significant investments in training and new technologies – but she also highlighted the importance of trust.

“Tech adoption and capabilities do not work without trust. One of the areas of trust that we see is security. Our trust principles are based on a set of pillars, and one of those pillars is security. Digital transformation can not happen without security transformation,” said Serhan.

Microsoft is known for the support it provides startups through their tailored programs and one of those is their Growth X Accelerator which has been a phenomenal success since its inception. Serhan explained the access to markets on top of knowledge and expertise is the value proposition that Microsoft gives the startup ecosystem.

“The Growth X Accelerator is part of a program that we describe as the highway to unicorn. We want to help these companies grow and become unicorns. Our role at Microsoft is to provide them with the tools and capabilities they need for their technical team to continue to grow, but the key differentiator we have at Microsoft is that we open markets for them across the 200 markets that we operate in. Once those startups are building on the Microsoft Azure platform, or the Microsoft 365 platform, or the Microsoft Dynamics 365 platform, we will then go and help them sell their product and solutions. We are a platform company and our value proposition to our customers and the startup community is you come and build on top of this platform, and we will help you sell it globally,” said Serhan.

On June 19th, it will be two years to the day since Microsoft established their first datacentres in the UAE, and that has paved the way for a huge acceleration and adoption in cloud technologies and Serhan illustrated the incredible impact they have had in terms of fueling and cultivating innovation across the region.

“In a few weeks we are going to celebrate the 2nd anniversary of the opening of our datacentres here in the UAE. The type of growth that we have witnessed has been incredible, and that obviously has been accelerated by the COVID-19 pandemic, and we seen schools all go online through MS Teams supported by our datacentres. There have been so many sectors that have utilised the benefits of our datacentres,” said Serhan.

GISEC is the flagship security event in the IT calendar in the Middle East, and Serhan reiterated Microsoft’s commitment to security as fears over ransomware attacks and other bad actors continue to emerge.

“As I said before no digital transformation can happen without security transformation, so it’s important for us to reiterate and reinforce to our customers and partners that there are tools available to organisations in the UAE that is going to help them to adopt and migrate to the cloud, and this will also remove a lot of the security concerns that they have. We invest more than \$1bn in security every year, and for us security is critical. We do not build a product and then think about security, the security is embedded and built-in to every single service and product that we design,” concluded Serhan. **crme**

PURE STORAGE

A PURE APPROACH TO MULTI-CLOUD

Dan Kogan, VP of Product, FlashArray at Pure Storage, has penned an exclusive op-ed for June's edition of CNME in which he outlines how companies need to adopt a multi-cloud strategy to strive and thrive in the digital economy.

Most of the customers I speak with today are dealing with two distinct yet related challenges. First, they're having to store, manage, and make sense of more data than ever before. Second, they have more options than ever before to do this.

Applications and their data are now residing in multiple locations—from customers' on-premises data centres to edge locations, and hyperscale public clouds such as Microsoft's Azure, Amazon Web Services, or Google Cloud Platform.

This means businesses are rapidly adopting multi-cloud strategies, which can deliver significant benefits around flexibility and agility. But they can also create new data management challenges.

Here are five critical steps to help you successfully implement your own cost-optimised and easy-to-manage multicloud data management strategy.

Go in with a plan

Many organisations lack a well-defined way to manage their data across heterogeneous environments. Some may even take a one-size-fits-all approach, starting with a single cloud and applying that same methodology enterprise-wide. The risks of this shortcut are limited collaboration, governance concerns, and integration challenges.

Becoming a cloud-driven organisation doesn't end once you've amassed all the best cloud environments. It's a journey, not an end-state. A clear strategy is absolutely key for adoption and evolution of your cloud environments. Consider interoperability and flexibility, which will help you be more strategic with resources and ultimately lead to better multicloud ROI.

Nail down a master data management strategy

In a multicloud environment, the complexity of data management can escalate

exponentially. Without a clear plan, organisations often duplicate data, which can lead to waste and overspend.

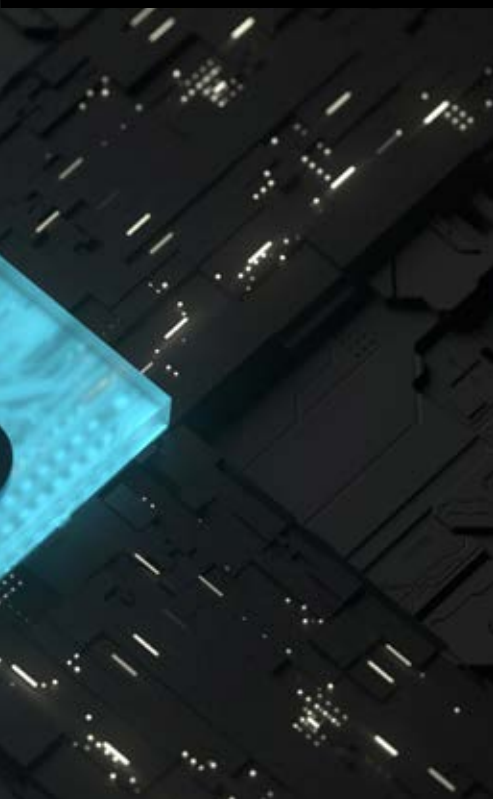
A data management strategy can consolidate and simplify data and workload portability. This can help inform the way you ingest, process, store, and analyse data from multiple locations—on-premises, across multiple clouds, or from a range of endpoints.

A central, unified data architecture can greatly reduce data management complexities. Centralised storage management will ideally include an operating environment that works seamlessly on-premises and in cloud environments.

Select a storage solution that runs seamlessly across hybrid and multicloud environments

The ability to migrate data and applications between data domains is essential.

However, on-premises and cloud environments are very different and don't always speak



the same language. The same can be said for different cloud environments. The resulting data silos can create management and efficiency challenges that can lead to friction and limited collaboration in a broad range of use cases.

To break down silos and get seamless data mobility, your operating environment should have a software defined storage solution that enables you to create a common infrastructure with a unified data plane. Non-negotiables include consistent APIs and an efficiency guarantee in writing depending on workload.

Consider how you'll control waste and spend at the outset

According to a recent survey conducted for Pure Storage by Spiceworks Ziff-Davis, IT executives say cost efficiency is a top reason to stay on-prem. Data repatriation to on-premises is common, and regress charges are a major pain point for any cloud deployment. This challenge

grows as cloud use increases.

Don't let waste and overspend eclipse the tangible benefits of going multicloud. Ensure that your operating environment has best-in-class storage efficiency, thin provisioning, deduplication, and data compression. Leverage advanced analytics and AI-powered monitoring where possible to get better visibility into your clouds—especially as you adopt more services.

An excellent way to augment efforts to reduce bloat: opt for storage as a service to remove the need to forecast and overprovision storage and only pay for what you use.

Incorporate compliance and data sovereignty requirements

Using more than one cloud for data and analytics can make data management, governance, and integration even trickier. This is often driven by corporate compliance requirements, which are also sometimes government-mandated.

For example, if your company is global or in the process of expansion, you'll likely require new disaster recovery (DR) zones in multiple regions. These often need to meet strict data governance regulations such as the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). This would mean

certain data, including customer information or personally identifiable information, cannot leave the region.

One solution: Cloud-based backups in multiple high-availability zones (AZs) that reside on different tectonic plates and flood zones in the event of a disaster. In terms of multicloud data recovery plans, look for a storage solution with continuous, asynchronous replication to meet your recovery point objectives (RPOs) and recovery time objectives (RTOs) with enough margin.

What's the Best Way Forward?

To fully embrace multicloud and create a strategy to manage this complex new world:

Don't start with a single cloud and try to apply the same methodology to the whole enterprise. This can limit ROI and weaken business outcomes. You may risk ending up with a proliferation of silos and an opaque view of data assets across the organisation.

Do embrace the multicloud world order with a plan. You'll increase opportunities for data synergies and cost optimisation without limiting accessibility or creating silos.

Once you've fleshed out your multicloud strategy, make sure you have the right solutions to support it. You'll need a data storage solution that provides seamless data mobility, resilience, and a consistent experience—no matter where your data lives. Only then can you gain true agility and elasticity across complex cloud environments—and the competitive advantage from your organisation's most valuable asset: data. **cnme**



Businesses are rapidly adopting multi-cloud strategies, which can deliver significant benefits around flexibility and agility."

HUAWEI

UNLOCKING THE POTENTIAL OF INDUSTRY 4.0

Jiawei Liu, CEO of Huawei UAE, has penned an exclusive op-ed for June's edition of CNME, in which he outlines how enterprises can tap into and unlock the incredible potential of the Fourth Industrial Revolution.



Jiawei Liu
CEO of Huawei UAE

The Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR), founded on ICT networks and technologies, is leading us into an intelligent era where there will be 100 billion connections and 40 billion smart devices around the world by 2025. Information is expected to move faster, more securely, and it is predicted that there will be more intelligent data exchanges. Annual data generated will reach 180 billion TB in the next four years, a 20-fold increase compared to 2018. This path toward an intelligent world with ubiquitous high-speed connections will lead to unprecedented economic growth, innovation, and value creation.

Demonstrating incredible foresight, the UAE government launched its Strategy for the Fourth Industrial Revolution in 2017. It is driven by the vision of strengthening the UAE's position as a global hub for the Fourth Industrial Revolution, and for the UAE to become an open lab for 4IR applications. 4IR has many commercial, industrial, and sectoral applications that will be advantageous to society more broadly. Manufacturing, healthcare, utilities, and the Internet of Things (IoT).

The UAE's Strategy for the Fourth Industrial Revolution set into motion various plans on the integration of advancing innovation and future technologies to boost the UAE's national economy. It also laid the foundation of

the future digital economy of the UAE.

According to predictions made by Huawei and Oxford Economics, the global digital economy will be worth US\$23 trillion by 2025. A recent research believed that the digital economy contributed 4.4% to the UAE's GDP. During the pandemic, we witnessed an accelerated adoption of ICT technologies like 5G, Artificial Intelligence (AI), and cloud in the UAE. In a post-pandemic world, having a robust digital



To ensure that we can unlock the full potential of the 4IR in the UAE, two key elements need to be considered – world-class ICT infrastructure, and talent development.”

economy, in tandem with greater application of 4IR technologies powered through 5G, will ensure the UAE's continued economic success.

The UAE government recognises that the value of building a robust digital economy during the 4IR given the scale of contributions it can make in creating real opportunities for foreign direct investment. It plays a pivotal role in enhancing the country's

economic security by adopting digital economy and blockchain technologies in financial transactions and service.

As the UAE gears up to host the Expo 2020, further development of its digital economy, ICT infrastructure, powered by technologies like 5G, will enable it to create more value not just for its visitors, but the nation as well. It will support in creating an environment that fosters computational thinking will help in the development of advanced mindsets, which in turn will stimulate critical thinking. It will also ignite job creation at an unparalleled level.

To ensure that we can unlock the full potential of the 4IR in the UAE, two key elements need to be considered – world-class ICT infrastructure, and talent development. To build the ICT infrastructure to capitalise on the 4IR, the UAE is empowering and partnering to co-create solutions. Secondly, developing local talent is also crucial to the success of the UAE's 4IR and digital economy ambitions. Global ICT leaders such as Huawei have embraced the responsibility of upskilling the existing workforce, and also contribute towards nurturing the youth of our nation.

The UAE government is taking concrete steps to establish a strong digital economy, and through ongoing collaboration, we can help fulfill the nation's vision for the 4IR. **enme**



MEKDAM TECHNOLOGY

VISIBILITY THE KEY TO SECURE DIGITALLY-READY NETWORK INFRASTRUCTURE – MEKDAM TECHNOLOGY

CNME Editor Mark Forker spoke to Vatan Sakhuja, ICT BU Head, Mekdam Technology, Qatar, to find out how it is helping customers acquire secure next-generation networking solutions, its relationship with Cisco – and the importance of the channel in the IT ecosystem.

The need for customers to have secure, next-generation networking technology solutions has become stronger than ever in the new normal. What are the Cisco solutions that you are currently suggesting to your end customers?

Today's enterprise network is expanding rapidly. It connects multiple branches, mobile users, the cloud, and data centres. Organisations are moving away from traditional IT infrastructure and towards a digitally ready network infrastructure to support the way in which business is done today.

From streamlining operations and inventory management to offering new value-added services, many businesses are realising significant benefits from digitisation. But as companies change to digital businesses and adopt new practices and technologies, they require increased visibility to maintain security.

To support the customers in their digital transformation, Mekdam Technology provides a whole range of solutions that include Cisco Secure Firewall, Secure Endpoint, Secure Email, Secure Workload, Identity Services Engine (ISE) as well as Cisco Software Defined Networking solutions like SD-

Access, SD-WAN & Application Centric Infrastructure solutions.

What are some of the key milestones that Mekdam has achieved as a Cisco Partner over the years?

Over 100+ businesses around the Qatar have trusted us in their journey to go digital. For them and many others, a digital infrastructure partner like Mekdam can help their resources converge and deliver transformation which is required to be successful in the new normal.

We at Mekdam are proud to have built a strong team on whom the customers can rely upon to help them converge and transform.

One of the key Cisco projects that I would like to highlight here is the one we have recently executed for a reputed retail client in Qatar. The customer trusted Mekdam to plan, design and deploy their complete Network Infrastructure.

The solution comprises of Meraki full stack and SDWAN solution for their headquarters, public cloud, CoLo DC and all their branches across Qatar.

We also provided them with Data centre and security infrastructure which includes Firewall and IPS Services while ensuring secure wireless access to across all offices and campus. The solution is highly

scalable, available and reliable in performance.

We have received several awards and recognitions over the years such as the 'Partner of the Year' award for Cisco Collaboration presented to us by Comstor.

We have also received direct awards from major clients in the government sector related to aviation, healthcare & defence sector by showing the capability which we hold in successfully deploying even complex Cisco Solutions.

Cisco and Comstor have been at the forefront in keeping the channel trained and certified during the pandemic through their virtual training initiatives. How has your experience been being one of the key partners in these virtual sessions?

The ongoing pandemic has been the worst hit for the businesses around the globe but on the flip side, it has provided an opportunity for IT professionals around the globe to learn more and enhance the existing skill set.

Our entire team has taken leverage of all the virtual events and trainings that Cisco & Comstor have provided to further grow our technical capabilities and become trained on the latest technologies which Cisco has in their portfolio. **CNME**



Today's enterprise network is expanding rapidly. It connects multiple branches, mobile users, the cloud, and data centres."

Run autoExpress

and grow your Automotive Dealership

autoExpress – your nextGen DMS on SAP's S/4 HANA
Digital Platform designed to help expand revenue,
reduce cost and provide best customer experience.



Brochure





AirEngine Wi-Fi 6

All-New Speed for Everything

Lightning-Fast Speeds,
Always-On Mobility,
Continuous Self-Organizing Networking.
Redefine Wi-Fi Industry Benchmark.



Scan here to learn more



Contact Us:

- enterpriseME@huawei.com
- e.huawei.com/ae